

# **Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats: Strengthening a Regional Network for a Shared Resource**

**Project Number GEF 2713-03, PIMS GF/1020-03**

## **FINAL EVALUATION**



**Members of the Jaragua Site Support Group leading a bird tour on Laguna de Oviedo,  
Jaragua National Park, Dominican Republic**

**5<sup>th</sup> October – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

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It should be stated that the Evaluation was greatly facilitated – and made a pleasurable experience – due to the openness, courteousness and sense of humour of all the project team. Whatever the project may lack, it has certainly has a pool of dedicated and talented personnel whose efforts are not sufficiently recognised. Very many thanks to all for a stimulating and very worthwhile assignment.

## List of Acronyms

BEST	Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission
BLJ	BirdLife Jamaica
BNT	Bahamas National Trust
CAD	Consortio Ambiental Dominicano
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEBF	Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival
CRAG	Caribbean Regional Advisory Group
CSC	Caribbean Steering Committee
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FE	Final Evaluation
FoE	Friends of the Environment (Abaco)
FSP	Full-Sized Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GJ	Grupo Jaragua
HOS	Hispaniolan Ornithological Society
HWP	Harrold and Wilson Ponds (Bahamas)
IBA	Important Bird Area
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
JET	Jamaica Environment Trust
JNP	Jaragua National Park (Dominican Republic)
LFMC	Local Forest Management Committee
MENR	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Dominican Republic)
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MSP	Medium-Sized Project
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency (Jamaica)
NEPT	Negril Environmental Protection Trust
NIBACS	National Important Bird Areas Conservation Strategy
NLC	National Liaison Committee
NMBCA	Neotropical Migratory Birds Conservation Act
PA	Protected area
PIR	Project Implementation Review
SCSCB	Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds
SSG	Site Support Group
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TR	Terminal Report
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-DGEF	United Nations Environment Programme – Division of Global Environment Facility
WIWD-WC Project	West Indian Whistling-Duck and Wetlands Conservation Project
WRC	Windsor Research Centre
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WWP	Watchable Wildlife Pond

# 1. Executive Summary

## Project execution

The *Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats: Strengthening a Regional Network for a Shared Resource* project (Project Number: GF/1020-03-02) was approved by GEF on 28 April 2003, began implementation on 1 October 2003, and, after a 6-month no-cost extension, was completed on 30 September 2007 (project duration 48 months). UNEP acted as the implementing agency and BirdLife International, based in Cambridge, UK, as the main executing agency for the project, with co-executors in each of the three target countries - the Bahamas National Trust (BNT) in the Bahamas, Grupo Jaragua (GJ) in the Dominican Republic, and, initially, BirdLife Jamaica (BLJ) in Jamaica. The project received US\$999,200 from the GEF Trust Fund (includes a PDF-A grant of US\$25,000) and raised US\$255,000 of in-kind financing and US\$2,055,000 of cash co-financing, giving a total of US\$2,310,000 in co-financing. The project raised 215% more co-financing than originally foreseen.

## Project design

The project's goal (Development Objective) was stated as '*Conservation status of globally important sites for biodiversity in the Caribbean is enhanced through strengthened local and national partnerships and increasingly aware national and international networks of public and private sector stakeholders and decision-makers.*' There were three indicators/targets for achievement of this goal: Conservation status of 6 important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean enhanced by the end of the project; Stakeholder networks subscribing to national site conservation strategies as a framework for site action; and, Awareness of biodiversity conservation issues raised throughout the network. The project had five Immediate Objectives, to:

1. Enhance cooperation, communication and consensus among biodiversity conservation stakeholders through the coordination of a strengthened network of NGO, government agency and regional institution partnerships;
2. Increase awareness of Caribbean biodiversity and the issues affecting it amongst local, national and international stakeholders and decision-makers;
3. Document globally important Caribbean biodiversity sites and establish a framework within which information gaps are evaluated and conservation requirements are assessed, advocated and acted upon for the highest priorities;
4. Communicate/ exchange site conservation experiences throughout the network of NGOs, government agencies and regional institutions through the establishment (and inclusion) of globally important site action;
5. Set in place a strategy and mechanism to ensure sustainability for the conservation and management of globally important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean.

The project problem analysis and logframe were confused in places, there was no quantified baseline, and the associated indicators were poor with no biological impact or threat reduction indicators, or indicators to measure changes in awareness and or behaviour towards biodiversity. The GEF's Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool was added to the project as a proxy impact indicator before implementation began but it was not adopted successfully by the project. Unfortunately, the project proposal review process seems to have had little significant input from GEFSEC or UNEP-DGEF (GEFSEC's input was particularly poor), which should have corrected these flaws.

## Project implementation

Despite failures in the project design and proposal review process, the project has achieved significant results and impact, with some excellent and important products, and indeed in some areas project executants at both the national and international level were instrumental in leveraging actions that went beyond the scope of the project. Overall, the Immediate Objectives have been largely achieved, although some deliverables are still outstanding but are expected within the next 3 months. Notable project successes include: identification of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the Bahamas, Dominican Republic and Jamaica, with associated databases and IBA site accounts; a Regional IBA Directory (publication date February 2008) and IBA database accessible through the BirdLife website; establishment of Site Support Groups (SSGs) at 7 of the 8 project sites; some excellent regional- and national-level publications, including the *Birds Caribbean* newsletter; very significant raising of co-financing for a MSP (over twice that originally anticipated at project outset), and including significant funding from the corporate sector in the Bahamas; a major contribution to a successful advocacy campaign to halt bauxite mining within the Cockpit Country IBA; small-scale ecotourism ventures around one of the project sites in the Dominican Republic; successful workshops in media communication and strategic and financial planning; some success in promoting the adoption of the IBA programme within government in Jamaica (through the Department of Forestry), the Dominican Republic (Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources) and within the BNT's strategic plan in the Bahamas; and the bulk of the activities for 6 of the 8

project sites achieved (Negil IBA uncertain due to limited information). In some instances, e.g. the Cockpit Country advocacy campaign, the project has helped catalyse action beyond its immediate scope.

However, other outputs were not achieved e.g. National IBA Conservation Strategies, partner NGO business plans and operational National Liaison Committees (NLCs) in the Bahamas and Jamaica or Caribbean Regional Advisory Group (CRAG). There have also been delays over delivery of several key outputs, particularly the national IBA lists, which has meant that there has not been sufficient time for significant impact on national policies, and advocacy work has been limited. In addition, the long-term impact of the project on biodiversity – for instance, whether the project will lead to improved status for globally threatened species at IBAs and uptake of the biodiversity conservation message - is difficult to judge at this point. Although the impact of the awareness-raising and education components of the project, in terms of changed attitudes and behaviours, could not be assessed directly and quantitatively, it is fair to say that without the GEF project tens of thousands of people in the Caribbean would not have been exposed to bird and site conservation issues.

The project placed considerable emphasis on ensuring sustainability of project results and processes from the initial design stage. Particular results that are likely to be sustained at the global level are capacity built and availability of information on key conservation sites to decision-makers. However, there is uncertainty over the sustainability of the SSGs (and oldest one is only 2.5 years old), and they need an enormous amount of support and resources to become properly established. There are also environmental risks that could threaten the sustainability of project outcomes at Cockpit Country and Jaragua National Park if not adequately addressed. So far, there has been limited replication or uptake of project results or components by others (in part because of delays on delivery and this is expected to improve when the Regional IBA Directory and site Case Studies are published). However, the SSG model has high potential for replication and some has occurred in the Dominican Republic (where there are now 7 additional SSGs), but not yet in Jamaica or the Bahamas.

Stakeholder consultation was poor at the project design phase. However, it is now very strong in the Dominican Republic, at local level through the SSGs and national level through the NLCs, and reasonable and growing in the Bahamas and Jamaica (although the latter still lacks an institutional home for the NLC and IBA programme, which would help). Project awareness has increased considerably and is now generally good. Stakeholder participation in project activities has been very good, especially with schools, and through the various environmental festivals, particularly the Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival. The most serious capacity issue was the loss of BirdLife Jamaica (BLJ) just as the project started. Unfortunately, there had been no institutional or capacity assessment of project partners, and it was assumed there was no problem with BLJ. However, the project management's response, although delayed, identified key individuals and groups who could take on responsibility for delivering the national components and to a great extent they performed very well and overcame the loss of BirdLife Jamaica.

Project monitoring and evaluation performance was rather mixed, as the NLCs and CRAG played no or very little role in project monitoring or supervision as envisaged in the Project Document, and the bulk of the project oversight was taken on by the Project Manger, who did a capable job, supported by other staff at the BirdLife International Secretariat in Cambridge. Daily management of the project by the staff at BirdLife, BNT, GJ, WRC, JET and the Jamaica Project Consultant was excellent, who all worked to high standards and in a very professional manner, creating a strong, capable project team that showed good adaptive management capacity. Backstopping by the UNEP-DGEF Task Manager, who made two supervisory visits to the Caribbean, was generally good. Overall, the Evaluation considers the project document was much too ambitious with the time and resources available, and the project should have been submitted as a Full-Sized Project.

## Key lessons for future projects

- If UNEP-DGEF is looking for well-constructed, realistic and effective projects then it needs to pay attention to the design of the project strategy and the selection of indicators to ensure that objectives and outcomes can be measured, and to ensure that every proposal goes through the whole GEF review process. Particular attention needs to be paid to ensuring biodiversity impact and awareness/behavioural change indicators are included.
- All projects should have a steering committee with decision-making authority. Membership is critical and for regional projects development of a regional advisory group needs to be built from the national partners upwards, with the partners driving the process.
- It is essential to ensure that any NGO involved in a GEF project has sufficient institutional structure and capacity, is self-sustaining, and has a clear strategic plan in place before taking on a role in project implementation.
- NLCs that seek to promote the uptake of an IBA programme in a country are viewed as too specific and therefore of limited value, and will fail if the NLC process is driven by NGOs rather than governments. The system developed in the Dominican Republic – a forum for sharing information and building trust for the IBA programme – might be a more useful model for the Caribbean.



