



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Project evaluation series

Mid-term evaluation of
“Disposal of obsolete
pesticides including
persistent organic pollutants,
promotion of alternatives
and strengthening
pesticides management
in the Caribbean”

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"Disposal of obsolete pesticides
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**GCP/SLC/204/GFF
GEF ID 5407**

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AFIPA	National Association of Manufacturers and Importers of Agricultural Phytosanitary Products
ANT	Antigua and Barbuda
BAR	Barbados
CAHFSA	Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency
BH	Budget Holder
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARDI	Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute
CGPC	Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean
COTED	Council of Trade and Economic Development
DMI	The Commonwealth of Dominica
DOM	Dominican Republic
EMP	Environmental Management Plans
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAO SLC	FAO's Sub-regional Office for the Caribbean
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GUY	Guyana
HHPs	Highly Hazardous Pesticides
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IPM	Integrated pest management
JAM	Jamaica
LoA	Letter of Agreement
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
LTU	Lead Technical Unit
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NPCs	National Project Coordinators
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation
PAN UK	Pesticides Action Group, United Kingdom
PC	Project Coordinator
PCB	Pesticide Control Board
PCBs	Polychlorinated Biphenyls
POPs	Persistent Organic Pesticides
PTCCB	Pesticide and Toxic Chemicals Control Board
PIF	Project Implementing Report
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSMS	Pesticides Stock Management System
SO	FAO Strategic Objective
STK	Saint Kitts and Nevis
STL	Saint Lucia
STV	Saint Vincent and The Grenadines
SUR	Suriname
ToC	Theory of Change
Tor	Terms of Reference
TRI	Trinidad and Tobago
USD	United States Dollars
UWI	University of the West Indies

Executive summary

1. The adverse effect of agrochemicals, particularly pesticides, on human health and the environment is a global concern. The agriculture sector is very important to the economies of many countries in the Caribbean Region. However, downturns in the once thriving sugarcane and banana industries resulted in an accumulation of obsolete pesticides. This scenario has been compounded by confiscation of unlicensed imports, inadequate and inappropriate storage facilities, and a lack of technical and financial resources for lifecycle management of pesticides. The Organisation of American States (OAS) survey of Caribbean countries "revealed a dire situation facing Caribbean countries in managing obsolete pesticide stockpiles" (OEA, 2007). The Global International Waters Assessment reported that "the use of agro-chemicals within the agricultural sector is a source of significant damage to both surface and groundwater resources" and highlighting indiscriminate and improper disposal of agricultural wastes as a priority issue (GIWA, 2006).
2. In this context, the project Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides including POPs, Promotion of Alternatives and Strengthening Pesticides Management in the Caribbean (GCP/SLC/204/GFF) is being implemented by FAO with the financial support of GEF, with a total budget of USD 26 368 739. The project complements previous regional efforts and seeks to promote the sound management of pesticides throughout their life cycle in the Caribbean Region, and reduce the risk posed by pesticides to human health and the environment. The project was signed in 2015 and will end in September 2019.
3. A Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) has been conducted on this project to identify any problems and constraints on the project relevance, performance and sustainability, and formulate appropriate recommendations for effective implementation of the remaining part of the planned project intervention. The scope of the MTE focused on the implementation of project and its activities from November 2015 to April 2019.
4. The evaluation questions were focused on the relevance of the project, its progress in achieving positive outcomes for beneficiary countries, the cost-effectiveness and efficiency, the strategy for stakeholder engagement and partnerships; the likelihood of sustainability and the consideration and involvement of gender issues in project implementation. The MTE methods comprised: desk review of over 35 documents; 152 key informant interviews; an online survey conducted in English and Spanish; and direct observation during site visits. 8 countries were visited during the evaluation mission: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic.
5. The main findings of the MTE, particularly on the relevance of the project indicate that project interventions are aligned with national and regional priorities. Project interventions are contributing to strategic objectives of the institutions in charge of pesticides regulation in each participating country and putting knowledge and training on the ground. At regional level, agriculture

will continue being a key economic growth driver in the Caribbean region and project interventions are strengthening this activity by proposing a regional harmonization of sound pesticides management that will reduce risks by pesticides and facilitate pesticides trade.

6. Regarding effectiveness, the project implementation this far includes the environmentally-sound disposal of 319 tonnes of obsolete pesticides stocks, including POPs from 11 project beneficiary countries, which has been the most visible and more important outcome reached by the project. Nonetheless, delays are observed in all other activities, being more significant for the technology transfer of methodologies to identify and remediate contaminated sites and for the strengthening of the regulatory framework and institutional capacity for sound management of pesticides. The identification and remediation of contaminated sites also presents important technical difficulties. These delays and technical problems are putting the compliance of project objectives at risk considering that the project is scheduled to end in September 2019.
7. The reasons of the delays identified are: i) the project started six months late, it was planned to start in November, 2015, but the project was initiated in May 2016; ii) in the Year 1 of the project, the priority was directed to the preparatory activities to ship the obsolete pesticides stocks for their destruction, finishing earlier than expected; iii) the implementation framework indicated in the Results Matrix of the PRODOC did not adequately balance tasks between project years; iv) most of the National Project Coordinators stressed that their capacities are limited with regard to human and financial resources; v) there are low technical capacities in the region to carry out chemical analyses of soil samples for pesticide contamination, and vi) there is also limited expertise to manage soil samples.
8. An opportunity to improve the Monitoring and Evaluation plan was identified, since there is a lack of critical view to qualify the level of achievement of project activities; important decisions made during project implementation have not been monitored; two Project Progress Reports are missing, and the MTE started late. This has impeded the opportunity for implementing partners to have timely feedback on the progress of the project, and to assist them in taking informed decisions on any necessary remedial steps that ensure timely interventions.
9. Financial resources provided to the project appear to be adequate compared to the results achieved, and expenditure is consistent with the delays in project delivery. There is uncertainty on the level of materialization of co-financing as its estimation has been challenging for project partners. Efforts have been identified to ensure compliance and correct reporting of co-financing by project countries.
10. Regarding partnership and stakeholder engagement, FAO has established a fluid and effective channel of communication with partners to support them on technical issues, mainly by e-mail and meetings of the PSC, and with the assistance of some social media platforms. However, there has been limited

supervision of Technical Officers on the ground. Additionally, the engagement of all levels and categories of stakeholders relevant to the project has been generally weak in almost all project countries. This is in stark contrast to the active participation of multiple stakeholders in the empty pesticides container management network in Suriname. It was identified that the strategy to avoid a weak engagement of national stakeholders has not been implemented. Particularly, the Dominican Republic presents the weakest stakeholders' engagement. Only one new partnership has been created between different government institutions and the private sector to implement an empty pesticides containers management scheme in Suriname. Although the project has taken prudent actions to engage and partner with stakeholders at the regional level, such as the ongoing consultations with the Council for Trade and Economic Development and the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency. This regional engagement is key to the sustainability of the project and its actions.

11. The sustainability of project activities and benefits at this point is in jeopardy. The adoption of the model regulations on sound pesticides management and the establishment of a regional group on pesticide registration are key activities to ensure sustainability of project benefits. Notwithstanding, there is high risk that these activities will not be accomplished due to intrinsic political risks, delays and time constraints. Initial efforts are in the correct direction to obtain support from key regional organizations to promote the accomplishment of these two activities from project countries, but thus far they are not sufficient.
12. In respect to gender mainstreaming, the PRODOC did not consider the inclusion of gender perspective in the project implementation, as the guidelines to elaborate it of that time did not require it. However, sound management of pesticides has important gender dimensions. Until now, gender perspective had neither been included in practical trainings on remediation of contaminated sites, nor in the communication materials on the dangers of chemical pesticides to human health and the environment.
13. Activities under the project have contributed to generating knowledge on pesticides risk reduction through the identification of highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) in the Caribbean region and the process of developing alternatives to replace them through field trials. Moreover, knowledge has been generated on sound pesticides management since a diagnostic of the gaps on the current pesticides legal framework in each project country was developed, which will be the base to elaborate the model regulation. A proposal of cost-recovery mechanisms was also elaborated to provide inputs to project countries to strengthen pesticides management. Stakeholders have also benefitted from knowledge sharing through a package of trainings focused on safeguarding obsolete pesticides, remediation of pesticides contaminated sites, pesticides import/export and control, and generally increasing awareness on the adverse effects of these chemicals. A new data repository on CAHFSA's website was developed, which will contain data on pesticides use in the region.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1 (Relevance/Design). Project interventions are contributing to the accomplishment of national strategic objectives on pesticides management and to position this matter as relevant to support modern agriculture at the regional level.

Conclusion 2 (Effectiveness). The elimination of obsolete pesticides in the region has been seen as a great success of the project. However, significant delays in other important activities such as the development of model regulations and the remediation of contaminated sites are putting at risk full achievement of the project's objectives.

Conclusion 3 (Efficiency). Project expenses are consistent with the progress in the activities, although monitoring of the project's activities can be greatly improved. Deficiencies in executing the M&E plan meant that risk affecting project performance were not identified on time and appropriate recommendations were not provided in a timely manner to keep the project on track.

Conclusion 4 (Partnerships and stakeholder engagement). Engagement of national stakeholders in the project is weak due to their lack of full knowledge of the project and its activities. This risk was identified in a previous pesticides project in the region, however the recommended strategy to avoid it was not implemented. In comparison, important actions have been carried out to engage key stakeholders at the regional level such as the presentation of project results in the COTED's annual meetings since 2016 and the inclusion of information related to the project in the Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) database system housed and maintained by CAHFSA.

Conclusion 5 (Co-financing). It is apparent that co-financing is not at risk due to the delays in project implementation and the availability of resources to accomplish the activities which were undertaken. However, there is uncertainty on the level of materialization of co-financing and the estimation of co-financing continues to be challenging for NPCs.

Conclusion 6 (Sustainability). Sustainability of project benefits are at risk due to significant delays in activities that are fundamental to it, such as the proposal of a model regulation to be adopted by project countries, and the reduction of risks to human and the environment by the initial remediation of priority contaminated sites, which will also create capacities in the region to manage pesticides contaminated sites. Initial efforts are in the correct direction to obtain support from key regional organizations to elaborate a harmonized model regulation, but are insufficient.

Conclusion 7 (Gender). The project did not have a gender mainstreaming strategy, even though sound management of pesticides has important gender dimensions. Efforts have been made to collect gender disaggregated data, but trainings and communication materials have not included the gender perspective.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 to GEF and FAO: Request a project extension until December 2020 at no cost in order to provide sufficient time to achieve a satisfactory level of contamination reduction in selected pesticides contaminated sites, which is a key activity to reduce risks

to human health and the environment and build capacities in the Caribbean region. Also, ensuring enough time to engage key allies to do lobbying work with targeted regional and national institutions and organizations in order that Model Regulations can be adopted. For that, it is necessary to accomplish the activities defined in the project, namely: 1) to develop model regulations in consultation with Chief Parliamentary Counsel at the national level and CARICOM Legal Affairs Committee at the regional level; 2) ensure the revision and approval of the model by the technical experts of OECS; and 3) provide sufficient time for countries to negotiate internally the adoption of the model regulations. In general terms, this project extension will allow implementers to finish all pending project activities.

Recommendation 2 to CGPC and FAO: Improve visibility of the project through a strategic communication campaign addressed to national stakeholders and external partners (i.e. FAO country offices) in order to inform on project activities progress and its benefits additional to the removal of obsolete pesticides. This would help to reemphasize the importance of the project for the region and their commitment to the project.

Recommendation 3 to CGPC and FAO: The arrangements to appoint the National Focal Points (NFP) from different line ministries to support National Project Teams should be implemented as indicated in the PRODOC. This would address the weak engagement of national stakeholders, who lack full knowledge of the project and its activities. Considering that 9 countries have national Boards, a proposal could be that members of the Boards are appointed as NFP of the project, which would have the responsibility to inform to their respective ministries or organizations on project progress and would be responsible for specific project duties related to their institutional functions. The NPC would have the responsibility to update during the Boards meetings on project progress and share the 6-monthly project progress reports. In the case of Suriname, the members of the Pesticide Approval Committee could be appointed as NFP. For the Dominican Republic, the members of the virtual group, created to attend activities related to the Rotterdam, Basel and Stockholm Conventions, should also be appointed as NFP of this project.

Recommendation 4 to FAO and National Project Team of the Dominican Republic: Communication capacity and capabilities of the National Project Team of the Dominican Republic (DR) should be strengthened in order to overcome language barriers to effectively communicate with regional partners and PC, and actively participate in the project implementation. Hiring or developing bilingual staff is one way to reinforce these capacities. Additionally, it is necessary to strengthen communication and coordination among the National Project Team members and with stakeholders, as many were unaware of the full spectrum of the project's activities. Finally, the project should ensure that the National Coordinator has the necessary capacity to manage, implement and deliver on the project's strategic priorities. As a first step, it is advisable to have a high-level face to face meeting with the new Plant Health Director of the Ministry of Agriculture of DR in order to discuss the best way to attend this recommendation.

Recommendation 5 to CGPC, FAO and GEF: It is advisable to establish coordination with the activities of the GEF project ID 5558 "Development and implementation of a sustainable management system for POPs in the Caribbean" as it contains some overlapping components with the current project, including the results and lessons learned. According to FAO's previous experience, there is a potential risk that the proposals of legislations

elaborated in both projects contain contradictory aspects for the sound pesticides management.

Recommendation 6 to FAO: A Monitoring and Evaluation System is crucial to identify new/potential risks that could affect the achievement of project objectives and propose actions to mitigate them. Since significant delays were not identified during project implementation, which now affect the fulfilment of the objectives, the Monitoring and Evaluation plan of the project should be strengthened by using available resources for hiring a specialist to support the monitoring and reporting on project's progress.

Recommendation 7 to FAO and CGPC: The adoption of model harmonized regulations would help the project countries to prevent the generation of new obsolete pesticides, however, there is uncertainty when the regulation could be adopted. Thus, a training exercise to prevent the obsolescence of pesticides is highly advisable at this stage of the project.

Recommendation 8 to FAO: A gender mainstreaming strategy should be defined and implemented in pending project activities. Specialized support should be requested from FAO gender specialist. The strategy should consider aspects such as: to ensure that awareness raising activities are targeting vulnerable groups relevant to the project; to ensure that pesticides risks to vulnerable groups (such as pregnant and nursing women) are identified in the project and the identified risks are considered in trainings, remediation activities and in the communication materials; and to increase application of a gender perspective to the relevant areas of the project (for instance, intention to ensure gender balance during trainings).

