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Global Environment Facility (GEF)**

Mid-Term Evaluation Report

Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region

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This report presents the findings of the evaluator and does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of UNEP, GEF, UWI or national executing agencies.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BCH	Biosafety Clearing House
CARICOM	Caribbean Community of Commonwealth States
CABI	Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux International
CARDI	Caribbean Agriculture and Development Institution CARICOM Caribbean Community
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
FFPs	LMOs intended for food and feeds and processing
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Genetically modified
IA	Implementing Agency
ICGEB	International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation On Agriculture
LEA	Lead Executing Agency
LMOs	Living Modified Organisms
M&E	Monitoring And Evaluation
MEA	Multi-Lateral Environmental Agreement
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NBF	National Biosafety Framework
NCA	National Competent Authority
NEA	National Executing Agency
NFP	National Project Focal Point
NSC	National Steering Committee
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PEO	Public Education and Outreach
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PMU	Project Management Unit
RA	Risk Assessment
RCHM	Regional Clearing House Mechanism
RM	Risk Management
ROLAC	UNEP's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
RPA	Regional Project Assistant
RPM	Regional Project Manager
SDED	Sustainable Development and Environment Division (St. Lucia)
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TM	Task Manager
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UG	University of Guyana
UWI	University of West Indies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The “Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region” was approved in April 2011 for a four-year period with a total budget of US\$13,158,079 consisting of a US\$ 5,972,493 GEF contribution and US\$ 7,097,582 in cash/in-kind co-financing by participating countries and regional partners. The project is implemented by UNEP and executed by the University of West Indies in its capacity as Lead Executing Agency (LEA). The participating countries are Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago; Barbados and the Bahamas were expected to join the project but have not signed the requisite documents.

2. The overall goal of the project is to implement effective, operable, transparent and sustainable National Biosafety Frameworks which cater for national and regional needs, deliver global benefits and are compliant with the *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* in the Caribbean sub-region to ensure that their biodiversity will be less vulnerable to any potential risks from introduced LMOs. To this end, the project encompasses five components that integrate country and regional initiatives. These components support the development of national biosafety legislation and national biosafety frameworks (NBFs), institutional capacity building and human resource development, biosafety information management systems, and the articulation of regional cooperation frameworks.

3. The project is well into its third year and is scheduled to terminate in September 2015. Implementation has been inconsistent and the achievement of planned outputs remains considerably behind schedule, despite improved momentum as of the present year. Approximately one-quarter of the project outputs have been completed or are likely to be completed by the project’s finish (according to their scheduled timeframe and current level of progress). Only 26% of the GEF contribution had been disbursed as of February 2012.

4. At its present rate of implementation, the project is unlikely to achieve most planned outputs or outcomes within the remaining period. The main achievements to date are the start of a post-graduate MSc programme in Biosafety of Biotechnology Product that commenced this year at UWI, and the expected creation of a Center of Excellence for Biosafety that will offer LMO risk analysis and information management services on a sub-regional scale. These are important advances that enhance perspectives for sustaining training, capacity building and LMO risk management beyond the project term. However, there is considerable imbalance in the progress achieved by the project’s regional and country-oriented components, with the risk that many countries may not be able to consolidate enabling legislation and policy frameworks, or develop the technical capacities needed to generate adequate demand for - or fully benefit from – the envisioned regional support services.

5. This situation is conditioned by a series of factors that include (i) extended delays in the project’s start-up in many countries, which had not signed the required Partnership Agreement addendum to enable disbursement; (ii) delays in the recruitment of National Project Managers (NPMs) and establishment of implementation arrangements at the country level; (iii) unfamiliarity with UNEP/GEF project management and reporting guidelines (the Anubis system in particular); (iv) the LEAs limited experience in implementing regional projects with national governments; and (v) the intrinsic coordination and delivery pressures of executing five project components, seven outcomes and more than eighty outputs to 12 countries within a four-year period. On a positive side, the project has

encouraged high levels of country ownership through the conformation of Regional and National Steering Committees that offer oversight, assist coordination needs and contribute to adaptive management.

6. In several respects, executing a project of this scale and complexity has been a learning process for the Lead Executing Agency and national partners that will undoubtedly improve their preparedness to manage future regional initiatives. However, the learning carries high opportunity costs in terms of missed time and opportunity.

7. The recommendations of the MTE center on the critical importance of accelerating project *Implementation and achieving greater balance achieved between the project's regional and country-based components*. In particular, attention needs to be focused on (i) ensuring the approval of biosafety legislation and policies that enable the establishment of NBFs and are compatible across the sub-region; and (ii) developing national capacities to conduct biosafety risk assessments and make informed LMO decisions.

8. To this end, several actions are proposed under the “Recommendations” chapter that include the following:

- Regional workshop and peer reviews to assess country progress in drafting biosafety legislation and policies, and work towards their harmonization
- Country missions to expedite the approval and enactment of proposed Biosafety Bills and other enabling legal/policy provisions.
- In-country training on LMO application and risk management processes with the “hands on” technical guidance, and greater incorporation of institutional partners who are aligned to the CPB.
- The adjustment of project workplans and expected achievement levels, based on a realistic assessment of what can actually be accomplished in the remaining period.
- A project extension to ensure the achievement of minimum performance benchmarks for clusters of countries, based on their levels of progress and momentum. This will be based on the above-mentioned assessment and focus on key deliverables that are essential to enable further progress.
- Greater attention to building relations with global, regional and national biosafety institutions that are aligned to CPB principles, in order to convey a consistently balanced message that is coherent with project objectives and UNEP’s mandate.
- There is need for regional public awareness on biosafety and the initiatives that are being supported through the regional project. This would help to mobilize “buy in” towards the project and its objectives by a wider range stakeholders and the political establishment. Successful biosafety activities carried out in various countries could be highlighted on the regional media to raise the profile of the project and biosafety awareness in general.

I. EVALUATION BACKGROUND

A. The Context

9. The *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* (CPB) is derived from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and aims “to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account risks to human health, and

specifically focusing on trans-boundary movement.” As of 2010, 17 countries from the Caribbean region (Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago) had ratified or acceded to the CPB.

10. The obligations of the Protocol require technical capacities and equipment, legal and regulatory frameworks, information systems and the coordination of institutional responsibilities. These needs were supported in the past by GEF projects for the development of biosafety networks and clearing house mechanisms that were implemented through UNEP. The “Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region” is the latest of this sequence.

11. For most Caribbean countries, modern biotechnology is a new field and there is little knowledge on the interaction of living modified organisms (LMOs) with the sub-region’s various ecosystems. Institutions in Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago are carrying out research in biotechnology. Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago have developed the potential to release their own LMOs. New initiatives in biotechnology have provided opportunities for Caribbean countries to manage their natural resources in a more sustainable manner. There are plans to establish a Centre for Food security and Entrepreneurship that will seek to engage large- scale investment projects in Caribbean countries such as Saint Lucia, where MOUs have been signed with the government. The investment projects would include those related to biotechnology; as a result biosafety systems need to be in place in the region so as to protect its biodiversity.

12. The importance of having operational biosafety frameworks that follow consistent policy and regulatory guidelines across the sub-region is reinforced by trans-boundary LMO movements to Caribbean countries that import GM foods. There is also research on GM food components contained use. There is increasing need that LMOs and modern biotechnology products, be managed to avoid risks and potential negative impacts on human, animal and plant health and environmental safety. LMOs that enter one Caribbean state through trade are not necessarily subject to further trans-boundary movements involving other Caribbean states. However, there are frequent transshipments in Caribbean waters, which raise the issue of LMOs in transit that aren’t subject to the CPB’s Advanced Informed Agreement.

13. Although not all Caribbean countries concur on the magnitude and consequences of the potential threats of modern biotechnology, all coincide on the relevance of having biosafety systems in place. Having the necessary safeguards and controlling the entry and release of LMOs are essential to their safe use. Maintaining adequate biosafety levels and defining how to handle transit cases and first-time imports is of common interest to all Caribbean states.

14. Many governments have expressed the need for more information, technical capacities and regulatory control for managing LMOs. Some governments recognize case evaluations and authorizations issued by other countries to take decisions, while others have indicated a preference to develop local knowledge base, in order to build national capacities for LMO risk analysis and management. Private entities engaged in LMO importation will benefit from consistent guidelines and regulatory certainty that encourage more efficient and transparent LMO application and management practices. To reach this, Caribbean countries that are Parties to the CPB need to build comprehensive biosafety

frameworks involving the key sectors and institutions, and put the necessary legal and regulatory norms in place.

B. Project Background

15. The “Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region” was approved in April 2011 for four years, with a total budget of US\$ 13,070,075 (including a project preparation grant) that is divided between the GEF contribution of US\$ 5,972,493 and US\$ 7,097,582 in cash/in-kind co-financing by participating countries and regional partners such as CARICOM, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the University of West Indies (UWI) and University of Guyana.

16. The overall goal of the project is to implement effective, operable, transparent and sustainable National Biosafety Frameworks which cater for national and regional needs, deliver global benefits and are compliant with the *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* in the Caribbean sub-region countries of Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago to ensure that their biodiversity will be less vulnerable to any potential risks from introduced LMOs.

17. As described in the evaluation ToRs, the project intends to achieve the following objectives:

- To establish institutional (policy /legal) frameworks for biosafety at both the national and regional levels that will allow Parties to the CPB to utilize modern biotechnology in compliance with this Protocol;
- To facilitate the establishment, enhancement and operationalization of institutional capacities as well as technical and technological resources among the participating Caribbean Member States for the detection, assessment and management of potential risks from modern biotechnology (in combination with IAS where appropriate) at the national and regional levels;
- To develop and strengthen the human resource base and level of expertise in biosafety on a national and regional scale, in support of biosafety management and national biosafety systems in the Caribbean;
- To improve and consolidate biosafety information management within Caribbean project countries in a way that can promote transparency, raise public awareness and facilitate biosafety decision-making, and be up-scaled to provide broader regional information services as needed, and if possible, establish links to IAS information sources.

18. The project is regionally executed by the University of West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad & Tobago, as the designated Lead Executing Agency (LEA). There is a Project Management Unit within UWI that consists of a Regional Project Manager (RPM) and Project Assistant. The participating countries are Antigua & Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines.¹ All governments are signatories to the Cartagena Protocol and have designated National Executing Agencies (NEAs). Oversight and guidance are provided by regional and national

¹ Barbados and the Bahamas were included among participating countries but have not signed the project Partnership Agreement addendum and do not participate in the project.

steering committees composed of national agencies with actual or planned biosafety functions. UNEP provides technical guidance and support as the GEF implementing agency.

19. The work plan combines national and regional aspects. National component activities are supporting the establishment of the necessary legal and institutional frameworks, public education programs and training necessary for effective and sustained implementation of the CPB. Country-specific outcomes include establishment and consolidation of the following: 1) fully functional and responsive NBFs in line with the CPB and national and regional needs and priorities; 2) functional national systems and availability of services for handling requests, performing risk assessment, detecting living modified organisms (LMOs), decision-making and for performing administrative tasks; 3) functional systems for monitoring environmental effects and enforcement; 4) functional national systems for biosafety information management and stimulating public awareness, biosafety education, and participation in the decision-making process.

20. The regional aspects of the project are supporting: (a) the establishment and/or strengthening of region-wide processes and mechanisms for cooperative coordination to support countries in biosafety management; (b) region-wide training on biosafety risk assessment and risk management, and other specific CPB-related topics; (c) evaluations of existing and required capacity for risk management and LMO detection; (d) the creation of a Regional Node for the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) to support and coordinate information exchange and access to information on biosafety; and (e) project management structures and processes, and monitoring and evaluation of project performance. In relation to (a), under the regional component, countries should have determined whether the development of CARICOM-wide standards, protocols and procedures for biosafety risk assessment/management, LMO authorization (permit issuance) and identification are warranted and how such regional mechanism may be operated and maintained cost-effectively.

21. The project is broad in scale, with five components and more than 80 planned outputs² that are expected to lead to the following outcomes, which are associated to their respective project components:

- *Outcome 1:* Biosafety governance regimes are improved and aligned with the CPB in 12 countries of the Caribbean sub-region.
- *Outcome 2:* Well-articulated and technically sound risk assessment, risk management and follow-up systems are functioning for biosafety in the Caribbean.
- *Outcome 3:* A multi-disciplinary cadre of trained personnel and technical support mechanisms that combine both national and regional capacities, are operational and ensure the future sustainability of biosafety management in CARICOM countries.
- *Outcome 4:* National and regional mechanisms that provide access to biosafety information in order to promote transparency, raise public awareness and facilitate biosafety decision-making are institutionalized throughout the region.
- *Outcome 5.1:* Regional processes aid to lay the foundations for regional biosafety services and a regional framework to assist NBF implementation in the Caribbean.
- *Outcome 5.2:* Regional processes support project management.
- *Outcome 5.3:* Regional processes support project M&E.

² The PIRs list a larger number of project outputs than the 66 that are in the project document.

22. This project builds on the advances of prior GEF/UNEP biosafety support initiatives. The participating countries were involved in the global “Development of National Biosafety Frameworks” project. Through this project, 12 countries had designed draft versions of National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF) by 2009, and others had adopted policy/legal instruments or technical and administrative guidelines. Others made plans to implement NBFs with proposed specific actions and time frames.³

C. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

23. Following UNEP evaluation policy and GEF guidelines for implementing agencies, the project was scheduled to undergo a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) halfway through the implementation process. As stated by its Terms of Reference, the MTE’s main purpose is to analyze whether the project is on-track, identify problems or challenges being faced, and identify corrective actions needed to improve aspects of project implementation. The MTE looks at project performance according to its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and analyzes the likelihood of achieving and sustaining planned results and outcomes. The evaluation findings should contribute feedback and lessons to UNEP, GEF and national partners for this and future initiatives. The evaluation is guided by lead questions (listed in Section 5)..

24. The evaluation methodology combined the desk review of project documentation with brief visits to Trinidad & Tobago, St. Lucia and Guyana to interview the PMU, UWI staff, NPMs, NEAs and NSC participants. The country visits were followed by skype interviews with the NPMs of Grenada, Belize and St. Kitts and Nevis to cover a broader sample. The UNEP Task Manager from ROLAC and the Nairobi-based Fund Manager were also interviewed. The meetings with the PMU and country teams in Guyana and St. Lucia have provided a lot of input for this evaluation. The visits and subsequent contacts (listed in Annex __) were successful in large part thanks to the excellent support given by the RPM and RPA.

25. In terms of methodological difficulties, the country sample was exceedingly small for a project of this magnitude, and which has considerable variance in starting dates and the progress achieved by countries. The skype interviews with the NPMs have helped in this respect, but do not offer a glimpse into the dynamics of national components that comes with being there and speaking to various participants from different institutions. Aside from being a project in progress, there has been a very late start and there is not much to report for most outputs or those components that have not started in full. On the other hand, there are a number of intervening issues that can be analyzed from a forwarding-looking perspective, with the intention of contributing to better implementation and delivery.

26. The findings derived from the desk review, meetings with the regional project team, the country visits and skype interviews, were systematized to identify trends in the perceptions of different stakeholder focus groups regarding the project’s performance and factors affecting it. This is important to broaden the evaluator’s perspective and understanding of how the factors analyzed in this report are influencing implementation; and to propose actions that lead to improvements.

II. PROJECT PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT

A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

A.1 Achievement of Outputs and Activities

27. Project implementation had a very slow start and progress has been uneven since. The delivery of most outputs remains well below programmed levels. Of the 85 outputs that are listed in the Project Implementation Review (PIR) report for the July 2013-June 2014 period, the evaluator estimated that only 23 (27%) had been completed or could still be completed by the target dates.

28. The situation is influenced by a combination of factors that include (i) extended delays in the project's activation in several countries; (ii) overall unfamiliarity with UNEP's management and reporting guidelines, and with the Anubis format in particular; (iii) the project's ambitious geographic and thematic scope; and (iv) disparities between the advance of the regional components in relation to the implementation of initiatives supporting national capacity building and technical assistance. The project was not fully operational for some time following its approval in April 2011, and only began to gather momentum in 2013. The first regional training workshops were held this year.

29. The national components have been most affected. The participating countries have common interests and are linked in many ways, yet remain a heterogeneous sample in terms of their operational environments, capacities and commitment to the project. The project's activation was very much affected by differences in country preparation, combined that at times significantly delayed start of national project activities. Three years into the project, two countries have yet to become operational, while others are at different stages of advancement. As a result, the progress achieved varies across countries.

30. Timelines for achieving outputs were revised in consultation with the Regional Steering Committee in November 2013, and Implementation has picked up in 2014 with the signing of the Partnership Agreement addendum by most countries, the scheduling of regional training workshops and the start of a new MSc programme in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products at UWI. Yet at its present pace the project is unlikely to generate the "critical mass" of outputs and processes needed to achieve the planned outcomes and have impact by September 2015.

31. The status of project outputs are analyzed below by component:

- **Component 1:** *Establishment of National Legal Frameworks for Biosafety/Biotechnology*

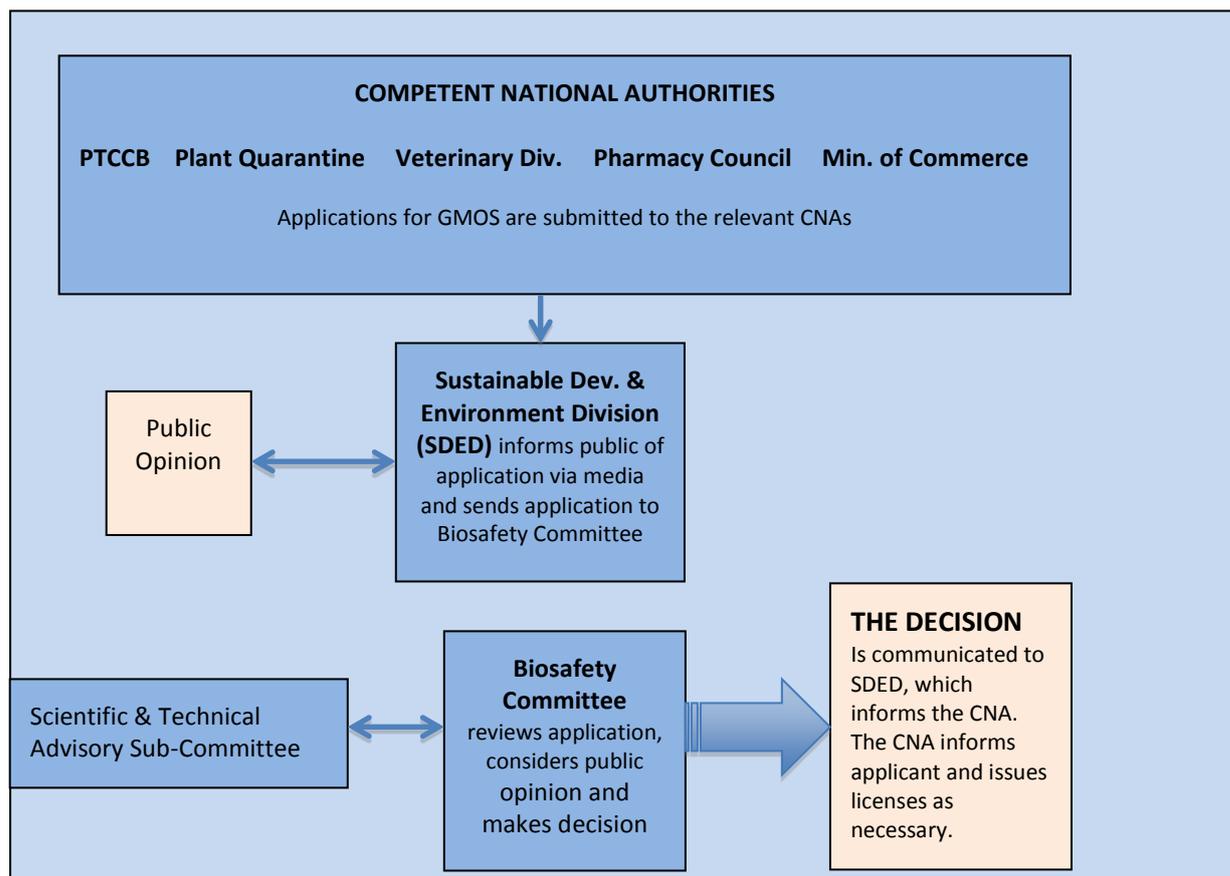
32. Most countries had already drafted biosafety policy and legislation proposals, and therefore project support has focused on their updating and revision, and the holding of public hearings to finalize the drafting process prior to submittal for approval by Cabinet and legislative bodies. The support offered has been put to good use by most countries; St. Lucia adjusted a prior Biosafety Law proposal into an over-arching Bill that builds on existing legislation and institutional mandates.

33. Moderate progress was achieved in the review, consultation and approval of draft NBF and biosafety legislation (Outputs 1.1-1.4); with many countries at halfway stage of completion according to the 2013-2014 PIR. Among the twelve participating countries, only

St. Kitts & Nevis has enacted national biosafety legislation. In the case of St. Lucia (Figure 2), the project helped national authorities adapt an earlier proposal that is now considered to be more compatible with existing legislation, institutional frameworks and mandates. At present St. Lucia’s biosafety legislation is undergoing the final stages of legal review that precede its submittal to Parliament for approval.

Figure 1

Proposed Administrative System for Biosafety Management: St. Lucia



Source: SDED

34. Guyana, Antigua & Barbuda and Dominica finished drafting biosafety legislation and administrative guidelines that must now be reviewed and approved by national Cabinets and legislators. Grenada and Guyana have drafted Biosafety Bills that can be incorporated within broader biotechnology and biodiversity legislation. Five countries have held public consultations on the proposed legislation and policies (Guyana, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Antigua/Barbuda and Dominica). The respective level of progress achieved by the individual countries is influenced by political and institutional factors that are outside the project’s control. At the present stage in which proposed national legislations have been drafted and will be subject to review, there is a need to bring country participants together to ensure the compatibility of national biosafety laws and LMO risk management procedures.

35. Although all participating countries have drafted laws and policies that address biotechnology and biosafety issues to varying degrees (Output 1.4), an approved legal and

institutional framework is essential to operationalize national biosafety frameworks. Until then, the technical and scientific coaching, oversight and direct support planned under Outputs 1.5 and 1.9-10 cannot be fully exploited and is best postponed towards the end of the project (or its extension in the event there is one). Several countries have advanced in developing institutional mandates, responsibilities and procedures for biosafety risk assessment at the country level (Output 1.6), yet the full achievement of this output is ultimately linked to the approval of the enabling legal and administrative frameworks.