- Influencing corporate sector policy towards more environmentally sensitive practices requires time and specialist capacity. NGOs do not have a comparative advantage in this, and UNEP-DGEF needs to provide concrete guidance on how NGOs can best engage with the corporate sector on GEF projects, and to screen project proponents more carefully on their track record of interaction with this sector if they are proposing major engagement.
- Designers of large, complex, multi-country projects (such as this one) need to ensure that their project deliverables are not heavily dependent on the delivery of other products over which the project has no control, as happened with this project, and this needs to be checked during the project design stage.
- Assessment of the experience of establishing and sustaining SSGs so far in the Caribbean, shows that a great deal of staff time and resources (and therefore organisational commitment) are required, that the investment needs to be particularly intense in the first two years, and greatest benefits occur if there is a dedicated SSG Coordinator appointed by the national partner.

## Summary of main recommendations to strengthen project outcomes and impacts

### *Recommendations for BirdLife and project partners (in no particular order) to strengthen project outcomes*

- The project's Terminal Report (TR) should include an annex with project follow-up aims and activities, and implementation funding arrangements
- The project should re-examine the objective-level indicators and identify a small number of biodiversity impact and threat-reduction indicators that could be used to quantify impact of the project to strengthen the analysis in the TR
- Information on the SSG experience to date should be collected, synthesized and published by the project
- The role and utility of the NLCs in each country needs to be re-examined
- To further emphasize the value of the project results, a separate analysis should be undertaken of the project's specific contributions to the 2010, MDG1 and MDG7 targets
- Additional surveys should be undertaken in Jamaica to identify IBAs in habitats that were underrepresented in the original national analysis
- A more detailed analysis of the market for bird tourism should be carried out and the economic case for ecotourism development at each of the project sites re-examined to construct adequate business models, before further promotion of these activities in the planned project follow-up
- Given that the delays over the publication of the Regional IBA Directory and IBA site accounts reduced the opportunity for advocacy work, the extent of uptake and success of the IBA programme at the national policy level should be assessed in 2-3 years from the conclusion of the project.

### *Recommendations for UNEP-DGEF/UNEP/GEF (in no particular order) for future projects*

- A review of the most effective methods for awareness-raising and behaviour change and how best to measure changes in awareness, attitudes and behaviours (indicators) should be commissioned to guide future project proponents
- GEF OFPs should be kept more informed of project progress and encouraged to become more involved with the monitoring and evaluation of UNEP-DGEF projects
- UNEP-DGEF should consider linkage with UNDP COs where there are strong national elements to projects (as in this case) because of UNDP's on-the-ground presence, capacity to react to immediate events, and linkage to national level policy makers
- More detailed guidance needs to be provided to project proponents on reporting
- A formal capacity assessment of project partners should be undertaken before project implementation begins, particularly for NGO-led projects
- **UNEP should suggest to GEFSEC that an explanation of the tracking tools and their utility become a standard part of project documentation and inception meetings.**
- UNEP should commission a review of information on the value of the ecosystem services provided by selected biodiversity rich and protected areas (including IBAs) in the region, as such a study would greatly enhance the effectiveness of advocacy associated with these sites
- Given that the SSGs are still in the early stages of development there needs to be a follow-up assessment of the success, impact and sustainability of the SSG experience in four years time

## Overall rating

The overall rating given to the project is Moderately Satisfactory (MS) to Satisfactory (S).

**Sections highlighted in yellow indicate where text that has been altered or comments inserted into the final report based on the reviewers' feedback.**





## 1. Introduction and background

### 1.1 Project development

A PDF-A grant for the *Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats: Strengthening a Regional Network for a Shared Resource* project (Project Number: GF/1020-03-02) was approved by GEF in February 2002. The funds were largely used to hold a project-planning workshop in the Bahamas on 25-27 April 2002 during which a problem analysis and content for a logframe were developed. Proposal writing was largely undertaken by the Project Manager at the BirdLife Secretariat in Cambridge with feedback on drafts from the three national partners. The proposal for the Medium-Sized Project (MSP) was submitted to UNEP-GEF in August 2002 and approved by GEF on 28 April 2003. Project implementation began on 1 October 2003.

The project was initially planned to finish on 31 March 2007 (giving a project duration of 42 months), but due to delays a 6-month no-cost extension was granted and the project was completed on 30 September 2007 (project duration 48 months).

### 1.2 Project description

The *Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats: Strengthening a Regional Network for a Shared Resource* project (hereafter referred to as 'the project') was supported by GEF and other co-financiers (see Annex 5 for complete list). The project had regional, national and site-specific components, with each of the three participating countries – the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica – having two or three site projects as well as national activities.

UNEP acted as the implementing agency. The Secretariat of the BirdLife Partnership, based in Cambridge, UK, was the main executing agency for the project, with co-executors in each of the three target countries - the Bahamas National Trust (BNT) in the Bahamas, Grupo Jaragua (GJ) in the Dominican Republic, and, initially, BirdLife Jamaica (BLJ) in Jamaica. At the regional level, other major collaborators were the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB), Bird Studies Canada and the West Indian Whistling-duck and Wetlands Conservation Project (WIWD-WC Project), a major initiative of the SCSCB). The project did not have an oversight steering committee (although this was proposed in the Project Document, but a Caribbean Regional Advisory Group (CRAG) was established to provide technical guidance and consisted of representatives from the BirdLife Partnership, UNEP-DGEF, SCSCB, and other regional partners groups.

The goal (Development Objective) of the project was stated as '*Conservation status of globally important sites for biodiversity in the Caribbean is enhanced through strengthened local and national partnerships and increasingly aware national and international networks of public and private sector stakeholders and decision-makers.*'

The project had five Immediate Objectives, to:

1. Enhance cooperation, communication and consensus among biodiversity conservation stakeholders through the coordination of a strengthened network of NGO, government agency and regional institution partnerships;
2. Increase awareness of Caribbean biodiversity and the issues affecting it amongst local, national and international stakeholders and decision-makers;
3. Document globally important Caribbean biodiversity sites and establish a framework within which information gaps are evaluated and conservation requirements are assessed, advocated and acted upon for the highest priorities;
4. Communicate/ exchange site conservation experiences throughout the network of NGOs, government agencies and regional institutions through the establishment (and inclusion) of globally important site action;
5. Set in place a strategy and mechanism to ensure sustainability for the conservation and management of globally important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean.

## 2. Scope, objective and methods of evaluation

### 2.1 Scope of Evaluation

In line with GEF procedures, a Final Evaluation (FE) was undertaken to provide an objective assessment of the project and its implementation. In line with its Terms of Reference (ToR), the Final Evaluation (see Annex 1) aimed to: a) assess project performance and the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results, and b) assess the extent and magnitude of any project impacts to date and determine the likelihood of future impacts. The Project Document lists three indicators/targets for achievement of the project goal:

1. Conservation status of 6 important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean enhanced by the end of the project;

2. Stakeholder networks subscribing to national site conservation strategies as a framework for site action;
3. Awareness of biodiversity conservation issues raised throughout the network.

The Final Evaluation (FE) focused on determining whether the project had achieved these targets. The ToR also requested that the Evaluation should **assess and rate** the project with respect to eleven categories defined below:

- A. Attainment of objectives and planned results (including effectiveness, relevance and efficiency)
- B. Achievement of project outputs and activities
- C. Sustainability (including financial resources, socio-political, institutional framework and governance, environmental)
- D. Catalytic role
- E. Preparation and readiness
- F. Country ownership/driveness
- G. Assessment monitoring and evaluation systems (including M&E design, M&E plan implementation, and budgeting and funding for M&E activities)
- H. Stakeholder participation/public awareness
- I. Financial planning
- J. Implementation approach
- K. UNEP supervision and backstopping

## 2.2 Methodology

The Evaluation was conducted through the following participatory approach:

- Extensive face-to-face and telephone interviews with the project management and technical support staff, including Jamaica Environmental Trust (JET), Grupo Jaragua (Dominican Republic), the Bahamas National Trust (BNT), Birdlife International (BLI) Secretariat in Cambridge, UK, and UNEP-DGEF;
- Face-to-face and telephone interviews with intended users for the project outputs and other international, regional, national and local stakeholders. Interviews were followed up with email communication, as appropriate;
- A thorough review of project documents and other relevant texts, including the project documents, outputs, monitoring reports, such as progress and financial reports to UNEP and GEF annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports, relevant correspondence, other project-related material produced by the project staff or partners, and relevant material available on BirdLife's Caribbean Programme web-site ([www.birdlife.org/regional/caribbean](http://www.birdlife.org/regional/caribbean));
- Field visits to 6 of the locations/islands where site activities had been undertaken (Cockpit Country in Jamaica, Fondo Paradí, Laguna de Oviedo an Cabo Rojo in the Dominican Republic, and Abaco and Harrold and Wilson Ponds in the Bahamas) and in-depth discussions with project staff on sites not visited (Negril and Mount Diablo in Jamaica and Inaqua National Park in the Bahamas).

A full list of those interviewed is given in Annex 2, and documents reviewed in Annex 3.

## 2.3 Timing and arrangements

The Final Evaluation (FE) began on 5 October 2007 and was completed on 20 December 2007. A field mission was carried out from 9 October – 2 November 2007, with visits to BirdLife International Secretariat in Cambridge, UK (9 October), Jamaica (10-17 October), the Dominican Republic (17-24 October) and the Bahamas (24 October – 2 November). Due to logistical and financial constraints it was not possible to visit all 9 project sites<sup>1</sup>, but at least one was visited in each country (2 in the Bahamas, 3 in the Dominican Republic and 1 in Jamaica) and the others were extensively discussed with the national project partners. In addition, adverse weather conditions (Tropical Storm Noel in the Bahamas and several days of heavy rain in Jamaica) resulted in delays and some interviews had to be conducted over the phone rather than face-to-face as planned.

Text or comments highlighted in yellow indicate revisions to the draft report based on the reviewers' feedback.

## 3. Project Performance and Impact

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<sup>1</sup> The Project Document mentions 8 sites, but an additional site – the Cabo Rojo Watchable Wildlife Pond - was added in the Dominican Republic and visited by the evaluation.