GEF Rating Table

GEF criteria/sub criteria	Rating	Summary Comments
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	S	Project interventions contribute to FAO's Strategic Objective 2 on increasing agricultural production on a sustainable manner; and the CHEM-1 Outcome 1.4 of GEF Objectives on POPs sound management and elimination.
A2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities	S	Project interventions contribute to the accomplishment of national and regional strategic objectives and are aligned with international environmental treaties (i.e. Stockholm Convention).
A3. Complementarity with existing interventions	MS	There are overlapping actions with GEF project ID 5558 on chemicals management, and the <i>Rotterdam project</i> related to alternatives to dangerous pesticides.
A4. Overall strategic relevance	S	Partners and stakeholders participated actively in the project design; thus, project actions are aligned with national, regional and global priorities.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MU	Component 1 shows satisfactory accomplishment of results, but those of the other four Components are delayed. Particularly, Components 2 and 4 are significantly delayed.

B1.1 Delivery of Outputs	MU	The elimination of the obsolete pesticides was a great success for the project; however, other important outputs such as the development of Model Regulations, regional HHP use and risk reduction plan, among other, are delayed.
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹ and project objectives	MU	Although the elimination of the obsolete pesticides contributes strongly to the fulfilment of project objectives, other activities of the similar importance have not been carried out, thus accomplishment of the objectives of the project is at risk.
B1.3 Likelihood of Impact	Not rated at MTE	NA
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency ²	MU	There are significant delays in important project activities (i.e. remediation of contaminated sites and the elaboration of model regulations). Monitoring and evaluation of project activities is very weak and the Mid Term Evaluation is being conducted much later than scheduled in the PIF.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	MU	Model regulations and the creation of a working group on pesticides registration to harmonize pesticides management at regional level are key elements for sustainability, but they show significant delays.
D2. Financial risks	MU	The CGPC would take over activities on the management of pesticides at regional level. However, it has limited financial and technical capacities. Thus, a secretariat is needed to support its activities. This is being negotiated with CAHFSA, which also has limited resources.
D3. Socio-political risks	ML	Since the regional harmonization on pesticides management was requested by project countries, their support for the adoption of the model regulations is expected. However, some partners and stakeholders expressed concern about sovereignty considerations held by some countries.
D4. Institutional and governance risks	ML	Considering that project interventions are aligned with national priorities, it is expected that project countries would continue with their activities. Nonetheless, NPCs have expressed limited capacities to implement them.
D5. Environmental risks	ML	Remediation of contaminated sites is still pending and quantities of obsolete pesticides remain in the region due to the inaccuracy of some inventories.
D6. Catalysis and replication	MU	The adoption of the model regulation for pesticides legislation by at least 5 project countries could be at risk if timely and astute negotiations are not conducted.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		

² Assessment and ratings by individual outcome may be undertaken if there is added value. includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

E1. Project design and readiness ³	MS	The project started 6 months late due to the delay in hiring the Project Coordinator.
E2. Quality of project implementation	MU	The annual workplans do not reflect the problems faced by the project, and no indication of M&E efforts undertaken due to the late commencement and delays in key projects activities. The activities planned to be carried out during the first year were unrealistic considering the capacities of the National Project Coordinators.
E2.1 Project oversight (FAO, PSC, PTF, etc)	MU	FAO and the PSC have not had a critical view to qualify the level of achievement of project activities, thus there have been no warnings to project coordinators to attend to project delays.
E3. Quality of project execution	HS	Considering the challenges to deal with "lag" and "lead" project countries, the limited technical capacities in the region, and insufficient staff for regional coordination, the level project execution has been highly satisfactory.
E3.1 Project management arrangements and delivery (PMU, financial management, etc)	MU	Use of project resources by the BH & PC has been adequate and cautious, although management arrangements are incomplete due to the lack of national focal points who would support national stakeholder engagement.
E4. Co-financing	UA	There is uncertainty on the materialization of project co-financing due to challenges experienced by project partners in estimating the value of in-kind contributions.
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder involvement	MU	Stakeholder engagement at national level is weak due to lack of national focal points to support stakeholder involvement.
E6. Communication and knowledge management	MS	Good communication and knowledge management is active between the regional and national project coordinators, with exception of the Dominican Republic due to language barriers.
E7. Overall quality of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	U	The monitoring of project activities and evaluation of results is weak. The MTE started late.
E7.1 M&E Design	MS	The PRODOC includes the delivery of reports to inform to GEF and FAO on project progress, however, the determination of the level of achievement of activities has been unrealistic.
E7.2 M&E Plan Implementation (including financial and human resources)	U	Despite the fact that Component 6 includes budget provisions to support the M&E plan, no specific resources have been directed to this activity. Thus far, only 8% of this budgetary allocation has been spent.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	U	M&E plan implementation is not apparent as a high priority in implementation of the project.
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNs		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	UA	The PRODOC did not include a gender mainstreaming strategy.
F2. Human rights issues	UA	The nature of the project is mainly technical, no specific human rights issues are addressed.
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	HS	Safeguarding of high-priority sites and the disposal of POPs has been effective as no reports of incidents

³ Refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at the project's launch.

		affecting the environment and the health of people involved in these tasks have been recorded.
Overall project rating	MU	The level of outcomes achieved is lower than expected considering that the project is scheduled to end in September 2019. Thus, the project is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives. Important activities to accomplish project objectives, which would also contribute to the sustainability of project benefits, are delayed. There is weak national stakeholder engagement which is also contributing to the delay in project activities.

1. Introduction

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is implementing a project titled Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides including POPs, Promotion of Alternatives and Strengthening Pesticides Management in the Caribbean (GCP/SLC/204/GFF). This report presents the findings of the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the project as required by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations FAO Monitoring and Evaluation policies.
2. The project seeks to promote the sound management of pesticides throughout their life cycle in the Caribbean Region, and reduce the risk posed by pesticides to human health and the environment. The total project budget is USD 26 368 739, of which GEF contributed USD 4 357 500, with additional co-financing provided by FAO, governments of the participating countries and complementary institutions.
3. The specific objectives of the project are to:
 - safely destroy POPs, other obsolete pesticides and PCBs stocks (Component 1);
 - remediate pesticide-contaminated sites (Component 2);
 - establish mechanisms to deal with empty pesticide and other waste plastic containers (Component 3);
 - strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework for managing pesticides through their life cycle (Component 4);
 - increase successful uptake of alternatives to the most hazardous chemical pesticides on key crops (Component 5); and
 - manage, monitor and evaluate the project and establish awareness/communication strategy (Component 6).
4. The project is being implemented in eleven (11) countries in the Caribbean, viz. Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and The Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

1.1. Purpose of the Mid-term Evaluation

5. The MTE seeks to provide information for learning and accountability purposes. Problems and/or constraints affecting the project are identified alongside appropriate operational and strategic recommendations formulated for corrective actions to support effective implementation of the remaining planned project activities. The MTE process reviews the effectiveness of implementation in terms of achieving the project's objectives and outcomes, and its delivery of outputs. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation is provided in Annex 2 of this report.

1.2. Intended users

Box 1: Target Audience and Intended Uses of the Mid-term Evaluation Report

Primary Audience	Intended Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments of the 11 participating countries⁴ • GEF • FAO • Coordinating Group of Pesticide Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC) • Project Steering Committee (PSC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support and advance project results • To inform decision-making and strategic actions • To sustain resource mobilization • To improve project implementation • To share lessons learned for improvement of other current and future projects
Secondary Audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) • Council of Trade and Economic Development (COTED) of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) • Regional research organizations: University of the West Indies (UWI), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) 	Intended Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For informed decision-making and strategic actions • To enable and strengthen regional cooperation • To support, improve and replicate project results

1.3. Scope and objective of the Mid-term Evaluation

6. The scope of the MTE focused on the implementation of project and its activities from November 2015 to April 2019. The geographic scope of the evaluation covered all countries involved, with evaluation missions based in the capitals of eight of the eleven project countries⁵, namely St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda; Bridgetown, Barbados; Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic; Kingston, Jamaica; Castries, St. Lucia; Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Paramaribo, Suriname and Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Field visits to the districts of Nickerie and Commewijne in Suriname, and South Trinidad in Trinidad and Tobago were also carried out.
7. The main objective of the MTE was to assess the relevance of the project, its progress in achieving positive outcomes for beneficiary countries, the cost-effectiveness and efficiency, the strategy for stakeholder engagement and partnerships; the likelihood of sustainability and the consideration and involvement of gender issues in project implementation.

⁵ Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & The Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago. 4 Countries in mission identifier in the MTE ToR.

Box 2: Main evaluation questions

- a. To what extent are the planned project interventions aligned to regional and national needs and priorities? (relevance, design).
- b. To what extent is the project on track towards achieving the planned results under each of the outputs? How much progress towards project outcomes can be measured, and to what degree is the project on track towards the attainment of project objectives and higher-level results, including assessment of the likelihood of impact (using a Review of Outcomes to Impacts analysis) and implementation of adaptive management? (effectiveness)
- c. What has been the cost-effectiveness of the project? Were project activities timely implemented, and were there sufficient management procedures to affect efficiency, including regular monitoring and evaluation? (efficiency)
- d. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement: How has FAO collaborated with partners and to what extent does the project develop new partnerships or enhance existing ones? To what extent are stakeholders engaged in the project? How, if at all, has FAO contributed to improve organizational policies, strategies and programmes? What linkages, if any, exist between the capacities developed among diverse types of beneficiaries? (government ownership, partnerships, capacity development)
- e. How effective has the materialization of co-financing been?
- f. What are, if any, the socio-political, financial, institutional and governance, and environmental risks to sustainability? What evidence exists indicating the feasibility of replication or catalysis of project results, likelihood project activities will continue following project closure (financial and operational sustainability)
- g. How has the project affected gender dynamics in participating countries? What lessons, if any, can be drawn?

1.4. Methodology

8. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the FAO's guidelines and the GEF's Policies, Norms and Standards⁶. A participatory and consultative approach was used to engage stakeholders who were interviewed during the evaluation process. A set of methods, outlined below, were used to generate robust evidence to support findings and inform evaluation conclusions and recommendations.
9. The MTE was conducted from February to April 2019 by an independent team. The team comprised two experts with experience in pesticides and environmental issues and evaluation methodology. The process was supervised and supported by a designated Evaluation Manager from the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED).
10. Prior to the field mission, the evaluation team conducted desk reviews of project related documents⁷, designed the methodology for data collection, reconstructed the Theory of Change of the project, conducted a stakeholder mapping and elaborated the Evaluation Matrix (Annex 3). These elements formed part of the team's Inception Report.
11. The MTE methods included:
 - i. Desk reviews of over 35 documents, articles and presentations (see Annex 4 for the list of documents consulted);
 - ii. 152 key informant interviews (see Annex 5 for the list of stakeholders interviewed);
 - iii. Online survey developed in collaboration with the OED Evaluation Manager in English and Spanish, in order to gather feedback from partners, in particular related to institutional engagement and national ownership. The survey was sent to 176 stakeholders from all participating countries (See Annex 6 with Survey Report);
 - iv. Observed the Eighth (8th) virtual Meeting of the CGPC; and
 - v. Direct observation during site visits in Suriname, Trinidad and Jamaica (See Annex 7 with Itinerary and Mission Agendas).
12. A proposal for seven countries to be visited during the field mission was included in the ToR for the evaluation. The countries (and their capitals) were Antigua and Barbuda (St. John's), Barbados (Bridgetown), Jamaica (Kingston), St. Lucia (Castries), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (Kingstown), Suriname (Paramaribo) and Trinidad and Tobago (Port-of-Spain). Given availability of budget, the Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo) was also included in field visits, as it was also the only Spanish speaking country included in the project.
13. A debriefing session was conducted at the end of the mission on February 25, 2019 at the FAO sub-regional office in Barbados to present the MTE preliminary

⁶ Independent Evaluation Office GEF: <http://www.gefieo.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/gef-mepolicy-2010-eng.pdf>

findings. Online participants from FAO Headquarters (FAO HQ) included the Evaluation Manager, the Lead Technical Officer on Agriculture and the FAO GEF Coordination Unit representatives. Face to face participants included the Regional Project Coordinator (RPC), Lead Technical Officer on Plant Production and Protection and two representatives of the budget holder based in the FAO sub-regional office in Barbados (FAO SLC).

14. The number of persons interviewed by the evaluation team as part of the evaluation process are disaggregated by country, gender and category (institutional and community stakeholders). A total of 152 persons were interviewed, 31 percent of whom were women (Table 1).

Table 1: Stakeholders interviewed by Country (individual and focus group meetings)

Country	Institutional Representatives		Community Representatives		Total	% Women
	Men	Women	Men	Women		
Antigua & Barbuda	6	2	2	1	11	27%
Barbados	10	5	0	0	15	50%
Dominica	0	1	0	0	1	100%
Dominican Republic	13	5	0	0	18	33%
Guyana	1	1	0	0	2	50%
Jamaica	11	4	0	0	15	27%
St Kitts & Nevis	1	0	0	0	1	0%
St. Lucia	8	3	0	0	11	27%
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	8	6	0	0	14	43%
Suriname	18	7	1	0	26	27%
Trinidad & Tobago	18	4	0	0	22	22%
FAO Headquarters	2	2	0	0	4	50%
FAO SLC (Regional)	5	3	0	0	8	20%
Consultants	1	3	0	0	4	60%
<i>Totals</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>31%</i>

15. A total of 56 persons completed the online survey, representing 32 percent of the 176 circulated to project partners. Responses were received from all of the countries participating in the project with the exception of Saint Kitts and Nevis. 4 submissions were received in the Spanish version of the questionnaire. Fifty-nine percent, (33), of the respondents to the survey indicated their gender, 52 percent of whom were women while 23 persons did not indicate their gender (Table 2).