36. There were delays in organizing study tours and short-term attachments for country personnel involved in LMO risk assessment and management (Output 1.10). However, this may be improving with recent visits by delegations from St. Lucia to Chile's SAG (at the initiative of the St. Lucia government), and the establishing of contacts with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and biosafety institutions in Brazil and Cuba (Output 1.9).

37. The production of manuals, guidelines and protocols for administrative procedures under Output 1.8 is at a low stage of advancement (although countries such as St. Lucia have advanced in the formulation of administrative guidelines and manuals). The overall slow progress affects the harmonizing of biosafety frameworks in the sub-region and implementation of training activities that require these materials. The RPM has proposed that biosafety manuals, protocols and other materials be developed as course materials for the newly approved MSc in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products, and made available for other training events as well. This may be a cost-effective option, assuming they are produced in a timely manner that allows countries to use them in national capacity building efforts. During prior communications with UWI and the PMU, UNEP had commented on the risk of producing the manuals late in the project's life, as will occur if they are developed under the MSc program. There has been concern that if countries receive the materials close to the end of the project – or after it has terminated – their utility may be weakened. However, it is expected that the manuals and other didactic materials will become available commencement of the MSc programme in October 2014.

- **Component 2:** Enhanced establishment and upgrading of resource base and institutional capacities for biosafety decision-making and management

38. This component focuses on developing LMO detection and risk management capabilities, through a network of national laboratories that would be linked to the Center of Excellence for Biosafety (CEB), a specialized regional facility offering risk assessment services, training and information dissemination through a central biosafety clearinghouse (BCH) linked to national nodes. There have been surveys of country laboratory needs for LMO detection and risk assessment, and the procurement process is underway.⁴ The intention is to equip national laboratories with detection capabilities and use the CEB for risk analysis, although some countries –St. Lucia and Guyana - are interested in applying a wider range of risk assessment procedures internally to detect trans-boundary movements of LMO-FFPs. Guyana in particular is likely to require a greater laboratory presence given its geographic scale, extensive porous borders and unauthorized entry of GM soya and other grains from Brazil; it has conducted capacity assessments for four national laboratories with project support. The division of country and regional responsibilities and CEB's relationship with the

⁴ It has been noted that Saint Lucia was asked to re-submit its request for lab equipment, originally submitted in August 2013.

national laboratories in particular are supposed to be stipulated in MOUs (Output 2.10), which hasn't occurred yet.

39. Institutional capacity needs assessment for LMO risk assessment and monitoring (Output 2.1) was completed, and two training workshops were held. As foreseen under Output 2.2, there were short visits of national partners to institutions with biosafety functions in Chile (by initiative of the St. Lucia government), Brazil and Cuba, with the possibility for further collaboration. The training visits were highly appreciated by the few participants that were interviewed by the evaluator, and have served to provide direct exposure to actual biosafety operations. The United States Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) is supporting training workshops and twelve scholarships to the USA. The USDA contributions are valued because they help to reduce the project's co-financing gap, and have relevance to trade relations with the U.S. (which include importation of GM grains and LMO-FFPs). However, the United States is not a party to the CPB and the training provided at the Barbados workshop was considered by some participants to be pro-LMO and inconsistent with the Protocol's principles.⁵ In this respect, UNEP had advised UWI to network with a bigger range of institutions and expand cooperation with institutions considered "neutral" in this respect, and had provided information on institutions that could be also contacted for training workshops. To get a balanced message across, the PMU needs to expand cooperation ties with IICA, IFPRI and national biosafety institutions in the region. One clear possibility may be Cuban experts (to the extent that training in English can be arranged) given its established technical capacity, geographic proximity and adherence to the CPB.

40. Technical documents and tools (Output 2.11) for standardizing biosafety risk management, sampling, lab testing and quality assurance will be developed through the new MSc programme (as is the case with Output 1.8). This could be a cost-effective and perhaps more sustainable measure; however, it is more important at this moment to avoid further delays in making material available for national capacity building activities supported by the project. There is the risk that countries may not have time to make effective use of these materials within the project's lifetime, which are needed now to ensure compatibility in LMO detection and risk management among CARICOM countries (Outputs 2.8, 2.11, 2.12). There was also little progress in agreeing on common LMO border control procedures, and a regional meeting is planned in November this year.

- **Component 3:** *Human resources development in support of biosafety management throughout CARICOM member states*

41. Technical training for country participants has lagged and started in 2014 with the LMO Risk Assessment regional workshops that was held in Dominica in April and Barbados in September with USDA and UWI support. As noted earlier, technical staff from St Lucia travelled to Chile's SAG to observe GM detection procedures and laboratory facilities. There is the proposal to hold a back-to-back workshop on biosafety legislation and policy where countries can share approaches, build on each other's work and harmonize national frameworks. Workshop venues are rotated to enable the attendance of more people from the host countries.

42. Much of the project's capacity building effort was devoted to creating the MSc in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products (Outputs 3.4, 3.15) that will be offered at UWI, in

⁵ The evaluator has not received the training materials for this workshop and simply acknowledges the views expressed by some of the interviewed participants.

partnership with universities in Belize, Guyana and Suriname. The Master's programme was approved by UWI's Executive Board one year later than planned, and started in October 2014. The MSc intends to meet the growing interest in biotechnology as a dominant economic activity, and to address concerns about potential risks for the environment and human health. As stated in its literature, the MSc intends to meet the demand for biosafety expertise to regulate trade in modern biotechnology industry products, and to promote the benefits and understanding of biosafety and biotechnology among primary stakeholders and other target groups. In the context of this project, the MSc. was intended to assist the NPMs, NEAs and other NCAs that would be directly involved in the implementation of the biosafety framework at the country level.

43. The formal MSc programme will be accompanied by shorter-term modular courses for working professionals; and most of the training will be conducted online. Each participating country has nominated two participants to attend the MSc with project funds; the first trained group is expected to train national colleagues in-country. While the initial scale of training is too small to have a major impact during this project, the MSc and CEB could become institutional drivers for post-project sustainability, assuming there is sufficient demand and income to sustain activities over time.

44. Another important development is the Center of Excellence for Biosafety (CEB), which is expected to provide LMO risk assessment, training and information management services for the sub-region. The CEB will technically support the planned network of national laboratories by offering LMO analysis capabilities. Training in the use of the BCH (Output 3.13) has not happened yet⁶ but is scheduled to start this year with the arrival of a regional consultant who brings experience from the earlier UNEP/GEF BCH project.

45. LMO application mock trials and risk analysis simulations are foreseen in the work plan (Outputs 3.11-12) and are essential to test national preparedness and involve various institutions as a system. The exercise would serve to build confidence and involve people. Most of the interviewed national respondents emphasized the importance of in-country training with mock trials and decision-making/risk assessment simulations, yet most countries are not yet positioned to fully benefit from such experiences. They will be more useful once countries have established their NBFs and laboratories, and the network is ready to become operational.

46. The self-financing mechanisms of the regional programme (Output 3.16) revolve around expected demand towards the MSc in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products that is starting at UWI, and applicant charges for the LMO tests and risk analysis, and training from the CEB. Their financial viability beyond the project will depend on the demand – and willingness to pay - for such training by the national biosafety authorities, and on the cooperation and funding received external organizations. Countries that have operational NBFs with some level of momentum stand to benefit more fully from the MSc. The NPM has noted that the MSc's self-financing mechanism is expected to revolve around the expansion of the capacity for research through the CEB lab facilities; while there may be infrequent opportunities to receive payment for LMO detection, the project research funding is anticipated to be adequate to sustain biosafety in the Caribbean region and become the major financing mechanism.

⁶ Several countries participated in the previous BCH I and II projects that were supported by UNEP/GEF.

Component 4: Strengthening Biosafety information management in the Caribbean

47. The main activities under this component are Information sharing through the BCH and public education and outreach. The LEA hired a consulting firm⁷ to develop a regional PEO strategy with national components. Several outputs are scheduled to be completed during the final year of the project, and most are presently at a low stage of completion (5-35%). However, some countries – St. Lucia, Grenada and St. Vincent & Grenadines among others – have already produced or distributed biosafety materials (brochures, posters, videos) for public awareness and educational use; these are drawn from regional biosafety educational materials produced outside the project. The availability of regional public awareness materials would help towards harmonizing the messages disseminated to the public.

48. Draft biosafety legislation was put to required public consultation in several countries with project financing, enabling its finalization and presentation for approval. The public education and outreach activities planned under Output 4.4 will have greater effect if implemented once the proposed Biosafety Bills and administrative systems are approved, but several countries aren't ready for this yet. PEO initiatives need to be designed and regional materials developed to support country activities. The PMU recently awarded a project for the BCH information portal, and an international consultant will develop the sub-regional BCH and information exchange network linking national BCH nodes to the regional portal (Outputs 4.6-4.10), which will be hosted by the CEB.

49. The development of the regional information exchange network (Outputs 4.1-2) will also be part of the CEB's work programme. This may improve the likelihood of the network's continuity beyond the project. Although the regional information network was scheduled to be ready by December 2014, it will more likely occur towards the end of the project as other supporting outputs materialize. The building of information links between academia, science and information Technology (IT) through an active network could become a driver for the regional sustainability of biosafety activities.

Component 5: Regional processes in support of the Project and NBF sustainability in the Caribbean

50. There is little progress outside the awarding of a consultant contract to assess the financial, technical and institutional viability of different biosafety options (Outputs 5.1-5.3); and UWI's approval of the Center for Excellence in Biosafety (CEB) which, once operational, will provide LMO detection, risk analysis, information management and training services to the sub-region (Outputs 5.6-5.7).

51. A number of outputs are related to internal project management actions (formulation of ToRs, staff recruitment, monitoring, reporting) that are required for GEF/UNEP projects. The obstacles encountered in applying Anubis formats affected project reporting as well as disbursements received by countries that managed their budgets through excel worksheets that were not recognized by Anubis. The UNEP Task Manager has noted that disbursements were done by UWI, and delays in releasing funds to countries were largely influenced by UWI's limited command of the project's financial requirements (as stated in the Project Cooperation Agreement) as well as the Anubis formats. As a result,

⁷ Everest Management Communication Services

countries received insufficient information and guidance on how to proceed with expenditures and reporting.

A.2 Relevance

52. The project's relevance is high at several levels. It belongs to the Biodiversity Focal Area and is consistent with the GEF strategy for financing implementation capacities for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. As a trans-boundary initiative that supports the implementation of a MEA, the project is aligned to UNEP's programme priorities of Ecosystems Management and Environmental Governance as contained in the 2010-2014 Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) although the project was not explicitly designed to contribute to UNEP's Programme of Work (PoW) or MTS (further described under Section 111.H "Complementarities with UNEP Strategies and Programmes"). This project builds on earlier GEF/UNEP biosafety support initiatives. The participating countries were involved in the global "Development of National Biosafety Frameworks" project. Through this project, 12 countries had designed draft versions of National Biosafety and administrative guidelines. Others made plans to implement NBFs with proposed specific actions and time frames.

53. At the national level, the Caribbean region countries, as parties to the CPB must fulfil their obligations by implementing and operating national biosafety frameworks in accordance with the Protocol and national priorities. There were consultations with country partners during the project's design, and implementation started with a 5-day Inception Workshop that was attended by a broad range of participants. At a regional level, the project will support the implementation and operation of NBFs by supporting the establishment of an MSc in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products and the CEB, which will assist countries with LMO testing and risk assessments.

54. When the project was conceptualized, 17 countries from the Caribbean region had ratified or acceded to the Cartagena Protocol. Articles 1 and 2 of the Protocol require Parties to: "*ensure an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of these LMOs*", and to ensure that "*the development, handling, transport, use, transfer and release of any living modified organisms are undertaken in a manner that prevents or reduces the risks to biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health*". Each Party is required to "*take necessary and appropriate legal, administrative and other measures to implement its obligations under this Protocol*". The project directly supports the consolidation of NBFs and implementation of the Cartagena Protocol in 10 Caribbean countries.

55. For most Caribbean countries, modern biotechnology is a new field and there is little knowledge on the interaction of living modified organisms (LMOs) with the sub-region's various ecosystems. The capacity levels that were in place during the project's design have not changed significantly in most countries. National and regional capacities to conduct risk assessment and management in compliance with the CPB are lacking among CARICOM members. Only St. Kitts and Nevis has enacted national biosafety legislation among the countries that participate in the project.

56. The project's relevance is underscored by present circumstances. Belize's current policies restrict the entry of LMOs to the country until biosafety capabilities are in place, yet GM soya and maize seed have entered the country undetected over the past years and are being used by farmers; according to the NPM, this situation poses a direct threat to native varieties of maize ("creole maize") that the government is trying to preserve. In St. Lucia, a

labeled GM corn seed imported from France was recently detected; while GM maize and soya varieties destined for feed processing enter St. Lucia's Economic Free Zone (the EFZ is covered under the proposed biosafety legislation, and there is a recommendation for a member from the Biosafety Committee to be part of the Free Zone Authority's decision-making body. Government authorities across the sub-region deal with applications to import GM feeds, but in most cases have nowhere to refer applicants for biosafety purposes. On the other hand, project relevance is also reinforced by advances achieved in several countries: Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago are conducting biotechnology research. Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago have developed the potential to release their own LMOs. Indeed, new initiatives in biotechnology offer opportunities for Caribbean countries to manage their natural resources in a more sustainable manner. The newly created Food Security and Entrepreneurship Center that is supported by UWI will promote investments that are likely to involve FFPs, and could provide an incentive for countries to approve and operationalize national biosafety frameworks.

57. The importance of having consistent biosafety frameworks in the sub-region is underscored by trans-boundary LMO movements to Caribbean countries that import GM foods. There is also research on GM food components and contained use. There is increasing need that LMOs and modern biotechnology products be managed to avoid risks and potential negative impacts on human, animal and plant health and environmental safety. As noted earlier, LMOs entering Caribbean nations are not necessarily subject to further trans-boundary movements to other Caribbean states. However, there are frequent transshipments in Caribbean waters, with LMOs in transit that aren't covered under the CPB's Advanced Informed Agreement.

58. Not all Caribbean countries face the same magnitude and consequences of modern biotechnology, yet all coincide on the relevance of having biosafety systems in place. Establishing the necessary safeguards and controlling the entry and release of LMOs are essential to their safe use. Maintaining adequate biosafety levels and defining how to handle transit cases and first-time imports is of common interest to all Caribbean states. Private entities engaged in LMO importation will benefit from consistent guidelines and regulatory certainties that encourage more efficient and transparent LMO applications and management practices. To reach this, Caribbean countries that are Parties to the CPB need to build comprehensive biosafety frameworks with key sectors and institutions, and put the necessary legal and regulatory norms in place.

A.3 Effectiveness

59. An assessment of the project's effectiveness in terms of moving towards its outcomes or objectives is premature at present. There is little to go by, and much time and effort have gone into simply getting the Partnership Agreement and addendum signed, and the project started in the 12 countries. However, the project's prospects for achievement and impact on the scale foreseen are not encouraging and expectations need to be adjusted. Country implementation finishes in June 2015 and there is little more than one year of regional implementation left. The project is considerably behind track in achieving its goal of establishing operational and sustainable NBFs that support national and regional needs, deliver global benefits and are consistent with CPB guidelines. This has been affected by the slow implementation of regional and country-based project activities, reporting problems, and continued delays in getting countries to sign the Partnership Agreement and its addendum. Project design has also had a contributing role, as almost all intended outcomes

and many outputs assume government approval of biosafety legislation and activation of NBFs, which as reality again demonstrates, involve decisions, processes and timelines that are outside the project's ability to determine.

60. Activities have been implemented, the MSc has been established and there is progress towards the CEB at UWI, which create conditions for continued capacity development and risk assessment. And some countries have advanced in finalizing draft legislation and policies that may be approved in the next year. The strengthening of national laboratory capacities for LMO detection is underway. But in general, a direct pathway towards the outcomes and objectives is not evident at this stage. This is discussed in greater depth under Sec 6.

61. At the regional level, there is important progress towards the third outcome of having multi-disciplinary, trained personnel and technical support mechanisms that drive sustainability in the sub-region. The mechanisms are the newly approved MSc in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products that is being offered by UWI and associated universities in the region, and the Center of Excellence for Biosafety (CEB), which will provide information, laboratory support and LMO risk assessment services. While the fundamental conditions for longer-term sustainability are being put in place, the challenge is ensuring that enough countries achieve a level of progress that enables them to take full advantage of the new opportunities.

62. Several of the intended outcomes are influenced by factors outside the project's control and attribution. The progress made towards approving national legislation and regulatory-policies is very much affected by the particular political juncture and legislative agenda. Country activation has been and continues to be slow in various cases. Most outcomes do not seem to be developing (aside from the aforementioned progress towards the third outcome at the regional level) nor do they appear likely to materialize by the end of the project at the present rate. However, the rate of implementation picked up somewhat in 2014 with the holding of regional workshops and planned laboratory equipment purchases. The project situation also varies considerably country-by-country.

63. As mentioned earlier, expectations of achievement and impact need to be adjusted. *The main challenge is now to ensure that as many countries as possible are able to approve and enact national biosafety legislation and policies, or that formal government approval is in the pipeline, as a minimal benchmark of achievement.* Some countries will advance further with functional laboratories and a working system. In either case, achievement levels are likely to be inconsistent between countries. Any advances in regional agreements and the development of legal and policy frameworks that are consistent across the region, will eventually need to re-engage CARICOM which has intended to build a regional biosafety framework for some time.

A.4 Efficiency

64. In the context of this evaluation, efficiency refers to the timeliness and cost-effectiveness of implementation. Both bear on the quality of implementation and ultimate results that are achieved. Efficiency and timeliness in particular is the most critical aspect of the project that needs to be improved on. There was practically no activity during the first year and progress has been slow since then; the regional training workshops only commenced in 2014. The timelines of many deliverables were re-scheduled after the Regional Steering Committee meeting in November 2012, yet most remain behind schedule.

Budget execution and delivery have also been low, as indicated in the chart below. At almost three-quarters into the implementation period, UNEP disbursements to the project represented only 26% of the total budget. This is consistent with the percentage of project outputs that have been delivered – or are likely to be delivered – on schedule.

Figure 2

Disbursements of the GEF contribution to the Lead Executing Agency

Advances: US\$ 1,548,033.00 on a US\$ 5,972,493.00 Budget			
#	Requested	Acknowledged	Amount (US\$)
1	27/09/2011	11/10/2011	895,874.00
2	13/03/2013	16/03/2013	19,712.00
3	14/11/2013	09/12/2013	17,949.00
4	27/01/2014	06/02/2014	614,498.00
			US\$ 1,548,033.00

Source: Anubis

65. Several factors contribute to and are at the same time, influenced by this situation:

66. *The demands of implementing activities across a broad thematic and geographic range within a limited time period that is now considerably shorter.* As noted in the first PIR report, the PMU has had to find a way to manage activities and interact with 12 countries. Although it benefited from a preparatory funding and had a good inception workshop, the project has not found an implementation strategy that is suited to the complexities of the project and countries involved. The enabling conditions for efficient project implementation were lacking, and minimum benchmarks should have been enforced – for example, the signing of cooperation agreements or ensuring country implementation arrangements before the project’s actual start. In practice, nobody was able to “hit the ground running”.

67. *Different levels of preparation and initiative among countries.* This is reflected in the uneven and often very slow momentum in setting up the project nationally and implementing activities. Three years after the project’s approval, two countries (Barbados and Bahamas) have yet to formalize their participation in the project. One of the main obstacles faced by the LEA has been the impossibility of having countries move forward in unison.

68. *Limited LEA experience in executing regional projects with government partners.* The selection of UWI-Trinidad as Lead Executing Agency was clearly the best option for implementing a project of this scope, and raises opportunities for longer-term educational and technical support. UWI has had experience in implementing large regional projects that were funded through the EU and ACP programme; however, these were done with consortia of universities; in retrospect, the challenges of working with a group of sovereign governments were underestimated. The PMU undoubtedly went through a learning process in order

“The project has had a slow start and this is impacting the timely achievement of outcomes. Project is still finding a way on how to interact and manage the 12 countries towards a more efficient project implementation. It has been a challenge for the project to deal with the different realities and needs of the various participating countries; some of them with possibilities of moving things forward in a much easier way than others. This has created a disparity in the progress of activities at the national level.”

- Project implementation Review (PIR) - Julv 2012-June 2013.

to understand project guidelines and formats, and develop working/coordination dynamics, both internally and with the various countries. The semester progress report for December 2013 noted "...Workflow and delays in decision making and implementation of programmes at the national and regional level."⁸ The report suggests the need to..."Identify a new approach to be followed if usual approaches prove not to be solving the problem in the short term".⁹

69. There was periodic and probably insufficient oversight of project implementation by the UWI authority who is responsible for the project, yet has other responsibilities, lives in Barbados and is at the UWI-Trinidad campus on a part-time basis.¹⁰

70. *Disparity in implementation with little attention to country training needs.* There has been little technical delivery in relation to what was planned. Emphasis has been placed on developing the MSc and CEB, with less attention given to the immediate technical training needs of countries. Regional workshops for country participants only began in 2014. The evaluator was told that much of the time of the Senior Technical Advisor was spent on getting countries to sign the documents for joining the project. In some countries, this required parliamentary or Cabinet approval. The development of the MSc and CEB were in part a response to the slow pace of country approvals and start up, and at the time offered the best opportunity to move forward.

71. *Unfamiliarity at all levels with UNEP reporting procedures and Anubis in particular.* Systematizing the use of Anubis has clearly been one of the major challenges faced by UNEP in this project. Anubis is the reporting system applied by UNEP to biosafety projects that enables the tracking of expenditure and disbursements. The LEA and country participants were unfamiliar with the system, which was presented by UNEP at the Inception Workshop. Timely reporting in general and compliance with Anubis in particular is a lagging management problem that affected country disbursements. The LEA and countries were given a one-year grace period by UNEP to make the transition from Excel spreadsheet reporting to Anubis, which continues to require coaching by several countries. Countries have also had problems reconciling the Anubis budget lines for project activities with those used by the project document; this was recently clarified and a translation table provided. The guidance and responsiveness of the UNEP Task Manager and Fund Manager for understanding and adopting Anubis was recognized by the LEA and interviewed NPMs. However, various countries continue to require recurrent guidance from the LEA when reporting expenditures.