## A. Attainment of objectives and planned results

### 1. Effectiveness

The project had one Development Objective (goal) and five Immediate Objectives, and indicators for these were set in the logframe of the Project Document. According to the FE's ToRs, the "achievement" indicators in the logframe together with any additional monitoring tools, including the GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), were to be used to assess the extent to which the project's major relevant objectives had been met. An assessment of the degree of achievement of the Development Objectives is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Extent of achievement of Development Objective based on logframe 'achievement' indicators**

Objective	Indicators	Extent of achievement and comments
Conservation status of globally important sites for biodiversity in the Caribbean enhanced	1. Conservation status of 6 important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean enhanced by the end of the project	<p>'Conservation status' and baseline were not defined and thus the objective was not directly measurable using this indicator. It is assumed that 'important biodiversity sites' refers to Important Bird Areas (IBAs), but which 6 sites (8 are given in Annex 19 of the Project Document) this refers to is not clear. The Project Document footnotes this indicator with the following 'Changes in the conservation status of Important Bird Areas can be monitored through the use of BirdLife's World Bird Database'. However, there is no mention of this within the project reports, including the project's draft Terminal Report (TR) viewed by the Evaluation.</p> <p><b>Rating - Level of attainment unclear as not measurable by indicator</b></p>
	2. Stakeholder networks subscribing to national site conservation strategies as a framework for site action	<p>It is assumed that 'National site conservation strategies' refers to National Important Bird Areas Conservation Strategies (NIBACS). Although a framework for these exists, they have not yet been developed for any of the three target countries, as the national IBA lists needed to be identified and published first and these had been delayed. BirdLife has a stated commitment to developing NIBACS (with associated monitoring plans, advocacy plans, SSG engagement plans) with partners throughout the Caribbean and aims to move this forward in the short to medium term. Consequently, NIBACS may be developed for the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, following publication of the Regional IBA Directory due in early 2008. Planning for a NIBACS is most developed in the Dominican Republic where it was discussed at an IBA strategic planning workshop held in August 2007.</p> <p>However, whether IBA-specific strategies would be adopted by each government is not clear, and IBA data and analyses may be more effective if integrated into existing planning processes and procedures. For instance, master plans for protected area systems in the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica are currently being developed following gap analysis (led by The Nature Conservancy), in which IBA data featured prominently. They could also be incorporated into the next review of NBSAPs for the Bahamas and Jamaica (the Dominican Republic has not yet produced a NBSAP).</p> <p><b>Rating – Moderately Satisfactory</b></p>
	3. Awareness of biodiversity conservation issues raised throughout the network	<p>Like the other Development Objective indicators, there is little indication how to measure this. No baseline survey was conducted in any of the three target countries, either nationally or at the 8 selected sites, and there were no specific assessments of awareness on "biodiversity conservation issues" (again the Project Document does not define what these 'issues' are and therefore which are to be measured) during the project lifetime. Instead, the project reports on the number of posters and brochures produced, teachers trained, and other output and performance indicators.</p> <p>The project's draft TR claims that follow-up evaluations of teacher workshops undertaken by the project in the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic indicate that teachers and their students have greater knowledge, awareness and appreciation of Caribbean birds, wetlands and biodiversity (although the levels are not quantified), and many, as a result of the awareness-raising programme, have then taken part in awareness-raising or community conservation activities, such as World Wetlands Day, the Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival (CEBF), Earth Day, wetland and beach clean-ups, joined an environmental group, visited wetlands, observed birds, created school displays, etc. The draft report states that over 25,000 people (in 14 countries) participated directly in CEBF events (which function primarily on a voluntary basis)</p>

		<p>during 2007, and information on these would have reached many more people through local and national media. Although the <u>impact</u> of the awareness-raising and education components of the project was not assessed directly and quantitatively, in terms of changed attitudes and behaviours, it is fair to say that without the GEF project tens of thousands of people in the Caribbean would not have been <u>exposed</u> to bird and site conservation issues. The fact that people were willing to express their opposition to, and take part in protests against, destructive mining practices in Cockpit Country, Jamaica suggests that awareness of the value of biodiversity has been raised locally and nationally in Jamaica through the project. In the Dominican Republic, members of the Jaragua Site Support Group (SSG) commented that they had observed a change in the behaviour of local people because of the awareness-raising activities of the project, evidenced by less fishing in the Laguna than previously and particularly around the spawning banks.</p> <p>It is also difficult to say what specific contribution the project has made to raised awareness of biodiversity in the Caribbean as there have been many conservation projects on all three islands that have had major education/awareness components, and it is difficult to separate out their relative contributions. For instance, on Abaco in the Bahamas, there is a tremendous awareness of the Bahama Parrot <i>Amazona leucocephala bahamensis</i>, which has been a focus for some of the work of the GEF project (centred on the Abaco National Park, its principal area). However, there was a RARE project focused on the parrot and many other projects since which had already informed and sensitised the island's population before the GEF project began.</p> <p><b>Rating – Satisfactory, although poor indicator and not quantifiable</b></p>
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As can be seen from Table 1, the project appears to have achieved a rather mixed and uncertain level of success and impact at the Development Objective level. However, Table 1 is misleading, because the Development Objective indicators are poor and cannot measure achievement as they are formulated. None of the indicators can be considered 'SMART'<sup>2</sup> and indeed they are worded more like Outcomes than indicators. It should also be noted that there are no quantitative baselines<sup>3</sup> or milestones (mid-term targets) set out in the Project logframe associated with these indicators. In addition, there is no biodiversity status indicator (e.g. to show changes in the population status of selected threatened species occurring at identified sites in the project area within the timeframe of the project), or threat reduction indicators (e.g. to show changes in rate of deforestation, wetland loss or hunting at IBAs during the project's lifetime).

The poor selection of indicators presented a particular problem for the Evaluation as it was clear from the various project reports and interviews with BirdLife and project partner staff that the project had achieved significant results and impact, with some excellent and important products. In other words, the success of the project was not being adequately demonstrated through the logframe indicators.

One Development Objective level indicator tool that was added to the project by GEF just before implementation started was the GEF (protected area) Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT)<sup>4</sup>. GEF protected area projects (Biodiversity Focal Area, Strategic Objective 1) are required to complete the METT at work program inclusion<sup>5</sup>, at project mid-term during project implementation, and at project completion, and to report on, analyse and interpret changes in scores. The GEF recognises that multi-country projects may face unique circumstances in applying the tracking tools and, consequently, multi-country projects such as the present one complete one tracking tool per country involved in the project, based on the project circumstances and activities in each respective country. The completed forms for each country should then be submitted as one package to the GEF, and the final tracking tools should be submitted with the project's final evaluation or Terminal Report, and no later than 6 months after project closure. Although the METT was completed for Inagua National Park (Bahamas), Laguna de Oviedo at Jaragua National Park (Dominican Republic), and Cockpit Country - Linton Park Mountain (Jamaica) within two years of the project starting (not when the proposal was submitted for CEO approval or immediately after implementation began), the project's draft TR does not present the final METT scores for these sites, nor does it provide an analysis of any changes recorded and how the project activities have led to changes in scores. Unfortunately, because the final METTs for Inagua National Park and Cockpit Country had not been completed before the Evaluation mission took place and the METT for the

<sup>2</sup> SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Attributable, Relevant and Realistic and Time-bound, Timely, Trackable and Targeted. SMART indicators are a requirement for GEF project M&E plans. See the ToR for the final evaluation in Annex 1.

<sup>3</sup> A 'baseline' column was given in Annex 30 – 'List of key performance indicators' of the Project Document and discussed in general terms in Annex 17 – Baseline activities and set up for site protection - of the Project Document, but these are very general and lack quantitative measures relevant to the logframe indicators.

<sup>4</sup> GEF (undated). Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: "Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas"

<sup>5</sup> For Medium Sized Projects when they are submitted for CEO approval.

Laguna de Oviedo, completed in October 2007, had yet to be properly analysed, the Final Evaluation was not able comment on these and they could not be used to assess project achievement.

A better understanding of the project's achievement and impact in relation to project goals can be gained from analysis of attainment of the project's Immediate Objectives, which is presented in Table 2 below.

As can be seen, the project has delivered these objectives to a large degree, with most project activities either completed or will be in the next 6 months. Notable project successes include: identification of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the Bahamas, Dominican Republic and Jamaica, with associated databases and IBA site accounts available on the internet; a Regional IBA Directory (publication date February 2008); establishment of Site Support Groups (SSGs) at 7 or the 8 target sites with an additional 7 SSGs created from the model in the Dominican Republic; some excellent regional- and national-level publications, including the *Birds Caribbean* newsletter; very significant raising of co-financing for a MSP – over twice that originally anticipated at project outset, and including significant funding from the corporate sector especially in the Bahamas; a key contribution to a successful advocacy campaign to halt bauxite mining in Cockpit Country; small-scale ecotourism ventures around one of the project sites in the Dominican Republic; successful workshops in media communication and strategic and financial planning; incorporation of the IBAs into the BNT's strategic plan which will mean that IBAs will be submitted to government for inclusion within the country's protected area system; some success in promoting the adoption of the IBA programme within government in Jamaica (through the Department of Forestry) and the Dominican Republic (Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources); and the bulk of the activities for 6 of the 8 achieved (Negil IBA uncertain due to limited information). In some instances, e.g. the Cockpit Country advocacy campaign, the project has helped catalyse action beyond its immediate scope.

Other less tangible, but nevertheless important achievements, include: building of trust and new relationships between key stakeholders in the Dominican Republic through the National Liaison Committee (NLC); empowerment and significant capacity building of some individuals and communities through the SSG approach in the Dominican Republic; and improving the gap analysis processes being undertaken to strengthen the protected area systems on all three islands.

However, the late delivery of several key outputs, e.g. Regional IBA Directory means that there has been insufficient time to demonstrate a significant impact in some areas, particularly on changes of policy and public awareness in favour of biodiversity conservation. In addition, the long-term impact of the project – for instance, whether the project will lead to improved status for globally threatened species at IBAs and uptake of the biodiversity conservation message (and specifically the integration of the IBA Programme and SSG model into national policy and planning frameworks) - is difficult to judge at this point.