Table 2: Respondents to Online Survey

Men	Women	Other	Total	% Women
15	17	1	33	52

1.5. Limitations

16. The evaluation mission was limited to eight of the eleven project countries due to budgetary and time constraints. Only the national project coordinators for Guyana, Dominica and St. Kitts and Nevis were interviewed by the team online, which represents a single view of the project implementation for these countries. However, the online survey was dispatched to all participating countries and responses were received from different stakeholders, complementing information on institutional engagement and national ownership in these countries.
17. The selected sites were based on predefined criteria, so there was an element of bias in the selection. The reason for this was that the ToR already defined the countries based on the following criteria since it was important to observe:
 - i. various implementation contexts in the participating countries (typology: large island states, small island states, large countries);
 - ii. innovativeness of the piloted technique or approach;
 - iii. degree of uptake by participating national institutions; and
 - iv. varied representation of institutional and field level activities.
18. Stakeholder interviews were planned to have the perspective from the government, academia, NGOs and private sector, but there were complications to interview farmers and NGOs due to short itineraries which could not accommodate farm visits in most countries, and the stage at which implementation of activities had been carried out at the farm level was low due to implementation delays. Also, due to the reported inactivity of NGOs with relevance to the project. Further, less than 3 percent of the persons interviewed were community representatives (Table 1) thereby making it difficult to assess the performance of project actions, including the incorporation of gender perspective, at the community/farm level.
19. At the level of response to the online survey, while 56 submissions were received from partners, only 37 (66 percent) of them responded to the majority of questions. As a result, the MTE did fully benefit from the feedback of 19 partners (34 percent) who completed the survey.

1.6. Structure of the report

20. Chapter 1 provides an introduction on the project while its national and regional scope and intent are elaborated in Chapter 2. Key findings of the MTE based on analysis of the Theory of Change (ToC) of the project results are presented in Chapter 3, and the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned from its implementation are detailed in the 4th and final chapter.
The report is also accompanied by annexes which are listed below:

- Annex 1. Terms of reference for the MTE
- Annex 2. MTE Matrix (evaluation questions and sub-questions)
- Annex 3. Stakeholders interviewed during the MTE
- Annex 4. Report of findings of the online survey
- Annex 5. MTE itinerary including field missions (agenda)
- Annex 6. Results Matrix for assessing degree of achievement of project outcomes
- Annex 7. Review of Outcomes to Impacts analysis
- Annexes are available to download at: www.fao.org/evaluation

2. Background and context of the project

21. Inventories of obsolete pesticide stocks in the Caribbean region were undertaken by national authorities⁸ during 2010 and 2013 with the assistance of the FAO under the EU-funded project GCP/INT/063/EC: *Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States – Clean-up of obsolete pesticides, pesticides management and sustainable pest management*. The inventories found approximately 300 tonnes of obsolete stocks which required safeguarding and environmentally sound removal.
22. In addition to an improvement of life-cycle management of pesticides in the Caribbean, the project also identified the transfer of locally available technology for the remediation of pesticides contaminated sites; empty pesticides container and waste management; strengthening the institutional and regulatory capacities for pesticides life cycle management and the promotion of alternatives to toxic chemical pesticides to be generally weak in the region. These priority areas were elaborated during a project workshop held jointly with the FAO, Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Grenada on *Pesticides Risk Reduction and Obsolete Pesticides Elimination*. They were integrated into GEF Project Identification Form (PIF) and developed with assistance from the FAO Pesticides Risk Reduction Group at FAO headquarters, Rome.
23. Therefore, this project was conceived as a result of the GCP/INT/063/EC findings. The project targets eleven countries in the Caribbean Region aforementioned (figure 1).

Figure 1: Map of Central and South America⁹ showing Project Countries in the Caribbean Region



Source: United Nations

⁸ Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & The Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago. It is important to mention that Bahamas is not part of the project.

⁹ Source: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

24. The overall project objective is to promote the sound management of pesticides in the Caribbean throughout their life-cycle in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the global environment. It is designed into six (6) main components and specific objectives:

i. **Component 1: Safe Disposal of Persistent Organic Pollutants and other Obsolete Pesticides and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)**

Specific Objective: To safely destroy POPs and obsolete pesticides

Outcome 1: Known stocks of POPs, other obsolete pesticide and Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCBs) stocks in 11 countries in the region disposed of in an environmentally sound manner

Target: 300 tonnes of Organic Pollutants and 100 tons of PCBs destroyed

ii. **Component 2: Technology transfer of methodologies for identification and remediation of contaminated sites**

Specific Objective: To remediate pesticide-contaminated sites

Outcome 2: Capacity improved in the region to identify and remediate contaminated sites through the availability of regionally appropriate tools and strategies for identification, characterisation and remediation of pesticide and POPs-contaminated soil

Targets: a) 22 staff trained in identification and implementation of strategies for remediation of pesticides and POPs contaminated soils; b) Three priority sites selected and for which a strategy and Environmental Management Plans (EMP) are developed; c) 50 percent reduction in contamination levels in high priority sites where remediation has started

iii. **Component 3: Development of systems for the management of empty pesticides containers**

Specific Objective: To establish mechanisms to deal with empty pesticide and other waste plastic containers

Outcome 3: Risks to the environment and human health from empty pesticide containers reduced through establishing and enhancing container management systems at national level

Targets: a) 50 percent of surveyed farmers triple rinse containers at the end of their life; b) Centralized data on containers collected in at least 2 countries

iv. **Component 4: Strengthening the regulatory framework and institutional capacity for sound management of pesticides**

Specific Objective: To strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework for managing pesticides through their life cycle

Outcome 4: Common tools and processes adopted and financed by Caribbean countries for regionally harmonized pesticide registration and control

Targets: a) Five countries adopting new and harmonized regulations; b) Five regional registration recommendations voluntarily adopted by national registration bodies; c) Budget available for regional pesticide management, with a decreasing contribution towards the cost of CGPC meetings thereby building in a sustainability strategy

v. **Component 5: Promotion of alternatives to chemical pesticides**

Specific Objective: To increase the successful uptake of alternatives to the most hazardous chemical pesticides on key crops

Outcome 5: Alternatives to conventional chemical pesticides up-scaled and use of highly hazardous pesticides reduced

Targets: a) At least 4 Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) products de-registered and overall 20 percent reduction in number of registered HHPs; b) 10 percent reduction in use of HHP and chemical pesticides by farmers and home gardeners

vi. **Component 6: Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E)**

Specific Objective: To manage, monitoring and evaluate the project and establish awareness/communication strategy

Outcome 6: Project achievements and lessons monitored and widely shared for maximum influence

Targets: a) Eight (8) semi-annual Project Progress Reports (PPR); b) Two (2) evaluation reports; c) Communication and visibility plan developed and executed, including at least 5 FAO press releases

25. The project is managed by the FAO sub-regional office in Barbados and coordinated by a regional project coordinator with support from key FAO project-related personnel from FAO Headquarters in Rome. Implementation of project activities are managed by national coordinators in each beneficiary country and conducted in-country by government and non-government organizations, research institutions, farmers and other partners with support from collaborating agencies and consultants.
26. The intended beneficiaries of the GCP/SLC/204/GFF project range from pesticides regulatory authorities and ministries of agriculture, health, environment, legal affairs, finance and information, to farmer organizations, farmers and farm households, women and youth farmers, the private sector, indigenous groups, regional organizations, and NGOs. The environment and public health will also benefit from project implementation. See Box 3: Stakeholders and Beneficiaries of the project.
27. The GCF/GFF/204/GCF project is funded by GEF, with a planned implementation period of 2015 – 2019. The total budget of the project is

USD 30 726 239 with USD 26 368 739 contributed by national governments and international and regional institutions. The GEF-contribution of USD 4 357 500 is being implemented by FAO.

Box 3: Stakeholders and Beneficiaries of the project

Regional Stakeholders	Key role in the project
<p>Regional Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) • Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSAs) • Coordinating Group of the Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC) • University of the West Indies (UWI) • Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) 	<p>Key role in the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COTED - support establishment of a harmonised regional regulations, including a registration process for pesticides in CARICOM Member States • CAHFSAs – Advise project implementation and host information from CGPC • CGPC – Lead executing partner • UWI – Research and technology transfer for integrated pest management (IPM) and remediating pesticide-contaminated sites • Support to regional cooperation
<p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Health • Pesticides and Toxic Chemical regulatory authorities in project countries • Customs and Excise Departments • Ministries of Legal Affairs 	<p>Role in the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management and oversight including co-finance mobilization • Capacity building and institutional strengthening • Improve regulatory framework and harmonize pesticide legislation • Dissemination of information and technology transfer • Promote reduction of HHP use and improve IPM • Promote safe handling and disposal of pesticides and empty containers
<p>Local</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers, farmers' organizations and farmer's groups • Manufacturers, importers, distributors and retailers • Waste recyclers 	<p>Role in the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sharing and technology transfer • Field testing and implementation of alternatives to pesticides on their farms • Participation in and provision of training/capacity building • Improve pesticide lifecycle management • Empty pesticide container management

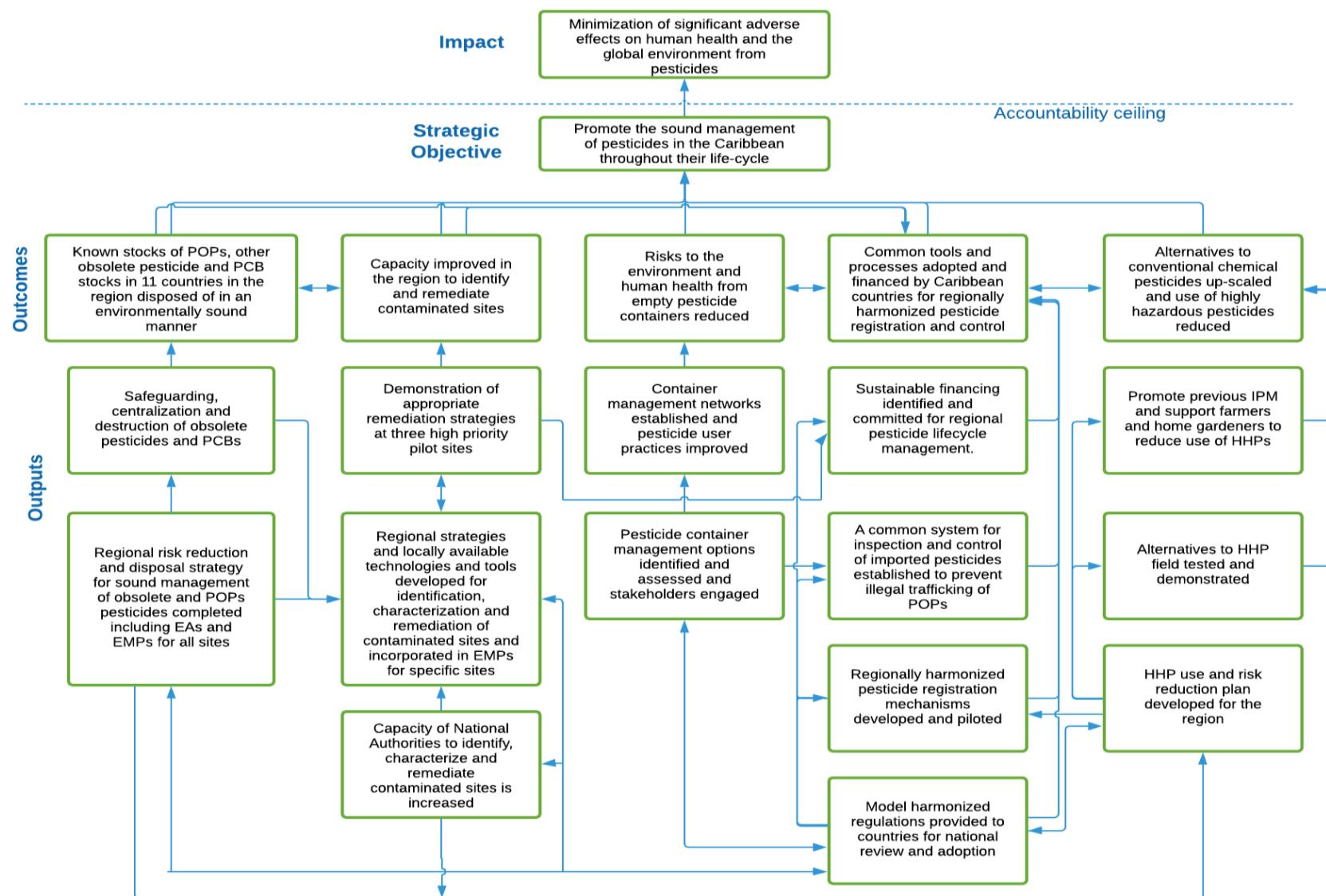
3. Theory of Change

28. The expected impact of the project is the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the global environment from pesticides. The project will contribute to this desired result by the promotion of sound management of pesticides in the Caribbean throughout their life-cycle (strategic objective). To achieve this objective, the project primarily has to enable further risk reduction from obsolete pesticide stockpiles, contaminated sites and old pesticide containers (Outcomes 1, 2 and 3) considering the development of capacity under previous projects (GCP/INT/063/EC). The project also has to build on existing structures to put in place sustainable systems to the sound management of pesticides and the prevention of future accumulation of new stockpiles via regional institutional capacity building and strengthening the regulatory framework (Outcome 4). It also includes actions to encourage farmers to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approaches to reduce the use of HHPs in agricultural production (Output 5).
29. Particularly, the environmental sound disposal of known stocks of POPs, other obsolete pesticides and PCBs stock from participating countries (Outcome 1) would be accomplished by the completion of a regional risk reduction and disposal strategy for the stocks (Output 1.1) and its implementation for the safeguarding, centralization and destruction of the stocks (Output 1.2).
30. For the improvement of the capacity in the region to identify and remediate contaminates sites (Outcome 2), the first output would be the increase of the capacity of the national authorities to identify, characterize and remediate contaminated sites (Output 2.1), followed by the development of strategies and tools to carry out these tasks, which will be incorporated in an Environmental Management Plan for specific sites (Output 2.2). These strategies and tools would be used, along with local technologies, to remediate three high priority pilot sites (Output 2.3).
31. There are close linkages between Outcomes 1 and 2, since the Output 1.1 implies the double checking of the obsolete stock inventories in participating countries, which also includes the verification of the presence of pesticides-contaminated soils. This verification would allow contractors and officials to confirm the contaminated sites that could be subjected to remediation (Output 2.2). The training “learning by doing” to safeguard obsolete wastes, foreseen in the Output 1.2, should also provide useful insights for the development of strategies and tools to identify and characterize contaminated sites as the trainees should acquire expertise directly from the sites. In addition, the demonstration of appropriate remediation strategies at three high priority pilot sites (Output 2.3) could provide feedback to adjust the strategies, technologies and tools developed to remediate sites (Output 2.2), so there is a bidirectional interaction between both outputs.