A.5 Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI)

72. As applied to UNEP evaluations, the "Theory of Change" (TOC) depicts the logical sequence of desired changes (called "causal" or "impact pathways," or "results chains") to which the project is expected to contribute. It shows the causal linkages between changes at different results levels (outputs, outcomes, intermediate states and impact) and identifies the factors influencing those changes. The reconstruction of a TOC can help identify links between outputs and outcomes, and the intermediary states between outcomes and intended impacts. All projects are partly based on assumptions that influence their design

⁸ *Half-yearly Progress Report* December 2013, pg. 16

⁹ *Idem.*

¹⁰ As recognized by Dr. Hunt, UWI Vice-Chancellor and main LEA focal point, during the MTE interview.

and implementation, yet are often outside its control or ability to influence. There are also drivers of impact that contribute to the achievement of outputs and move implementation along the causal pathways towards the planned outcomes and intermediate states that precede impacts.

73. As illustrated in Figure 3, project design and performance can be analyzed through the mapping of causal pathways, and the extent to which related outputs and outcomes are connected sequentially. The analysis of this project indicates that most outputs lead to their respective outcome, with several examples of cross-linkages between project components.

74. Given its scale and number of outputs, the project has many causal pathways that connect related outputs to their respective outcomes, in addition there are also transversal pathways connecting outputs and outcomes of different components. The project's outputs and outcomes are foreseen at the national, sub-regional, institutional and systemic levels. There are linkages between the development of biosafety governance frameworks and institutional capacity building, technical training, information management and public awareness. The development of the graduate biosafety programme and Center of Excellence also directly feed into the development of national and sub-regional risk management capacities.

Figure 3

Theory of Change Analysis: Project Impact Drivers and Assumptions

Impact Drivers:

- Adhesion and commitment of project countries to CPB
- Importation of GM products
- Support of national governments and regional bodies, i.e. CARICOM
- Management capabilities of UWI and its sub-regional radius
- Technical capacities of regional and national executing agencies
- Quality of technical assistance contracted

Assumptions:

- The four-year project duration is adequate for delivering project outputs to 12 countries in the sub-region.
- There is efficient project start-up and delivery at the sub-regional and country levels
- Political commitment exists at the country level to approve enabling legislation, regulations and policies; and to support project outcomes and objectives beyond national governance cycles.
- There are adequate baseline national capacity and expertise levels to move project processes forward in 12 countries .
- Financing and cost-recovery for biosafety operations are possible through service fees and other mechanisms

75. These are positive findings that indicate linkages and synergy both within and between components; the effects of many outputs provide inputs to the achievement of higher-order outputs situated on the pathway. The project has few "stand alone" outputs

that are unrelated to others. However, the sheer number of outputs (86) clutters the pathways and adds to delivery pressures; several seem duplicate of other outputs, or closer to being activities.

76. The project has advanced less than expected due to a very slow and extensive start-up phase, accompanied by generally slow implementation with low levels of output delivery and achievement. Therefore, it is too early to make conclusive observations on project contributions or likely contributions towards changes in stakeholder behaviour, in terms of i) implementing the CPB, ii) successfully managing biotechnologies, iii) enhancing and operationalizing institutional capacities; or iv) public awareness.

77. Only one country (St. Kitts and Nevis) has approved biosafety legislation among the participating countries. The rest are in the process of finalizing design or seeking approval of draft biosafety bills and other legislation that were revised and updated with project support. The CPB is not implemented in most countries at present, nor is this likely to happen until the NBFs are approved and enacted. The project has not reached the point at which its effect on biotechnology management can be discerned. Institutional capacities have not been raised beyond the attendance of country participants to three regional workshops. Most training and public awareness activities have yet to be implemented.

78. To a large extent, project performance has been below expectations due to a series of flawed assumptions that influenced its design and implementation approach. Assumptions concerning the levels of government commitment and the viability of implementing a project of its scale and complexity in four years have not materialized. Most countries were slow in signing essential project agreements and in hiring national project coordinators; two have yet to do so. The implementation of work plans has fallen behind schedule, and financial reporting has also been slow in several cases. Assumptions of homogeneity across the country sample were also unfounded, as reflected in the different capacities, commitment and level of progress achieved. The combination of implementation delays and mounting delivery pressures has weakened the project's ability to drive implementation processes along their causal pathways and sequence the delivery of outputs based on their linkages.

79. Many outputs are on hold because proposed national Biosafety Bills and other enabling legislation have not been approved or enacted (as foreseen under Output 1.1). This has prevented countries from formalizing institutional responsibilities (Output 1.5), adopting administrative procedures (Output 1.11) or establishing NBFs that are operational and effective in 12 countries (Output 1.4) - which is directly connected to the first outcome of improved biosafety governance regimes in 12 countries that are aligned to the CPB. Unfortunately, all of these outputs and several of the project's outcomes are influenced by external factors outside its control or attribution.

80. Likewise, the delays encountered in securing country approvals, having the required documents signed and getting started have set back the project's capacity building activities, affecting the delivery of outputs 2.10 (standardized LMO detection protocols), 2.8 (availability of laboratories), 2.8 and in particular, 2.4 (personnel trained in the CPB, LMO detection, risk analysis, BCH use and trans-boundary movement) which lead to the second outcome of having technically sound risk management and follow-up systems. Against the delays in approving and starting project activities in several countries, the PMU focused attention on regional activities that were closer to the LEA's universe – hence the important progress attained towards Output 2.11 (institutionally and financially sustainable

mechanisms for risk management) through the planned Center of Excellence (CEB) and MSc in Biosafety.

81. Lags in the implementation of LMO risk analysis simulations and mock trials have also slowed progress towards the third outcome of having trained personnel and technical support mechanisms in place at national and regional levels. The fourth outcome – national and regional biosafety information mechanisms – requires the establishment or reactivation of biosafety clearinghouses (BCH) in participating countries and the creation of a sub-regional node linked to the CEB.

82. The project's greatest advance has been towards one of the outcomes for the fifth component – “regional processes lay the foundation for regional biosafety services and a regional framework to assist NBF implementation” – in part because this level has been less vulnerable to country approval delays and slow implementation. This has led to an imbalance between the project's regional and country-based components. In several countries there is a risk that national capacities and biosafety processes may not develop sufficiently to take advantage of (or sustain demand for) the MSc in Biosafety or the services that would be offered by the CEB.

83. The difficulties of implementing the project as planned are also influenced by the limited effect of several “drivers of impact.” CARICOM's non-payment of US\$ 2 million in cash co-financing led to a significant funding deficit that affected implementation (until alternative sources of co-funding were subsequently mobilized). The responsiveness and commitment of national governments has been inconsistent, although co-financing commitments are consistently met. The LEA did not have prior experience in implementing regional projects with national governments and underestimated the challenges involved; some of the management capabilities (i.e. reporting, knowledge of guidelines, country coordination) that are needed to drive the project forward were gradually acquired through practice.

84. The intermediate states that, according to the ToC methodology, necessarily precede impact and the achievement of objectives are, in this case, well represented by the following project outcomes:

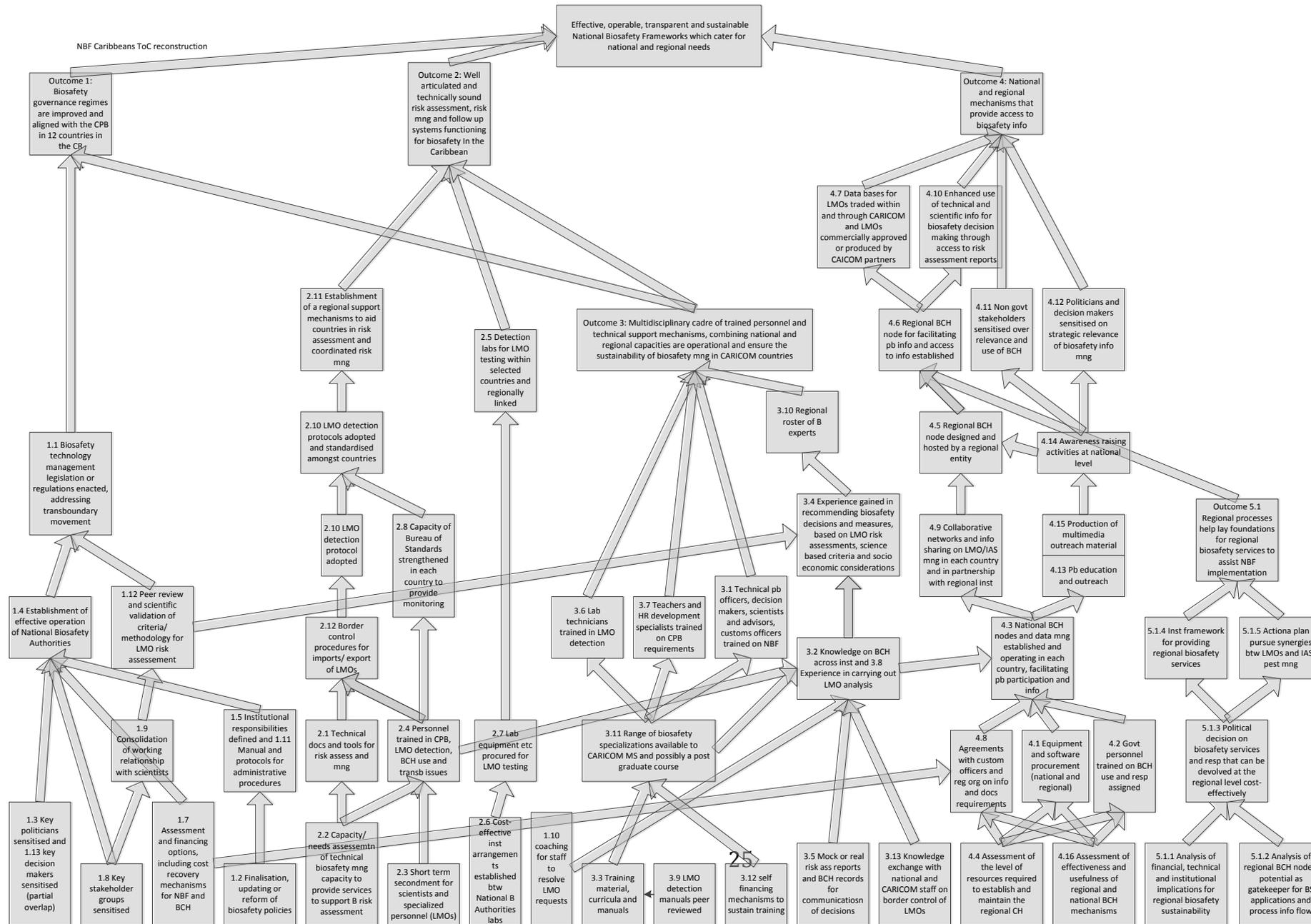
- *Intermediate State/Outcome 1:* Biosafety governance regimes are improved and aligned with the CPB in 12 countries of the Caribbean sub-region.
- *Intermediate State/Outcome 2:* Well-articulated and technically sound risk assessment, risk management and follow-up systems are functioning for biosafety in the Caribbean.
- *Intermediate State/Outcome 3:* A multi- disciplinary cadre of trained personnel and technical support mechanisms that combine both national and regional capacities, are operational and ensure the future sustainability of biosafety management in CARICOM countries.

Hence the constraints encountered in progressing towards project outcomes have direct bearing on the likelihood of attaining a “critical mass” of intermediate states that culminate in the desired impacts.

85. As part of the ToC methodology, the MTE assigns RoTI (Review of Outcomes towards Impact)_ratings to the project evaluation criteria, based on the likelihood of achieving intermediate states and impacts. The ratings are presented in Annex 2 of this report.

Figure 4

Reconstruction of Theory of Change (ToC): Causal Pathways linking Outputs to Outcomes



B. Sustainability and Catalytic Role

86. At present, the sustainability of project-supported initiatives is uncertain and will depend on the extent to which the LEA and country partners are able to achieve intended results and establish the minimum enabling conditions required to sustain them. This remains a major challenge, given that most project outputs are behind schedule and country activities are scheduled to terminate in June 2015.

87. Socio-political sustainability is particularly vulnerable because it is conditioned by factors that are outside the project's control. Although the project is characterized by high levels of national ownership, it is unlikely that most countries will have approved or enacted national biosafety frameworks by the end of the implementation period. To date, only St. Kitts & Nevis has reached this threshold, while St. Lucia is completing the legal review that is required to present the draft Biosafety Bill for approval. Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica and Guyana have also completed the drafting and public consultation processes, and will submit the proposed legislation to their Cabinets and/or legislative branches in the coming months. A "best case" scenario suggests that less than half of the full country sample will have approved NBFs in place by the end of the project. However, this will depend largely on externalities that include national commitment levels – biosafety is not a high priority on most government or legislative agendas - present political junctures, electoral timeframes and continuity of counterpart personnel.

88. The continuity of project results and eventual impacts will depend moderately on continued financial support. The operational costs of the NBFs will be partially met by applicant fees and core government allocations, to the extent that biosafety legislation and policies are approved and budgeted. Several countries have drafted biosafety bills that build on existing institutional mandates and legislation for biotechnology and plant health, and hence are likely to be more cost-effective and potentially sustainable. The costs associated to GMO detection with the lateral flow strip test are not high and can be integrated into existing plant health/quarantine operations. In some countries, i.e. St. Lucia, there are possibilities for securing recurrent financial support from the national environmental fund that need to be explored further.

89. The project has advanced in creating the enabling conditions for institutional sustainability at a regional level, which would enable the longer-term continuity of biosafety training and risk analysis. The project has gone far in creating the enabling conditions on a regional scale for continuity of biosafety training activities, LMO risk assessments and laboratory analysis, and information management/dissemination. This is surprising for a project that has faced several obstacles in moving the project forward at the country level. On the other hand, the slow processes and delays of having the project approved in the various countries, and subsequently in getting the Partnership Agreement and addendum signed, inclined the attention of the PMU towards regional activities that had less political challenge and could be pursued with the more familiar academic and scientific circles.

90. The approval of an MSc In Biosafety of Biotechnology Products at UWI that started this year, combined with the creation of the Center for Excellence in Biosafety (CEB) providing LMO risk analysis and information support to the sub-region, are important developments that connect inter-disciplinary learning and research and will be hosted by an established university network with presence across the anglophone Caribbean. The MSc combines formal degree training with short-term distance courses for working professionals, in collaboration with national campuses in Guyana and Belize. The availability of such a

programme is clearly important to sustain capacity development in the sub-region through an institutional approach that transcends the project cycle, and to cope with the inevitable turnover of technical personnel over time.

91. The sustainability of the new MSc programme and the CEB will be determined by the demand for such services and may require continued financial support. While the project has agreed to fund the MSc programme for two candidates/country, the scale of demand for such training – or the willingness of prospective students to pay full tuition (costing approximately US\$ 16,000) has not been quantified and some form of external cooperation/donor support may be needed.

92. The CEB will have advanced laboratory facilities to conduct certified risk assessments in benefit of CARICOM countries, and will liaise with national laboratories that would focus on LMO detection and preliminary laboratory analysis. However, countries such as St. Lucia, Grenada and Guyana aspire to have fuller laboratory capabilities through the project, and have submitted their laboratory needs. The CEB will be financed, hosted and maintained by UWI on behalf of the participating countries, and is expected to become self-financing. The costs of LMO applications and risk analysis would be borne by the applicant, although it is not clear if this will suffice to cover the cost of operations over time.

93. Technical capacities for biosafety and LMO risk management in particular remain at very low levels and the project has made little headway in building national capacities as was foreseen in the project document. Although three regional workshops are scheduled for 2014 (two were already held) the limited number of attending participants per country is not likely to generate capacities that can be applied. In-country training demonstrations, mock trials and simulations are part of the project work plan and should be re-programmed to the end of the project - or scheduled during an extension – to ensure that NBF arrangements are in place at the country level. Most countries are still in process of finalizing draft legislation and administrative proposals, and are not well-positioned to reap full advantage of such training.

94. From an environmental perspective, project results are sustainable and no negative environmental impacts have been reported or are expected. To the extent that the project is able to establish operational NBFs at the country level and consolidate sub-regional support systems, it will have contributed significantly to the protection of the sub-region's biodiversity.

95. At its present level of implementation, the project has not advanced sufficiently to have a catalytic role, disseminate “best practices” or promote the replication of successful initiatives.

III. PROCESSES AFFECTING THE ATTAINMENT OF PROJECT RESULTS

A. Preparation and Readiness

96. Preparation and readiness have had considerable influence on project performance, in terms of project design, the capacities of executing agencies, and implementation arrangements at the country level.

97. The project benefits from a comprehensive and balanced design that combines country-driven components that are adjusted to specific national contexts, with regional

initiatives that address shared needs, develop common approaches and encourage sub-regional cooperation. Project design is ambitious and encompasses all the key elements that are needed to build operational biosafety systems. The various components, outcomes and outputs support the approval of legal and policy frameworks, institutional capacity building and technical training, administrative systems for risk management, regional information management, and networks for higher education and LMO risk management.

98. The University of West Indies' selection as Lead Executing Agency (LEA) brings the added value of a regional campus network and academic synergies as reflected in the new MSc for Biosafety of Biotechnology Products, and the planned Center for Excellence in Biosafety (CEB) that intends to provide LMO risk analysis services and information management to CARICOM countries. The academic linkages reinforce the project's capacity building goals and may enhance the sustainability of results by institutionalizing human resource development over a longer term. At the country level, project implementation is led by National Executing Agencies (NEAs) with participation of competent national authorities who sit on Steering Committees. The arrangement broadens opportunities for interaction between participants who form the core of Biosafety Committees and NBFs (whether existing or proposed).

99. Ironically, the scale and comprehensiveness are also obstacles to effective implementation. Implementation has been undermined by "diseconomies of scale" in design that were aggravated by extended delays in setting the project up in the twelve countries. The delivery and coordination pressures of implementing five project components with 7 outcomes and 66 outputs in twelve countries over a four-year period are considerable. The combined delays and mounting delivery pressures make it difficult to follow the logical sequence of outputs to outcomes following the causal pathways described in Section II.A.6). The attainment of the project goal and several outcomes will depend on externalities - the approval of national biosafety legislation by all or most governments; political commitment to budget and implement biosafety frameworks - that are largely outside the project's ability to influence. The sum of activities and outputs that must be attended surpass the absorptive capacities of countries that have limited pools of technical expertise, and where technical partners often serve as focal points to MEAs and their associated projects, with little time for their "core" work. In retrospect, the sequencing of two or three MSPs spread out over a 10 year period might have been more viable and user-friendly than compressing all biosafety elements within one full sized project.

100. Project design benefitted from a preparatory grant (PPD) that enabled consultations with the various country and regional stakeholders and an early consensus on the project's main areas of activity. While the consultations have clearly strengthened relevance, the evaluator feels that the opportunity was missed to ensure implementation arrangements were in place for the project's commencement. Most countries were unprepared to begin implementation after the project's approval and there have been extensive delays in getting the Partnership Agreement and addendum signed or getting activities started. Two countries hired NPMs this year and two others have yet to sign the Partnership Agreement and therefore have not participated in the project. Countries that have retained staff and institutional memory from prior UNEP/GEF Biosafety initiatives - the case of St. Lucia and Grenada among others - were better prepared to assume project implementation responsibilities and advance at a faster pace.

101. There were unexpected budgetary shortfalls after the offer of US\$ 2 million in co-financing from CARICOM did not materialized. This prompted the PMU and STA to search

for new donors with some success as evidenced in the support that is being provided by USDA. Likewise, project budget allocations to NEAs are similar among countries. This arrangement is relatively equitable for most of the smaller countries, but it does not meet the needs of Guyana and Suriname that have dispersed populations and extensive borders with their neighbors. Allocations for public consultations and education and outreach activities may be insufficient and, in the case of PEO in particular, will require the additional funding or the transfer of funds from budget lines.

102. Project implementation at the country level was minimal during the first two years, and progress has been slow since then. More than the PPD, the project would have benefited from an inception phase to ensure adequate country preparation and understanding of administrative guidelines and reporting formats. This might have made a difference in the project's delivery and likelihood of having impact.

103. Differences in country preparedness have been detrimental to the expectations of countries with comparatively greater biosafety knowledge, which expected more sustained project delivery with a higher technical content. The flawed assumptions of country readiness and the getting 12 countries to move forward in unison suggest that the lessons of past projects were not applied.

104. Given the project's scope and duration, ensuring an effective start-up and developing early momentum is essential to have a chance for achieving the intended outputs and outcomes. This did not happen, and the project has experienced growing pains for much of the first two years. As the designated LEA, UWI underestimated the demands of implementing a project of this scale within the foreseen timelines. Although UWI has prior experience in managing CARICOM-scale projects through the EU's ACP programme, they involved consortia of universities; this is UWI's first experience in regional project execution through national governments. The project team began its work with limited technical grounding in biosafety or UNEP project management guidelines; both aspects have improved over time with the greater involvement of the PMU Project Assistant in the project's technical management. To a large extent, the PMU has had to find a *modus operandi* for working with the twelve countries; the 2013 Semester Progress Report recommended that the LEA "...identify a new approach to be followed if usual approach proved not to be solving the problem in the short term"¹¹ in moving the project forward in the various countries. The trial-and-error dynamics of this learning process absorbed much of the first year with a high opportunity cost.

105. Views differ on the quality of the technical support offered thus far. Regional training workshops on LMO detection and risk analysis started in 2014, and a Senior Technical Advisor (STA) was hired to manage the project's technical components and organize the Dominica workshop in April. Various country respondents have recognized the STA's responsiveness to technical inquiries at RSC meetings or when otherwise requested, despite the delayed delivery of (until now limited) capacity building support to countries. Others are very critical of the technical support offered thus far, and consider that the first workshop was general and lacked depth while the second event was biased towards pro-GMO positions advocated by USDA. Some respondents regret that USDA was selected to deliver a workshop on LMO risk assessment for a project that aims to implement the CPB, considering that its policies and values are not aligned with the Protocol (nor is the United States a signatory). USDA co-financing was important to hold the second workshop and

¹¹ *Half-yearly Progress Report: December 2013*, pg. 16

underscores close trade relations with the United States, from which GM-FFPs are imported. Yet financial considerations cannot override the project's obligation to project balanced and neutral technical messages that convey Protocol objectives and reinforce UNEP's image as a global environmental actor. NPMs and NSC members were appreciative of the legal consultancy support given to guide the formulation of national biosafety legislation, which has helped several countries align draft Biosafety Bills and policies to the Protocol, ensuring more consistency among the proposed biosafety legislations of CARICOM countries.