Demonstrating increased awareness and beyond that changes in behaviours towards biodiversity (and birds in particular) among sections of the general public is more problematic as impact indicators were not incorporated into the project design. However, there were several anecdotal cases reported to the Evaluation that indicated that the project has led to changes in behaviour and attitudes among some sections of local communities. For instance, one member of the Jaragua National Park SSG in the Dominican Republic, a local teacher, mentioned that less school children were using catapults to kill birds in the area which he explained as a result of the awareness raising campaigns carried out by the GEF (and other recent) projects in the region. He also stated that his students ask a lot of questions on environmental issues after their field trips, much more so than for other school activities, and there is wide and deep interest in environmental topics among the students compared with other issues, e.g. social studies.

Changing human behaviours requires a constant, long-term approach, consequently such changes are usually the result of several awareness-raising and education campaigns spread over many years. For instance, according to the Abaco SSG, protection of the Bahamas Parrot *Amazona leucocephala bahamensis* on Abaco is now deeply ingrained in the population who are proud of 'their bird', demonstrated by the fact that hunters no longer take the parrot and have supported the call for an expansion of the Abaco National Park, the species' stronghold on Abaco, to include feeding areas critical to the birds. However, this has been the result of 15+ years of awareness-raising and educational campaigns undertaken by many project, of which the GEF project was only one, and targeted at many different stakeholder groups. Evidence suggests that changing attitudes and behaviours is a complex long-term, sometimes generational, process that may not see significant, measurable results for some years.

Therefore, the impact of the project activities should be reassessed in the future, and it is recommended that a follow-up assessment of project impact is undertaken in 5 years time. Unfortunately, indicators to measure impact are still not in place and will need to be designed (e.g. for the awareness-raising and educational components) or baselines collected (e.g. for the monitoring of the IBAs).

**Rating – Moderately Satisfactory**

**Table 2: Extent of achievement of Immediate Objectives based on logframe ‘achievement’ indicators**

Objective	Indicators	Extent of achievement and comments
<b>Immediate objectives</b>		
<p>1. Enhance cooperation, communication and consensus among biodiversity conservation stakeholders through the coordination of a strengthened network of NGO, government agency, and regional institutional partnerships</p> <p>2007 PIR report (covers 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007) grading – <b>Satisfactory</b></p>	<p>1. Coordinated regional network operational and expanded to include 3 other countries, not currently part of this project</p>	<p>It is not clear from the Project Document how a ‘coordinated regional network operational’ is to be measured (non-SMART indicator). By the end of the project a ‘network’ of groups, operating at site (Site Support Groups), national (through project partners, and to some extent in the Dominican Republic through the National Liaison Committee), and regional (principally through the SCSCB, WIWD-WC Project, and BirdLife’s wider Caribbean IBA Programme) levels had been created (although this is not well defined in the project reports). However, although there is communication of results between the different levels especially through newsletters (e.g. the excellent regional-level bilingual <i>Birds Caribbean</i> and national-level publications on all three islands including the BNT <i>Trust Notes</i> on the Bahamas, Grupo Jaragua’s <i>Grupo Jaragua Informa</i> in the Dominican Republic, and JET’s newsletter in Jamaica), e-groups (project e-group, SCSCB e-group), national and regional meetings and site visits by the national project partner staff, the three levels are not well-connected and integrated. For instance, several Site Support Group (SSG) members interviewed were poorly informed on developments at a national and regional level in the Bahamas and Jamaica. The project e-group does not appear to have been very successful (little used) and a more efficient option would be merging with the SCSCB e-group.</p> <p>Most SSGs associated with the project sites have been established, most successfully in the Dominican Republic. However, it has not been possible to create a functioning NLC in the Bahamas, the NLC in Jamaica is only just being established, and the NLC in the Dominican Republic, while useful for gathering and sharing information on IBAs and building trust between stakeholders, has a restricted role. At the regional level, the concept of a formal project steering/advisory committee (CRAG) has not worked well, and had very limited impact on the project. The project staff in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic did not feel strongly linked to the work on the other islands or part of a strong regional network. Language was seen as a particular barrier for the integration of the Dominican Republic into a wider largely English-speaking Caribbean. Much communication and dissemination of information on project matters has rested with the Project Manager based in Cambridge, UK, rather than directly between and among the different levels of the project, which worked against building an independent ‘regional identity’.</p> <p>This Objective is the primary focus for the project’s capacity building activities. Specific workshops were developed for the project, the most successful of which (judging from staff feedback to the Evaluation) appears to have been a ‘media relations workshop’ held in the Bahamas in 2004, and strategic and financial planning workshop held in Puerto Rico in 2006 (titled ‘Advancing Bird Conservation in the Caribbean’). The media training was noted as being particularly well focused, well delivered and immediately useful, and was a significant influence on the development of the successful campaign to address bauxite mining in Cockpit Country, Jamaica by the Windsor Research Centre (WRC), and this extended beyond the immediate scope of the project. BNT claimed that their engagement with the media quadrupled during the course of the project. Mentoring, particularly on proposal development by the UK-based Project Manager, has also been a significant capacity development tool, but much more could be made of targeted mentoring in follow-up. Indeed, one Jamaica project member commented that mentoring would be preferable to workshops, since mentoring can be more successfully tailored to individual needs.</p> <p>Several project staff expressed the opinion that creating a regional network in the Caribbean with its diverse mix of cultures, languages and political, social and environmental situations within 3-4 years was over-optimistic, a statement with which the Evaluation agrees. Nevertheless progress has been made.</p>



<p>2. Increase awareness of Caribbean biodiversity and the issues affecting it amongst local, national and international stakeholders and decision-makers</p> <p>2007 PIR report (covers 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007) grading – <i>Satisfactory</i></p>	<p>1. Caribbean biodiversity information included in government tourism packs and policy level documents</p>	<p><b>Rating - Satisfactory</b></p> <p>There was limited direct contact between the project teams and their respective government tourism agencies during the project. Indeed, in the Dominican Republic, the relations between Grupo Jaragua (GJ) and the Ministry of Tourism (MT) have been strained due to conflict over unregulated tourism development, particularly in national parks, e.g. Bahia de Aguilas in Jaragua National Park (JNP), which has prevented close collaboration, although tourist brochures viewed by the consultant in the hotel in Santo Domingo show that information produced by GJ on the JNP (generated by the GEF project) is being used by the tourism agencies, even if it is not being explicitly acknowledged.</p> <p>The project document states that panels (posters) will be produced and displayed at the main international airports in each country (as another indicator for uptake of project products by tourism agencies). <b>This had not been achieved as of 2 November 2007, although the project’s draft terminal report states that it has for the Bahamas and Jamaica<sup>6</sup>.</b> Apart from the cost – leasing poster space at airports is expensive and run by private companies not the governments – it is questionable how effective these posters are likely to be. If positioned in the departure lounge most travellers will receive the information after they have visited the islands, and positioning them in the arrival lounge is not ideal either as travellers are usually tired and in a hurry to get through immigration, baggage collection and customs as fast as possible. In addition, these posters will be targeted at international passengers which are not the main target groups adversely impacting the IBAs in the region. Producing advertisements for international tourist magazines might have been a more effective use of project funds if the intention was to promote IBAs as ecotourism destinations on the three islands.</p> <p>The indicator for this Objective is not specific on which ‘policy level documents’ need to include biodiversity information, or the type of information that should be included (it is assumed that this would refer to birds and areas important for birds), and no quantitative baseline data were presented in the Project Document either. There was an assertion by project staff on all three islands that the project has increased dialogue between partner NGOs and government officials (although access to policy makers has varied between the islands during the project, and been most successful in the Bahamas), but what level of impact this has had and how sustained this will be is difficult to judge and was not measured. In the Bahamas, the BNT has a special relationship with government through its legal mandate to manage the country’s protected areas and propose new ones to be included in the system and the BNT is currently submitting a list of 5 new sites for National Park status which include 3 previously unprotected IBAs<sup>7</sup>. In the Dominican Republic, the IBA network map is being included within the Dominican Republic Biodiversity Atlas produced by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MENR), and GJ is also working with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to help develop a national Ecotourism Strategic Master Plan, which will draw on their GEF project experiences of helping to establish bird tours and other ecotourism micro-enterprises around Jaragua National Park. Although as yet it is not directly integrated into their policy and planning work, the Forestry Department in Jamaica is incorporating IBA information into its GIS database, and its staff are now collecting information on birds when they do biophysical field and socio-economic assessments and have established a number of permanent plots for monitoring, which will include birds. The Forestry Department has also nominated a ‘bird focal point’ to coordinate information and analysis (the GEF project has provided the Department of Forestry with 20 bird field guides for their divisional offices and valuable training in bird identification and monitoring techniques through the WRC and the Jamaica Project Consultant). On the other hand, the project has benefited from access to Ikonos map materials supplied by the Forestry Department. The project has also held discussions with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) about building IBAs into their national strategy in Jamaica, although the Evaluation was not able to verify this. In view of these limited successes, overall, the Evaluation feels that the project’s influence on government <u>policy</u> on biodiversity issues, particularly on the conservation of the important sites for biodiversity conservation has not yet been significant.</p>
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<sup>6</sup> According to the Project Manager the posters were described as “up” in the project’s draft Terminal Report on the understanding that agreements had been given by airports authority and by the time the TR was to be submitted they would be in place. They were apparently placed in arrivals and departures during the first week of November, after the FE mission had been completed (Project Manager comments on draft Evaluation Report).

<sup>7</sup> However, it should be noted that the BNT produced a booklet on the islands’ IBAs in 2006 that was distributed to every government department, but BNT received little feedback and one government employee told the evaluation that he felt that the information wasn’t in a very useful format.