32. The estimated costs to remediate the three high priority pilot sites (Output 2.3) may constitute an input to determine a sustainable financing for the regional pesticide lifecycle management (Output 4.4) since the remediation activities would continue in the region.
33. In order to reduce risks through the appropriate sound management of empty pesticides containers (Outcome 3), the project primarily would look for the identification and assessment of sound options to manage the containers and the engagement of key stakeholders. Secondly, the project would support the establishment of key stakeholders' networks to implement the best options to manage the containers using improved practices.
34. The harmonization of pesticides registration and control through the adoption and financing of common tools and processes by the participating countries (Outcome 4) would be achieved by the development of model harmonized regulations (Output 4.1). These model regulations would constitute the foundations to pilot regionally harmonized pesticide registration mechanisms (Output 4.2), to establish a common system for inspection and control of imported pesticides to prevent illegal trafficking of POPs (Output 4.3) and to foster regional commitment for a sustainable financing of pesticide lifecycle management (Output 4.4). These activities should be reinforced by training provided to national authorities and key stakeholders (i.e. importers) to avoid accumulation of new stockpiles.
35. There are also linkages among the Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 5 with the Outcome 4. The foreseen training in Outputs 1.2 and 2.1, the tools and strategies developed in Outputs 1.1 and 2.2, and the legal revision and studies carried out to find options to manage pesticide containers (Output 3.1) and the identification of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHP) (5.1) should be an input to the Output 4.1, as the technical knowledge and experience on field would generate inputs for a more realistic model of harmonized regulations. For that, trained officials should be consulted during the development of the model regulations and the technical studies and information should be provided to the responsible of the Output 4.1. Also, the revision of the regional regulations and the FAO Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management (Output 4.1) may support the compliance of the laws/regulations during the development of strategies to remediate contaminated sites and safeguard obsolete wastes and also the implementation of the best practices during these tasks.
36. Output 3.1 related to the proposal of options to manage pesticide containers, would generate import data on pesticides that may be useful for the design of the system for inspection and control of imported pesticides (Output 4.3).
37. The reduction of the use of HHPs and the up-scaling of alternatives to conventional chemical pesticides (Outcome 5) would be accomplished by the development of a HHP use and risk reduction plan for the region (Output 5.1), which would also constitute the basis for the field testing and demonstration of alternatives to regional priority HHP (Output 5.2) and for the promotion of IPM by the use reduction of HHPs by farmers and gardeners (Output 5.3).

38. The Outputs 1.1 and 2.1 may have a linkage with the Output 5.1 since the identification of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHP) in the obsolete pesticides to be destroyed, or in the contaminated sites could be used as evidence that these chemicals are problematic. Thus, de-registration could be proposed as a way to eliminate their use in the region. Output 5.1 should also provide relevant information to define regionally harmonized pesticide registration mechanisms in order that these mechanisms prevent the registration of HHPs.
39. The successful achievement of the outcomes and outputs resulting from project implementation are based on the following assumptions:
 - Information from inventories of obsolete pesticide stockpiles is accurate
 - There is active participation of key stakeholders to support the implementation of project activities
 - Training provided to targeted project beneficiaries meets the necessary capacity needs across all countries
 - Regional bodies exist or are being developed to foster collaboration among national focal points
 - Sufficient resources are available and provided to support all project activities
 - The CGPC is capable of coordinating regional registration and enables collaboration on the project
 - There is enough and robust expertise and technical skills in the region to handle and analyze soil samples and carry out site remediation
 - The pilot studies develop and demonstrate best practices to remediate contaminated sites and promote effective HHP alternatives
 - There is equitable representation of all relevant actors in the project
 - There are effective alternatives to HHPs
 - There is political willingness to adopt the model regulations to harmonize pesticide registration and control at the regional level

Figure 2. Theory of Change of the project, reconstructed by the evaluation team



Source: Evaluation team

4. Key findings and Mid-term Evaluation questions

4.1 Evaluation question 1: To what extent are the planned project interventions aligned to regional and national needs and priorities?

Key finding 1: Project interventions contribute to strategic objectives of the institutions in charge of pesticides regulation in each participating country and put knowledge and training on the ground.

Key finding 2: Agriculture will continue being a key economic growth driver in the Caribbean region and project interventions are strengthening this activity by proposing a regional harmonization of sound pesticides management that will reduce risks by pesticides and facilitate pesticides trade.

40. All national stakeholders and partners interviewed by the evaluation team widely recognized and appreciated the support of the project to dispose of POPs stockpiles in an environmentally sound manner, including obsolete pesticides. Government stakeholders indicated that removal of the stockpiles could not have been done by governments due to the lack of resources. A few countries had made efforts to dispose of some obsolete pesticides but with limited success. Some stakeholders from the environmental sector also mentioned that elimination of POPs stockpiles was a pending task, since the need for their elimination had already been stressed in the national diagnosis carried out in the Stockholm Convention framework.
41. All project countries have, from the late 1960's and up to 2013, enacted legislation to regulate the importation, storage, manufacture, sale, transportation, use and disposal of pesticides and/or toxic chemicals. However, most stakeholders interviewed acknowledged the current limitations of their own legislations. Currently, some stakeholders are implementing arrangements to deal with the legal restriction to include officials from the Ministry of Environment in the technical committee in charge of the review of pesticide dossiers. Others stressed their inability to apply fees to recover resources that allow them to strengthen pesticide regulation and compliance, or to apply fines to pesticides smugglers. Some stakeholders are implementing voluntary programmes as they do not have legislation to support actions. According to the Project Document (PRODOC), the project would provide model legislation consistent with the FAO Revised International Code of Conduct for Pesticide Management for adoption in the project countries, which would contribute to surpass these limitations.
42. All national stakeholders stressed, to varying degrees, the lack of capacities and/or human and financial resources to regulate pesticides in an adequate manner. For some project countries, the head of the Pesticide Control Board is the only staff member. According to PRODOC, the project aims to develop the basis for a harmonized registration process at the regional level, and through this countries with less capacity could benefit from those with more resources and greater capacity. All

stakeholders from the private sector interviewed, except one, highlighted the advantages of a regional pesticides registration process to streamline commerce in the region and its contribution to solve the problem of illegal pesticides trade that affects the region. In addition, all stakeholders who received training recognized its usefulness to improve performance at work. Particularly, the training on the FAO registration toolkit has been well received by almost all pesticide registrars.

43. The planning and operational documents of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and its derived bodies, including the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) and the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) are aligned, in general terms, with project activities. The Community Strategic Plan for 2015 to 2019 of CARICOM identifies agriculture as a key economic growth driver in building CARICOM's economic resilience and aims at accelerating again, the development of this sector. In line with this planning, COTED aims to promote and develop policies and programmes to facilitate the transportation of people and goods, which is integral to the establishment of a harmonized regional registration process for pesticides in the CARICOM region.
44. Draft decisions of COTED's Annual Meeting of 2018, indicate COTED's support to the priorities and objectives of the CGPC to promote sustainable agriculture and protect human health and the environment through effective management of pesticides and toxic chemicals in the Caribbean. In this regard, COTED has included in the agenda of its last three annual meetings on agriculture (2016, 2017 and 2018), the participation of CGPC to update on progress of project activities and it has provided recommendations to Member States to fulfill those activities.
45. COTED has also encouraged CGPC to work with CAHFSA to include Pesticides Management under the mandate of CAHFSA, along with Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The proposal that CAHFSA will be the secretariat of CGPC has been also well received by COTED and CAHFSA. Currently, pesticide information from the country project is included in the regional Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) database system housed and maintained by CAHFSA.
46. In addition, respondents to the online survey disseminated to project partners were generally in agreement that the project was aligned appropriately to the priorities of the Caribbean Region. This determination was based on the response of 92 percent (or 35) of the 38 respondents where 8 percent (3) did not know. Specifically, 71 percent (25 of 35) respondents thought that the project was aligned to national priorities and 83 percent (29) said the project met the priorities of the Caribbean Region. More than half (57 percent or 20) of project partners said the project was relevant to local needs while 43 percent (15 respondents) said it was aligned with priorities of industry (See Figures 3a and 3b).

Figure 3a: Project Alignment - Feedback on alignment to regional, country, community or industry priorities

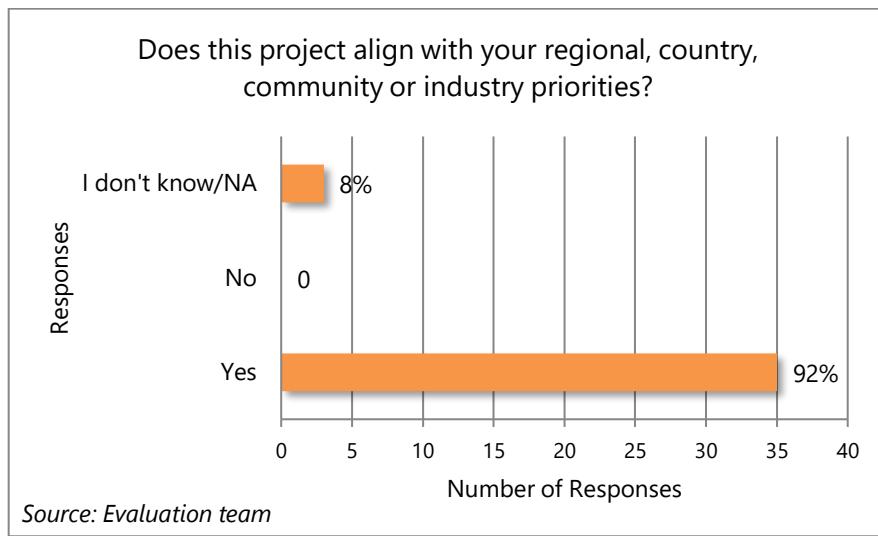
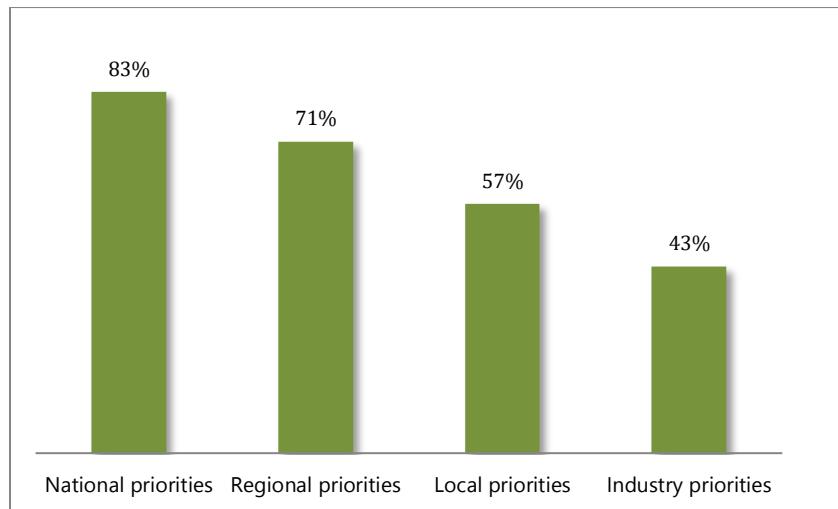


Figure 3b: Alignment of the project to regional, country, community and industry priorities (by priority)



4.2 Evaluation question 2: To what extent is the project on track towards achieving the planned results under each of the outputs? How much progress towards project outcomes can be measured, and to what degree is the project on track towards the attainment of project objectives and higher-level results, including assessment of the likelihood of impact (using a Review of Outcomes to Impacts analysis) and implementation of adaptive management?

Key finding 3: The disposal of close to 319 tonnes of obsolete pesticides stocks from the project countries and its environmentally-sound destruction has been the most visible and more recognized outcome reached by the project.

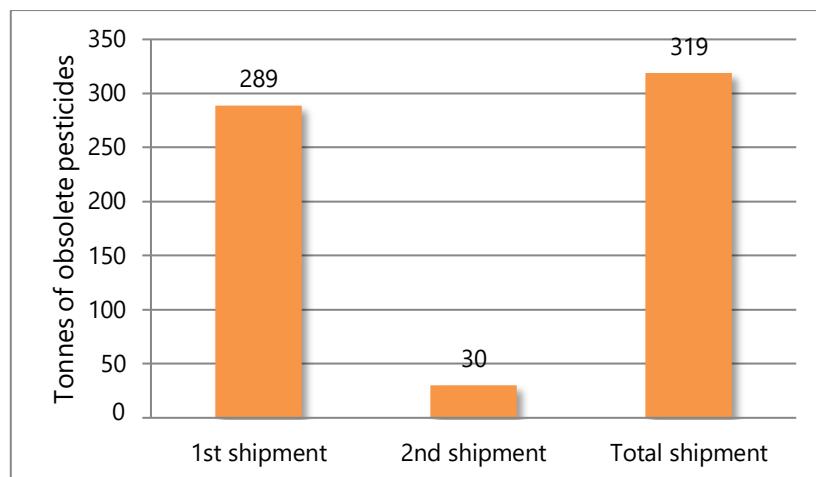
Key finding 4: A significant delay is observed in Components 2 and 4 putting the compliance of project objectives at risk.

Key finding 5: Component 2, regarding the identification and remediation of contaminated sites, also presents considerable technical difficulties.

47. **Component 1:** Safe Disposal of POPs and other Obsolete Pesticides and PCBs. The project started with the activities related to the disposal of POPs stockpiles, including obsolete pesticides (Component 1). The Project Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in ACP countries Phase II (GCP/INT/153/EC) preceded this project, under which more than 11 countries in the Caribbean Region conducted pesticide obsolete inventories, except the Dominican Republic. From this effort, the company Veolia Field Services from the United Kingdom (UK) was hired in 2006 to provide training to national authorities, repackage and safeguard the obsolete pesticides stocks, and support the participating countries to finalize document preparation for transboundary shipment of the stocks.
48. During the verification and repackaging of the stocks, some national inventories were found to be inaccurate due to incorrect classification of the pesticides (liquid vs solid) and underestimation of the actual quantities present. Suriname and Guyana, with Jamaica and Barbados to a lesser extent, were found to have more stocks than recorded. Consequently, the project took and paid extra tonnes, approximately 19 tonnes of obsolete pesticides, as the target was 300 tonnes, without reporting any implication for project budget. Some stakeholders interviewed expressed disappointment about the limitations of the project to deal with other chemicals as they also identified other obsolete chemicals that need disposal. Regardless, all stakeholders were motivated to participate in the project considering the risks of the POPs and obsolete pesticides.
49. The stocks of 10 of the 11 project countries were shipped to UK for environmentally sound destruction, accounting for 289 tonnes of obsolete pesticides. In the meantime, the Dominican Republic concluded its inventory and a second stockpile was shipped for its destruction accounting for around 30 tonnes. In total, approximately 319 tonnes of obsolete pesticides stocks were shipped for elimination (Figure 4). Disposal certificates were presented to Ministers of Agriculture of the

beneficiary countries at the CARICOM-COTED Meeting in October 2017. In addition, in November 2017, a press release on the successful achievement of the removal of the obsolete pesticides stocks was distributed throughout the Caribbean Region.