106. There was little readiness to assume project reporting. The unfamiliarity of UWI and NEAs with project reporting requirements and in particular, the ANUBIS format that is required of all biosafety projects to develop a comparable online data base, led to delayed or erroneous reporting that in turn has affected monitoring and disbursements. Although UNEP authorized an initial one-year "grace period" during which project finances were managed with Excel worksheets (a necessary concession to ensure some level of project activity), the revised Excel budgets were not recognized by the ANUBIS system and some of the resulting disbursements were below the amounts indicated in the revised budget. In several countries, this deficit required interim financing from the NEA to enable the continuity of project activities. Country project teams have also had difficulties in reconciling ANUBIS budget lines with those in the project document to report expenditures; the problem was resolved three years after the project's approval when a conversion table was prepared and circulated by the UNEP Task Manager. ANUBIS was presented to the NPMs at the Project Inception Workshop, yet more in-depth coaching would have been desirable before starting to implement work plans. A brief pre-implementation inception phase (and not a single workshop) could have helped to ensure that all implementation arrangements were understood and in place.

B. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

107. The project work plan is comprehensive and addresses all the main elements of a functioning national biosafety framework: enabling legislation and policies, institutional capacities for making informed LMO decisions, technical training, laboratory infrastructure for conducting risk assessments and information sharing.

108. Implementations arrangements are two-tiered consistent with the project's regional and country-based dynamics. A regional Project Management Unit (PMU) is based at UWI in its capacity as Lead Executing Agency (LEA), while national project units are attached to NEAs at the country level. Both teams are compact – a Project Manager and Assistant, plus a Senior Technical Advisor for the regional PMU - and receive technical and administrative support from the host executing agencies.

109. Regional and national steering committees have met regularly and provide oversight to project management and implementation. NSCs articulate and encourage interaction among national authorities that will sit on National Biosafety Committees once the enabling Bills and policies are approved. The RSC is a forum for interaction between NEAs, the LEA and UNEP that is important for project coordination and adaptive management; both have had influence on implementation processes.

“Identify a new approach to be followed if the usual approach proves not to be solving the problem in the short term”.

“Develop a risk management plan with alternative routes to follow to speed up the process of signature of the [Partnership Agreements] and addendums.”

“Create a calendar to ensure missions are done in an orderly manner...In absence of such a plan or scheme ,there is a risk that if the project reacts to requests from countries without a particular scheme or plan the funds could end up benefiting certain but not all countries.”

“Urgently update the project work plan...[and] develop a project risk mitigation plan with a clear route to follow and where new deadlines for key deliverables are set.”

- Risk Management Plan, August 2013

110. Once the PMU and regional implementation mechanisms were in place, there were significant delays in approving and activating the project among the countries. These delays have reinforced the low levels of delivery and overall progress, undermining the effectiveness of the project’s implementation mechanisms for delivering outputs and influencing outcomes.

111. The situation is influenced by a series of factors that include:

- The inherent difficulties of implementing a project of this scale and thematic scope in twelve countries with different levels of capacity and preparedness, over a four-year period. In retrospect, it seems that the project’s design – with five sub-components, 7 outcomes and 66 outputs - was over-dimensioned, and might have been best approached through a combination of two or three medium size projects over a longer period, to work within (and not override) the absorptive capacities of UWI and the national partners.
- The lack of experience in managing regional projects with national governments prompted an initial underestimation of the delivery and coordination challenges involved. The LEA’s project management approach has developed incrementally through a learning process that has benefited from trial-and-error and perseverance. The processing and transfer of country payments by UWI’s Bursary was initially slow for the project’s needs, but is considered to have improved over time. UWI’s approval of the MSc. In Biosafety of Biotechnology Products involved a complex and slow process that delayed its expected commencement by one year. These factors have had costs to the project in terms of lost momentum and missed opportunities, although overall performance has improved during the past year with the approval of the PA addendum by most countries, the gradual consolidation of a project management approach and the organizing of regional workshops.
- The unfamiliarity of UWI the PMU and country project teams with UNEP/GEF reporting requirements and the ANUBIS formats in particular. This affected both communications with UNEP and project monitoring during the first year, and disbursements to national budgets that in several cases were below the amounts requested – according to

interviewed NPMs, this happened because the revised budgets were elaborated in Excel format and not recognized by ANUBIS.

- The extremely slow project start-up in more than half the country sample was clearly the most critical factor that has weakened the effectiveness of project implementation arrangements. The Partnership Agreements and addendums were signed late in almost all cases and are still pending in Bahamas and Barbados; by May 2013 only St. Kitts had signed the addendum, which was required in order to receive GEF funds. Changes of government in Grenada and St. Lucia delayed the start of project activities. Most countries required the approval of Cabinet, Parliament or the Attorney General's Office to sign the project Partnership Agreement and to authorize expenditures (above US\$ 20,000). The recruitment of National Project Managers has been slow in most cases; Belize and Trinidad & Tobago hired NPMs in 2014, two years after the project's commencement.

"...The meeting also examined the regional project's risk management and work plans...and also sought to obtain agreement from participants on new deadlines for the execution of national work plans, as well as on the national and regional action items outlined in the Group 1 results of the technical workshop report."

- Minutes of the third Regional Steering Committee (RSC) meeting November 2013

112. These combined factors have set implementation back by practically two years, undermining the strategic sequence and timely delivery of outputs and outcomes, weakening the project's cumulative effect. As noted previously, almost three-quarters of the project outputs are behind schedule and many seem unlikely to be achieved by the project's end given the current pace. The implementation gaps and mounting delivery pressures have disrupted the "critical pathways" (described in Section A.5) that are required to achieve planned outputs and generate the intended outcomes. Most countries lack established biosafety networks and are presently not positioned to make effective use of technical training, in-country simulations/mock trials, or public education and outreach campaigns that are essential to build a working system. An established NBF with clear actors, responsibilities and administrative systems is important to reap full benefit from the technical training and institutional capacity building components. At present only St. Kitts & Nevis has approved biosafety legislation, and it is likely that several countries will not have approved legal and policy frameworks in place by June 2015.

113. The project's implementation mechanisms allow for adaptive management. The timelines for completing outputs and work plans have been re-scheduled and budgets revised with the participation of the Steering Committees. To avoid disruptions, UNEP approved a one-year "grace period" allowing the LEA and NEAs to make a gradual transition from Excel worksheets to ANUBIS. The UNEP Task Manager and PMU prepared a Risk Management Plan after the 2013 PIR that updates the original risk matrix in the project document, and makes suggestions to improve project implementation.

114. The project Steering Committees contribute to adaptive management at the regional and country levels. The RSC plays an important role as an interface between countries and the region – and between NEAs and the LEA - that encourages dialogue and consensus. The RSC contributes to adaptive management by reviewing work plans, proposing adjustments, suggesting revisions to budgets and timelines, and assisting the implementation of this complex and difficult project. The PMU is obliged to practice adaptive management on an almost daily basis to cope with recurring delays, slow progress and the various issues that arise at the country level. Work plans and budgets have been re-programmed, and the PMU strengthened by raising the profile of the Project Assistant, based on her academic background in biosafety and understanding of technical issues.

115. The PMU's responsiveness to the management guidance and suggestions offered by UNEP has been inconsistent, with gradual progress over time as reporting formats are internalized. The evaluator's meetings with the PMU were largely devoted to exploring measures to improve delivery and move the implementation process forward.¹² However, more adaptive management will be needed. Expectations of project achievement have to be adjusted, and work plans revised according to available resources, the progress that has been achieved, and the likelihood of having impact within the remaining year.

C. Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness

116. The project involves a broad range of participants across the sub-region, give the cross-sector and inter-institutional dynamics of biosafety processes. Encouraging and managing stakeholder participation is important to build linkages and communication channels between competent national authorities who are the foundation of the NBFs; to articulate regional and country-based initiatives; and to ensure periodic consultations and adaptive management for a project of this scale and complexity.

"The RSC will be consulted on all issues pertaining to regional biosafety mechanisms to be promoted by the project, especially legal and financial issues, and will advise on mechanisms for ensuring the sustainability of National Biosafety Frameworks....[The RSC will] discuss and agree on the way forward on any relevant issues raised by the PMU and/or the RSC members."

- RSC functions outlined in Appendix 1: Regional Steering Committee, Minutes of the Second Meeting of the RSC

117. There is general consensus among interviewed participants that the project has performed well in terms of participation. National and regional biosafety focal points from participating countries were consulted during the project design, and attended a one-week inception workshop that brought participants together to review work plans and become familiar with project guidelines.

118. Stakeholder participation is now channeled through the Regional and National Steering Committees that meet periodically and provide inputs and oversight to project work plans, decision-making and coordination.

119. The Regional Steering Committee (RSC) is the highest advisory body and is comprised by the National Project Managers from all participating countries, the UNEP/GEF Task Manager and a UWI staff-member in representation of the LEA among others. There may also be representatives of regional organizations such as CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Agricultural Research & Development Institute (CARDI) and CAHNSA at the meetings. The RSC's main responsibilities are to (i) oversee the project's technical progress and performance; and (ii) coordinate the role of the organizations represented; and (iii) ensure that decisions are taken with consideration of project's activities and objectives.

120. The RSC holds bi-annual meetings, alternating face-to-face with online conferences. The minutes of the RSC meetings indicate that there were substantive discussions and participation by committee members, in the review and approval of annual work plans, endorsement of annual budgets, discussions of the project progress, and coordination between countries and the PMU. At the November 2013 meeting, the RSC reviewed the ToRs for consultancies in biosafety information management and public education and outreach, and examined the project risk management and general work plan that was

¹² These are described under Section III.C "Recommendations"

formulated by the PMU. The RSC also discussed and agreed on new deadlines for the execution of national work plans at this meeting.

121. Similar dynamics have taken place at the country level through the National Steering Committees, which are chaired by the NEAs with participation by National Competent Authorities (NCAs) representing agriculture and plant quarantine services, commerce and industry, veterinary services, customs inspection and education/social communications among others. The NSCs review project work plans and budgets, and provide coordination support to the NPM. The NCAs represented on the Committee are the foundation for national Biosafety Committees that would lead the NBFs once enabling legislation and policies are approved. Therefore, the interaction of NSC members has didactic value and is helping to develop a group rapport and identity. The views of members in St. Lucia and Guyana suggest general satisfaction with the level of participation and discussions within the NSCs.

D. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

122. The project also scores highly in the level of country ownership and implementation responsibilities assumed by NEAs. Several of the contributing factors that influence stakeholder participation also apply here. National ownership was encouraged by early consultations during the project's formulation. The resulting project design and institutional arrangements established national budgets and project management units hosted by NEAs responsible for annual work planning and the execution of activities. National steering committees were created for oversight and inter-institutional coordination. The size of the regional budget was largely determined through the agreement of national focal points to allocate a percentage of the project budget. The proposal for the Center of Excellence for Biosafety (CEB) was submitted to and approved by the RSC. Country budgets were adjusted through revisions. Indeed, the progress achieved – or not achieved – at country levels is largely conditioned by national preparedness and motivation. An additional indicator of national ownership is that countries have moved at their own pace, with the challenges this has presented for project implementation.

123. National Steering Committees (NSCs) articulate the various institutions and sectors with actual or planned biosafety functions. The inputs of country representatives at RSC meetings have had an influence on the re-programming of activities, the ToRs of consultants, and adjustments to project work plans. This has helped project coordination and adaptive management.

124. The LEA is supportive in promoting country ownership, and most of the interviewed national participants consider that they have good communication with the PMU, whose members are responsive to their inquiries and suggestions. Although the LEA has devoted greater attention to implementing the regional initiatives than providing technical assistance or training to countries, this was influenced by the delays of most countries in approving the PA and addendum, or in setting up national project teams.

125. Public awareness activities have started in some countries, although not on the scale foreseen under the project's Public Education & Outreach (PEO) component, which is behind schedule in countries that are still drafting biosafety legislation and policies. A consultant

“The importance of the RPM as TM going through all the documents submitted by countries and accepting those that are correct and sending back those that have to be adjusted, was emphasized. A message can be inserted in the box that appears to indicate exactly why a document is being returned”

- Minutes of the UWI-UNEP Meeting January 2014

was hired to formulate national and regional PEO approaches with best practices that are applied elsewhere. Technical support to reactivate the national biosafety clearinghouses (BCH) and create a regional node has been programmed to start this year.

126. St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada, among others, have developed their own biosafety awareness materials for distribution to schools, farmers and other target groups; or use existing materials from other regional organizations. National participants concur that overall levels of public awareness of biosafety issues are very low and will require extensive attention. This may not happen until the end of the project, as it is important that countries have approved biosafety frameworks in place to give national content and context to public awareness efforts.

E. Financial Management

127. Project finances are managed transparently and follow project principles. Two external audits have not found irregularities in the use of the GEF contribution. There have been budget revisions and re-programming of expenditures to cope with implementation delays. Participating countries are meeting their co-financing commitments and reporting on a quarterly basis. The only isolated incident in this regard was UWI's contracting of the Senior Technical Advisor, which included a major salary advance that was incompatible with UNEP/GEF hiring requirements; the contract was (correctly) rejected by UNEP and payments to the STA have been charged to UWI's co-financing contribution instead.

128. The problems encountered are more related to the consistency and timeliness of project reporting. To a large extent, this is associated to the understanding and application of Anubis formats. The PSU and NEAs commenced the project with insufficient working knowledge of Anubis and the project's reporting requirements in general. The Anubis system was presented at the Inception Workshop; however, more sustained coaching was clearly needed. UNEP authorized the use of Excel worksheets during the first year of implementation to facilitate the transition to Anubis without disrupting implementation. However, there were growing pains. Country budget revisions that had been made in Excel format were not recognized by the ANUBIS system; as a result the first disbursements to countries were often below the requested amounts. This generated budget deficits in the countries that required interim financing by the NEAs to enable the project's continuity. In some cases, i.e. Guyana, this required the re-allocation of funds that had already been earmarked for other NEA activities, thus affecting their implementation (although the amounts involved were subsequently reimbursed by the project).

"It has been requested that project decisions that have the potential to impact the project budget are timely shared with UNEP. For example, it has been proposed that a mission's calendar is created in order to allocate resources for those activities in a coordinated manner."

*- UNEP/GEF PIR -
Fiscal Year 13*

129. There were also problems with the compatibility of formats. NPMs had difficulties in reporting expenditures for specific activities because Anubis uses different budget lines than those used in the project document and Partnership Agreement. The issue was resolved earlier this year by the UNEP Task Manager, who has circulated a budget line conversion table that reconciles the PA and budget formats. As late as January 2014, the UNEP Task Manager and Fund Manager were clarifying Anubis procedures and reporting requirements for countries.¹³ At present, most countries are able

¹³ *Minutes of UWI-UNEP Meeting – 15 January 2014, pp. 1-2*

to prepare quarterly financial reports using Anubis, yet the PMU Project Assistant must often provide direct guidance to avoid errors.

"I spend up to 2 hours skyping each day with [national] Project Managers to explain how to enter the figures. And when it comes it is still incorrect."

- Karen Lynch, Regional Project Manager

"We get a lot of silence and don't know if they understood"

- Michelle John, Regional Project Assistant

130. According to the PMU there were delays and slow service in processing and transferring country payments by UWI's Bursary. At the UWI-UNEP meeting in January 2014, the UNEP Fund Manager had recommended that the Bursary's Office appoint a focal point to clear expenditure reports prior to sending them to the UNEP Task Manager. The Bursary's efficiency in processing payments and reporting improved during the past year, according to the PMU.

131. Some expenditures aren't captured during the reporting period because supplier invoices and receipts arrive late and accumulate into the next reporting period. When this happens, the expenditures are charged as back-payments against the new disbursement, lowering the resources available for the current period. After the

Dominica workshop, there were delays in obtaining invoices for the airfare purchased from travel agencies, and workshop travel expenditures had to be reported during the next quarter.

132. The project has had to cope with an unexpected deficit of US\$ 2 million in co-financing from CARICOM that did not materialize. This shortfall would have affected project training and capacity building had they been implemented on schedule. Fortunately, the LEA and PMU were able to close the gap by leveraging almost US\$ 1.8 million in co-financing from the USDA and other partners. The recent regional workshop on LMO Risk Assessment held in Barbados was co-funded by USDA, and several academic scholarships to the United States were awarded.

F. UNEP Supervision and Backstopping

133. From the beginning, the challenges faced by this project have required attention from UNEP. The approval of the Partnership Agreement and its addendum involved a drawn-out process that was only recently completed by most countries (two have yet to sign). Reporting country expenditures and applying the Anubis format have been difficult to standardize, despite having introduced the subject at the one-week inception workshop.

134. Overall, UNEP has had a high level of engagement as implementing agency. The UNEP Task Manager has contacted the PMU regularly to inquire on the status of project deliverables or request other information. Communications with the PMU were not fluid in the beginning but are considered to have improved over time. The Task Manager was on leave during the MTE yet has provided valuable guidance to the evaluation, asking the evaluator to look into forward-looking options that improve project performance and move implementation forward.

135. The Task Manager sits on the Regional Steering Committee and has invested time – with the UNEP Fund Manager – and several visits to explain reporting guidelines and to the PMU and NPMs. The Task Manager updated the project Risk Management plan with the PMU, and also prepared a chart that correlates the budget lines contained in the project

document and PA with those used by Anubis, in response to the difficulties of countries in charging project expenditure to budget lines for specific activities.

G. Monitoring and Evaluation

136. The project's design devotes more attention to monitoring and evaluation than is usually the case for these initiatives. The project document includes the required Monitoring Plan that follows the common format and is report-based. However, detailed monitoring provisions are annexed for each project component that identify the frequency, location and target group, responsibility, timeframe and budget. Baseline levels are summarized and there are mid-term and final performance targets for all outcomes and outputs. Tracking Tools have been introduced to monitor the progress of each country. Outcome 5.3 "Regional Processes support M&E" and its associated outputs feed the findings of monitoring and evaluations into lessons that are re-applied to the project and future initiatives. This is important given the project's pilot nature and possible interest in replicating this type of initiative in other SIDS regions such as the South Pacific.

"Few information in terms of project outputs and key activities has been shared with UNEP which makes it difficult to implement the project's M&E plan."

- UNEP/GEF PIR – Fiscal Year 13

137. Monitoring in practice has lacked the depth and rigor described in the project document, focusing more on internal delivery and performance issues than changes to baseline conditions. Initial reporting delays and unfamiliarity with formats limited UNEP's access to project data and, according to a PIR report, its ability to implement the monitoring plan. The Task Manager has devoted attention to the project and offered advice to the PMU on various implementation issues. Project participants recognize that the TM and UNEP Fund Manager have provided clarifications and guidance on reporting guidelines, budget management and the Anubis system at RSC meetings, during project visits and via Internet. The evaluator considers that UNEP's ability to detect substantive issues and constraints that affect project implementation, and provide suggestions for improvement constitutes a form of preventive monitoring.

H. Complementarities with UNEP Strategies and Programmes

138. This project builds on the advances of prior GEF/UNEP biosafety initiatives. All of the participating countries were involved in the global "Development of National Biosafety Frameworks" project. Through that project, the 12 countries designed draft versions of National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF) in 2009, while others elaborated policy/legal instruments or technical and administrative guidelines. These drafts have been updated and revised with support from the project.

139. In terms of complementarity with UNEP strategies, the biosafety projects were not designed with UNEP's Programme of Work or Expected Accomplishments in mind. Nor were they designed to contribute to the PoW, which makes their strategic relevance from a UNEP point of view somewhat weaker. The biosafety project portfolio wasn't integrated into UNEP's work until 2009 and was not reflected among the Expected Accomplishments of the 2010-2011 Programme of Work.

140. However, biosafety is clearly connected to the programme themes of Environmental Governance and Ecosystems Management. As a trans-boundary initiative that supports the

implementation of a MEA, the project contributes to the following EAs that are within UNEP's current 2010-2014 Mid-Term Strategy:¹⁴

- *Ecosystem Management EA 3:* Outputs will focus on the collaborative efforts aimed at strengthening the science-policy interface at global, regional and national levels and assisting countries to create the necessary institutional, legal and policy conditions to integrate goods and services into their development planning, decision-making and poverty reduction measures. Upon request by member states, support will be provided to create favorable policy, legal and institutional conditions for access and benefit sharing as per the Nagoya Protocol. Support will also be provided upon request by member states for the conservation of biodiversity across landscapes or seascapes. In particular, support will be provided to countries in creating the enabling environment for the implementation of biodiversity-related MEAs, with a particular emphasis on the achievement of the Aichi biodiversity targets.
- *Environmental Governance (b)* The capacity of countries to develop and enforce laws and strengthen institutions to achieve internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals and comply with related obligations is enhanced.
- *Expected Accomplishments: (b)(i)* Increase in number of legal and institutional measures taken by countries to improve the implementation of internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals with the assistance of UNEP.

IV. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

IV.A Conclusions

141. *Project implementation and deliverables are behind schedule, affecting the completion of most outputs.* The project faced critical start-up delays that undermined implementation for most of the first 18 months, followed by generally slow progress and low delivery. The evaluator estimates that only 25% of the planned outputs have been completed or are likely to be completed on schedule. Implementation has picked up in 2014 following the signing of the Partnership Agreement addendum by most countries, and the scheduling of the first regional training workshops. However, both the PMU and NEAs will need to raise delivery considerably during the final year to cover the project components and come closer to the outcomes. This is hard to achieve within the available timeframe given the logistical challenges and country variances in preparedness and momentum.

142. *At its present rate, the project is unlikely to reach most of its planned outcomes or the main goal of implementing effective, operable and sustainable national biosafety frameworks.* Country activities terminate in June 2015 and the PMU will close in December. The accumulated outputs and processes that need to be implemented over the next year to achieve the intended outcomes are not feasible at this late stage - or would have to be compressed and overlapped in a manner that would undermine the project's causal pathways and exceed national absorptive capacities. There are also attribution issues that hinder implementation: Government approvals of national biosafety bills and other legislation/policies are largely outside the project's control or responsibility, yet the delays encountered in their approval have deferred the implementation of other outputs.