		<p>Unfortunately, delays over the delivery and dissemination of the IBA fact sheets and case study profiles and the publication of the Caribbean IBA Directory have reduced the opportunity for impact at the national policy level. However, this may change when the Regional IBA Directory and site accounts are published and available in early 2008.</p> <p>Influence on corporate sector policies by the project has been limited (a common problem for both NGO-and government-executed GEF projects). There has been some success in raising funds for project activities (and extending them), particularly in the Bahamas<sup>8</sup>, but changes in corporate attitudes towards the environment and adoption of specific policies by the corporate sector as a result of the project do not seem to have been achieved. NGOs do not necessarily have a comparative advantage in influencing corporate policies, especially as environmental NGOs often find themselves in conflict with certain business sector activities, e.g. GJ protesting against limestone mining and mass-market tourism development in Jaragua National Park in the Dominican Republic, and JET and WRC against bauxite mining in Cockpit Country in Jamaica. In the Bahamas, the BNT has started to get a small number of requests for information about IBA sites from lawyers and developers, who have phoned to ask whether a site proposed for development is an ‘important bird site’, which has included a request for information on an area on the island of Eleuthera that is important for the globally threatened Kirtland’s Warbler <i>Dendroica kirtlandii</i>.</p> <p><b>Rating - Moderately Satisfactory</b></p>
	<p>2. Exposure to biodiversity information increased at the national level through heightened media coverage, training of 45 teachers, site visits and numbers of posters, brochures, etc, dispersed.</p>	<p>A wide range of generally very high quality regional- and national-level education materials have been produced and widely disseminated by the project. The project’s draft TR presents figures on the distribution of these materials and it was clear from the Evaluation mission that they have reached a wide audience. The project’s adoption and development of the Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival (CEBF), first held in 2002, prior to the GEF project, has been a very successful vehicle for providing information on biodiversity conservation and providing opportunities for local people, especially children, to become more directly involved in environmental issues on all three islands, but particularly in the Dominican Republic. The draft TR notes that over 1,100 teachers have been trained through the project<sup>9</sup>, and that project evaluation measures (quizzes, workshop evaluation forms and follow-up questionnaires) have shown that the teachers are using the materials in their lessons to teach children and adults in both the classroom and field settings.</p> <p>At the regional and international level, BirdLife’s Caribbean Programme website (<a href="http://www.birdlife.org/regional/caribbean/index.html">http://www.birdlife.org/regional/caribbean/index.html</a>) hosts or is linked to a number of project-related publications that are available for download, including the ‘<i>Birds Caribbean</i>’ newsletter. This site has received an average of 730 people/month in 2007, up from 350 people/month in 2004 (figures from the project’s draft TR). The site clearly acknowledges the GEF contribution to the Caribbean Program, with the UNEP-DGEF logo and link presented (although the link did not work on 15 November 2007).</p> <p>Although the project logframe gives no measurable indicator or baseline by which to assess the degree of change in exposure to biodiversity information at national level (again the indicator cannot be considered SMART), it is reasonable to assume that, on the basis of the considerable amount of high-quality materials distributed to target groups, number of teachers who have attended project training courses and the many thousands of people who participated in the project-sponsored festivals, especially the CEBF, that the project successfully ‘increased <u>exposure</u> to biodiversity information’. However, the impact of the project’s awareness-raising components, in terms of changes in attitudes and behaviours towards biodiversity, is not directly measurable (quantifiable) by the project.</p>

<sup>8</sup> This is probably because the Bahamas has a stable economy, with a currency pegged to the US Dollar, and a significant population of wealthy North American and (to a lesser extent) European ex-patriots who are used to donating to charities and ‘good causes’. In addition, the BNT has built successful relationships with donors by establishing long-term relationships, and importantly attempts to understand what drives them to donate and what they look for in return, and only targets them for specific carefully chosen causes.

<sup>9</sup> The number of teachers to be trained is given as 45 in the Project Document but 450 in the PIR for 2007 and the project’s draft Terminal Report.

		<b>Rating - Highly Satisfactory</b>
<p>3. Document globally important Caribbean biodiversity sites and establish a framework within which information gaps are evaluated and conservation requirements are assessed, advocated and acted upon for the highest priorities</p> <p>2007 PIR report (covers 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007) grading – <b>Satisfactory</b></p>	<p>1. Regional site directory published and available on the web</p>	<p>Although this indicator has not been met, the Regional IBA Directory is at an advanced stage with publication set for February 2008. Data collection and collation from multiple sources, documentation, verification, data entry, and translation have all led to delays over the delivery of the Regional Directory. In addition, there were changes in the global IBA database and web design, which increased the time needed for software development. National IBA inventories were not complete until July 2007, less than three months before the end of the GEF project. National Directories are planned to be published for the Dominican Republic and Jamaica but probably not for the Bahamas. The Bahamas has already published a booklet on its IBAs, although this contains the provisional list of sites and that list is under review. As of 3 December 2007, the Bahamas had 43 IBAs identified, although this list was still under review; the Dominican Republic 20 IBAs with one pending confirmation, reduced from an initial list of 51 candidate IBAs; and Jamaica had 15 IBAs, cut down (some sites merged) from an initial list of 71 candidate IBAs.</p> <p>An interactive, map-based, web-based IBA database (part of the World Biodiversity Database) was established by BirdLife and went live in 2005, and is linked with BirdLife’s Caribbean Programme webpage. Individual IBA site accounts are available online for the Dominican Republic at <a href="http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/sites/index.html">http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/sites/index.html</a> but not yet Jamaica or the Bahamas (as of 13 November 2007). The database is managed by the BirdLife Secretariat, but the data are ‘owned’ and updated by the national partners (who have national IBA Coordinators trained in the database use, although the main trainee for Jamaica has since left the island), and updating has been built in as part of institutional workplans for GJ in the Dominican Republic and the BNT in the Bahamas. The Institute of Jamaica (part of the Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture and Sports) has offered to house the national database for Jamaica, but this is not yet confirmed.</p> <p>It is clear that the amount of time and support that the compilation of the national IBA accounts and databases required to ensure ownership and consensus among the scientific and conservation community and to address the lack of capacity to manage the informatics was significantly underestimated in the original proposal and should have been increased considerably. The fact that the final product was to be a Regional Directory introduced a significant external risk to project delivery as the publication of the Directory has been dependent on progress on IBA identification and documentation in non-project countries not funded directly through the GEF project. This could perhaps have been predicted at the project design stage based on BirdLife’s prior experience of compiling IBA directories in other parts of the world, e.g. Africa and Europe.</p> <p>One of the targets for this Objective was the establishment of annual monitoring programmes (to regularly update IBA information) at 10 priority sites (again, the localities of the sites are not mentioned in the Project Document). Site monitoring began late in the project and, although the draft TR claims that a total of 20 sites between the three countries are being monitored, the evaluation found evidence that monitoring at some sites had been disrupted and is being conducted irregularly due to logistic and capacity problems, e.g. monitoring at Harrold and Wilson Ponds National Park in the Bahamas has been on hold since spring 2007. In Jamaica, the Forestry Department has agreed to help with monitoring of selected IBAs, especially where Local Forestry Management Committees (LFMCs) have been set up, and the IBA within the Cockpit Country Conservation Area is being monitored by the Windsor Research Centre (WRC). Monitoring has been most successful in the Dominican Republic, with baseline monitoring data collected for 11 IBAs for two consecutive years using the BirdLife’s global IBA monitoring framework, which has helped build a baseline, and some site monitoring has now been taken on by the Wildlife Department of the MENR.</p> <p>The Objective states that once the ‘conservation requirements are assessed’ they will be ‘advocated and acted upon for the highest priorities’. Advocacy work is still at the initial stages, as the project partners are lobbying to get the sites incorporated within the various national protected area systems.</p>

		<b>Rating – Satisfactory</b>
	2. National site conservation strategies developed for each country and acted upon	<p>This is the same indicator as the second indicator for the Development Objective. As pointed out in Table 1, NIBACSSs have yet to be produced, consequently none have been acted upon. As such, the project can be said to have failed in relation to this indicator. However, separate strategies that include support for the national IBA network are taking place in each country. In the Bahamas, a specific NIBACSS is not considered essential at present, because the draft strategic plan (2008 – 2012) for the BNT will provide the context and framework for an IBA site conservation strategy<sup>10</sup>. Priority is for IBAs important for seabirds and to advocate for the already identified IBAs to be included in the protected area system. In addition, IBAs will be incorporated within the Protected Area Master Plan that is being developed for the Bahamas, led by TNC. In the Dominican Republic, a map of the country's IBAs was published by the MENR in September 2006, and part of the third IBA workshop held in August 2007 was set aside to develop ideas for a national IBA strategy, which is likely to focus on maintaining the festivals associated with the IBAs (e.g. CEBF), monitoring and outreach work, and publication of information on IBAs.</p> <p>It should be noted that this indicator does not limit the timeframe for 'action', and consequently it is a poor indicator.</p> <p><b>Rating – Moderately Satisfactory</b></p>
4. Communicate/exchange site conservation experiences throughout the network of NGOs, government agencies and regional institutions through the establishment (and inclusion) of globally important site action projects	1. Site action projects (or aspects of them) are used as models at other sites and by other conservation managers	<p>As yet, there has been little replication of site action components or activities. The creation of Site Support Groups (SSGs) has been perhaps the most replicated feature of the site projects. As of 30 October 2007, 6 SSGs associated with the project sites had been created – two in Jamaica (NEPT at the Negril Great Morass IBA and three Local Forest Management Committees acting as a single SSG for the Cockpit Country IBA), one in the Dominican Republic (Jaragua National Park SSG, comprising several local community groups), and three in the Bahamas (the Friends of the Environment (FoE) on Abaco, the Sam Nixon Bird Club on Inagua and the Ornithology Group of the BNT acting as the SSG for the Harold and Wilson Ponds IBA). Seven other SSGs have been created at other IBAs in the Dominican Republic (but not yet in the Bahamas and Jamaica) as a direct result of the success of the GEF project - Sierra de Bahoruco SSG, Bahoruco Oriental SSG, Los Haitises SSG, Laguna Cabral SSG, Laguna de Limón SSG, Parque Nacional del Este SSG, and Lago Enriquillo SSG.</p> <p>TNC has been interested in acquiring the IBA data generated by the project (for both sites and species) and has used it in its gap analyses undertaken on each of the islands, although project staff claim that TNC has not properly acknowledged this use.</p> <p>At the national level, there has not been enough linkage and sharing of experiences on site action projects between the different countries, which would have helped promote replication, primarily due to lack of a budget and language problems between the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic and the English-speaking Bahamas and Jamaica. Most information exchange has occurred through the various project and partner newsletters or presentations at international conferences. Exchanges between SSGs have occurred in the Dominican Republic, although not yet to a great extent, but there has been no exchange between the Negril SSG and any of the three LFMCS acting as the SSG for Cockpit Country in Jamaica, and direct exchanges of experiences between SSG in the Bahamas have been very limited, again mostly due to budget restrictions.</p> <p><b>Rating – Moderately Satisfactory</b></p>
2007 PIR report (covers 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007) grading – <b>Satisfactory</b>		
	2. Site action	The case studies, following a structured format developed by BirdLife International's Site Action Unit, are still in draft form and not publicly

<sup>10</sup> In the BNT strategic plan, funding priorities are given for 5 IBAs – Abaco, Inagua, Exuma, Harold and Wilson Ponds, and San Salvador.