Figure 4: Shipments of persistent organic pollutants and other obsolete pesticides



Source: Evaluation team

50. It was not possible to determine the amount of obsolete pesticide that remain in the region, but most of the stakeholders with remaining stocks mentioned having various amounts of obsolete pesticides. The evaluation team recorded 70 tonnes of black mosquito coils reported by the Customs Office of Jamaica and 17 tonnes of obsolete pesticides in Guyana. At the 22nd Meeting of the CGPC, held in June 2018, all countries were requested to conduct another inventory with their built capacity for its possible inclusion in a new proposal to be submitted for the GEF 7 new cycle of funding. It is important to highlight that a governmental stakeholder emphasized the need to receive additional training to avoid the new generation of obsolete pesticides, which was not considered in the design of the project. The elimination of 72.14 tonnes of PCBs from Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda is still pending, since there were administrative difficulties to offer the tender. Thus, this component is on track to fulfill project objectives.
51. **Component 2:** Technology transfer of methodologies for identification and remediation of contaminated sites. Regarding Component 2, the activities started in the first year of the project, as planned in the PRODOC. They were initiated with Rapid Environmental Assessment (REAs) of the suspected pesticides-contaminated sites, included in the PSMS¹⁰, in Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Barbados, Saint Kitts and Nevis and the Dominican Republic. The assessment included soil sampling and training of nine national technicians by an International Soils Consultant. The soil samples were shipped to Trinidad and Tobago for their analysis. The identification of

¹⁰ At the time the project document was written, the FAO-hosted pesticide stock management system (PSMS) database was up and running. This means countries had access to this database at the time into which they could input their data on pesticide stock management including imports, uses etc. However, this database is not available at this time, and an alternative is being considered.

- a suitable laboratory to conduct the analysis was challenging due to technical limitations causing delays in the activity. A laboratory was selected and the analysis results showed undetected levels of contamination. The explanation provided to the evaluation team regarding these results indicated an inadequate management of the samples.
52. Despite these results, the sites tested in Suriname and Saint Kitts and Nevis were selected as priorities based only on an exposure analysis. The evaluation team considers that this decision was made without robust evidence, thus there is a risk that selected sites do not have the level of contamination that require remediation. As a consequence, the demonstration of appropriate remediation strategies at two sites, although the PRODOC specified three sites, could not be carried out. According to the implementers there are sufficient resources to carry out the remediation of two sites. The remediation is expensive, thus there could be an underestimation of the costs in the project design.
53. In the second half of 2018, a detailed sampling (discrete) strategy was used at both sites to assess landscape and vertical soil contamination. In order to carry out the analyses of the samples collected, considerable time was spent on trying to find a regional laboratory. However, there was no laboratories in the region, which could analyze the samples; thus the search for laboratories was extended to USA and other countries. A laboratory in the USA was eventually identified, although obtaining approvals from USDA-APHIS to export soil samples to this laboratory caused further delays. Finally, the samples were sent to the selected laboratory in February and March of 2019. One part of the results has been received. The set of samples analyzed showed a low content of contamination at the Suriname site, which may require an additional sampling event or look for an alternate site.
54. According to the PRODOC, the remediation of the contaminated sites had to begin in Year 3 and a 50 percent of reduction in contamination levels had to be achieved in Year 4 of the project. Considering that project is in Year 4, a significant delay of more than one year and technical problems have been identified in this activity. In addition, the Guidance Manuals on remediation of contaminated sites had to be published in the year 2, so the elaboration of the manuals is delayed by two years. The manuals have to be elaborated considering the knowledge and expertise gained during the remediation of the sites; therefore, the delay is due to the problems experienced in the analyses of soil samples. In this sense, the progress registered to achieve Outcome Two is not on track and also towards the attainment of project objectives and higher-level results. If the reduction of level of contamination in the selected sites is not achieved, there would not be a reduction of the risks to human health and the environment.
55. **Component 3:** Development and implementation of empty pesticide containers management systems. In relation to Component 3, the main output obtained is the operation of a container management network in Nickerie, Suriname, launched in June 2018 with stakeholders from Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment,

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Trade, Customs Department, Pesticides Importers and Distributors and waste recyclers. The Suriname's stakeholders provide monetary and in-kind resources. However, the recycle management of the containers is still incomplete since the recycling company, at the time of the evaluation, had not found a buyer of the collected and cleansed empty containers. Even though the Dominican Republic stakeholders reported that they have a buyer of pesticides empty containers. In addition, a study on the cost-effectiveness of the container management process implemented should be carried out in order to ensure that this scheme, as is, is feasible and could be replicated in other countries. This study is not indicated in the PRODOC, but it should be implemented to ensure that Suriname's scheme is feasible. At present, other project countries including Guyana, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados have indicated their interest in establishing pilot empty pesticides container management networks.

56. With respect to other activities, a delayed response has been identified from countries to provide baseline information to determine quantities and types of pesticide containers imported. Some countries expressed difficulties in obtaining the required information which was only available at other government ministries or agencies and others have submitted their information in a slightly different format. At present, only six countries have provided the information to the PC, even though the request was sent at the beginning of project implementation according to the first Project Progress Report.
57. This situation has delayed the evaluation of options for developing a container management scheme, which should have been developed and discussed in a regional workshop during Year 2 of the project. This workshop is key to address the problem of small islands, which may not generate sufficient empty pesticides containers to run a scheme such as the Suriname. There is also a lag in the development of pilot activities to integrate containers wastes into existing plastic waste management systems, and in conducting a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey. This survey aims to identify baseline practices at the beginning of the project and behavioral changes of farmers at the end of the project, in response to a communication strategy on container management developed at a regional level. The survey had to be conducted in the Year 1. At present, two KAP surveys have been tested and conducted in Suriname and Antigua and Barbuda. Feedback was incorporated into a package of materials which would be shared more widely as a 'toolkit'. Supporting communication materials were also developed in three languages, English, Spanish and Dutch, and have just been delivered in Suriname and Antigua and Barbuda. Additionally, a legal review was carried out to determine what regulations are prescribed to deal with the problem of empty pesticides containers that complements component 4.
58. **Component 4:** Strengthening the regulatory framework and institutional capacity for sound management of pesticides. The activities carried out during the first two years of the project under Component 4 were focused mainly on training activities related to the use of the FAO Pesticides Registration Toolkit. There were 25 persons

trained in February 2017 from 14 countries. According to the stakeholders interviewed, 6 participating countries were using the toolkit. In addition, 25 Customs Officers and Pesticides Inspectors were trained on Pesticides Import/Export and Control in March 2017, and 20 participants at the Harmonization of Registration Procedures and Information Sharing workshop in February 2017.

59. It was not until the end of the second year that the review of national legislations started, aimed at identifying gaps in the current legislations of project countries and lend itself towards the drafting of a model legislation based on the "FAO Guidelines for Pesticides Legislation" and the "FAO/WHO International Code of Conduct for Pesticides Management". The review was divided into three consultancies: one for English speaking countries, one for Suriname and the other for the Dominican Republic, and ended in 2018.
60. The elaboration of the model regulation was scheduled to start in 2019, even though this activity was planned in the Year 1 of the project, indicating a significant delay is also identified in this activity. Considering that the project was planned to be completed in September 2019, there would not be sufficient time to implement the regional consultation and the adjustments of the model regulations in order to be presented to COTED and be adopted by project countries. The adoption of the model regulations is fundamental to the sound management of pesticides in the region, which would lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the global environment.
61. Although all governmental stakeholders interviewed concurred with the need to harmonize pesticide regulation at regional level, this harmonization may be challenging. Some external stakeholders mentioned that every country is strictly careful with its sovereign considerations, and that this initiative has been discussed for more than 20 years without any concrete result, thus the negotiations would not be easy. Some stakeholders expressed concerns to lose sovereignty and agreed that the harmonization will take time, and rushing the process is unlikely to produce positive results.
62. Some partners and stakeholders informed the evaluation team on the development of a regional harmonized chemicals law under GEF project ID 5558 "Development and implementation of a sustainable management system for POPs in the Caribbean". This law would cover all the chemicals including pesticides. According to previous FAO experience in other countries, this kind of overarching chemicals laws may contain contradictory aspects for the sound pesticides management.
63. The formation of a regional Technical Working Group (TWG) for pesticide registration was also planned in the Year 1, but it has not been created yet. The aim of this group is to conduct regional pesticides evaluations and jointly deliver recommendations of at least 5 products during the last year of the project. The formation of this group is the responsibility of CGPC. In order to accomplish this activity, a harmonization workshop was held in February 2017; however, technical officers were reluctant to work as a regional group without the approval of the policy makers. "Therefore the

issue was taken to the regional Governing Body – the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), comprising the Ministers of Agriculture of CARICOM. The October 2018 COTED mandated the formation of the regional technical working group (TWG) to consider applications for pesticides registration.” At present, the PC and LTO have prepared a Letter of Agreement (LOA) to conduct the pilot TWG. This is to be implemented by CAHFSA, which has the regional mandate for plant health-related issues, including pesticides. The project is expected to support the first meeting of this regional group. Nonetheless, the group would need sufficient time to define its operational procedures before starting to deliver recommendations, which could not be finished in September 2019.

64. At the end of the second year, the Cost Recovery Analysis of the pesticides regulatory authorities in 4 countries (Guyana, Barbados, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) was conducted as part also of Component 4. The final report was submitted at the end of 2018 and the recommendations were considered at the 3rd Meeting of the PSC. The report was presented at the COTED Meeting in 2018, and the results “were well received”. It is expected that the discussions on this matter would take place when the model regulation is ready to be discussed.
65. **Component 5:** Promotion of alternatives to chemical pesticides. With respect to Component 5, the evaluation team visited the UWI Mona campus in Jamaica, where field test alternatives to toxic pesticides against insect pests in cabbage (*Brassica oleracea*), pak choi (*Brassica rapa*), and callaloo (*Amaranthus viridis*) were conducted in two crop rotations at two locations. At present, the first report has been completed and validation exercises are ongoing. The evaluation team also visited the fields, in which UWI St Augustine Campus in Trinidad is testing alternatives to control of diseases in tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) and pepper (*Capsicum annuum*) crops. The tests are still ongoing and there are no available results. According to the researchers interviewed, trials would be finished on time before the project ends in September. According to the FAO implementers, one farmer field day has already taken place in Trinidad and Tobago in March 2019, where the results were shared with farmers and stakeholders. Further, the evaluation acknowledges the additional trials that have been implemented as the PRODOC allows for two field trials and the project has implemented 5 trials.
66. The identification of HHPs through the review of pesticides registered in each country has reportedly been challenging for almost all the governmental stakeholders as the task was said to be very time-consuming. There is also a need that project countries purge their lists of old pesticides no longer being imported or manufactured. Some of the stakeholders interviewed stated that they needed more time to comply with this task due to workloads and a shortage of staff. Currently, Jamaica and Guyana partners are working on another structure to present the registered pesticide lists in an easier way, which has the approval of all members of CGPC. At present, HHPs from five countries have been identified using the FAO Pesticides Registration Toolkit. Due to this task is still ongoing, although it was planned to be finished during the first year, there is a delay in the development of an HHP use and risk reduction plan, which

is dependent on information from the ground being supplied by NPC and national regulatory authorities. The plan should have been endorsed by project countries in Year 2.

67. Notwithstanding, this activity has been temporally stopped to avoid duplication of activities with the project "Identification of a strategy and related frameworks for promotion of alternatives to carbofuran and carbosulfan", which finished in December 2018. This project included a component to strengthen the capacity of Caribbean Island countries on alternatives to newly listed and candidate pesticides under the Stockholm and Rotterdam Convention. Thus, the Project Coordinator was awaiting the final results of that project to analyze possible activities and adjustments in order to avoid duplication of efforts on this matter. Finally, the KAP survey mentioned in Component 3 would also be used to measure behavioral changes to reduce the use of HHPs in the region, thus there is a delay also in this activity.
68. Annex 9 presents the Review of Outcomes to Impacts analysis, under the premise that the expected impact, according to the ToC, is to minimize significant adverse effects on human health and the global environment. The analysis also addresses the implementation of adaptive measures to ensure accomplishment of the project's objective.

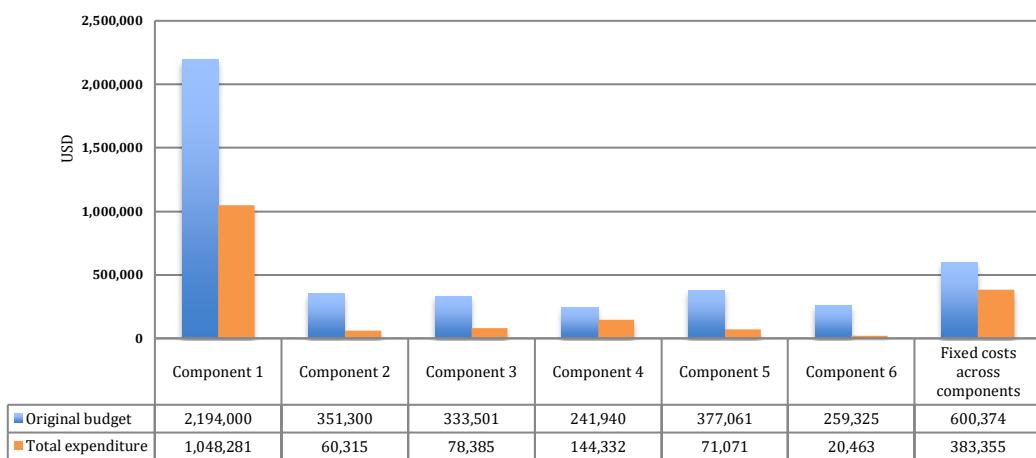
4.3 Evaluation question 3: What has been the cost-effectiveness of the project? Were project activities implemented in a timely manner, and were there sufficient management procedures to affect efficiency, including regular monitoring and evaluation?

Key finding 6: There is widespread perception that the project has been cost-effective mainly due to successful elimination of the obsolete pesticides.

Key finding 7: Components 2, 3, 4 and 5 have had delays in the implementation of activities, being significant for Components 2 and 4.

Key finding 8: There has been weak monitoring of project activities and the Mid Term Evaluation was carried out late.