143. *Low levels of preparedness have contributed to delayed project start-up and slow implementation.* There were extended delays by many countries in signing the Partnership

¹⁴ These observations are based on information provided by UNEP's Evaluation Office

Agreement and addendum, which sometimes required approval at Cabinet or legislative levels. Although the project's design benefited from a PPD grant and a one-week inception workshop, the regional and national executing agencies started on an unfamiliar footing with UNEP administrative and reporting guidelines (Anubis in particular). The complexities and demands of executing a sub-regional inter-governmental project were underestimated by UWI, and more regular oversight and guidance for the PMU would have been desirable. Many countries have made reporting errors and were slow in applying Anubis. Communications between the PMU and UNEP Task Manager have not been fluid at times, but are considered to have improved over the past year. In several respects, executing the project has been a learning process for regional and national project teams; this has value, yet also has significant costs in terms of missed time and opportunity.

144. *Project design is comprehensive and integral, yet unrealistically ambitious and over-dimensioned in relation to timelines and management resources.* The project builds on the advances of previous UNEP/GEF biosafety projects and addresses all of the fundamental components of a working biosafety framework - legal and policy frameworks, institutional capacity building, technical training and IT – combining support for regional and country-driven initiatives. However, executing a sub-regional project with five components, seven outcomes and over 80 outputs in 12 countries in four years is a steeply uphill endeavor conditioned by stakeholder capacities and commitment, national operating environments and other external factors. In most cases, project activation was weakened at the country level by slow internal approval processes and national elections among other factors.

145. *The project has achieved important advances on a sub-regional level with the approval and start of a MSc in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products at UWI and the planned Center of Excellence in Biosafety.* Much of the project's attention has been focused on the design and approval of a graduate MSc programme in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products, which began this Fall at UWI, and the proposed Center for Excellence in Biosafety that would provide LMO risk analysis and information management services through the BCH network. Both initiatives support a longer-term vision and are important to sustain capacity improvements and biosafety activities through continued scientific-academic collaboration. They contribute decisively to Outcomes 3 “A multi- disciplinary cadre of trained personnel and technical support mechanisms that combine both national and regional capacities, are operational and ensure the future sustainability of biosafety management in CARICOM countries” and 5.1 “Regional processes aid to lay the foundations for regional biosafety services and a regional framework to assist NBF implementation in the Caribbean.” The evaluator does not know if the financial feasibility and projected demand for these services were considered in their design; demand will depend largely on the extent to which functional national biosafety frameworks are established in the sub-region.

146. *There are disparities in the progress of the project's regional and country-based components.* Aside from its efforts in getting countries to approve the project Partnership Agreement and addendum, much of the PMU's attention has been focused on regional initiatives. This was part of the work plan, and was also the path of least resistance for starting implementation at a time when most countries had not signed the enabling documents or formed project teams. As a result, the components supporting technical training and capacity building for NCAs has lagged. There has been increased momentum this year with the holding of regional workshops, although the evaluator received mixed perceptions from participants regarding the technical depth and impartiality (with regards to LMOs) of the training provided thus far. There is a risk that countries may not achieve the fundamental threshold of approving biosafety legislation or establishing their NBFs, which

are essential to generate momentum and continued demand for post-graduate biosafety training or advanced LMO risk analyses. The challenge is to ensure that countries are able to develop the enabling framework and basic capacities that are necessary to fully benefit from - and eventually pay for - these services. Only St. Kitts and Nevis has approved biosafety legislation at present; the other countries are at different stages of finalizing draft biosafety bills, administrative steps and policies, and in most cases do not have approved mechanisms in place.

147. *The project has performed well in encouraging national ownership and stakeholder participation.* The project was designed with the benefit of a project preparation grant that facilitated consultations with regional and national stakeholders. Its institutional arrangements include regional and national Steering Committees that oversee progress and assist coordination. The Regional Steering Committee’s bi-annual meetings enable adaptive management and direct interaction between national project managers, UNEP, UWI and the PMU. The minutes of RSC meetings document its influence on re-programming of project outputs and work plan timelines, approving consultant ToRs and recruitments, and other project decisions. At the country level, NSCs articulate national competent authorities that will form – or already do - the nucleus of Biosafety Committees within the NBFs. For this reason, their participation in the project Steering Committees carries its own capacity building benefits.

148. *A project extension will be needed* to make space for in-country training, simulations, mock trials, public education and outreach if a critical mass of national biosafety legislation is to be approved (or is at least in process of approval), and an operational framework being established. This will allow countries to better benefit from “hands on” training, simulations and mock trials, and adjust capacity building to national contexts. In the next section, the evaluator proposes a six-month extension of country activities and the project’s termination in December 2015. However, any proposed extension should be approved on the basis of a realizable work plan that has clear deliverables and raises the project’s aggregate effect.

149. In line with the ToRs for this evaluation, the ratings of project performance (based on the criteria analyzed in this report) are presented below:

Figure 5

Mid-Term Evaluation Ratings of Project Performance

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Attainment of project objectives and results	Most objectives and results are unlikely to be achieved in full at the present rate of progress. Project outputs and results are considerably behind schedule due to extended start-up delays and slow implementation. Limited progress has been achieved in all components, with the exception of regional Biosafety MSc and Center of Excellence that involve UWI.	MU
1. Effectiveness	Same as above.	MU
2. Relevance	Project was designed with stakeholder consultations and builds on prior UNEP/GEF support. Countries are signatories to the CPB. The project’s design is comprehensive and supports NBF and sub-regional needs.	HS

3. Efficiency	The project has low delivery levels. Performance has been undermined by initial unfamiliarity with UNEP/GEF project guidelines and procedures, reporting problems, and extended delays in activating implementation at the country level. The first country disbursements were often insufficient due to incompatibilities in the budget formats used.	U
B. Sustainability of project outcomes	Project implementation has not advanced sufficiently towards the realization of most project outcomes, and therefore the conditions for sustainability are not presently in place. There has been important progress towards <i>Outcome 5.1: "Regional processes aid to lay the foundations for regional biosafety services and a regional framework to assist NBF implementation in the Caribbean"</i> with the MSc and CEB.	MS
1. Financial	It is too early to assess this aspect. It is expected that NBFs and risk management systems would recuperate a portion of operating costs from user fees for applications, and in some countries from the national Environmental Fund.	MS
2. Socio-political	There is little progress at this stage. Biosafety bills, regulations and policies have been drafted, yet only St. Kitts & Nevis has approved legislation. Implementation momentum and government commitment vary considerably among countries.	MU
3. Institutional framework	There is little progress at this stage. Institutional biosafety responsibilities within NBFs need to be formalized and enacted. The MSc and proposed CEB are important advances in long-term institutionalization.	MU
4. Environmental	To the extent that NBFs are established and become operational, this will carry benefits for human and animal health, and for the conservation of biodiversity.	HS
C. Catalytic role	It is too early to assess this. No catalytic effects to date.	
D. Stakeholders involvement	There were consultations during the project design phase. There is satisfactory stakeholder involvement through national and regional Steering Committees. Stakeholder involvement may be broadened once PEO initiatives are implemented.	HS
E. Country ownership / driven-ness	Same as above. Country work plans are developed and adjusted by RPM and NEA in consultation with NSCs.	HS
F. Achievement of outputs and activities	Most are behind schedule, and many are unlikely to be achieved by the project's end.	U
G. Preparation and readiness	The weakest aspect of the project – particularly in getting the project signed at the country level - despite a project preparation grant and the inception workshop.	U
H. Implementation approach	The implementation approach is comprehensive and balances regional and country-driven initiatives, yet is over-dimensioned in scale and complexity in relation to the project's duration and management resources.	MS
I. Financial planning and management	This is conducted correctly, despite problems in reconciling country budgets in Excel and Anubis. The PMU has been able to reduce the US\$ 2 million financing gap by mobilizing support from other institutions.	S
J. Monitoring and Evaluation	UNEP monitoring has been affected by delayed reporting. The detailed monitoring provisions contained in the project document have not followed, yet there have been frequent inquiries and several visits by the UNEP Task Manager, who follows implementation closely.	S

1. M&E Design	Detailed attention is given in the project document. The M&E plan meets UNEP guidelines.	HS
2. M&E Plan Implementation	There have been delays in submitting project reports that affect the M&E Plan. However, the UNEP Task Manager and Fund Manager have provided guidance and backstopping to the PMU and NPMs.	MS
3. Budgeting and funding for M&E activities	There are budgetary provisions for monitoring activities in the project document. The MTE lacked funds to cover a wider sample of countries.	MS
K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping	The UNEP Task Manager and Fund Manager have consistently been available to guide participants on project and budget management and reporting issues.	HS

Rating Scale:

HS: *Highly Satisfactory*

S: *Satisfactory*

MS: *Moderately Satisfactory*

MU: *Moderately Unsatisfactory*

U: *Unsatisfactory*

IV.B Lessons Learned

150. *Expectations of project achievement and impact need to be adjusted.* At this stage there is need to take stock of what can realistically be achieved within the remaining time, and adjust work plans and budget lines accordingly. Countries are at different stages of and may have different priorities for the final year. The PMU needs to focus on the achievement of minimum performance benchmarks that can be built on. It is important to ensure that enabling biosafety legislation and policies are approved (or in process of approval) within the next year. It is also important that the more advanced countries be supported in moving to higher-order outputs and outcomes with in-country technical training and coaching.

151. *Adaptive management is needed more than ever to achieve project outcomes.* As the project enters its final year, the PMU will be challenged to accelerate the delivery of outputs and devote more attention to country needs in order to raise performance and achievement. This will be difficult to realize for 12 countries that differ considerably in terms of technical capacity, commitment or level of project implementation. A lineal “one size fits all” approach is unfeasible (as it always was) and differentiated strategies are needed to move clusters of countries forward, based on their momentum and likelihood of achieving results. These clusters could be distinguished between countries that started very recently (i.e. Belize, Trinidad & Tobago), those that are behind schedule yet progressing (Guyana, Suriname, St. Kitts & Nevis), and those that are comparatively more advanced (St. Lucia, Grenada, Antigua & Barbuda, and possibly St. Kitts & Nevis given its approved biosafety legislation). Barbados and Bahamas have not signed the PA addendum and do not meet the requisites or timelines for implementing national components; their participation is therefore limited to the regional activities.

152. *Implementing the full work plan as foreseen in the project document does not seem to be viable at this stage. Work plans need to be pragmatic and focused on strategic priorities – and a realistic assessment of what can realistically be achieved during the next year.* The

fundamental common benchmark that needs to be reached is the approval and enactment of biosafety legislation/policies in participating countries. Not achieving this outcome could undermine the project's legacy and may limit future biosafety support for the sub-region. Countries that have advanced beyond this stage are likely to prioritize in-country training and guidance on LMO detection and risk management with NCAs and other biosafety stakeholders.

153. The depth of training that is needed to raise national biosafety capacity and confidence levels cannot be reached with regional workshops or short-term study tours. The new MSc programme at UWI is an important advance in this respect. Above all there must be "hands on" training and on-the-ground guidance, with simulations and mock trials. This is foreseen in the project document; however, countries need to have established national biosafety frameworks with laboratory facilities (not the case in most countries at present) to provide context and fully benefit from the experience. Likewise, the regional and national biosafety information systems linked to the BCHs and public education and outreach initiative may have more utility for countries that have approved legislation and operating NBFs

154. *The project's experience gives several lessons on how regional initiatives of this scale and complexity should be approached.* To an extent, the "Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-region" is a demonstrative project that - in concept and approach - could be replicated in other SIDS regions such as the South Pacific. The project's experience and lessons are relevant on a scale wider than the Caribbean.

155. *The potential of innovative projects that have demonstrative value should not be weakened by unrealistically ambitious or complex design.* As mentioned earlier, project design is comprehensive and addresses all the essential components of a working NBF with country and regional initiatives. Yet there are diseconomies of scale: The delivery and coordination demands are considerable for a project with five components and aims to achieve over 80 outputs in twelve countries, within a four-year period and using a two-person team. The project had a very drawn out starting period and national implementation was often delayed for reasons outside the project's control.

156. The NEAs and NPMs exercise high levels of national project ownership. However, variances in national capacity, commitment and operational environment weaken the assumption that countries can advance through this project in unison. In retrospect, the project might have had a greater impact potential had it been divided into two or three medium-sized projects, implemented over a longer period, to move in line with country processes and follow them through.

157. *Preparation and readiness are critical to make the most of a compact implementation period.* Although the project benefited from a preparatory grant and held an inception workshop, the LEA and most countries came to understand UNEP project guidelines and reporting requirements well into the first year or later. The extended delays in signing the Partnership Agreement addendum or hiring NPMs have set a number of outputs behind schedule. It has not been possible to sequence the implementation of outputs according to their causal or impact pathways to maximize their effect. This is the first time that UWI-Trinidad has implemented a sub-regional project with national governments (and not consortia of universities). The complexities and challenges were underestimated and oversight by UWI has been inconsistent.

158. Undeniably, executing the project thus far has been a learning process for UWI, the PMU and most national project managers. Without a doubt they are now better prepared to manage a project of these characteristics. Unfortunately, the learning curve has carried a high opportunity cost in terms of missed implementation time and opportunity.

159. *The project would have benefitted from an inception phase before starting implementation, to ensure that project guidelines, reporting formats and implementation arrangements were understood and in place.* UNEP and UWI led the commendable initiative of holding an inception workshop at the project's beginning with the participation of NEA partners and the national project managers that had been hired at that time. However, the difficulties faced in applying project reporting guidelines and understanding Anubis formats suggest that more than a workshop was needed to instill competency. This is especially the case for projects of this scale that connect groups of participants at different levels and require synchronized coordination to advance as planned. In many countries there were prolonged delays in signing the Partnership Agreement and addendums, in hiring NPMs, or in establishing appropriate conditions for national implementation. The project has lost practically a third of its available time as a result. These experiences point to the importance of being sure that pre-implementation requirements are met by all parties before activities start. An inception period of 3-6 months to form country teams and familiarize PMUs, NEAs and NPMs with UNEP management and reporting guidelines could enable projects of this scale to "hit the ground running" and not lose valuable time in getting organized.

160. *One size does not fit all. Diversity must be accommodated in a project of this scale and complexity through design and adaptive management.* Reality has shown that even within a sub-region that shares many similarities, countries have different needs and can move at very different paces. The different dynamics require adaptive management: Work plans need to be adjusted and outputs reprogrammed at both regional and national levels. However, some countries are unlikely to reach the fundamental outcome of having proposed biosafety legislation and committees approved, while others may move further ahead once the main actors in place, and focus on developing institutional capabilities for LMO risk management and decisions. The project will need to diversify approaches at some point, backing those countries that demonstrate greater progress and commitment.

161. *Some of the underlying socio-cultural aspects and linkages between stakeholders need to be considered when implementing regional projects.* Biosafety and biotechnology circles in the Eastern Caribbean are small, live in geographic proximity and interact periodically through research, conferences, projects and academia. Biosafety is not a pressing policy or legal issue in any country. Most countries have limited pools of biosafety expertise; technical experts often that have various responsibilities or serve as national focal point to various MEAs. In several cases, government legislation requires that projects - and budget expenditures above certain amounts - be approved by Cabinet or legislators. UWI is the sub-region's main institution of higher learning; its programmes and funding are influenced by the decisions and needs of countries. It has academic ties and interactions across the sub-region that transcends this project.

162. For these and probably other reasons as well, most countries have not been in a rush to implement the project. Likewise, UWI and the PMU have chosen not to exert pressure or become frontal with countries over delays to avoid the possibility of generating tensions or conflicts that could affect other levels of interaction. A low profile approach was followed

instead, with the support of the STA that led to the project's eventual if late approval in most countries. The UNEP Task manager has understandably been concerned over the need for more rapid action; however, the approach of the LEA and PMU is influenced by this bigger picture.

163. *The choice of institutional partners is important for a project of this nature, given the sensitivity and polarization of views concerning LMOs and transgenic crops in particular.* If the fundamental goal of this project is to encourage the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol in the sub-region, it stands that the institutions and organizations that provide technical support and co-financing for workshops should be aligned with the CPB as well. The contributions of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) are important because they bring technical experience of LMO risk analysis and cover most of the co-financing deficit. The USDA indirectly represents an important trade partner for most countries, which adds relevance to its participation in the project. However, the different views surrounding the possible health and environmental risks of transgenic crops and LMO-FFPs are highly polarized and to an extent ideological. They are also influenced by commercial and trade interests, and global issues that transcend the biosafety theme. Hence some of the participants who attended the recent regional workshop in Barbados on LMO Risk Analysis (co-hosted by USDA) perceived an underlying and pro-LMO position that they considered inconsistent with the Cartagena Protocol as well as with the project's objectives.

IV.C Recommendations

164. *Institutional cooperation and co-financing arrangements should involve partners from the region that are aligned to the Cartagena Protocol.* This is likely to generate more opportunity for biosafety collaboration and mentoring after the project term, than working with individual consultants or institutions that do not follow the CPB. The project has the opportunity to broker cooperation relationships with national, regional and global institutions that are recognized for their biosafety knowledge and LMO risk management performance, and which are in line with the CPB. The PMU has made contact with organizations such as IFPRI, and biosafety/biotechnology institutions in Chile, Brazil and Cuba that could provide a basis for institutional cooperation and training relations. The new MSc in Biosafety of Biotechnology Products and the Center of Excellence for Biosafety are well positioned to serve as regional conduits for future international cooperation. The RPM should take these opportunities further, taking advantage of the project's UNEP/GEF/UWI labels and country linkages. This would improve perspectives for the continuity of institutional cooperation and training beyond the project.

165. *Implementation needs to be accelerated and greater balance achieved between the project's regional and country-based components.* More attention needs to be focused on (i) ensuring the approval of biosafety legislation and policies that enable the establishment of NBFs and are compatible across the sub-region; and (ii) developing national capacities to conduct biosafety risk assessments and make informed LMO decisions. The approval of biosafety arrangements at the country level, whether through Biosafety bills or other draft legislation or regulations, is the minimum requirement that must be met to enable further development. In terms of national priorities, most country respondents have emphasized the importance of receiving in-country

"What are our priorities for the remainder of the project? Training, training and more training."

- Daniel Lewis, NPM for Grenada

technical training on LMO detection and risk management, with the participation of NCAs and other biosafety stakeholders in mock trials and simulations. Some countries could benefit from political, media or other lobbying support to move the approval process forward.

166. *An exit strategy needs to be articulated. The project work plan should be revised and extended to ensure the delivery of outputs that are essential for enabling continued biosafety development at the national and sub-regional levels.* Much of the time spent by the evaluator with the PMU was focused on exploring ways to move the project forward and improve output delivery, giving more attention to country capacity needs and technical training. The following recommendations propose management actions and alterations to the work plan that fill of the key gaps and would help the project reach a satisfactory outcome. It was agreed that the PMU would further develop these recommendations in consultation with UNEP and the NEAs, and if feasible revise the project work plan and budget accordingly.

167. The recommendations are summarized below:

168. *Organize a four-day, “back-to-back” regional workshop to harmonize the project’s legal and policy components, and accelerate the approval of draft biosafety legislation, policies and institutional arrangements.* The workshop would a dual purpose:

- *An expert peer review of the draft biosafety legislations that have been developed by participating countries, to ensure sub-regional consistency and alignment with the CPB, and to identify further support needs to finalize design and expedite approval.* This segment of the workshop would be led by a senior international legal consultant who has been identified. Sessions would enable NPMs and legal focal points to identify communalities, discrepancies and gaps among national proposals, and work towards improving their quality, comprehensiveness and consistency. There would also be discussions of the “critical paths” that need to be followed by countries to finalize the drafting process and facilitate their approval before the project’s termination. This might involve high-level technical visits to government decision-makers, informative meetings for legislators or media coverage. On the basis of the agreement reached, a series of follow-up country visits would be scheduled (described below) with the participation of the international expert and RPM.
- *Review of proposed institutional arrangements, policies and approval status of NBFs..* This segment would apply a similar dynamic with NPMs and a leading NEA/NCA representative from each country. Pending needs and strategies in support of the approval and enactment of NBFs would be discussed and again followed by country visits by a senior international expert and the RPM to move these processes forward.

169. As was discussed with the PMU, the four-day workshop could be scheduled in November 2014 when there is space for such an event (Trinidad & Tobago and Grenada were mentioned as possible venues). The PMU would seek the involvement of technical resource persons from recognized global, regional or national biosafety institutions. Possibilities should be explored with the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), International Food and Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), IICA, Cuba’s Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology and Center of Biological Safety, and biosafety institutions in Brazil, Argentina and Chile that are familiar with the project. An option is to invite several specialists to conduct interactive “peer reviews” with national

participants. The proposed workshop would support the implementation of Outputs 1.1-1.3 and 1.6 with a preliminary estimated cost of approximately US\$ 40,000.

170. *Schedule a series of short-term country missions by two senior consultants¹⁵ to provide direct assistance and “lobbying” support towards the approval of proposed legislation and policies.* The missions would follow the November workshop and continue into the first quarter of 2015, ideally involving the same specialists who led the workshops. Both would provide assistance on specific needs identified at the workshop – i.e. technical coaching and peer reviews to raise national “comfort levels”, meeting with senior government decision-makers and national legislators on behalf of the project, speaking to the media and participating in informational events. The cost of both country missions is estimated at US\$ 12,000 (20 working days for two senior consultants between November 2014-March 2015) and could be charged to the budget for international consultancies.

171. *The PMU needs to consider ways to assist the approval of draft national biosafety legislation and policies at different levels.* For example, the Regional Project Manager could attend the upcoming CARICOM Trade and Agriculture Week in Suriname that will have Minister-level participation, requesting a brief space in the agenda to inform attending Ministers and Permanent Secretaries and impress the importance of timely approval of biosafety legislation and policies for their countries. The RPM’s participation in this event would also serve to re-active links with CARICOM, in its capacity as a key regional actor that has a *Policy on Biosafety and Biotechnology* that it plans to implement.

172. There may also be utility in contacting the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which articulates Prime Ministers and is considered to bear influence in the smaller island states. The media and regional television stations in particular offer yet another channel for getting the message across and building momentum.

173. *The digitized LMO Application and Information Management System that was developed by Costa Rica’s CTN-Bio with UNEP/GEF support can be adapted to the project’s national and sub-regional needs.* This online system presents the requirements, procedures and forms needed for most LMO applications, provides “one window” access to NCAs involved in LMO risk assessment. The system appears to offer gains in efficiency,

¹⁵ The participation of the Regional Project Manager or Regional Project Assistant in these missions would be beneficial.