	<p>case studies are cited by others</p>	<p>available, although BirdLife International is likely to publish them (available on the BirdLife webpage) in early 2008. These should help partners better share their experiences and promote replication and uptake of the main lessons learned from the site action components of the project. Draft case studies viewed by the Evaluation - Abaco, Inagua and Harrold and Wilson Ponds national parks in the Bahamas, Oviedo Lagoon and Fondo Paradi in the Dominican Republic, and Mount Diablo and Cockpit Country in Jamaica – were detailed and informative, with a useful section on lessons learned. However, it is not clear how the use of the case studies by others will be documented (and therefore measured), as, unless a specific request is made to the BL team for a case study or research uncovers one used as a reference, it seems unlikely that those who download the documents will inform BL of how they were used.</p> <p>According to the project’s draft TR, the draft case studies have already been cited by Conservation International to elaborate a proposal they are developing for the Fondo Paradi group in the Dominican Republic, and the information collected for the case study on Laguna de Oviedo is being used in a submission for Ramsar status. However, these could not be verified by the Evaluation.</p> <p><b>Rating – Moderately Satisfactory</b></p>
<p>5. Set in place a strategy and mechanism to ensure sustainability for the conservation and management of globally important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean</p> <p>2007 PIR report (covers 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007) grading – <b>Satisfactory</b></p>	<p>1. Three documented national site conservation program funding strategies by 06/06</p>	<p>No specific national funding strategies have been completed, and formal national funding strategies for each country’s IBA network are only likely to be produced after the NIBACS are developed (and not certain in the case of the Bahamas). In Jamaica there is a recognition that a funding strategy for IBAs would need to be developed with the authorities in order to ensure a commitment from government to (part) fund the plan, and such an exercise cannot be simply driven by an NGO. BNT (working with TNC) will develop a sustainable finance plan for the Bahamas protected areas system, which will include at least the priority IBAs, and be incorporated into the country’s Protected Area Master Plan, which is under development, due for delivery in March 2008.</p> <p>Analyses of basic recurrent costs for the Caribbean regional programme have been carried out in the context of developing project follow-up proposals for several international donors, including the USFWS Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Fund (US), Darwin Initiative (UK), Jensen Foundation (Denmark) and the MacArthur Foundation (US). The three countries have also developed proposals for annual recurrent costs of the IBA program, most successfully in the Bahamas. Up to 30 September 2007, most funding applications had been on a regional or project-by-project basis.</p> <p>Note: This is one of the few Objectives with target dates set for its deliverables.</p> <p><b>Rating – Moderately Unsatisfactory</b></p>
	<p>2. Co-finance secured for the project and the site action initiatives by 03/07</p>	<p>Up until July 2006, US\$1.8 million had been secured as cash co-financing for the project activities (or expansion of project activities). Funds raised after this date have been classified as follow-up funding, and according to the project’s draft TR dated 30 September 2007, an estimated US\$3 million has either been secured or decisions were being waited upon (a €293,000 grant was awarded from the Jensen Foundation in late November 2007). The Evaluation was not required to undertake an audit of the project’s finances and financial flows and therefore could not confirm this figure. However, on the basis of interviews with project staff in the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas, this may be a realistic amount. What is clear is that the contribution of in-kind funding, particularly in terms of staff time and travel, provided by the project partners, particularly GJ, the BNT, the WRC and the Jamaica Project Consultant, has been significantly underestimated and needs to be more strongly recognised. This is a common occurrence with NGO-led GEF projects, as NGOs are generally more willing to give additional (and unpaid) time and resources than government agencies, which is one of the advantages to NGO-execution.</p> <p><b>Rating – Highly Satisfactory</b></p>

<p>3. Funding proposals submitted to potential donors for follow-up projects by 03/07</p>	<p>The project’s draft TR contains an impressive list of donors from which follow-up funding has been secured or is being sought, and project staff reported that the portfolio of funders engaged has increased during the course of this project. At the regional level, notable grants awarded include US\$100,000 from USFWS Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Fund (NMBCA) awarded to SCSCB for three outreach and education programs on birds and wetlands (migratory birds, the CEBF and the WIWD-WC Project), and US\$250,000 grant from the Jensen Foundation for the Caribbean programme. In the Bahamas, follow-up grants include a US\$70,000 grant from the NMBCA Fund for ‘Building community commitment to migrant bird conservation in the Bahamas’ and another for US\$112,000 for ‘Bahamas Natural Area Management Partnership: Plans into Action’. In addition, the BNT has secured an annual commitment of US\$1 million from Government to support and manage the country’s network of national parks, including IBAs. In the Dominican Republic, Grupo Jaragua has obtained a €100,000 grant from UNESCO for fire control in the Sierra de Bahoruco National Park and has several other proposals awaiting decision. In Jamaica, BirdLife/WRC has secured US\$130,000 from the USFWS-NMBCA Fund to continue habitat restoration and monitoring in Cockpit Country IBA and to establish a new monitoring and environmental education and advocacy project in the Lower Martha Brae/ Falmouth wetlands. WRC has also recently been awarded a US\$300,000 grant by the MacArthur Foundation to undertake a valuation of ecosystem services provided by Cockpit Country, which should significantly strengthen the arguments for the full protection of the area and its IBAs. It should be noted that not all proposal were submitted by the target date of March 2007, and proposals continue to be developed for follow-up activities.</p> <p>A regional funding workshop had been proposed in the Project Document to build capacity to develop follow-up proposals but this was not held. Instead a more personal and intensive mentoring system was operated by the Project Manager in the UK, and feedback from project staff on all three islands indicated that this was an effective approach, although time-consuming for the Project Manager. It was felt to be particularly valuable for the Bahamas, and it was clear that capacity for successful fund-raising has been built by the project, although it needs to be built further, particularly in relation to corporate sector donations.</p> <p><b>Rating – Highly Satisfactory</b></p>
<p>4. National NGO Business Plans used by project partners</p>	<p>NGO business plans have not been produced for any of the project partners in the three countries. In order to develop a business plan, an institution needs the backing of its Board and should follow on from (or be a part of) the NGO’s institutional development strategy, which did not exist for BirdLife Jamaica, GJ or even for the BNT at the beginning of the project (and were still not finalised at the end of the Evaluation). Jamaica left the project, and business plans for GJ and the BNT were probably ‘a step too far’ as other project activities and deliverables were seen as more important, e.g. IBA database and establishing the SSGs. Consequently, the project pushed for development of business plans before there were any appropriate institutional framework in which they to fit. BirdLife. In addition, there has been some confusion over the purpose and relevance of a business plan among project staff, and there was low capacity (little experience) to develop one. However, the strategic plan (2008 – 2012) for the BNT (to be submitted to BNT Council by the end of 2007) will act as its “business plan”, and GJ has been developing an ‘institutional strengthening strategy’ funded under another project, and intends to develop a business plan in the next two years. Both organisations recognise that they may need guidance from BirdLife)<sup>11</sup>.</p> <p>It is noted that one of the reasons why the Jamaica Environmental Trust (JET) has been such an effective, and, by Jamaican standards, a long-lived NGO, is that it follows a clear business approach and has a business plan, and JET’s long-term Executive Director has a background in business management.</p> <p><b>Rating – Moderately Unsatisfactory</b></p>

<sup>11</sup> Although GJ has no business plan, CAD, of which it is a member, does, and could also provide support to develop a plan for GJ.

## 2. Relevance

The identification of IBAs on all three islands has made a significant contribution to identifying the remaining (terrestrial) sites of biodiversity importance. This information has fed into various gap analyses that are being coordinated by TNC which are to form the basis of protected area master plans for the islands. In the case of the Bahamas, this will form the 'shadow list' of sites that will be nominated for inclusion within the national protected area system. As such the project has contributed to GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priorities (SP1) and targets that were in place during GEF-3<sup>12</sup>, principally SP1 - *Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas*, through the project's focus on identifying IBAs and advocating their inclusion within national protected area system frameworks to make them more representative, promoting the participation of local communities in the management of protected areas through the SSG model, building institutional, managerial and financial capacity for sustainable and more effective management of protected areas (in this case IBAs). The project has also contributed to Biodiversity SP2 - Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors, through its awareness-raising and campaigning work to promote more environmental sustainable approaches to bauxite mining in Cockpit Country, Jamaica and coastal hotel development in the Dominican Republic. The project also met the GEF-3 target for the average ratio of co-financing to GEF funding. This was set at 2.3:1<sup>13</sup>, and the project achieved a ratio of 2.37:1, which was above the target.

It should also be noted that an opportunity for additional dissemination and uptake of project results exist with respect to the CBD 2010 targets and the preceding round of national reports to the CBD. TNC is coordinating a gap analysis in all three project countries, which has included the new project-generated IBA data. The results are to be presented to COP9 in 2008. Following COP9, countries will be requested to submit the fourth round of national reports in 2009, which will include discussion of progress toward the 2010 targets. In addition, the UN is considering integrating the CBD 2010 targets within the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for 2015, specifically for MDG7 (Ensure environmental sustainability) and countries are required to report on status and progress towards MDGs. The project should try to ensure that the project results, particularly the IBA analysis, are included within the national and regional discussions of the 2010 targets and achievement of MDGs.