69. Considering that partners and stakeholders were awaiting the elimination of obsolete pesticides since 2013, their elimination has been seen as a great success of the project. Partners and stakeholders also mentioned their contribution of resources to transport and manage the stocks while in their countries. As a result, most of them suggested to the evaluation team that the project has been cost-effective.
70. Thus far, the funds provided for the project have been sufficient to carry out the planned activities, considering the status of implementation and the activities already completed. At the time of the evaluation, 41 percent (USD 1 806 201) of the project funds had been spent. The funds have been used mainly in Component 1 (48 percent of the original budget) and the fixed costs across components, 64 percent of the original budget (i.e. Project coordination and administration) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Budget and expenditure (April 2016 to January 2019)

Source: Evaluation team

71. Nonetheless, most of the activities have not been implemented in a timely manner for the following reasons:

- The project started six months late. It was planned to start in November, 2015, but the project was initiated in May 2016 when the Project Coordinator was hired.
- In the Year 1 of the project, the priority was directed to the preparatory activities to ship the obsolete pesticides stocks for their destruction in the UK. This activity finished earlier considering the Results Matrix of the PRODOC. The main shipment was executed at the end of 2016 when the elimination of the stocks was scheduled for 2017. As a consequence, other activities were left behind such as the elaboration of the model regulation tailored to the needs of the region, which is key to ensure the sound management of pesticides in the region, and the sustainability of project activities. This activity started two years later than scheduled, with the review of the legislation of each project country.
- The evaluation found that the implementation framework indicated in the Results Matrix of the PRODOC did not adequately balance tasks between project years. The first year of the project implementation was scheduled with many activities for the National Project Coordinators and their respective stakeholders to accomplish. According to the schedule, they had to conduct /support the repacking and safeguarding of the obsolete pesticides, support the formation of a regional registration group and receive multiple trainings, among others.
- Most of the National Project Coordinators stressed that their capacities are limited with regard to human and financial resources. Some of them indicated that they have the knowledge and skills to implement project activities but they need more time to implement them. Consequently, the response to project requests have had delays.
- There are low technical capacities in the region to carry out chemical analyses of soil samples for pesticide contamination. The initial analysis of obsolete pesticides excluded Carbaryl, Bromoxynil, HCH and Cupravit, which the regional laboratory at the time could not process. The second samples taken from Suriname and Saint Kitts and Nevis had to be sent to a US-based laboratory for their analysis.
- There is also limited expertise to manage soil samples. According to soil experts, "for measuring levels of contamination you need more skills to handle the samples than a

very sophisticated instrument". It was reported that an inappropriate handling and treatment of soil samples taken altered the levels of contamination of the samples, therefore the measured levels were undetected.

72. In addition, the current approach to results-based monitoring and evaluation can be greatly improved. Namely:
- There is a lack of critical view to qualify the level of achievement of project activities. In the last Project Progress Reports, the activities related to Component 2 and 4 were qualified as "Satisfactory", even though there were significant delays in their implementation while activities under Component 2 are also facing severe technical challenges. Consequently, no potential risk or problem related to these Components was reported and thereby no adaptive measures were taken.
 - The decision to wait for the final results of the project "Identification of a strategy and related frameworks for promotion of alternatives to carbofuran and carbosulfan", in order to avoid duplication of efforts with this project, was not reported as a problem that could further delay project activities.
 - The two Project Progress Reports, one corresponding to the period January-June 2017 and the second to the period January-June 2018, were not elaborated. These six-month reports are important to analyze the progress of activities with an integral perspective and analysis, allowing project coordinators to identify what activities are on track, and those that are delayed so that the necessary corrective actions could be identified and undertaken.
 - The evaluation team acknowledges that the Mid Term Evaluation started late (due to varying factors, including those outside of the project's control since the preparatory work started in July 2018), at the beginning of the last year of the project which had only nine (9) months remaining. This impeded the opportunity for implementing partners to have timely feedback on the progress of the project, and to assist them in taking informed decisions on any necessary remedial steps that ensure timely interventions.

4.4 Evaluation question 4: Partnerships and stakeholder engagement: How has FAO collaborated with partners and to what extent does the project develop new partnerships or enhance existing ones? To what extent are stakeholders engaged in the project? How, if at all, has FAO contributed to improve organizational policies, strategies and programmes? What linkages, if any, exist between the capacities developed among diverse types of beneficiaries?

Key finding 9: The strategy to avoid a weak engagement of national stakeholders has not been implemented. The Dominican Republic presents the weakest stakeholders' engagement.

Key finding 10: FAO has established a fluid and effective channel of communication with partners to support them on technical issues, mainly by e-mail and meetings of the PSC, and with the assistance of some social media platforms. However, there has been limited supervision of Technical Officers on the ground.

Key finding 11: Only one new partnership has been created between different government institutions and the private sector to implement an empty pesticides containers management scheme in Suriname.

Key finding 12: The institutional process to evaluate applications for registration of new pesticides in the region is being strengthened partly through use of the FAO's Pesticides Registration Toolkit by national registrars.

Key finding 13: There is a strategy to keep COTED involved in the project through the provision of project updates at the Council's regional meetings. This strategy is key to the sustainability of the project and its actions.

FAO Collaboration

73. All partners interviewed largely acknowledged the effective work and support from the FAO Project Coordinator (PC), which has been integral to keeping the project moving forward for the achievement of its objectives. The PC has been the link between the partners and the FAO Technical Officers assigned to this project. Considering the nature of the technical requests from partners, the PC identifies the Technical Officers, including the Lead Technical Officer (LTO), to attend to the requests of project partners, and establishes direct communication mainly by email. Most of the partners feel supported by the LTO and FAO Technical Officers, who provide support even for technical matters not directly related to project activities. The consultants interviewed indicated that the LTO and FAO Technical Officers have provided useful feedback to the progress and final reports of their consultancies to ensure quality. However, more expert technical support is required on the ground to supervise trials carried out to test alternatives to toxic pesticides.
74. The LTO, the Budget Holder and the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit are members of the PSC, that supports the project by monitoring the quality and timeliness of the execution of project activities and delivery of outputs, and propose adjustments as necessary. The LTO has participated in the three PSC Meetings carried out in May 2016, 16-17 February 2017 and 14-15 June 2018. The Technical Officer of the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit has also participated in the 3rd Meeting providing training on how to estimate co-financing.

New partnerships

75. As part of the activities under Component 3, a new partnership was created in Suriname between the government and private sector. As mentioned earlier in this report, a pesticides container management network was established with stakeholders from Ministry of Agriculture, which coordinates the network and provides training to farmers and importers about triple rinse of empty pesticides containers and its disposal on the specific bags located in the rice fields of Nickerie. The National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname (NIMOS) participated in the establishment of the pilot and conducted stakeholder engagement sessions with pesticide retailers. NIMOS also manages the resources

provided by importers and distributors provide monetary and in-kind resources. One participant provides support to collect the bags full of empty containers from the fields, and the space of their warehouses to store them temporarily. Amazona Recycling Company (AMRECO), a waste recycling company, receives the empty containers and provides physical treatment (crushing the containers into small pieces) at no cost to the project. The company executive interviewed reported their distinct preference for the containers to be triple rinsed before delivery to their site and said removal of the protective plastic film wrapped around each bottle reduces the company's cost efficiency. Efforts are ongoing to secure a buyer of the recycled product. The Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Trade, and the Customs Department are supporting with the network by promoting awareness on triple rinsing and pesticide life cycle management, improved storage of obsolete pesticides including those seized by the Customs officials, and support to the transportation process for collecting and transporting the empty containers to the collection points.

Stakeholder engagement

76. Stakeholder engagement by the project at the national level could be divided into two stages. The first corresponds with the commencement of the project and the work carried out for removal of the obsolete pesticides. This stage was characterized by active stakeholders engagement during which representatives from ministries of agriculture, health, and the environment, Customs Departments, research institutions and pesticides importers, all of whom were holders of obsolete pesticides, received "learning by doing" training on repacking and safeguarding of their own obsolete pesticides in each country. Then, they participated actively in the transportation and storage of the stockpiles, and provided in-kind and monetary resources. The respective Ministries of the Environment and Agriculture, and the Customs Offices of each participating country played a key role to obtain authorization for the transboundary movement of the stockpiles. The PC and the NPCs also played fundamental roles to coordinate all of these actions. Since this activity was an urgent need in the region, considering the impossibility to eliminate the stockpiles through previous projects, this high level of response was expected.
77. The second stage comprises the activities after the removal of the obsolete pesticides until now. This stage also includes two different scenarios: 1) the case of Suriname, in which key stakeholders are actively participating in a network to manage empty pesticides containers as described in previous sections of this report and in the training related to contaminated sites; and 2) the case of the other countries, in which there was no clear involvement of stakeholders or where this has been completely nonexistent. With the exception of St Kitts and Nevis, whose technicians received training in the marking out of grids in the selected contaminated site and the systematic collection of soil samples.
78. In this second scenario, many of the stakeholders did not know about other project activities other than the elimination of the obsolete pesticides and indicated that were not participating in any other activity related to the project. In Dominican Republic, stakeholders from the Customs Office and the Ministry of the Environment

mentioned that they thought the project had finished with the elimination of the obsolete pesticides as they did not hear anything about the project after that. All of the national research institutions interviewed related to plant protection matters did not know about the trials on alternatives to HHPs, although they expressed their interest in knowing more. Further, one of these institutions stated that there was a serious fault in the project since they had not been involved in the activity. All pesticides importers interviewed confirmed interest in participating in a network to manage empty pesticide containers or expressed that there would be possibilities to implement such an initiative, but many of them did not know about the project. In addition, many of the stakeholders stressed the inadequate visibility of the project. According to FAO implementers, the project has had challenges with the issuance of Issue Briefs and other communications materials, partially influenced by the lack of a fulltime Communications Officer based in the Barbados office.

79. Nine (9) of the eleven (11) countries (with the exception of Suriname and the Dominican Republic) have Pesticides and Chemicals Boards (PCBs) which are commonly made up of representatives of Ministries of Agriculture, the Environment, Health, and also representatives of Customs and Excise Departments, and Analytical Services. These boards are used by NPCs mainly to communicate the progress of the project to their respective agencies, but this is not done on a regular basis. The frequency and level of information appears variable, depending on each NPC. Suriname does not have a PCB but the NPC has developed a constant and fluid interaction with stakeholders.
80. There is a Pesticides Registration Division of the Ministry of Agriculture in the Dominican Republic, which is comprised of specialized personnel who analyze health, economic, agricultural and environmental aspects of pesticides as part of their evaluation process to register new pesticides. Thus, there is no participation of other ministries in the registration process. The evaluation found that the Dominican Republic presents the most significant deficiencies of communication and involvement with stakeholders, since as mentioned before, key stakeholders thought the project had finished. Pesticides importers do not know about the project, even though they have a small programme to collect and dispose empty pesticides containers and are planning to scale up this programme at national level. The coordination effort to implement project activities lack a strategic vision and communication with the wider regional partners is constrained due to language barriers. Although, the project had already begun with the translation of the Empty Container Management toolkit into Spanish, including all related materials.
81. This level of variation in the involvement in the project between countries could be explained due to the lack of a formal mechanism to coordinate effective communication and participation of stakeholders. None of NPCs had a specific strategy to communicate with stakeholders. According to the PRODOC, at the beginning of the project implementation National Focal Points were to be nominated from different line ministries to support CGPC members, as well as to strengthen communication and visibility actions through a project level strategy. This

arrangement was designed to avoid the risk of a weak engagement of national stakeholders due to lack of full knowledge of the project and its activities among key line ministries, which was apparent in previous projects. Particularly, the final evaluation of the FAO EC (GCP/INT/063/EC), which was the previous pesticides project in the Caribbean, identified relatively weak engagement of national stakeholders, citing lack of full knowledge of the project and its activities among key line ministries. Thus, the PRODOC of this project under evaluation adapted the previous implementation arrangement to include National Project Teams with National Focal Points from different line ministries to avoid this risk. However, this arrangement was not implemented; as a result, the national stakeholders do not have full knowledge of the project and its activities.

82. At regional level, important regional organizations and institutions are already partners of the project, such as IICA and CAHFSA which are members of the PSC, and UWI which is in charge of the implementation of the Component 2 and also is contributing to Component 4. CARDI was another important regional partner of the project included in the PRODOC; however, administrative changes caused its non-participation of the project. Efforts still continue to engage CARDI in the project as it is highly recognized in the region and its expertise in HHPs alternatives and other research is widely recognized. COTED, which comprises government ministers, is a fundamental regional stakeholder whose participation is key to contribute to the sustainability of the benefits of the project; thus, FAO Liaison Unit maintains a dialogue with this organization (see question 6 for more details on sustainability). The Rotterdam Convention Secretariat and PAN-UK as international organizations have also joined the project and are providing additional resources. There is an informal "WhatsApp" group to communicate between regional and national stakeholders created by the PC.

Training and institutional changes

83. Regarding the training provided to project partners and considering the online survey results, 24 of 52 respondents benefited from a training related to project activities and all of them indicated that they will continue to use the knowledge or skills learned. As of February 2019, there were 41 persons trained in use of FAO Registration Toolkit, although some persons do not belong to project countries. Partners from Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominican Republic, Suriname and Barbados indicated that they are partly using the FAO Pesticides Registration Toolkit. In addition, they found the training and the toolkit itself very useful but very demanding of information which many did not have. This impeded the complete use of the Toolkit in the process to register new pesticides. Thus, step by step the institutional evaluation process to register new pesticides is being modified to include the use of the toolkit.

4.5 Evaluation question 5: How effective has the materialization of co-financing been?

Key finding 14: The estimation of the co-financing has been challenging due to general lack of understanding on what qualifies as co-financing, thus there is uncertainty on its level of materialization.

Key finding 15: Efforts have been identified to ensure compliance and correct reporting of co-financing by project countries.

84. The co-financing reported by project countries up to June 2018 represents the 44 percent (USD 11.6 million) with respect to the total amount confirmed in the Letters of Agreement (USD 26.37 million) (Table 3). However, the percentage of materialized co-financing varies greatly across countries and institutions, from 2 percent estimated by Jamaica to 215 percent reported by Trinidad and Tobago or to 300 percent estimated by UWI. There has also been a contribution of USD 140 745 from the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat and USD 6 750 from PAN-UK which were not anticipated in the PRODOC.