Figure 6

Summary of MTE Recommendations for the Project Work Plan

Recommended Action	Purpose/Expected Benefits	Timeline	Participants/Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Relevant Outputs
“Back-to-back” regional workshop on status of Biosafety Legislation and NBFs	Stocktaking of country progress and pending needs, sub-regional harmonization of draft proposals, and identification of strategies to expedite approval of national BS legislation and NBF proposals. A schedule for follow-up support missions will be agreed at the workshop.	November 2014 (Four-day workshop)	Participants: PMU, NPMs, country legal and NEA focal points Responsible Party: PMU	US\$ 40,000: Workshop and travel expenses	1.1-1.3, 1.5-1.6
Country missions by international consultants	Direct support and coaching for countries for the finalization/approval of BS legislation and NBF proposals	November 2014-March 2015 depending on schedule of country visits	Participants: Senior consultants in BS legislation and NBFs, preferably from cooperating global/national institutions. Responsible Party: PMU	US\$ 12,000: 2 weeks x 2 consultants	Same as above.
Project Extension	To enable the project to compensate for extended start-up delays and ensure minimum achievement levels in participating countries	<i>Country components:</i> July to December 2015 <i>PMU:</i> October to December 2015	Participants: Affects all participants. Responsible Parties: PMU, UWI, UNEP	<i>Country extensions:</i> US\$ 96,000 (Six-month extensions of NPMs and NPAs in Guyana, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Antigua using funds from the existing project budget. Other countries may finance extensions from unspent surpluses within their national budgets) <i>PMU extension:</i> US\$ 30,000	Most outputs

In-country training on LMO risk management	Mock trials and simulations with expert guidance and coaching with regional/int'l expertise. Support will focus on countries that achieve this level of progress, i.e. Dominica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Guyana	July-December 2015	Participants: Senior consultant(s) in LMO risk management, preferably from cooperating global/national institutions. The consultant(s) will conduct six one-week country missions. Responsible Party: PMU	US\$ 20,000: 1.5 months x 1 consultant	1.5, 3.11-3.12
Re-phasing of BCH training	Mission of BCH consultant would be postponed to ensure greater country preparedness.	June to December 2015	Participants: No change Responsible Party: PMU	No change	3.13, 4.7, 5.4
Project Closure & Forward Planning Workshop	Participants will document final achievements, systematize lessons learned and determine next steps for countries and sub-region. This will provide inputs towards the design of future regional BS projects.	December 2015 (to coincide with the project's terminal evaluation)	Participants: PMU, UNEP,, NPMs, NEA focal points, evaluation consultant. Responsible Parties: PMU, UWI, UNEP	US\$ 20,000	4.11, 5.35
TOTAL COST:				US\$ 218,000 (to be funded by the existing GEF and Co-financing contributions)	

institutional coordination and transparency. Users can only access the system with e-keys, and are able to track the progress of individual applications. This was one of the Costa Rican projects most important outputs and has considerable replication potential. It is recommended that the BCH consultant become familiar with the online system, which can be viewed at <http://www.ovm.go.cr>, and contact the Costa Rican system manager to assess its usefulness for this project.

174. *In-country “hands on” technical training on LMO risk management with mock trials, simulations and expert coaching is a national priority that needs to be delivered by the project before its termination.* The support is foreseen in the project work plan under outputs 1.5, 3.11 and 3.12, which are behind schedule. Because most countries do not yet have operational biosafety frameworks or equipped laboratories for LMO risk analysis, the conditions needed to fully benefit from such support are not available at present. As a result, it is recommended that these outputs be re-programmed under the proposed project extension and given high priority by the PMU. Once again, it is desirable that technical expertise be contracted come from recognized biosafety institutions that are aligned with the CPB and offer opportunities for longer-term cooperation.

175. *The development of a biosafety clearinghouse (BCH) network linking national and sub-regional nodes should be reprogrammed to ensure that participating countries – and the Center of Excellence for Biosafety (CEB) - fully benefit from the assistance provided.* The arguments mentioned above also apply in this case. Countries will be better prepared to fully participate in and benefit from the regional clearinghouse network envisioned under outputs 3.13, 4.7 and 5.4 once there are approved NBFs and institutional responsibilities and the CEB is functional.

176. *The Regional Project Manager should consider attending the upcoming CARICOM Trade and Agriculture Week conferences that will be held in Suriname, to “lobby” for the approval of national biosafety legislation and policies that are essential to achieve most project outcomes.* Both agriculture and trade are central sectors to biosafety management in general and trans-boundary movements of LMOs in particular. Moreover, this annual event will be attended by Minister-level national delegations. The RPM should consider requesting a brief slot in the meeting’s agenda, to impress the importance of approving draft national biosafety legislation and NBF arrangements in a timely manner on attending Ministers and Permanent Secretaries. The project’s participation would also serve to re-activate links with CARICOM, a key regional actor that supports the development and harmonization of national biosafety frameworks among member States.

177. *Future regional biosafety projects need to ensure that participating countries start with adequate level of preparedness, implementation arrangements in place, and an understanding of project guidelines and reporting.* . As described in the report, considerable time was lost to delays in approving the project in several countries and commencing implementation. Initial unfamiliarity with UNEP/GEF reporting guidelines and Anubis formats in particular, combined with delayed reporting, have lowered project efficiency and monitoring. Future regional initiatives need be certain that these aspects are understood and if not, address the issue before starting implementation. This could be achieved through an inception phase that prepares participants to “hit the ground running” and make full use of the project timeline and resources. While a 3-6 month inception phase clearly adds to the project budget, it is also likely to provide a cost-effective investment by improving delivery and offsetting the need for eventual project extensions. As a preventive measure, this would have spared the regional and national project teams from many of the difficulties that have affected project implementation.

178. *The UNEP Task Manager can assist implementation by providing technical guidance and backstopping to countries on biosafety issues.* The Task Manager has advanced academic training and experience in biosafety management that should be made use of, beyond her general project monitoring responsibilities. There is an expressed need for in-country technical guidance and coaching that the Task Manager is well placed to contribute to during her country visits. The TM should also be viewed as a technical resource person and encouraged to conduct missions to countries, with travel and DSA covered by the project.

ANNEXES

Annex 1

Evaluation Questions, Target Respondents/Focus Groups, Indicators and Data Sources

Respondents

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	UWI LEA	Caricom	NPCs	NCAs	NSCs	RSC	IICA	NGOs	UNEP Task Manager	UNEP	Indicators	Data Source
A. Attainment of Outputs and Activities												
1. Status of project's progress/success in producing the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality, usefulness and timeliness.											Respondent perceptions, level of achievement of objectives and outcomes	Interviews, Project document, MTE, Final Report
B. Relevance												
2. Are the project's objectives and implementation strategies consistent with: i) Sub-regional environmental issues and needs relating to biodiversity conservation and natural resource management; ii) UNEP's mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; and iii) GEF's focal area on biodiversity, strategic priorities and the relevant operational program(s).											Respondent perceptions, project delivery and level of achievement	Interviews, Final Report
C. Effectiveness												
3. Is the project on track in achieving its main objective to implement effective, operable, transparent and sustainable National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF) that cater for national and regional needs, deliver global benefits and are compliant with the CPB in 12 Caribbean countries?											Respondent perceptions, continued involvement of Health Min. and other NCAs in NBF	Interviews, Project document, Final Report
D. Efficiency												
4. To what extent is project execution cost-effective and timely? Are any cost or time-saving measures being applied to the project budget or time-frame?												
D. Sustainability												
5. <i>Socio-political</i> : Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts? What is the project doing to ensure this socio-political											Respondent perceptions, continuity of project-supported initiatives	Interviews, Final Report

H. Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness												
23. What approaches were used to identify and engage stakeholders in project design and implementation? To what extent are there public awareness and outreach initiatives and how have they affected stakeholder participation and implementation in general?											Respondent perceptions, evidence of workshops or other consultation mechanisms	Interviews, PDF reports, PIRs, MTE
35. To what extent have project partners and stakeholders collaborated/interacted effectively during project design and implementation?											Respondent perceptions, documented interactions	Same as above.
36. Did the project promote mechanisms for stakeholder participation in decision-making in the programmes, plans and other initiatives that it generated?											Respondent perceptions, evidence of stakeholder participation in planning and decision-making	Same as above.
I. Country Ownership and Driven-ess												
37. To what degree has the LEA assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to its execution?											Respondent Perceptions, performance of CTNBio and PMU in project implementation, timeliness of project delivery	Interviews, PIRs, MTE, Final Report
38. To what extent was cooperation received from other institutions? Was there involvement of NGOs and communities in project planning/implementation?												
39. To what extent have the national and regional political/institutional frameworks facilitated project performance?											Respondent perceptions, consistency of NBFs in Central America, synergies with other countries through regional WB/GEF biosafety project	Same as above
40. . Were cooperation and funds leveraged from government partners and other institutions or organizations												
J. Financial Planning & Management												
39. Were sufficient financial resources made available and disbursed in a timely manner to the project and its partners?											Respondent perceptions, timeliness of disbursements, budget revisions	PIRs, budget revisions, financial reports
40. Were administrative processes such as staff recruitment, procurement of goods and services (including consultants), and preparation/ negotiation of cooperation agreements conducted efficiently and in a timely manner?											Same as above.	Same as above
41. Were co-financing commitments met as programmed and made available in a timely manner?											Same as above.	Same as above.
42. Were additional resources – financial, in-kind – leveraged by the project, beyond those that were already committed prior to the project's approval?											Budget revisions, increased allocations to existing/new budget lines through co-financing	Same as above.
43. Identify irregularities (if any) in procurement, use of financial resources and human resource management, and the measures taken by CTNBIO or UNEP to correct/prevent such irregularities.											Documented irregularities, interrupted procurement/disbursement processes	Interviews, PIRs, MTE, audit reports

<i>K. UNEP supervision and backstopping</i>												
44. Assess the extent to which UNEP applied supervision plans, outcome M&E,, tracked PIR reporting , produced quality documentation and had good administrative and financial management?											Respondent perceptions, timeliness and acceptance of PIR and financial reports; timeliness of disbursements and administrative support services by UNEP	Interviews, PIRs, MTE
45. Assess the quality of the project documentation produced by or with UNEP support?												
<i>L. Monitoring and evaluation</i>												
45. Did the project's design include a viable M&E plan that is based on outcomes and includes indicators?											Monitoring Plan is included in the project document.	Project document
46. Did the project's design include a monitoring budget?											Project document includes monitoring budget line.	Project document.
47. Have monitoring findings influenced adaptive management and contributed towards resolving implementation problems?											Respondent perceptions, evidence of technical/management decisions based on monitoring findings	Interviews, monitoring reports
48. Are there specific indicators for each of the project objectives? Are the indicators measurable, attainable (realistic) and relevant to the objectives? Are the indicators time- bound?											Indicators are included in Results Framework for each objective.	Project document.
49. Have the responsibilities for M&E activities been clearly defined? Were the data sources and data collection instruments appropriate? Was the frequency of various monitoring activities specified and adequate? In how far were project users involved in monitoring?											Monitoring activities are conducted periodically by designated parties with inputs from project participants. The monitoring approach is considered methodologically appropriate by the evaluator and most respondents.	Interviews, monitoring reports.

Annex 2

Review of Outcomes towards Impact (ROtI) Ratings

Likelihood of Achieving Intermediate States and Impacts

Outputs	Outcomes	Ratings	Intermediate States	Ratings	Impacts	Ratings
<p>1.1 Review of drafted NBF and proposed biosafety legislation, ensuring full alignment with main provisions of the CPB.</p> <p>1.2 Support for Office of Attorney General, NEA and NPC to prepare draft legislation for submission to Cabinet / House of Assembly, including public sensitization program to support enactment of biosafety law.</p> <p>1.3 Public participation and stakeholder consultations over regulatory developments through national discussion and meetings.</p> <p>1.4 Formulation of national biosafety policies, including public outreach program in support of development and adoption of national biosafety policy. (→ coupled to activities 4.4 and 4.5)</p> <p>1.5 Coaching and direct assistance to support effective operations of the National Biosafety Authorities and coordinating mechanisms for assessments, decision-making, and monitoring of biosafety and LMOs.</p> <p>1.6 Develop strategies and procedures that clearly identify institutional mandates, roles and responsibilities in biosafety (risk assessment, risk management and monitoring) and identify capacity gaps that could be filled by specialized institutions or a national or regional roster of experts.</p> <p>1.7 Using inputs from activity 2.1 assess and put in place financing options for maintaining NBF operations, including BCH functions, considering cost recovery mechanisms and administrative charges for biosafety procedures.</p> <p>1.8 Produce manuals, guidelines and protocols for following administrative</p>	<p>Outcome 1: Biosafety governance regimes are improved and aligned with the CPB in 12 countries of the Caribbean sub-region</p>	D	Legislation is approved and NBFs with designated institutional responsibilities are in place.	C	Moderately Unlikely.	DC

<p>procedures within and between National Biosafety Authorities.</p> <p>1.9 Establish formal and informal ties with scientific/research/biotech sector, for scientific validation (inputs and peer review) of criteria and methodology used for LMO risk assessments. (→ coupled to activity 2.11)</p> <p>1.10 Establish Scientific and Technical Advisory Committees and/or Roster of Experts in each country, or equivalent advisory structures/ad hoc mechanisms to support biosafety decision-making.</p>						
<p>2.1 Conduct capacity/needs assessment of key institutions with responsibility for risk assessment and monitoring of LMOs, including assessment of laboratory capacities (equipment, technologies and personnel) and information management needs /capacities (→ coupled to activity 4.1).</p> <p>2.2 Facilitate short term attachments for (scientists) personnel involved in risk assessment or risk management of LMOs.</p> <p>2.3 Procurement of laboratory equipment, supplies and reagents required for establishing and/or equipping and operationalizing national /reference laboratories for LMO testing and risk assessment that could eventually offer regional services. (→coupled to activity 2.7)</p> <p>2.4 Conduct detailed analysis to determine the most efficient institutional arrangements (national and regional) for conducting detection tests and research in support of the risk management process. (→ coupled to activity 5.2.iii)</p> <p>2.5 Regional agreement reached on which biosafety services are to be supported regionally, with definition of financing mechanisms and institutional arrangements and responsibilities. (→ coupled to activity 5.2.iv)</p> <p>2.6 Institute recommendations for the best arrangement for coordinating mechanisms for monitoring of biosafety. Select laboratories / research centres that shall provide risk assessment/management support to neighbouring countries. (→ coupled to activity 5.2.iv)</p> <p>2.7 Procure laboratory equipment, supplies and reagents required for operationalizing LMO testing and sampling techniques and enable technical support for risk management and LMO monitoring to be provided at the regional level. (→ coupled to activity 2.3 and 2.6)</p> <p>2.8 Design, and if possible, put in place a coordinated regional/national accreditation scheme for biosafety laboratories.</p>	<p>Outcome 2: Well articulated and technically sound risk assessment, risk management and follow-up systems are functioning for biosafety in the Caribbean</p>	<p>D</p>	<p>Functional NBFs are in place with designated NCAs and technically sound risk management systems that are articulated in the sub-region.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Moderately unlikely.</p>	<p>DC</p>

<p>2.9 Work closely with the Bureau of Standards of each country to strengthen capacity to provide monitoring services and standards for biosafety management.</p> <p>2.10 Establish formal (MOU's) linkages between national and regional laboratories and agencies with biosafety capacity as part of technical in support for conducting coordinated biosafety risk assessments.</p> <p>2.11 Develop technical documents and tools (standards, protocols and guidelines) for biosafety risk assessment, risk management, LMO detection (laboratory testing) and sampling, quality assurance and standardization across laboratories, and identification of LMOs.</p> <p>2.12 Propose, and if possible, agree to border control procedures for imports /exports of LMOs, including transshipments and transit, with feedback and inputs from national Customs Offices and CARICOM.</p>						
<p>3.1 Develop training manuals and curricula for short courses.</p> <p>3.2 Solicit Government agencies to designate staff for training courses. Those being nominated for training in risk assessment will need to confirm their longevity and continuing services with the institution.</p> <p>3.3 Conduct training on application of standards, protocols and guidelines developed above (2.9), targeted at members of the National Biosafety Authorities and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committees (or equivalent structures) and at other relevant technical staff.</p> <p>3.4 Develop a regional Biosafety training programme (with practical exercises and training manuals) intended for scientific and non-scientific personnel involved in LMO risk assessment, management and communication; LMO monitoring, control, and detection; and in certification programmes in biosafety-related areas.</p> <p>3.5 Launch inscriptions to the regional Biosafety training programme.</p> <p>3.6 Conduct training workshops and short courses for technical, scientific and non-scientific personnel, including customs officers and border inspectors and laboratory technicians and biotechnology graduates.</p> <p>3.7 Public-private encounters to discuss the scope of Biosafety risk management measures in different sectors.</p> <p>3.8 Nominations to, and compilation of, Regional Roster of Biosafety Experts.</p> <p>3.9 Coaching or training for teachers and specialists involved in human resources formation on the requirements and opportunities of the CPB.</p>	<p>Outcome 3: A multidisciplinary cadre of trained personnel and technical support mechanisms, that combine both national and regional capacities, are operational and ensure the future sustainability of biosafety management in CARICOM countries.</p>	D+	Support mechanisms are in place and operational to develop regional and national technical capacities.	B	Moderately Likely	DB+

<p>3.10 Seek knowledge exchange with CARICOM and customs officers and border inspectors (feedback and inputs concerning operational challenges, information requirements and standardized procedures) for the preparation of viable border control procedures for imports /exports of LMOs. (→ coupled to activity 4.12)</p> <p>3.11 Conduct a simulated LMO decision-making process (for training purposes) with participation of at least 10 of 12 countries.</p> <p>3.12 Carry out LMO detection analyses on mock or real LMO samples (for demonstrative purposes), involving at least 2 laboratories in the region.</p> <p>3.13 Conduct trainings in BCH use (in synergy with BCH-II global project) for technical personnel (from >1 Government institution) and selected stakeholders. (→ coupled to activity 4.8)</p> <p>3.14 Explore potential collaboration and synergies with other UNEP/GEF biosafety capacity building projects in the region (especially Cuba).</p> <p>3.15 Evaluate the possible development of a postgraduate programme in biosafety, the adoption of novel training curricula, manuals, methods and experiences derived from the project into the regional biosafety training programme.</p> <p>3.16 Establish self-financing mechanisms that will sustain the regional training programme beyond the project.</p>						
<p>4.1 Conduct needs assessment to determine the level of resources (physical, human and financial) required to establish and maintain the regional and national biosafety clearing house mechanisms and data bases. (→ coupled to activity 2.1 and 5.2 iii)</p> <p>4.2 Establish a collaborative national/regional/international network for information exchange especially with regards to the Biosafety decision-making and notification processes and links to IAS management.</p> <p>4.3 Procure equipment/software and determine data exchange protocols needed to support national and regional information management systems.</p> <p>4.4 Design a regional Biosafety public education and outreach strategy (PEO) to promote awareness and communication with various target audiences.</p> <p>4.5 Implement the Biosafety public education and outreach strategy (PEO) through both national and regional-level activities, including the promotion of BCH use amongst non-government sectors, Biosafety sensitization aimed at decision-makers and politicians, and the production and distribution of a monthly electronic and printed newsletter on Biosafety and other outreach materials.</p>	<p>Outcome 4: National and regional mechanisms that provide access to biosafety information in order to promote transparency, raise public awareness and facilitate biosafety decision-making are institutionalized throughout the region</p>	D	Regional and national BCH nodes are connected and working.	C+	Moderately Likely	DC+

<p>4.6 Generate and compile Biosafety data (including project products and data on LMOs traded and approved within CARICOM) in order to populate regional and national Biosafety database systems, with links to IAS data if necessary.</p> <p>4.7 Establish Biosafety clearinghouse mechanisms in each country, both to house information and database systems and to comply with BCH Central Portal registering requirements. These mechanisms should enable the general public to present their opinions and comments on applications, decisions and notifications by electronic means.</p> <p>4.8 Conduct trainings in BCH use (in synergy with BCH-II global project) for technical personnel and selected stakeholders. (→ coupled to activity 3.12)</p> <p>4.9 Design and determine the institutional host for an effective regional database and clearinghouse mechanism that has inter-institutional linkages, linkages to national BCH systems, compatibility with the BCH Central Portal, and identity as the primary regional node for Biosafety information.</p> <p>4.10 Initiate operations of the regional Biosafety clearinghouse node, starting with a pilot phase (until mid-term).</p> <p>4.11 Undertake assessment of effectiveness and usefulness of regional and national Biosafety clearing house mechanisms and database systems to derive lessons learnt and review sustainability factors.</p> <p>4.12 Meetings with Customs Offices and regional organizations to reach agreements on information and documentation requirements for LMO imports. (→ coupled to activity 3.8)</p>						
<p>5.1 Prepare Terms of Reference (TORs) for a viability assessment that analyzes the financial, technical and political implications of various options for establishing sustainable Biosafety services and functions at the regional level.</p> <p>5.2 Organize a technical regional workshop (virtual) to review and adopt TORs.</p> <p>5.3 Conduct the viability assessment, taking into account results of national and regional needs /capacity assessments conducted previously.</p> <p>5.4 Determine the potential of the Regional BCH Node to become the “gatekeeper” of regional Biosafety applications (electronic tracking LMOs applications and permits granted, ensuring public access to information on the processing of such applications, facilitating public input into the risk assessment process, etc).</p> <p>5.5 Review results of viability assessment and potential for expanding</p>	<p>Outcome 5.1 Regional processes aid to lay the foundations for regional biosafety services and a regional framework to assist NBF implementation in the Caribbean</p> <p>Outcome 5.2 Regional processes support project</p>	<p>D</p> <p>D</p>	<p>Regional mechanisms/institutions providing regional biosafety services to NBFs are in place and operating.</p> <p>Feedback and adaptive management/regional oversight mechanisms</p>	<p>B</p> <p>B</p>	<p>Likely</p> <p>Moderately unlikely</p>	<p>DB</p> <p>DB</p>