## Rating - Satisfactory

## 3. Efficiency

The project has proved to be very cost-efficient in several ways and the project was clearly designed with cost-effectiveness in mind. First, the project built on a number of previous Caribbean- and national-level projects, particularly a MacArthur Foundation funded project (*Biodiversity conservation in the Insular Caribbean – catalyzing site action through local, national and regional partnerships*), which had sought to develop the IBA and SSG concepts and establish a communication and information-sharing system<sup>14</sup>, a strong link was formed with the WIWD-WC Project, which already had a well-established network of project sites throughout much of the Caribbean and which had been pioneering the Watchable Wildlife Pond (WWP) approach<sup>15</sup> and high-quality educational materials for teachers and schools on wetland conservation issues (see <http://www.whistlingduck.org/>)<sup>16</sup>. The project also built on and expanded the growing framework that had been developed for the implementation of the Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival (CEBF) organised by the SCSCB. A similar approach was taken at the island level. For example, JET in Jamaica was contracted to carry out the project's awareness-raising and educational components, which were slotted into its existing long-running and extensive outreach programme (effectively adding in a 'bird' element), and in the Dominican Republic, GJ already had a strong relationship with communities in the Jaragua National Park area, so had a firm platform from which to launch the GEF project.

Second, the SSG model is based on voluntary commitment by local individuals and groups, consequently their involvement in the project required only out-of-pocket expenses to be covered.

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<sup>12</sup> GEF (2003). Strategic Business Planning: Direction and Targets. GEF/C.21/Inf.11. Prepared for GEF Council meeting 14-16 may 2003. April 17, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> GEF (2002). GEF Business Plan - FY03-05 (GEF/C.19/10), for GEF Council May 15-17, 2002. April 17, 2002

<sup>14</sup> BirdLife (2004). Biodiversity conservation in the Insular Caribbean – catalyzing site action through local, national and regional partnerships. Final, end of project (2002-2004) report to the MacArthur Foundation for Grant No: 01-69342. BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK.

<sup>15</sup> 'Watchable Wildlife Ponds' are a site conservation model which aims to provide wetland areas accessible to the public with facilities enabling them to interact with biodiversity, and provide educational and recreational opportunities for local communities. Judging from interviews with SSG members, WWPs have already helped to raise local awareness of wetland issues to some extent, e.g. local schools in the Bahamas have begun using the Harold and Wilson Ponds WWP as an "outdoor classroom", although this has not been quantified.

<sup>16</sup> The GEF project paid for reprinting of some learning materials and distribution to more teachers and to run teacher-training workshops in each of the three countries.



Third, much of the information for the IBA site accounts came from previous data-gathering exercises or was provided through a network of scientists and technicians who were not paid for their contribution (something which has not been sufficiently recognised in the project reports).

Fourth, the project achieved significant cash and in-kind co-financing and leveraged additional funds totalling US\$2.31 million (see Annexes 4, 5, 6) – over twice that anticipated in the Project Document. This represents a significant achievement. Securing GEF funds provided an opportunity to leverage co-financing from sources that have a match requirement (e.g. USFWS-NMBCA have a 3:1 match requirement), and support was given to developing proposals to these donors from the start of the project so that full benefit could be made of the GEF funds. In addition, selection of companies/individuals to deliver project activities was based on competitive bids wherever this allowed (the Evaluation recognises that there is often limited choice on small islands and going off island can be expensive). Although the project was extended by 6 months from its original finishing date to 30 September 2007, there was no overspend on project finances and the extension did not affect cost-effectiveness (indeed it ensured that the project delivered on most of its activities).

Finally, most project materials have been made available on the web which promotes sustainability in that expensive print runs of many hundreds of copies of project documents are not required. However, there is a very low incidence of web access in the rural parts of the Dominican Republic and Jamaica (10 of the 14 parishes in Jamaica are essentially rural). The project also sought to feed project materials into existing programmes with similar aims. For instance, in the BNT in the Bahamas, and JET in Jamaica used their respective ministries of education to distribute project educational materials.

## **Rating – Highly Satisfactory**

### ***B. Project Outputs and activities***

There were many national and regional components, the delivery of which has been well covered in the various project reports, particularly the draft TR. This report does not attempt to document all of them but identifies and highlights the most important and innovative Outputs and activities. These are: the development and success of the Site Support Groups; the identification and prioritization of IBAs in each country; the awareness-raising and education activities; site action projects; and advocacy work.

#### ***1. Site Support Groups (SSGs) (Relevant Outputs 4.1, 4.2)***

##### ***i. General points***

SSGs<sup>17</sup> are independent groups of voluntary individuals who work to promote conservation and sustainable development at IBAs and other key biodiversity sites. SSG membership is usually open to all; members share similar interests and concerns relating to the IBA and often a good understanding of natural resources and the local context in which they are managed. SSG members typically live in or adjacent to IBAs but may include individuals based further afield, e.g. in a neighbouring or distant town. They come from a variety of backgrounds, ages, occupations and gender, and can include the unemployed, students, farmers, teachers, other professionals, all with a passion for conservation, development, and responsible citizenship.

By the end of the project, SSGs had been established on all three project islands – 3 in the Bahamas, 8 in the Dominican Republic and 4 on Jamaica. Although SSGs do not exist as a separate legal entity in any of the three countries, they represent a significant innovation for community-based conservation in the Caribbean that can significantly empower local communities, and are likely to be an increasingly important part of the support framework for the region's IBAs.

Even after just four years there is a wide variety of forms, even among those in the same country. In the Bahamas, the Abaco SSG (the Friends of the Environment, Abaco) consists of largely white, middle-income volunteers and ex-pats. By contrast, the Inagua SSG (Sam Nixon Bird Club) comprises native Bahamians, many of whom are closely related so there are strong family influences on the way the SSG functions, and children have significant participation in the group.<sup>18</sup> The remaining SSG in the Bahamas – the HWP SSG is different again, comprising members of the BNT's Ornithology Group, so is not local community based. In the

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<sup>17</sup> The term SSG is used in the Caribbean and Africa. A generic term for local groups working for IBA conservation used across the BirdLife Partnership is 'IBA Local Conservation Group'

<sup>18</sup> Interestingly, many of the children are considered better birdwatchers than the adults and some participate because it's something they can do jointly with their parents, whereas others attend because they 'have nothing better to do'.

Dominican Republic, each of the 8 SSGs comprises a number of smaller groups. In the case of the Jaragua National Park SSG this includes a local guide and boatman association (Asociación de Guías de la Naturaleza de Oviedo (AGUINAOVI)) and a long-established local NGO (Los Voluntarios Comunitarios de Jaragua). In Jamaica, the SSGs are being constituted around the three newly created Local Forest Management Committees (LFMCs<sup>19</sup>) for the Cockpit Country IBA, and the NEPT for the Negril Great Morass IBA<sup>20</sup>. This diversity is both surprising and encouraging suggesting several different SSG models may work in the Caribbean.

However, there are significant issues regarding effectiveness and sustainability of the SSGs on the three islands. So far the activities of SSGs have been largely confined to site surveys and monitoring. Although there are examples of SSGs undertaking natural resource planning and management activities, e.g. supporting the development of management plans at Abaco National Park in the Bahamas, and for the Negril Great Morass and Royal Palm Reserve and Cockpit Country in Jamaica, and involvement in fire and invasive species control programmes at Abaco National Park, this has been on a relatively small scale and none of the SSGs have existed long enough to be able to develop significant capacity in this area. SSG capacity to raise and administer funds independently has also not yet been addressed.

Monitoring of SSG progress has probably been best done in the Dominican Republic, where a framework for SSG assessment based on a model from Nature Kenya (BirdLife in Kenya) has proved to be a useful tool.

An important part of SSG development was to promote exchanges between the newly created SSGs, in order give members the opportunity to share experiences, build confidence and learn new approaches, but these have been very limited due to budgetary restrictions (the budget originally allocated for these events was inadequate). Exchange visits are particularly logistically complicated and expensive in the Bahamas. Most exchanges have taken place in the Dominican Republic (at least 11 exchange visits between SSGs in 4 IBAs).

Experience has already shown that project partners need to commit considerable staff time and resources to ensure that the SSGs survive (particularly in the first two years) which requires significant funding, but they also need to work towards independence of the SSGs and need to develop an 'exit strategy' process (again the experience from the Dominican Republic is useful here).

## *ii. Country specific issues*

The Evaluation also has concerns over a number of country specific issues.

In the Bahamas, the BNT is officially mandated to manage the country's protected areas (under legislation dating back to 1959), and consequently the level of authority that SSGs have to take action at IBAs is unclear. This was expressed very forcefully to the consultant during his meeting with members of the Friends of the Environment (FoE) on Abaco, who represent the SSG for Abaco National Park and at present do not feel they can carry out any activities within the Park without the express permission from the BNT. The BNT needs to develop a clear MoU (or contract for specific activities) with each SSG setting out what activities and tasks the SSG is being requested to undertake (set within the management plan for the site). Although the Abaco SSG has been called for an MoU several times in the last two years the BNT has yet to approve one. Representation is the main issue at the HWP National Park. At present the SSG comprises members from the BNT Ornithology Group and not from local communities bordering the ponds. The hope is that a local group will emerge within a few years as local people start to take more of an interest in their site, but there is no guarantee of this. It is clear that BNT doesn't have the capacity and resources (nor will it anytime soon, despite an annual US\$1,000,000 grant from the government) to manage all its sites, so the SSG model offers a way for them to achieve effective management through local groups with a commitment to the site<sup>21</sup>. Conversely, well-established and independent SSGs should be able to facilitate the inclusion of local interests in the Trust's planning and decision-making processes much more effectively than if the Trust works alone.

In Jamaica, the Department of Forestry, which created three Local Forest Management Committees (LFMCs) around Cockpit Country<sup>22</sup>, which they hope will become independent within the next couple of years, but it was

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<sup>19</sup> These were signed into law on 28 March 2007. These groups have a focus on forest habitat, not specifically birds, and the aim is that they will eventually take over local enforcement and management of the Forest Reserves

<sup>20</sup> Other wetlands may be covered under 'watershed management committees', a scheme being developed by the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA).

<sup>21</sup> Interestingly, the BNT previously had a more protectionist attitude towards site conservation. The SSG approach has led to a 'culture change' and a new emphasis on partnership building and co-management for site management.