Table 3: Co-financing provided as at June 2018

Country/Organization	Amount confirmed in the Letter of Agreement (USD)	Amount officially contributed up to the date of the Mid-Term Review (USD)	Percentage of materialized co-financing (%)
Antigua and Barbuda	2 000 000	522 705	26
Barbados	837 594	207 473	25
Dominica	621 151	165 449	27
Dominican Republic	857 944	1 725 992	201
Guyana	2 250 000	320 250	14
Jamaica	3 026 000	64 615	2
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1 267 537	795 000	63
Saint Lucia	4 651 419	165 952	4
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	330 246	632 150	191
Suriname	909 987	323 534	36
Trinidad and Tobago	1 184 510	2 459 254	215
FAO	5 191 109	2 019 000	39
IICA	2 250 000	1 447 602	64
CAHFSA	200 000	45 589	23
CARDI ¹	591 242	-	-
UWI	200 000	599 003	300
Rotterdam Convention Secretariat ²	0	140 745	-
PAN-UK ²	0	6 750	-
Total	26 368 739	11 641 063	44

CARDI is not a current partner of the project.¹

These contributions were not considered initially in the PRODOC.²

85. According to a partner interviewed, guidelines for reporting co-financing were sent to the project countries in 2017 and a webinar by Skype was provided to support them to estimate costs that can be considered as co-financing. In addition, during the 3rd Project Steering Committee Meeting held on June 2018, a misunderstanding was reported in regards to reporting co-financing: one country representative assumed that co-financing had to be reported by component, as it was done during the 2nd Project Steering Committee Meeting of 2017. Other representative indicated the challenges to obtain the actual costs for several items and whether or not the items had to be included in the estimation. During the meeting, the Technical Officer of the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit clarified the misunderstanding and provided advice about how and what to report as co-financing.
86. Some partners interviewed indicated that they would not have problems to comply with the committed co-financing, as project activities are part of their regular activities, but estimations have been challenging. All partners interviewed do not keep a regular record of the resources used to support project activities. Some of them mentioned that cost estimations would be easier after training but some of them indicated that more training is needed. Some of the figures presented in Table 3 were estimated after the support received to improve reporting (i.e. the Dominican Republic) but most of them were not updated, therefore there is uncertainty about the total amount of co-financing materialized.
87. Among the priority areas for consideration of COTED in its meeting in October 2018, the CGPC included the specific high-level (policy-maker) support for the project activities and reporting on national co-finance contributions as required by the donor (GEF). In response, "COTED agreed that Ministries of Agriculture and Health of the beneficiary countries, where possible, should support the priorities and objectives of the project and provide co-finance (in-kind), as needed, for submission to GEF and to facilitate continued project implementation." Therefore, there are efforts to ensure co-financing from project countries.

4.6 Evaluation question 6: What are, if any, the socio-political, financial, institutional and governance, and environmental risks to sustainability? What evidence exists indicating the feasibility of replication or catalysis of project results, and the likelihood that project activities will continue following project closure?

Key finding 16: The adoption of the model regulations on sound pesticides management and the establishment of a regional group on pesticide registration are key activities to ensure sustainability of project benefits.

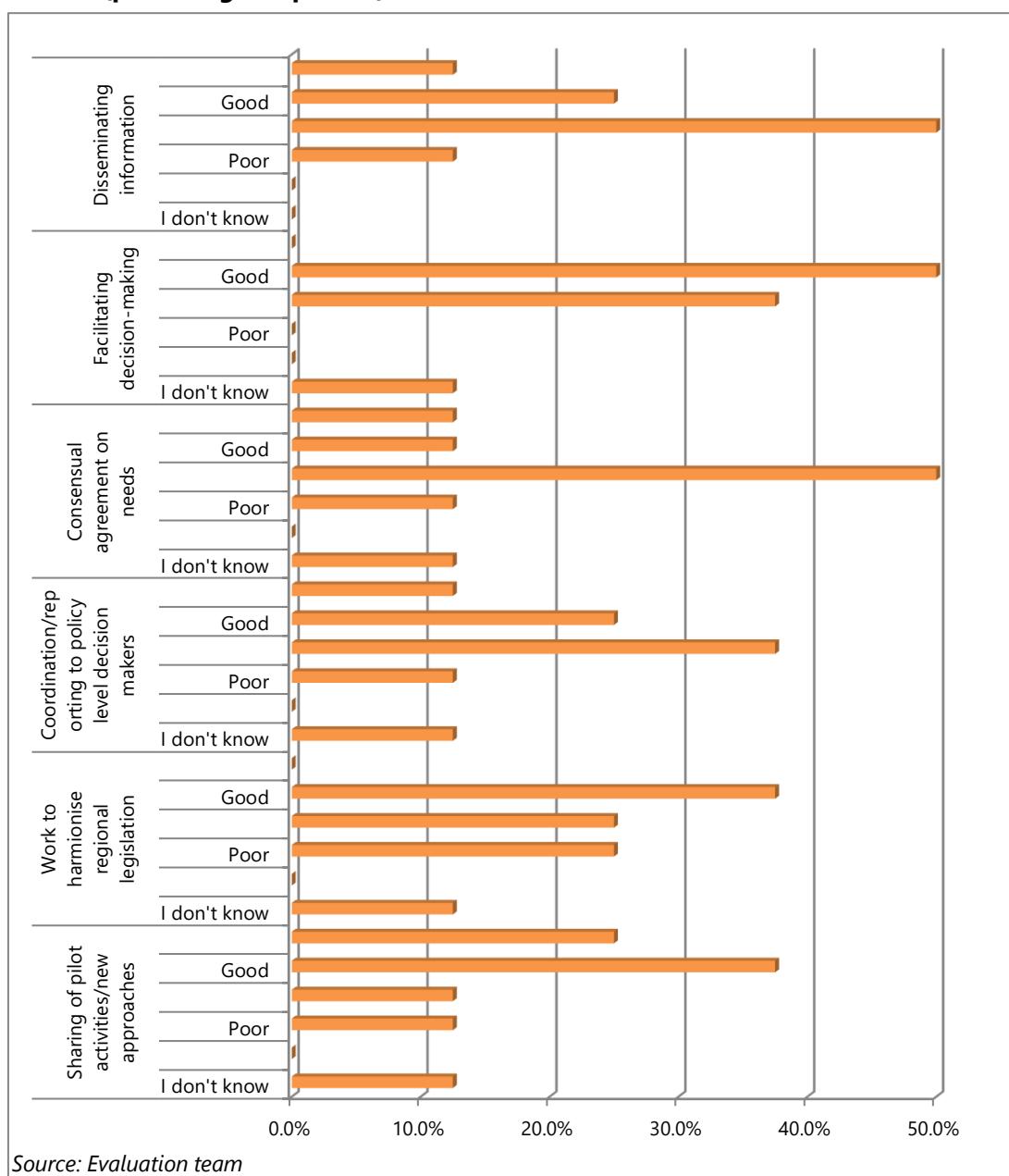
Key finding 17: There is high risk that these activities will not be accomplished due to intrinsic political risks, delays and time constraints.

Key finding 18 - Initial efforts are in the correct direction to obtain support from key regional organizations to promote the accomplishment of these two activities from project countries, but they are not sufficient.

88. The proposal of model regulations tailored to the needs of the region and revised by legislative drafters for voluntary adoption by project countries is a key element to ensure the sustainability of the project benefits and for sound pesticides management in the region. According to the PRODOC, the model regulations will address the gaps identified through a review of country legislation and the need to update old legislation. The model regulations will also be based on the FAO Code of Conduct which provides standards of conduct that serve as a point of reference for sound management practices of pesticide life cycle to government authorities and the pesticide industry. It would also include provisions to avoid the generation of obsolete pesticides and promote the financial sustainability of pesticides boards. As a complement, the project incorporates the development and piloting of regionally harmonized pesticide registration mechanisms. These mechanisms would also contribute to the sustainability of project benefits by strengthening national institutional frameworks and capacities for effective registration. Particularly, this would benefit the smaller states with less evaluation capacities and avoid the registration of HHPs. Thus, if these outputs are not achieved, the sustainability of the main project benefits would be at risk.
89. At present, there is high risk that these outputs will not be achieved due to time constraints as the project would come to an end in September 2019. In addition, these outputs have an intrinsic political risk that might be caused by sovereignty considerations, which could impede adoption of the model registration in some countries.
90. In these negotiations, the CGPC has an essential role. Presently, since the commencement of the project in 2016, the CGPC has participated in the last three COTED annual meetings to inform and update on project progress, and present recommendations to be adopted by COTED. As a result, COTED has made decisions to support project implementation. In the 2018 meeting, the Council supported the CGPC's recommendations to Member States, particularly COTED, among others:
 - Supported the recommendation for Member States to update and enact their pesticides legislation and regulations in line with the FAO/WHO codes and guidelines on pesticides management and legislation;
 - Mandated the establishment of a regional technical working group to review applications for the registration of pesticides in Member Countries and which would, thereafter, advise Member Countries accordingly.
91. In this respect, the FAO Liaison to CARICOM has had meetings with the PC to send a letter to Member States to communicate these decisions and encourage their adoption. These steps would be in the correct direction, however, the revision and negotiations aforementioned on the content of model regulations would be the toughest and very time consuming.
92. Another key issue for the sustainability of project benefits would be strengthening of the CGPC, although the project does not have direct responsibility on this. According to the survey results on the CGPC, which were answered by 8 CGPC

members, the respondents considered that the CGPC had an acceptable performance (50 percent of the respondents) in disseminating information and consensual agreement on needs; and also to coordinate and report to policy level decision makers (37 percent) and a good performance to facilitate decision making (50 percent), work to harmonize regional legislation and sharing of pilot activities and new approaches (37 percent, respectively). Further, as shown in Figure 6, the respondents indicated the specific resources required to support their increased participation in the group. 4 of 7 respondents specified there was need for increased availability of staff and financial resources, and a high level of political support to enhance participation in the CGPC.

Figure 6: Stakeholders' views on the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean performance (percentage responses)



93. The NPCs interviewed largely agreed that the CGPC could take over management of project activities, when the project is finished, once the Group has a secretariat that support its work. In this regard, the project is supporting and organizing the CGPC meetings (face to face and virtual meetings) and encouraging dialogue between the CGPC and CAHFSA. The proposal is that CAHFSA could become the secretariat of CGPC. In this respect, CAHFSA agreed to play this role, but it is concerned about its budget and personnel limitations. CAHFSA is currently seeking financing for a post to become the Secretariat. Therefore additional resources should be ensured. In this sense, the model regulations could help to generate revenues by including provisions to apply fees to the private sector for the import and registration of pesticides in the region.
94. Considering that the Dominican Republic is a member of CGPC, but not a member of CARICOM, the decisions and recommendations made by COTED to the Members States would not necessarily have effect in this country. However, as a project country and taking into account the review carried out to identify gaps, it is expected that the Dominican Republic would also execute the negotiations in-country to adopt the model regulation, and contribute to the sustainability of project benefits. Government stakeholders interviewed indicated there could be interest, but it would have to be analyzed. Currently, the government is working on harmonization with the Central America region, although they mentioned having a Free Trade Agreement with CARICOM. Stakeholders from the private sector expressed that all the members of the national pesticides association called AFIPA have adhered to the FAO Code of Conduct and some members have a small pesticides market in the English Caribbean. Further, they mentioned the need to update the national legislation on pesticides as this was reportedly "old".

4.7 Evaluation question 7: How has the project affected gender dynamics in participating countries? What lessons, if any, can be drawn?¹¹

Key finding 19: The PRODOC did not consider the inclusion of gender perspective in the project implementation as the guidelines to elaborate it of that time did not require it. Although the sound management of pesticides has important gender dimensions.

Key finding 20: Efforts have been made to collect gender disaggregated data in trainings and workshops. However, gender perspective had neither been included in practical trainings on remediation of contaminated sites, nor in the communication materials on the dangers of chemical pesticides to human health and the environment.

95. Efforts to ensure the Sound Management of Chemicals, including pesticides, have important gender dimensions. As elaborated by the United Nations Development Program, "Social factors, primarily gender-determined occupational roles, have a direct impact on human exposure to toxic chemicals, including the kinds of chemicals

¹¹ It is important to note the limitations the evaluation team faced in assessing this question, as described in the limitations section above.

encountered as well as the level and frequency of such exposures. For instance, in agricultural communities in developing countries, men may be at higher risk of direct exposure to chemical pesticides during application, while women (and sometimes children) may be more likely to be indirectly exposed during planting and harvesting." (UNDP, 2007). The International Code of Conduct on Pesticides Management (FAO and WHO, 2014) focuses on risk reduction by calling on countries to give attention to vulnerable groups such as pregnant and nursing women. Nevertheless, the PRODOC did not consider the inclusion of the gender perspective in the implementation of the project, as the guidelines to elaborate it of that time did not require it. Thus, none of the partners interviewed has considered a gender mainstreaming strategy during project implementation.

96. Disaggregated data on the gender of participants was presented in the Stakeholders Engagement section of the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) and in the section on Input in the Project Progress Reports (PPRs) (Table 4). According to this data, 41 females and 50 males have been trained on the use of the FAO Pesticides Registration Toolkit; contaminated site characterization and soil sampling; pesticides import/export control and on the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and related Conventions; and in the ECM enumerator. The KAP surveys conducted with farmers comprised 74 female and 233 male respondents. Nonetheless, the inclusion of gender perspective is more than collecting gender disaggregated data.

Table 4: Disaggregated data on the gender of participants in trainings and surveys

Date	Training/Surveys	Male	Female
<i>Training</i>			
7 – 18 November, 2016	FAO Pesticides Registration Toolkit Training of Trainers Workshop	6	3
25 – 29 June, 2017	Practical training in pesticides-contaminated site characterization and soils sampling	3	2
2 – 5 July, 2017	Practical training in pesticides-contaminated site characterization and soils sampling	2	2
4 – 6 December, 2017	Workshop for Customs Officers and Pesticides Inspectors on pesticides import/export control and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and related Conventions	14	20
19 – 20 April, 2018	ECM enumerator training in Suriname via WEBEX	10	1
24 – 25 April, 2018	ECM enumerator training in Antigua and Barbuda via WEBEX	6	8
30 August, 2018	Practical training in pesticides-contaminated site characterization and soils sampling	9	5
	Total	50	41
<i>Survey Conduction</i>			
23 April – 4 May, 2018	ECM KAP Survey and pilot container management awareness campaign conducted in Suriname	164	45
23 April – 4 May, 2018	ECM KAP Survey and pilot container management awareness campaign conducted in Antigua and Barbuda	69	29
	TOTAL	233	74

97. Women have been participating in the practical trainings in pesticides-contaminated site characterization and soils sampling, in which there was no consideration of the gender perspective. In addition, communication materials have been developed on the dangers of chemical pesticides to human health and the environment, including messages on the risks and alternatives of specific HHPs, without consideration of the gender perspective.
98. Regarding the promotion of alternatives to HHPs, the International Code of Conduct on Pesticides Management states that concerted efforts should be made by governments to develop and promote the use of IPM and Integrated Vector Management, which should be based on strategies that promote increased participation of farmers, including women's groups. In this respect, the project has not yet considered a strategy to distribute these materials to women's groups.