<p>Regional BCH Node functions, and organize a political regional workshop to reach a decision on which Biosafety services and responsibilities should be devolved at the regional level.</p> <p>5.6 Establish institutional framework for providing regional Biosafety services and taking on regional Biosafety responsibilities, including an initial pilot phase for regional coordination of Biosafety tasks.</p> <p>5.7 Based on the decision reached above, develop a self-financing plan for the Biosafety services and technical support mechanisms to be provided regionally, including the maintenance of the regional BCH node.</p> <p>5.8 Apply adaptive management, ensuring timely reporting to NSC / PSC and prompt correction of deviations from plans (stage control and change control), including changes derived from decision on regional Biosafety mechanisms.</p> <p>5.9 Incorporate Midterm Evaluation report findings into modified work plans and share revised project logframe with all those concerned.</p> <p>5.10 Invite relevant regional/international organizations to PSC meetings to take stock of potential synergies with IAS and pest management frameworks (commonalities in operations, assessment methodologies, data management and training schemes).</p> <p>5.11 PSC to take decision on how best to capitalize on potential synergies with IAS and pest management frameworks.</p> <p>5.12 Prepare and implement an action plan to pursue synergies between LMO and IAS / pest management frameworks.</p> <p>5.13 Incorporate considerations over certification requirements and other trade-related issues in assessment of effectiveness and usefulness of regional and national BCH mechanisms and database systems (→ coupled to activity 4.11).</p> <p>5.14 Appoint and hire regional project personnel (Lead Executing Agency's Project Team).</p> <p>5.15 Establish and equip regional project office (PMU: Project Management Unit).</p> <p>5.16 Appoint project personnel in participating countries (National Project coordinator and Project Focal Points)</p> <p>5.17 Establish National Steering Committees (NSC) in each country</p> <p>5.18 Establish national project offices and financial operations for fund transfers to countries.</p> <p>5.19 Detailed project planning, including preparation of national logframes</p>	<p>management</p> <p>Outcome 5.3 Regional processes support project M&E</p>	<p>D</p>	<p>are in place and operational.</p> <p>Fluid communications and efficient and timely reporting from country and regional levels, supporting the project's Monitoring Plan.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Moderately unlikely.</p>	<p>DC</p>
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<p>and annual workplans.</p> <p>5.20 Review & finalize annual workplans.</p> <p>5.21 NSC meetings (at least every 6 months or twice a year).</p> <p>5.22 Inception workshop / first RSC meeting.</p> <p>5.23 RSC meetings (physical and virtual) at least every 6 months or twice a year – with physical meetings once a year.</p> <p>5.24 Establish a project financial management and accounting system.</p> <p>5.25 Review & finalize M&E plan, indicators and baseline.</p> <p>5.26 Implement M&E plan and monitor the achievement of benchmarks and outputs as specified in annual workplans.</p> <p>5.27 Survey design and application amongst Govt staff for measuring outcomes of Comp 1.</p> <p>5.28 Project reporting – LEA to prepare and submit semi-annual progress reports and financial reports to UNEP (GEF funds and co-financing).</p> <p>5.29 Prepare and update annually project equipment inventory.</p> <p>5.30 Annual Project Implementation Reviews (PIR).</p> <p>5.31 Annual financial audit of project accounts.</p> <p>5.32 Midterm Evaluation (independent study managed by UNEP) - includes round two of Tracking Tools.</p> <p>5.33 Annual workplan and budget revisions with UNEP.</p> <p>5.34 Prepare and submit terminal (closure) documents to UNEP, including Final Report, final inventory, final audit, last PIR, and final expenditure statement.</p> <p>5.35 Terminal Evaluation (independent study managed by UNEP) –includes final round of Tracking Tools.</p>						
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Annex 3

Project Cost and Co-financing Table

Project Costs

Component/sub-component	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
10. PERSONNEL	US\$ 1,468,609.88	US\$ 332,567.45	0.226
20. SUBCONTRACTS	US\$ 2,759,703.37	US\$ 882,858.49	0.319
30. TRAINING	US\$ 829,615.79	US\$ 184,032.31	0.221
40. EQUIPMENT AND PREMISES	US\$ 765,978.24	US\$ 2,458.70	0.03
50. MISCELLANEOUS	US\$ 148,585	US\$ 7,150.55	0.048
40. TOTAL:	US\$ 5,972,493	US\$ 1,409,067.50	0.236

Source: Caribbean/FSP, Final Financial Statement, printed on 15/10/2014 11:45

Co-financing

Co financing (Type/Source)	IA own Financing (US\$)		Government (US\$)		Other* (US\$)		Total (US\$)		Total Disbursed US\$)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
- Grants	5,972,493	5,972,493	442,200	442,200	2,000,000	0	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,409,067.50 *
- Loans									
- Credits									
- Equity investments									

- In-kind support			3,253,362	3,253,362					
- Other (**)									
Totals:	5,972,493	5,972,493	3,253,362	3,253,362	2,000,000	0	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,409,067.50 *

* This represents expenditures charged to the GEF grant only.

** This refers to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

Annex 4

Persons Interviewed

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					5256	
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Annex 5

Bibliography

Anubis Files:

- Quarterly Project Expenditure Reports
- Caribbean/FSP Final Financial Statement
- Caribbean Budget Template (Regional Budget)
- Summary of Budget Advances to LEA

Barbados Workshop on Biosafety and the Environment: PP Presentation) (April 2014)

Final Audit Report 2011- 2012 (January 2013)

Final Audit Report 2012-2013 (April 2014)

Inception Workshop for the Regional Project for Implementing National Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-region (November 2012)

Minutes of the First Meeting of the University Project Steering Committee (UPSC) of the Regional Project for Implementing National Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region (February 2013)

Minutes of the Third Meeting of the University Project Steering Committee (UPSC) of the Regional Project for Implementing National Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region (November 2013)

Minutes of the First Meeting of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) of the Regional Project for Implementing National Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region (November 2012)

Notes of the UNEP-UWI Skype Meeting (January 2014)

Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) for GEF Full Size Project “Regional Project for Implementing National Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub Region” (September 2011)

Regional Project for Implementing National Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub Region” – Project Document (April 2011)

Regional project for the implementation of national biosafety frameworks in the Caribbean sub-region: Implementation plan framed around a proposed Centre of Excellence on Biosafety at the University of the West Indies - Appendix D (no date)

Report on Regional Meeting of National Project Coordinators – Lima, Peru (March 2014)

UNEP Half-yearly Progress Report (December 2013)

UNEP GEF PIR Fiscal Year 13 (1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013)

UNEP GEF PIR Fiscal Year 14 (July 2013 to 30 June 2014)

UWI Faculty of Science & Technology: MSc in Biosafety- Graduate Information Guide (August 2014)

Annex 6

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

A. Objective and Scope of the Evaluation

3. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy¹⁶ and the UNEP Evaluation Manual¹⁷ Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) of the Project “Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region” is undertaken half way through project implementation to analyze whether the project is on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required. The MTE will assess project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and impacts, including their sustainability. The focus of the MTE shall be on providing recommendations to the project partners to ensure that the project objectives are achieved. In particular, the MTR should consider suggestions for the project to find a way to interact and manage the 12 countries a more efficiently.
4. The MTE has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to date and of the likelihood of outcomes and impact in the future, to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to identify the challenges and risks to achievement of the project objectives and to derive corrective actions needed for the project to achieve maximum impact and sustainability. In addition, the MTE is expected to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, project partners and the GEF. It will focus on the following sets of **key questions**, based on the project’s component and current implementation issues, which may be expanded by the consultants as deemed appropriate:
 - a. How far has the project been able to establish **National Legal Frameworks for Biosafety /Biotechnology**? What recommendations can be issued which would support the project in accelerating the progress towards the enactment of biosafety regulations?
 - b. What progress was made on **establishment and upgrading of resource base and institutional capacities for biosafety decision-making and management**?
 - c. **What is the status of the** production of biosafety procedural and training manuals and the delivery of human resource training at the national and regional levels?
 - d. **What are the key challenges facing the implementation of component 4, which aims to** boost the quality and availability of relevant biosafety information in the region to benefit both the general public and decision-makers? What recommendations can be issued to ensure the outcomes of the component are achieved by the end of the project?
 - e. **What are the key challenges to project implementation and what remedies can be proposed?** Is technical backstopping to the country project teams useful and cost-effective? Is the project adding value to the ongoing work on biosafety in each country?

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<http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

17

<http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationManual/tabid/2314/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

- f. **Can the project realistically achieve its intended outputs and objectives within the time remaining?** If not, what would be a more realistic time frame or what activities should be prioritized so that the main outputs and objectives can still be achieved in a timely manner?

B. Overall Approach and Methods

5. The MTE of the Project “Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean Sub-Region” will be conducted by independent consultants under the overall responsibility and management of the UNEP Evaluation Office (Nairobi), in consultation with the UNEP GEF Coordination Office (Nairobi), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Liaison Office and the Task Manager.
6. The MTE will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts.
7. The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:
- a. A **desk review** of project documents¹⁸ including, but not limited to:
 - Relevant background documentation, *inter alia* UNEP and GEF policies, strategies and programmes pertaining to biosafety;
 - Project design documents; Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the logical framework and project financing;
 - Project reports such as progress and financial reports from participating countries; National and Regional Steering Committee meeting minutes; annual Project Implementation Reviews and relevant correspondence;
 - Documentation related to project outputs, etc.
 - b. **Interviews**¹⁹ with:
 - Project management and execution team in UWI (executing agency)
 - Project management and execution team in participating countries;
 - UNEP Task Manager and Fund Management Officer;
 - Country lead execution partners, including the National Executing Agencies and National Project Focal Points, and other relevant partners;
 - Relevant staff of GEF Secretariat;
 - c. **Country visits.** The evaluation team will visit three or possibly four of the targeted intervention countries. It would be advisable for the consultant to travel to countries at different stages of implementation. A possible selection would include St. Lucia, Grenada, Belize and Barbados. This should be agreed with the Evaluation Office in due course. A virtual meeting is planned in April and the consultant will join to gain an insight into the project implementation.

C. Key Evaluation principles

8. Evaluation findings and judgements should be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the evaluation report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible, and when verification is not possible, the single

¹⁸ Documents to be provided by the UNEP and UNDP are listed in Annex 7.

¹⁹ Face-to-face or through any other appropriate means of communication

source will be mentioned²⁰. Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

9. The evaluation will assess the project with respect to **a minimum set of evaluation criteria** grouped in four categories: (1) Attainment of objectives and planned results, which comprises the assessment of outputs achieved, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency and the review of outcomes towards impacts; (2) Sustainability and catalytic role, which focuses on financial, socio-political, institutional and ecological factors conditioning sustainability of project outcomes, and also assesses efforts and achievements in terms of replication and up-scaling of project lessons and good practices; (3) Processes affecting attainment of project results, which covers project preparation and readiness, implementation approach and management, stakeholder participation and public awareness, country ownership/drivenness, project finance, UNEP supervision and backstopping, and project monitoring and evaluation systems; and (4) Complementarity with UNEP strategies and programmes. The lead consultant can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.
10. **Ratings.** All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. However, complementarity of the project with UNEP strategies and programmes is not rated. Annex 3 provides detailed guidance on how the different criteria should be rated and how ratings should be aggregated for the different evaluation criterion categories.
11. In attempting to attribute any outcomes and impacts to the project, the evaluators should consider the difference between **what has happened with** and **what would have happened without** the project. This implies that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions and trends in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. This also means that there should be plausible evidence to attribute such outcomes and impacts to the actions of the project. Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions and trends is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the evaluators, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the evaluator to make informed judgements about project performance.
12. Particular attention should be given to identifying implementation challenges and risks to achieving the expected project objectives and sustainability. Therefore, when reviewing progress to date, the **“why?” question** should be at front of the consultant’s minds all through the evaluation exercise. This means that the consultants need to go beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance is to date, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance is as it is, i.e. of processes affecting attainment of project results (criteria under category 3 presented below). This should provide the basis for the corrective actions recommended by the evaluation and the lessons that can be drawn from the project. In fact, the usefulness of the evaluation will be determined to a large extent by the capacity of the consultant to explain “why things happened” as they happened and are likely to evolve in this or that direction, which goes well beyond the mere assessment of “where things stand” today.

D. Evaluation criteria

1. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

13. The evaluation should assess the relevance of the project’s objectives and the extent to which these were effectively and efficiently achieved or are expected to be achieved.
 - a. *Achievement of Outputs and Activities:* Assess, for each component, the project’s success in producing the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness. Briefly explain the degree of success of the project in achieving its different

²⁰ Individuals should not be mentioned by name if anonymity needs to be preserved.

outputs, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section 3 (which covers the processes affecting attainment of project results).

- b. *Relevance*: Assess, in retrospect, whether the project's objectives and implementation strategies were consistent with: i) Sub-regional environmental issues and needs related to biodiversity conservation and natural resource management; ii) the UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; and iii) the GEF focal area on biodiversity, strategic priorities and the relevant operational program(s).
- c. *Effectiveness*: Assess whether the project is on track in achieving its main objective to implement effective, operable, transparent and sustainable National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF) which cater for national and regional needs, deliver global benefits and are compliant with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) in 12 Caribbean countries. Briefly explain what factors affected the project's success in achieving its objectives, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section 3.
- d. *Efficiency*: Assess the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution to date. Describe any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to implement the project within its programmed budget and timeframe. Analyse how delays have affected project execution, costs and effectiveness. Wherever possible, compare the cost and time over results ratios of the project with that of other similar projects. Give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects, etc. to increase project efficiency.
- e. *Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROTI)*: Reconstruct the logical pathways from project outputs over achieved objectives towards impacts, taking into account performance and impact drivers, assumptions and the roles and capacities of key actors and stakeholders, using the methodology presented in the GEF Evaluation Office's ROTI Practitioner's Handbook²¹ (summarized in Annex 7 of the TORs). Assess the extent to which the project has to date contributed, and is likely in the future to further contribute to changes in stakeholder behaviour as regards to: i) implementing the CPB ii) successfully managing biotechnologies; ii) enhancing and operationalizing institutional capacities: iv) awareness and behaviour of the public.

2. Sustainability and catalytic role

14. **Sustainability** is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived results and impacts after the external project funding and assistance ends. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of benefits. Some of these factors might be direct results of the project while others will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not under control of the project but that may condition sustainability of benefits. The evaluation should ascertain to what extent an exit strategy for the project has been prepared and how project results will be sustained and enhanced over time. The evaluation will have to ascertain that the project is looking further than its immediate outputs, for instance, at how the application of the ROTI method will assist in the evaluation of sustainability.
15. Four aspects of sustainability will be addressed:
 - a. *Socio-political sustainability*. Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts? Is the level of ownership by the main national and regional stakeholders sufficient to allow for the project results to be sustained? Are there

²¹ http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Impact_Eval_Review_of_Outcomes_to_Impacts-RotI_handbook.pdf

sufficient government and stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to execute, enforce and pursue the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? What is the project doing to ensure this socio-political sustainability of results and benefits?

- b. *Financial resources.* To what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources²² will be or will become available to implement the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact? What concrete efforts is the project making to ensure financial sustainability of results and benefits?
 - c. *Institutional framework.* To what extent is the sustenance of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? How robust are the institutional achievements so far, such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact on human behaviour and environmental resources? How is the project contributing to the sustainability of these institutional achievements?
 - d. *Environmental sustainability.* Are there any environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of project benefits? Are there any project outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits? How is the project dealing with these?
16. **Catalytic Role and Replication.** The *catalytic role* of GEF-funded and UNEP-implemented interventions is embodied in their approach of supporting the creation of an enabling environment and of investing in pilot activities which are innovative and showing how new approaches can work. UNEP and the GEF also aim to support activities that upscale new approaches to a national, regional or global level, with a view to achieve sustainable global environmental benefits. The evaluation will assess the catalytic role played by this project, namely to what extent the project is:
- a) *catalyzing behavioural changes* in terms of use and application by the relevant stakeholders of: i) technologies and approaches show-cased by the demonstration projects; ii) strategic programmes and plans developed; and iii) assessment, monitoring and management systems established at a national and sub-regional level;
 - b) providing *incentives* (social, economic, market based, competencies etc.) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behaviour;
 - c) contributing to *institutional changes*. An important aspect of the catalytic role of the project is its contribution to institutional uptake or mainstreaming of project-piloted approaches in the national demonstration projects;
 - d) contributing to *policy changes* (on paper and in implementation of policy);
 - e) contributing to sustained follow-on financing (*catalytic financing*) from Governments, the GEF or other donors;

²² Those resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, other development projects etc.

- f) creating opportunities for particular individuals or institutions (“*champions*”) to catalyze change (without whom the project would not have achieved all of its results).
17. *Replication*, in the context of UNEP and GEF projects, is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in different geographic areas) or scaled up (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in the same geographic area but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources). The evaluation will assess the approach adopted by the project to promote replication effects and examine to what extent actual replication has already occurred or is likely to occur in the near future. What are the factors that may influence replication and scaling up of project experiences and lessons?

3. Processes affecting attainment of project results

18. **Preparation and Readiness.** Are the project’s objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of executing agencies properly considered when the project was designed? Is the project document clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation? Are the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities well negotiated? Are counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities) and enabling legislation assured? Are adequate project management arrangements in place? Have lessons from other relevant projects been properly incorporated in the project design and implementation? Are lessons learned and recommendations from Steering Committee meetings adequately being integrated in the project approach? What factors influenced the quality-at-entry of the project design, choice of partners, allocation of financial resources etc.?
19. **Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management.** This includes an analysis of approaches used by the project, its management framework, the project’s adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management), the performance of the implementation arrangements and partnerships, relevance of changes in project design, and overall performance of project management. The evaluation will:
- a) Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document are being followed and are effective in delivering project outputs and outcomes. Have pertinent adaptations been made to the approaches originally proposed?
 - b) Assess the role and performance of the units and committees established and the project execution arrangements at all levels;
 - c) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of project management by UNEP, the implementing agency and by the Lead Agencies at country level. How well is management able to adapt to changes during the life of the project?
 - d) Assess the extent to which project management is responsive to direction and guidance provided by the Platform Steering Committee and UNEP;
 - e) Identify administrative, operational and/or technical problems and constraints that influence the effective implementation of the project, and how the project partners try to overcome these problems.
20. **Stakeholder²³ Participation and Public Awareness.** The term stakeholder should be considered in the broadest sense, encompassing project partners, government institutions, private interest groups, local communities etc. The assessment will look at three related and

²³ Stakeholders are the individuals, groups, institutions, or other bodies that have an interest or stake in the outcome of the project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by the project.

often overlapping processes: (1) information dissemination between stakeholders, (2) consultation between stakeholders, and (3) active engagement of stakeholders in project decision making and activities. The evaluation will specifically assess:

- a. the approach(es) used to identify and engage stakeholders in project design and implementation. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches with respect to the project's objectives and the stakeholders' motivations and capacities? What is the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during the course of implementation of the project?
 - b. the effectiveness of any public awareness activities that are being undertaken by the project, how the results of the project (strategic programmes and plans, monitoring and management systems, sub-regional agreements etc.) engage key project beneficiaries and stakeholders relevant to biosafety.
21. The ROTI analysis should assist the consultants in identifying the key stakeholders and their respective roles, capabilities and motivations in each step of the causal pathway from activities to achievement of outputs and objectives to impact.
22. **Country Ownership and Driven-ness.** The evaluation will assess the performance of the Governments of the 3 project countries, namely:
- a. in how the Governments are assuming responsibility for the project and providing adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received so far from the various lead institutions in the countries involved in the project and the timeliness of provision of counter-part funding to project activities;
 - b. to what extent the political and institutional framework of the participating countries has been conducive to project performance.
 - c. to what extent the Governments have promoted the participation of communities and their non-governmental organisations in the project; and
 - d. how responsive the Governments have been to regional and national coordination and guidance, and to UNEP supervision recommendations.
23. **Financial Planning and Management.** This requires the assessment of the quality and effectiveness of financial planning and control of financial resources throughout the project's lifetime. The MTE will look at actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. The evaluation will:
- a. Verify the application of proper standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) and timeliness of financial planning, management and reporting to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources are available to the project and its partners;
 - b. Examine other administrative processes such as recruitment of staff, procurement of goods and services (including consultants), preparation and negotiation of cooperation agreements etc. to the extent that these might influence project performance;
 - c. Present to what extent co-financing has materialized so far as compared to what was expected at project approval (see Table 1). Report country co-financing to the project overall, and to support project activities at the national level in particular. The evaluation will provide a breakdown of actual costs and co-financing for the different project components (see tables in Annex 3).

- d. Describe the resources the project has leveraged since inception and indicate how these resources are contributing to the project's ultimate objective. Leveraged resources are additional resources—beyond those committed to the project itself at the time of approval—that are mobilized later as a direct result of the project. Leveraged resources can be financial or in-kind and they may be from other donors, NGO's, foundations, governments, communities or the private sector.
24. **UNEP Supervision and Backstopping.** The purpose of supervision is to verify the quality and timeliness of project execution in terms of finances, administration and achievement of outputs and outcomes, in order to identify and recommend ways to deal with problems which arise during project execution. Such problems may be related to project management but may also involve technical/institutional substantive issues in which UNEP has a major contribution to make. The evaluators should assess the effectiveness of supervision and administrative and financial support provided by UNEP including:
- a. The adequacy of project supervision plans, inputs and processes;
 - b. The emphasis given to outcome monitoring (results-based project management);
 - c. The realism and candour of project reporting and ratings (i.e. are PIR ratings an accurate reflection of the project realities and risks);
 - d. The quality of documentation of project supervision activities; and
 - e. Financial, administrative and other fiduciary aspects of project implementation supervision.
25. **Monitoring and Evaluation.** The evaluation will include an assessment of the quality, application and effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, including an assessment of risk management based on the assumptions and risks identified in the project document. The evaluation will review how information generated by the M&E system during project implementation is being used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensuring sustainability. M&E is assessed on three levels:
- a) *M&E Design.* Projects should have sound M&E plans to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The timeframe for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should be specified. The evaluators will use the following questions to help assess the M&E design aspects:
 - b) Quality of the project logframe as a planning and monitoring instrument: compare and assess the Logframe in the Project Document and the Logframe used in the Project Implementation Review reports to report progress towards achieving project objectives;
 - c) SMART-ness of indicators: Are there specific indicators in the logframe for each of the project objectives? Are the indicators measurable, attainable (realistic) and relevant to the objectives? Are the indicators time-bound?
 - d) Adequacy of baseline information: To what extent has baseline information on performance indicators been collected and presented in a clear manner? Was the methodology for the baseline data collection explicit and reliable?
 - e) Arrangements for monitoring: Have the responsibilities for M&E activities been clearly defined? Were the data sources and data collection instruments appropriate? Was the frequency of various monitoring activities specified and adequate? In how far were project users involved in monitoring?
 - f) Arrangements for evaluation: Have specific targets and deadlines been specified for project outputs? Has the desired level of achievement been specified for all indicators of objectives

- and outcomes? Are there adequate provisions in the legal instruments binding project partners to fully collaborate in evaluations?
- g) Budgeting and funding for M&E activities: Determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and is funded in a timely fashion during implementation.
 - h) *M&E Plan Implementation*. The evaluation will verify that:
 - i) the M&E system is operational and facilitates timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period;
 - j) annual project reports and Progress Implementation Review (PIR) reports are complete, accurate and with well justified ratings;
 - k) the information provided by the M&E system is really being used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs.