5. Lessons learned

Lesson 1. Problems identified with engagements of national stakeholders in previous projects, which were also identified as risks to the current project, should be included as potential risks in the PIR and PPR and be monitored throughout the project in order to apply corrective management actions where necessary.

Lesson 2. High importance should be placed on stakeholder engagement in regional projects to ensure capacity building and ownership in participating countries in addition to engagement of national, local and industry stakeholders. An indicator, with associated targets, to measure the level of stakeholder engagement could be helpful. This could be, for example, the number and frequency of the efforts to engage the various groups of stakeholders.

Lesson 3. The preparation of an annual workplans in Microsoft Excel® is not enough to guide the implementation of project activities, especially in scenarios where the project started late or there are delayed activities. The workplan should be supported with a strategic and concise document, which should be elaborated with inputs of the project monitoring and may include the milestones to reach in the year; the strategy to address delayed activities, and the detailed activities to carry out during the year along with the administrative tasks to be also accomplished.

Lesson 4. Technical capacities ought to be carefully analysed during project design to enable greater efficacy and efficiency during project implementation. Limitations of technical capacities in the region to carry out chemical analyses of soil samples for pesticide contamination, and to adequately handle soil samples are delaying the project. Moreover, technical decisions made without robust evidence are putting at risk the demonstration of appropriate remediation strategies.

Lesson 5. Since the sound management of chemicals, including pesticides, has important gender dimensions, a gender mainstreaming strategy ought to be included in all project activities related to this matter.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1 (Relevance/Design). Project interventions are contributing to the accomplishment of national strategic objectives on pesticides management and to position this matter as relevant to support modern agriculture at the regional level.

Conclusion 2 (Effectiveness). The elimination of obsolete pesticides in the region has been seen as a great success of the project. However, significant delays in other important activities such as the development of model regulations and the remediation of contaminated sites are putting at risk full achievement of the project's objectives.

Conclusion 3 (Efficiency). Project expenses are consistent with the progress in the activities, although monitoring of the project's activities can be greatly improved. Deficiencies in executing the M&E plan meant that risk affecting project performance were not identified on time and appropriate recommendations were not provided in a timely manner to keep the project on track.

Conclusion 4 (Partnerships and stakeholder engagement). Engagement of national stakeholders in the project is weak due to their lack of full knowledge of the project and its activities. This risk was identified in a previous pesticides project in the region, however the recommended strategy to avoid it was not implemented. In comparison, important actions have been carried out to engage key stakeholders at the regional level such as the presentation of project results in the COTED's annual meetings since 2016 and the inclusion of information related to the project in the Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) database system housed and maintained by CAHFSA.

Conclusion 5 (Co-financing). It is apparent that co-financing is not at risk due to the delays in project implementation and the availability of resources to accomplish the activities which were undertaken. However, there is uncertainty on the level of materialization of co-financing and the estimation of co-financing continues to be challenging for NPCs.

Conclusion 6 (Sustainability). Sustainability of project benefits are at risk due to significant delays in activities that are fundamental to it, such as the proposal of a model regulation to be adopted by project countries, and the reduction of risks to human and the environment by the initial remediation of priority contaminated sites, which will also create capacities in the region to manage pesticides contaminated sites. Initial efforts are in the correct direction to obtain support from key regional organizations to elaborate a harmonized model regulation, but are insufficient.

Conclusion 7 (Gender). The project did not have a gender mainstreaming strategy, even though sound management of pesticides has important gender dimensions. Efforts have been made to collect gender disaggregated data, but trainings and communication materials have not included the gender perspective.

6.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1 to GEF and FAO: Request a project extension until December 2020 at no cost in order to provide sufficient time to achieve a satisfactory level of contamination reduction in selected pesticides contaminated sites, which is a key activity to reduce risks to human health and the environment and build capacities in the Caribbean region. Also, ensuring enough time to engage key allies to do lobbying work with targeted regional and national institutions and organizations in order that Model Regulations can be adopted. For that, it is necessary to accomplish the activities defined in the project, namely: 1) to develop model regulations in consultation with Chief Parliamentary Counsel at the national level and CARICOM Legal Affairs Committee at the regional level; 2) ensure the revision and approval of the model by the technical experts of OECS; and 3) provide sufficient time for countries to negotiate internally the adoption of the model regulations. In general terms, this project extension will allow implementers to finish all pending project activities.

Recommendation 2 to CGPC and FAO: Improve visibility of the project through a strategic communication campaign addressed to national stakeholders and external partners (i.e. FAO country offices) in order to inform on project activities progress and its benefits additional to the removal of obsolete pesticides. This would help to reemphasize the importance of the project for the region and their commitment to the project.

Recommendation 3 to CGPC and FAO: The arrangements to appoint the National Focal Points (NFP) from different line ministries to support National Project Teams should be implemented as indicated in the PRODOC. This would address the weak engagement of national stakeholders, who lack full knowledge of the project and its activities. Considering that 9 countries have national Boards, a proposal could be that members of the Boards are appointed as NFP of the project, which would have the responsibility to inform to their respective ministries or organizations on project progress and would be responsible for specific project duties related to their institutional functions. The NPC would have the responsibility to update during the Boards meetings on project progress and share the 6-monthly project progress reports. In the case of Suriname, the members of the Pesticide Approval Committee could be appointed as NFP. For the Dominican Republic, the members of the virtual group, created to attend activities related to the Rotterdam, Basel and Stockholm Conventions, should also be appointed as NFP of this project.

Recommendation 4 to FAO and National Project Team of the Dominican Republic: Communication capacity and capabilities of the National Project Team of the Dominican Republic (DR) should be strengthened in order to overcome language barriers to effectively communicate with regional partners and PC, and actively participate in the project implementation. Hiring or developing bilingual staff is one way to reinforce these capacities. Additionally, it is necessary to strengthen communication and coordination among the National Project Team members and with stakeholders, as many were unaware of the full spectrum of the project's activities. Finally, the project should ensure that the National Coordinator has the necessary capacity to manage, implement and deliver on the project's strategic priorities. As a first step, it is advisable to have

a high-level face to face meeting with the new Plant Health Director of the Ministry of Agriculture of DR in order to discuss the best way to attend this recommendation.

Recommendation 5 to CGPC, FAO and GEF: It is advisable to establish coordination with the activities of the GEF project ID 5558 "Development and implementation of a sustainable management system for POPs in the Caribbean" as it contains some overlapping components with the current project, including the results and lessons learned. According to FAO's previous experience, there is a potential risk that the proposals of legislations elaborated in both projects contain contradictory aspects for the sound pesticides management.

Recommendation 6 to FAO: A Monitoring and Evaluation System is crucial to identify new/potential risks that could affect the achievement of project objectives and propose actions to mitigate them. Since significant delays were not identified during project implementation, which now affect the fulfilment of the objectives, the Monitoring and Evaluation plan of the project should be strengthened by using available resources for hiring a specialist to support the monitoring and reporting on project's progress.

Recommendation 7 to FAO and CGPC: The adoption of model harmonized regulations would help the project countries to prevent the generation of new obsolete pesticides, however, there is uncertainty when the regulation could be adopted. Thus, a training exercise to prevent the obsolescence of pesticides is highly advisable at this stage of the project.

Recommendation 8 to FAO: A gender mainstreaming strategy should be defined and implemented in pending project activities. Specialized support should be requested from FAO gender specialist. The strategy should consider aspects such as: to ensure that awareness raising activities are targeting vulnerable groups relevant to the project; to ensure that pesticides risks to vulnerable groups (such as pregnant and nursing women) are identified in the project and the identified risks are considered in trainings, remediation activities and in the communication materials; and to increase application of a gender perspective to the relevant areas of the project (for instance, intention to ensure gender balance during trainings).

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Appendix 1. GEF Evaluation Criteria Rating Table and Rating Scheme

GEF Evaluation Criteria Rating Table

GEF criteria/sub criteria	Rating	Summary Comments
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	S	Project interventions contribute to FAO's Strategic Objective 2 on increasing agricultural production on a sustainable manner; and the CHEM-1 Outcome 1.4 of GEF Objectives on POPs sound management and elimination.
A2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities	S	Project interventions contribute to the accomplishment of national and regional strategic objectives and are aligned with international environmental treaties (i.e. Stockholm Convention).
A3. Complementarity with existing interventions	MS	There are overlapping actions with GEF project ID 5558 on chemicals management, and the <i>Rotterdam project</i> related to alternatives to dangerous pesticides.
A4. Overall strategic relevance	S	Partners and stakeholders participated actively in the project design; thus, project actions are aligned with national, regional and global priorities.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MU	Component 1 shows satisfactory accomplishment of results, but those of the other four Components are delayed. Particularly, Components 2 and 4 are significantly delayed.
B1.1 Delivery of Outputs	MU	The elimination of the obsolete pesticides was a great success for the project; however, other important outputs such as the development of Model Regulations, are delayed.
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹² and project objectives	MU	Although the elimination of the obsolete pesticides contributes strongly to the fulfilment of project objectives, other activities of the similar importance have not been carried out, thus accomplishment of the objectives of the project is at risk.
B1.3 Likelihood of Impact	Not rated at MTE	NA
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency	MU	There are significant delays in important project activities (i.e. remediation of contaminated sites and the elaboration of model regulations). Monitoring and evaluation of project activities is very weak and the Mid Term Evaluation is being conducted much later than scheduled in the PIF.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	MU	Model regulations and the creation of a working group on pesticides registration to harmonize pesticides management at regional level are key elements for sustainability, but they show significant delays.

¹² Assessment and ratings by individual outcome may be undertaken if there is added value.

D2. Financial risks	MU	The CGPC would take over activities on the management of pesticides at regional level. However, it has limited financial and technical capacities. Thus, a secretariat is needed to support its activities. This is being negotiated with CAHFSA, which also has limited resources.
D3. Socio-political risks	ML	Since the regional harmonization on pesticides management was requested by project countries, their support for the adoption of the model regulations is expected. However, some partners and stakeholders expressed concern about sovereignty considerations held by some countries.
D4. Institutional and governance risks	ML	Considering that project interventions are aligned with national priorities, it is expected that project countries would continue with their activities. Nonetheless, NPCs have expressed limited capacities to implement them.
D5. Environmental risks	ML	Remediation of contaminated sites is still pending and quantities of obsolete pesticides remain in the region due to the inaccuracy of some inventories.
D6. Catalysis and replication	MU	The adoption of the model regulation for pesticides legislation by at least 5 project countries could be at risk if timely and astute negotiations are not conducted.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness ¹³	MS	The project started 6 months late due to the delay in hiring the Project Coordinator.
E2. Quality of project implementation	MU	The annual workplans do not reflect the problems faced by the project, and no indication of M&E efforts undertaken due to the late commencement and delays in key projects activities. The activities planned to be carried out during the first year were unrealistic considering the capacities of the National Project Coordinators.
E2.1 Project oversight (FAO, PSC, PTF, etc)	MU	FAO and the PSC have not had a critical view to qualify the level of achievement of project activities, thus there have been no warnings to project coordinators to attend to project delays.
E3. Quality of project execution	HS	Considering the challenges to deal with "lag" and "lead" project countries, the limited technical capacities in the region, and insufficient staff for regional coordination, the level project execution has been highly satisfactory.
E3.1 Project management arrangements and delivery (PMU, financial management, etc)	MU	Use of project resources by the BH & PC has been adequate and cautious, although management arrangements are incomplete due to the lack of national focal points who would support national stakeholder engagement.
E4. Co-financing	UA	There is uncertainty on the materialization of project co-financing due to challenges experienced by project partners in estimating the value of in-kind contributions.
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder involvement	MU	Stakeholder engagement at national level is weak due to lack of national focal points to support stakeholder involvement.

¹³ Refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at the project's launch.

E6. Communication and knowledge management	MS	Good communication and knowledge management is active between the regional and national project coordinators, with exception of the Dominican Republic due to language barriers.
E7. Overall quality of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	U	The monitoring of project activities and evaluation of results is weak. The MTE started late.
E7.1 M&E Design	MS	The PRODOC includes the delivery of reports to inform to GEF and FAO on project progress, however, the determination of the level of achievement of activities has been unrealistic.
E7.2 M&E Plan Implementation (including financial and human resources)	U	Despite the fact that Component 6 includes budget provisions to support the M&E plan, no specific resources have been directed to this activity. Thus far, only 8% of this budgetary allocation has been spent.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	U	M&E plan implementation is not apparent as a high priority in implementation of the project.
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNs		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	UA	The PRODOC did not include a gender mainstreaming strategy.
F2. Human rights issues	UA	The nature of the project is mainly technical, no specific human rights issues are addressed.
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	HS	Safeguarding of high-priority sites and the disposal of POPs has been effective as no reports of incidents affecting the environment and the health of people involved in these tasks have been recorded.
Overall project rating	MU	The level of outcomes achieved is lower than expected considering that the project is scheduled to end in September 2019. Important activities to accomplish project objectives, which would also contribute to the sustainability of project benefits, are delayed. There is weak national stakeholder engagement which is also contributing to the delay in project activities.

Overall Outcome ratings

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	"Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no short comings."
Satisfactory (S)	"Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor short comings."
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	"Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate short comings."
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	"Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings."
Unsatisfactory (U)	"Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major short comings."

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	<i>"Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe short comings."</i>
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.

Factors affecting performance ratings

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder involvement/communication and knowledge management exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder involvement/communication and knowledge management meets expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder involvement/communication and knowledge management more or less meets expectations.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder involvement/communication and knowledge management somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of implementation substantially lower than expected.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder involvement/communication and knowledge management .
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder involvement/communication and knowledge management .

Monitoring and Evaluation Design or Implementation Ratings

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation meets expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation more or less meets expectations.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation substantially lower than expected.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in M&E design or M&E implementation.
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design or M&E implementation

Sustainability Ratings

Rating	Description
Likely (L)	There is little or no risk to sustainability.
Moderately Likely (ML)	There are moderate risks to sustainability.
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability.
Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks to sustainability.
Unable to Assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

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