4. Complementarities with the UNEP strategies and programmes

26. UNEP aims to undertake GEF funded projects that are aligned with its own strategies. The evaluation should present a brief narrative on the following issues:
- a. *Linkage to UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and POW 2010-2011 and 2012-2013*. The UNEP MTS specifies desired results in six thematic focal areas. The desired results are termed Expected Accomplishments. Using the completed ROTI analysis, the evaluation should comment on whether the project makes a tangible contribution to any of the Expected Accomplishments specified in the UNEP MTS. The magnitude and extent of any contributions and the causal linkages should be fully described. Whilst it is recognised that UNEP GEF projects designed prior to the production of the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS)²⁴ / Programme of Work (POW) 2010/11 would not necessarily be aligned with the Expected Accomplishments articulated in those documents, complementarities may still exist.
 - b. *Alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP)*²⁵. The current and intended outcomes and achievements of the project should be briefly discussed in relation to the objectives of the UNEP BSP.
 - c. *Gender*. Ascertain to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring take into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to and the control over natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation. Assess whether the intervention is likely to have any lasting impacts on gender equality and the relationship between women and the environment. Are there any unresolved gender inequalities that could affect sustainability of project benefits?
 - d. *South-South Cooperation*. This is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries. Briefly describe any aspects of the project that could be considered as examples of South-South Cooperation.

E. The Consultants' Team

27. This evaluation will be undertaken by a team of one independent consultant to be hired by the UNEP EO. The consultant will combine the following expertise and experience:
- a. Evaluation of environmental projects

²⁴ <http://www.unep.org/PDF/FinalMTSGCSS-X-8.pdf>

²⁵ <http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf>

- b. Expertise in biosafety and implementation of national frameworks
 - c. Good knowledge of UNEP GEF work
28. The **consultant** will be responsible for coordinating the data collection and analysis phase of the evaluation, and preparing the main report. (S)He will ensure that all evaluation criteria are adequately covered.
29. *By undersigning the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the consultant certifies that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of their contract) with the project's executing or implementing units.*

F. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

30. **The main evaluation report** should be brief (no longer than 35 pages – excluding the executive summary and annexes), to the point and written in plain English. The report will follow the annotated Table of Contents outlined in Annex 1. It must explain the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used (with their limitations). The report will present evidence-based and balanced findings, consequent conclusions, lessons and recommendations, which will be cross-referenced to each other. The report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. Any dissident views in response to evaluation findings will be appended in footnote or annex as appropriate.
31. **Report summary.** The consultant will prepare a 15-slide presentation summarizing the key findings, lessons learned and recommendations of the evaluation. This presentation will be presented at National and Steering Committee meeting of the project, if possible. The purpose of this presentation is to engage the main project partners in a discussion on the evaluation results and obtain their buy-in into the MTE recommendations.
32. **Review of the draft evaluation report.** The consultant will submit an inception report two weeks after commencement of the evaluation using the format presented in Annex 10. S/he will submit the zero draft report latest by 12 May 2014 to the UNEP EO and revise the draft following the comments and suggestions made by the EO. The EO will then share the first draft report with the UNEP/DGEF Task Manager for review and comments. UNEP/DGEF will forward the first draft report to the other project stakeholders, for review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. Comments would be expected within two weeks after the draft report has been shared. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to the UNEP EO for collation. The EO will provide the comments to the consultant for consideration in preparing the final draft report. The consultant will submit the final draft report no later than 2 weeks after reception of stakeholder comments. The consultant will prepare a **response to comments**. This response will be annexed to the MTE report to ensure full transparency.
33. Consultations will be held between the consultants, EO staff, the UNEP/GEF and key members of the project execution team, including UNEP/DGEF project staff. These consultations will seek feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons.
34. **Submission of the final Mid-term Evaluation report.** The final report shall be submitted by Email to:
 Mr. Michael Spilsbury, Chief
 UNEP Evaluation Office

Email: michael.spilsbury@unep.org

35. The Head of Evaluation will share the report with the following persons:

Maryam Niamir-Fuller, Director
UNEP/ GEF Coordination Office
Email: maryam.niamir-fuller@unep.org

Lydia Eibl-Kamolleh
Fund Management Officer
UNEP/DEPI-GEF
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Annex 7

Evaluator CV Summary

Hugo Navajas

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EDUCATION:

1984 - Masters Degree (MRP) in Regional Planning - Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs, Syracuse University USA

1978 - Undergraduate Degree (BA) in Cultural Anthropology - University of Arizona USA

KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

Design, evaluation and technical support for environmental management, sustainable development, poverty reduction and governance projects.

SPECIFIC COUNTRY EXPERIENCE:

Country Missions:

Latin America & Caribbean: Argentina (3/97, 2-3/2011); Belize (9/96); Bolivia (9-10/93, 5/94, 8/94, 12/95, 9/96, 2-6/2011); Brazil (2, 8-9/01, 4/2006); Chile (3/99,7/2001, 7/2003, 4/2006, 9/2006); Colombia (10/95); Costa Rica (8/96, 10/2013, 4/2014) Cuba (4/98, 11-12/2001, 7/2004, 2/2005); Dominican Republic (6/99; 9/2000); Ecuador (10/97, 11/95, 4/2005, 8/2006), El Salvador (10/2014), Guatemala (7/94, 11/95, 11/98 7/94, 4/2003); Guyana (4/2010); Honduras (8/95, 3/96, 4-5,8/2002); Jamaica (3/97, 4/2010); Mexico (5/2000, 9/2004, 4/2005); Nicaragua (8/99, 12/95); Peru (7/97, 9/2006); Tortola, BVI (3/97); Uruguay (10/97); Trinidad & Tobago (9/98); Venezuela (9/98; 9/2003);

Asia & Pacific: Bangladesh (5-7/2006), China (10-11/2000); South Korea (7/2003); Laos (5/2001, 9-11/2002); Marshall Islands (10/2002); Mongolia (5-6/2003; 7-8/2005); Thailand (4/95; 1/2005).

Africa & Middle East: Egypt (4/99, 2/2000, 3/02); Jordan (7/03); Kenya (4/2005, 3/2006, 11/2011, 4/2012), Mozambique (2/98, 3/99); South Africa (11/97); Syria (2/2000); Tanzania (11/97; 7/2003); Turkey (2/2000; 4-5/2007); Yemen (8/01, 2/2003)

Central & Eastern Europe: Albania (2/2000); Macedonia (4/2004); Slovakia (3-4/2004; 5-6/2005); Slovenia (7/2003); Romania (6/2005), Ukraine (4/2004).

Fixed-Term Employment Contracts:

Bolivia (1/88-12/88); Honduras (7/91-5/93); Kenya (1/89-6/91); Mozambique (12/85-12/87); United States (7/78-6/82)

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE:

10/2013-2/2014 Project Evaluator/Team Leader UN-Habitat. Ex-post evaluation of UN Habitat's Joint Programme for the LAC region, encompassing 9 projects implemented in 6 countries (Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador and Guatemala) for a combined budget of US\$ 6.8 million. The projects address thematic areas of urban slum improvement, water and sanitation, environmental

conservation, democratic governance, race and gender rights, and peace-building/conflict resolution in the context of MDG 7 with financing by the MDG Achievement Fund. The project portfolio was co-implemented with other UN agencies under the joint programme modality. Duties include desk review, preparation of inception report, elaboration of questionnaires, direct/skype interviews, field visits to projects in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Ecuador; and preparation of draft and final evaluation reports.

10/2012-2/2013 Project Evaluator United Nations Environment Programme and Global Environment Facility (GEF). Final evaluation of GL4880 "Reducing Pesticide Runoff to the Caribbean Sea", a GEF-funded US\$ 15 million initiative that was implemented in Colombia, Costa Rica and Nicaragua through the ministries of Environment, in collaboration with cooperative/private producers of banana, plantain and pineapple, CROPLIFE Latin America, national NGOs and other public/private partners. The project supported components for introduction of environmentally sound agricultural practices, integrated pest management (IPM), capacity building and the establishment of a regional pesticide monitoring network with universities and national research institutions. Evaluation activities include (i) interviews with programme stakeholders linked to central and provincial government, NGOs, international organizations; (ii) field visits to targeted cooperatives and private enterprises situated in the Caribbean basin, and interviews with beneficiaries; and (iii) elaboration of the final evaluation report.

11/2011-6/2012 Programme Evaluator United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi Kenya. Final evaluation of the UNEP Environmental Governance Sub-programme, which is one of four sub-programmes within UNEP's 2010-2013 Medium Term Strategy (MTS). The EGSP involves 5 UNEP Divisions and encompasses 18 outputs and 14 projects, with a total programmed budget of US\$ 139 million. Interviews with representatives of UNEP's Divisions, Regional Offices and Executive level; review of Sub-programme and project documentation; and preparation of a final evaluation report in collaboration with UNEP's Evaluation Office.

2-8/2011 Programme Evaluator/Team Leader Global Environment Facility (GEF), Washington DC and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi Kenya. Final evaluation of the Implementation of the Strategic Program for the Bermejo River Binational Basin, a US\$ 11 million initiative encompassing the provinces of Salta, Jujuy, Formosa and Chaco in northern Argentina, and the department of Tarija in southern Bolivia. The programme was funded by GEF and implemented by UNEP, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Bi-National Commission for the Bermejo Basin (COBINABE), with components addressing institutional strengthening and capacity building, erosion and flood control, biodiversity conservation and environmental education. Evaluation activities include (i) interviews with programme stakeholders at the central and provincial government level, the academic sector, NGOs and beneficiary communities among others, (ii) field visits to a project sample in both countries, and (iii) elaboration of a final evaluation report and technical report addressing structural measures.

6-11/2010 Programme Evaluator UNDP, New York. Final evaluation of the GEF Country Support Programme (CSP), a US\$ 11.8 million initiative offered in 128 countries to build national/sub regional capacities for accessing GEF funds and managing the GEF project cycle. Direct interviews with the project team based at UNDP Headquarters and representatives of the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office. Design and implementation of e-surveys directed at national GEF focal points that participated in the programme, followed by in-depth interviews with selected respondents. Review of project documentation, subregional workshop reports and the CSP web page. Drafting of the final evaluation report.

4-5/2010 Programme Evaluator UNDP Jamaica - Kingston Jamaica. Outcome evaluation of UNDP Jamaica's environment and energy portfolio under the 2007-2011 Country Programme. Interviews with UNDP senior management and programme staff, government counterparts and implementing partners. Visits to selected project sites. Review of relevant documentation and preparation of preliminary findings for Stakeholder Meeting. Elaboration of the evaluation report.

3-4/2010 *Programme Evaluator/Team Leader* UNDP Guyana - Georgetown Guyana. Outcome evaluation of UNDP Guyana's environment, energy and poverty reduction portfolio under the 2007-2011 Country Programme. Interviews with UNDP senior management and programme staff, government counterparts and implementing partners. Visits to selected projects. Review of relevant documentation and preparation of preliminary findings for Stakeholder Meeting. Elaboration of environment and energy components of the evaluation report, and incorporation/editing of sections addressing poverty reduction.

11/2009 – 1/2010 *Consultant* United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) – Turin, Italy. Assessment of existing evaluation practices among 7 UN research and training institutes, considering levels of adherence to UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines, gaps and analysis/recommendations for harmonizing evaluation practices in the context of OneUN/Delivering as One. Elaboration of a report for circulation among the institutes, UNEG and the SG's Office.

9/2009 – 11/2009 *Consultant* UNDP - New York / UNEP - Nairobi. Assessment of trends and stakeholder perceptions regarding various forms of UNDP - UNEP collaboration, both within and outside the One UN/Delivering as One context. Preparation of a global inventory of UNDP-UNEP collaboration, grouping initiatives by theme/strategic objective, region and country. Consultations with UNDP, UNEP and partner focal points through on-line surveys and questionnaires. Elaboration of inventory and forward-looking assessment reports for the UNDP-UNEP Working Group.

4 – 8/2009 *Project Evaluator* UNEP, Nairobi. Final evaluation of the Biosafety Clearinghouse Project (BCH Phase I), a US\$ 14.9 million capacity development initiative implemented in 112 countries to support the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Consultations with project staff based in Geneva and Nairobi, review of documentation and country visits to Mongolia, Ethiopia, Albania, Guatemala and Uruguay. Preparation and processing of on-line surveys to national coordinators and regional advisors. Formulation of the final evaluation report.

9-11/2008 *Project Evaluator* UNEP – Nairobi. Final evaluation of the UNEP/Belgian Partnership covering the 2004-2008 period. Under the partnership, the Government of Belgium provided US\$ 12 million to support programmes for implementing the Global Plan of Action (GPA) for marine and coastal zone protection, designing National Action Plans for coastal/river basin conservation and integrated waste management; integrating environmental priorities within Poverty Reduction Strategies; strengthening national legislation and participation to implement Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs); and implementing demonstration projects. The evaluation included the desk review of relevant documentation, interviews with programme managers at UNEP Headquarters, design/dissemination of an on-line survey to programme recipients, and field visits to Peru and Bangladesh. Elaboration of Final Evaluation Report.

6-7/2008 *Project Evaluator* UNEP – Nairobi. Mid-term evaluation of "Enhancing conservation of the critical network of sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways" (Wings Over Wetlands), a US\$ 6 million initiative funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by UNEP in 12 countries of the African and Eurasian regions. Interviews with the Project Coordination Unit, Steering Committee and institutional partners in Wetlands International, Bird Life International, UNEP, Africa Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA) and Government of Germany. Design and processing of on-line surveys targeting stakeholder groups in the participating regions. Desk review of relevant documentation. Elaboration of Mid-Term Evaluation Report.

5-6/2008 *Evaluator* UNDP – New York. Assessment of the Civil Society Organization Advisory Committee to the UNDP Administrator, which provided policy advice, monitoring and advocacy support to UNDP senior management between 2000 and 2006. The assessment considered Committee performance, influence/impact on policy and programmes, institutional responsiveness and coordination with different levels of UNDP. Interviews and focus group meetings with senior UNDP staff (Office of the Administrator, BPE, RCBP and Regional Bureaux), CSO Division and CSO Advisory Committee members. Design and processing of an on-line survey for committee members and UNDP partners/clients. Desk review of relevant documents. Analysis and presentation of findings at UNDP Headquarters. Preparation of Assessment Report.

8-11/2007 Programme Evaluator UNDP Evaluation Office – New York. Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Study for UNDP-Ecuador covering the 2002-2007 period. The ADR focussed on governance, environment/sustainable development, economic development, HIV/AIDs and other thematic components of the UNDP Country Cooperation Framework. The assignment additionally included an assessment of UNDP Ecuador's energy/ environment portfolio as a component for UNDP's Global Assessment of Energy & Environment report. Activities included the desk review of relevant documents; interviews with UNDP/UN agency and project staff, central/local government officials, NGOs and other stakeholders; and field visits to projects in Quito, Guayaquil and Galapagos. Co-drafting of ADR Study and drafting of the Ecuador component for the Global Assessment of Energy & Environment.

4-5/2007 Country Evaluator Global Environment Facility (GEF)/World Bank – Washington DC. Country evaluation of GEF Small Grants Program in Turkey, under a joint global evaluation of country SGPs conducted by GEF-World Bank and the UNDP Evaluation Office. Meetings with GEF-SG staff, GEF national focal points, NGO and donor representatives in Turkey. Field visits to small grant projects, review of documentation, and focus group interviews/workshops with grantees and Steering Committee members. Analysis of findings with UNDP Evaluation Office participant, supervision of national consultant and drafting of Country Study.

8/2006-2/2007 Evaluator Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation (GBMF) – San Francisco, USA. Evaluation of the Global Conservation Fund, a US\$ 100 million financing facility implemented by Conservation International (CI) that supports the creation/expansion and long-term financing of Protected Areas in wilderness areas and "hot spots." Meetings with GCF-CI staff in Washington DC and Moore Foundation staff in San Francisco. Review of documents and processing of survey findings for GCF's portfolio of 58 projects. Field visits to GCF projects in Ecuador, Peru and Chile. Analysis of findings and recommendations, and drafting of evaluation report in collaboration with other team members.

5-7/2006 Mission Team Leader UNDP – Dhaka, Bangladesh. Formulation of governance and capacity development components for the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility, a US\$ 30 million initiative funded by UNDP, EU and other donors for the sustainable development of the CHT region, targeting indigenous communities and natural resource management. Review of background documents, design of formulation methodology, supervision of a five-person team, field missions in the CHT, and formulation of an integrated technical assessment report and comprehensive program document with modules on community outreach and support systems, environmental protection and management, disaster preparedness, NGO capacity strengthening and skills development for community management.

Annex 8: UNEP Evaluation Quality Assessment

Evaluation Title:

Mid term Evaluation of the Project Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework in the Wider Caribbean region

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. The quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants.

The quality of both the draft and final evaluation report is assessed and rated against the following criteria:

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Draft Report Rating	Final Report Rating
Substantive report quality criteria			
A. Quality of the Executive Summary: Does the executive summary present the main findings of the report for each evaluation criterion and a good summary of recommendations and lessons learned? (Executive Summary not required for zero draft)	Draft report: Final report: good summary highlighting key points		5
B. Project context and project description: Does the report present an up-to-date description of the socio-economic, political, institutional and environmental context of the project, including the issues that the project is trying to address, their root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being? Are any changes since the time of project design highlighted? Is all essential information about the project clearly presented in the report (objectives, target groups, institutional arrangements, budget, changes in design since approval etc.)?	Draft report: Good overview of context Final report: Same as above	5	5
C. Strategic relevance: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of strategic relevance of the intervention in terms of relevance of the project to global, regional and national environmental issues and needs, and UNEP strategies and programmes?	Draft report: Relevance to UNEP MTS and PoW has to be added Final report: Added in the final report	4	5
D. Achievement of outputs: Does	Draft report: Yes well-reasoned analysis presented	5	5

	the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of outputs delivered by the intervention (including their quality)?	Final report: Same as above		
E.	Presentation of Theory of Change: Is the Theory of Change of the intervention clearly presented? Are causal pathways logical and complete (including drivers, assumptions and key actors)?	Draft report: ToC reconstruction developed with EOU support Final report: Same as above	4	4
F.	Effectiveness - Attainment of project objectives and results: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the achievement of the relevant outcomes and project objectives?	Draft report: Yes, complete presentation Final report: Same as above	5	5
G.	Sustainability and replication: Does the report present a well-reasoned and evidence-based assessment of sustainability of outcomes and replication / catalytic effects?	Draft report: Analysis is well reasoned although occasionally the substantiation of the sustainability aspects is less detailed, partially due to the fact that it is rather difficult at mid-term in the case of a project with little in terms of delivered outputs Final report: Same as above	5	5
H.	Efficiency: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency? Does the report present any comparison with similar interventions?	Draft report: One of the main sections of the report as efficiency has so far hampered progress in implementation Final report: Same as above	6	6
I.	Factors affecting project performance: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of all factors affecting project performance? In particular, does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used; and an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?	Draft report: Full analysis, financial data presented as available, but there is little information at this stage Final report: Same as above	5	5
J.	Quality of the conclusions: Do the conclusions highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect those in a compelling story line?	Draft report: Conclusions capture the key points and are linked to report solidly Final report: Same as above	5	5
K.	Quality and utility of the recommendations: Are	Draft report: Recommendations needed refinement in	5	5

recommendations based on explicit evaluation findings? Do recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented?	terms of WHO, but overall provide good guidance for the rest of the project and have been acknowledged by the TM Final report: Good recommendations, appreciated by most stakeholders		
L. Quality and utility of the lessons: Are lessons based on explicit evaluation findings? Do they suggest prescriptive action? Do they specify in which contexts they are applicable?	Draft report: Lessons are relevant and specific Final report: Same as above	5	5
Report structure quality criteria			
M. Structure and clarity of the report: Does the report structure follow EO guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included?	Draft report: Not all annexes included, structure has been followed Final report: All required annexes have been included	4	5
N. Evaluation methods and information sources: Are evaluation methods and information sources clearly described? Are data collection methods, the triangulation / verification approach, details of stakeholder consultations provided? Are the limitations of evaluation methods and information sources described?	Draft report: Yes good description of methods and limitations Final report: Same as above	5	5
O. Quality of writing: Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)	Draft report: Required minor editing Final report: Well written report	5	5
P. Report formatting: Does the report follow EO guidelines using headings, numbered paragraphs etc.	Draft report: Mostly Final report: Yes	5	5
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		4.9	5

The quality of the evaluation process is assessed at the end of the evaluation and rated against the following criteria:

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments		Rating
Evaluation process quality criteria			
Q. Preparation: Was the evaluation budget agreed and approved by the EO? Was inception report delivered and approved prior to commencing any travel?	Yes		6
R. Timeliness: Was a TE initiated	Yes, but then delayed due to a serious		5

	within the period of six months before or after project completion? Was an MTE initiated within a six month period prior to the project's mid-point? Were all deadlines set in the ToR respected?	illness of one of the consultant's baby daughters, requiring an operation abroad		
S.	Project's support: Did the project make available all required documents? Was adequate support provided to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Yes, only issue encountered was with obtaining full contact details of stakeholders		5
T.	Recommendations: Was an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations prepared? Was the implementation plan adequately communicated to the project?	Yes		6
U.	Quality assurance: Was the evaluation peer-reviewed? Was the quality of the draft report checked by the evaluation manager and peer reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments? Did EO complete an assessment of the quality of the final report?	Yes		6
V.	Transparency: Were the draft ToR and evaluation report circulated to all key stakeholders for comments? Was the draft evaluation report sent directly to EO? Were all comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the EO and did EO share all comments with the commentators? Did the evaluator(s) prepare a response to all comments?	YesYes		6
W.	Participatory approach: Was close communication to the EO and project maintained throughout the evaluation? Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately communicated?	Yes		6
X.	Independence: Was the final selection of the evaluator(s) made by EO? Were possible conflicts of interest of the selected evaluator(s) appraised?	Yes		6
OVERALL PROCESS RATING				5.75

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1

The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.