<sup>22</sup> The Forestry Department hopes to eventually create 52 LFMCs (two per forestry division) covering the whole island, but simply doesn't have the capacity to support and service any more than they have at present.

clear from interviews of LFMC members that they will need considerable staff support and some financial resources to build sufficient capacity for some time to come. Forestry estimates that each LFMC needs around US\$2,500/year for transportation, stationery and communication costs, but this does not cover additional funds to hire and equip an office. At present there is no sustainable funding for them, but they have been included within the draft Forest Management Plan for Cockpit Country, which if approved will provide them with significant funding. There are high local expectations that LFMCs will help improve members' livelihoods, and offer work opportunities, particularly in ecotourism (in the case of Cockpit Country, drawing tourists from Montego Bay), as there is high unemployment in rural areas in Jamaica. However, the Evaluation is concerned that expectations will not be met, as there are very limited opportunities for such development at present, and there is a lack of market research on which to base the development of business models<sup>23</sup>. If expectations are not met there is a risk that the LFMCs will collapse as people drift away in search of other 'opportunities'. There is also an issue regarding representation. At present, the LFMCs have poor participation by local landowners and the business community, and there is some concern that the membership fee of 500 Jamaica Dollars may exclude the poorer sections of the community, especially if they fail to see any financial benefit from membership.

The most successful and developed SSGs occur in the Dominican Republic. The Jaragua SSG, established in August 2004, is among the oldest and its members have led or participated in many local events and activities, including conservation research projects on the critically endangered Ricord's Iguana *Cyclura ricordi*, environmental summer camps, natural resources awareness campaigns targeted at children, beach clean-ups and the building of the Fondo Paradi road. A major focus for the JNP SSG has been the development of sustainable local enterprises, principally ecotourism (bird tours)<sup>24</sup>, establishment of nurseries for native and endemic trees, and wild honey production. However, despite considerable support from GJ these activities are still very small-scale (although expanding) and it is not yet clear how many people can be sustainably financed. The relative success of the Dominican Republic experiment with SSGs, is due to several factors, particularly GJ's decision to employ a member of staff to provide dedicated, intense and on-going support to the SSGs for the first 2-3 years of their existence<sup>25</sup> (also the IBA Officer has very good problem solving and people skills). Another reason for the success is that GJ had been working with volunteer groups in the south-west of the country for some years before the GEF project started and has an office in the area, so SSGs were built using their already considerable experience.

Project partners were provided with copies of documents detailing experience on developing SSGs from other parts of the world, principally Africa, where SSGs have received the most attention and have the longest history. This literature was useful, but the partners were essentially left to develop their own approach on how to develop SSGs, and universally felt they were not given enough guidance from BirdLife. All three of the project partners would benefit from additional guidance from BirdLife on institutionalizing SSGs (what models have worked, what hasn't in other parts of the world).

Overall, despite the successes, the Evaluation feels it is too early to say which SSGs will survive and what their impact will be, which will need to be judged through a follow-up evaluation or regional meeting in 3-4 years time. It should be noted that as the SSG network increases in the three countries, the sustainability of the coordination capacity will become an issue and this is something the BirdLife Caribbean Program will have to address.

## **Rating - Satisfactory**

### **2. Identification of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) (Relevant Outputs 1.2, 2.1, 3.1)**

IBAs are sites identified according to internationally agreed criteria (presence of globally threatened species, restricted-range species, birds characteristic of biomes, and congregations of birds) as being of key importance for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity (see <http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites>). Consequently any IBA can be said to be of global importance and therefore the identification of IBAs can be said to be helping to address one of GEF's core aims of supporting conservation of globally important biodiversity. Although the BirdLife IBA programme began in the Caribbean in 2001, and IBA identification activities had already started in the three project countries before the GEF project started in October 2003 (funded through previous MacArthur

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<sup>23</sup> Most tourists come to Jamaica for a 'beach holiday' or pay for all inclusive holidays and probably wouldn't be attracted by what Cockpit Country has to offer. In addition, the number of 'ecotourists' may have been declining in recent years, evidenced by the number of visitors to Windsor Great House (Mike Schwarz *pers.comm* to N.Varty).

<sup>24</sup> GJ had previously received funding from the MacArthur Foundation and Spanish Cooperation for a pilot project to develop ecotourism, including funds to construct a campsite and identify and mark out visitor trails, with a local group at Fondo Paradi.

<sup>25</sup> The Bahamas has also appointed a full-time IBA Officer who will adopt a similar approach

Foundation and USFWS grants), the completion of the national IBA lists and Regional Directory would not have happened without GEF Funding and can be considered a major achievement of the project.

It was clear to the Evaluation that an enormous effort went into the collection, collation, analysis and review of the IBA data, compilation of the IBA site accounts and establishment of the national and international IBA databases. Although project staff were employed in each country to coordinate data collection and entry of data in the BirdLife database format, and a Caribbean Programme Officer based in Puerto Rico was part-funded by the project to take on some of the IBA-related work being done by the Project Manager, an enormous amount of time was given by many ornithologists, ecologists, government technicians, SSG members, birdwatchers, personnel from other NGOs, and others, who provided data through workshops, reports, correspondence or interviews, or reviewed drafts of site accounts. The Project Manager estimated that around 10%-15% of the GEF project funds were spent on IBA identification and review activities, but the almost exclusively voluntary contribution of those who provided data or undertook reviews is not shown in the co-financing (because it was not quantified), and this would certainly have been very significant. However, the Evaluation has a concern that contributors have not been sufficiently acknowledged in the IBA accounts. This is a particular concern for the Dominican Republic where it took a lot of investment from GJ to build trust between key players for them to share information and this needs to be recognised in the final fact sheets that appear on the web (perhaps through an acknowledgement section is added to the site accounts in addition to references/.

Although the IBA process has helped identify key gaps in the conservation of important biodiversity in each country, not all the IBAs have yet been identified in each country, and some sites are still considered as potential IBAs and need to be verified through further desk research and site surveys. In the Bahamas, information on potential IBAs came largely from one published source, supplemented with (limited) records from local and visiting ornithologists and a small number of field visits to assess the current status of a selected number of sites<sup>26</sup>. Although the identification of IBAs is felt to be largely complete, additional field surveys are needed to the less well-known localities. Information on the threats to the sites is considered to be particularly outdated<sup>27</sup>. In Jamaica, efforts were focused on forest IBAs, a personal choice of the lead researcher but which support the majority of the island's endemic bird species, and the IBA identification process was, at least initially, concentrated with a very small group of people and not widely discussed. As a consequence, wetlands, offshore islands, and dry limestone and coastal forests were under-represented and caves do not feature at all<sup>28</sup>. In the Dominican Republic, one indirect but very important impact of the IBA data gathering exercise was that it helped build trust between stakeholders in terms of information use, exchange and availability, within a community does not have a history of sharing information. The structure and membership of the NLC in the Dominican Republic, and the way it was serviced by the national IBA Coordinator, who looked to build partnerships and bring direct benefits to members (e.g. through additional consultancy work), certainly facilitated this information-sharing process, and would be a good model for IBA identification projects being considered in other parts of the world.

The issue of most concern to the Evaluation was the process for mapping and defining the boundaries of the IBAs, which differed slightly between countries<sup>29</sup>. This was surprising as the boundary of the IBA determines the area of focus for advocacy and management resources to ensure the IBA receives sufficient protection (either inside or outside the official protected area system), and it was expected that the boundary definition and

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<sup>26</sup> Budgetary restrictions meant that field visits were only made to Cat Island, Inagua, South Andros, Abaco and southern Eleuthera.

<sup>27</sup> The Project Manager commented in his review of the draft Evaluation Report that "It is probably worth noting that the IBA analysis is only ever intended to reflect the current state of knowledge – there is very little information available in Bahamas, so the evaluation is sounds in terms of what is known now. The IBA inventory is "live" – there will always be changes relating to new information and changed status of sites." The Evaluation considers this to be a fair point. Nevertheless, more data collection should be considered a priority for the Bahamas.

<sup>28</sup> The Project Manager noted in his review of the draft Evaluation Report that "In Jamaica, IBAs have been identified and documented for three major wetland areas and two offshore cay sites – caves would not be represented in an IBA analysis."

<sup>29</sup> In response to the draft Evaluation Report the Project Manager noted that "The definition of an IBAs' boundary depends on local circumstances, although guidance is clear – "start with the protected areas system". In some cases, areas have been added to national parks (e.g. Hole in the Wall has been added to Abaco National Park IBA) where there is an argument and intention to seek annexation. However, an IBA by definition needs to be a "practical conservation unit" so it does not necessarily get defined by all available habitat. Mapping boundaries to IBAs is intended to be indicative rather than prescriptive – detailed, prescriptive mapping can lead to numerous issues related to private lands, and these are best dealt with (and mapped) on an individual basis, most likely in conjunction with the development of a participatory site specific conservation or management plan. Mapping for the rest of the Caribbean (and indeed editing of the DR, Bahamas and Jamaica maps) is now being done (but has only been possible for the last 9 months) on Google Earth which provides an easily shared, internet based platform to map, edit and share." However, interviews with those dealing with IBAs in the Bahamas, the DR and Jamaica, revealed a certain amount of confusion over how best to delineate IBA boundaries, and the Evaluator got no sense that everyone was following a standard set of guidelines. Discussions with the IBA team at the BirdLife Secretariat also revealed that essentially it is up to the individuals identifying the IBAs to take a 'practical' approach. If the guidance from BirdLife was "clear – "start with the protected areas system", it is not clear why Jamaica chose a different approach based on habitat mapping. The suggested approach of mapping sites on an individual basis "in conjunction with the development of a participatory site specific conservation or management plan" is viewed as probably the best approach.

mapping process would have been standardised. In the Bahamas, it was decided that apart from discrete cays with seabird colonies, any IBAs within a formally protected area would take the boundaries of the protected area rather than the extent of suitable habitat for key species as such information was not available in most cases. In the Dominican Republic, most of the IBAs were within protected areas and the boundaries of these IBAs were also set as those of the associated protected area. In Jamaica, however, IBA boundaries were initially demarcated according to forested land shown on land-use maps, but took into account whether there were many roads or human settlements in the area. As a consequence, most of the IBAs are within existing Forest Reserves. Boundaries have since been modified by WRC. BirdLife provided very limited guidance on the mapping of IBAs, and indeed interviews with BirdLife's Global IBA Coordinator revealed that generally partners are told to adopt 'whatever makes most sense locally' when deciding on IBA boundaries (L.Fishpool *pers.comm.* to N.Varty). It seems therefore that there are no fixed rules on defining IBA boundaries (and therefore their areas), and the Evaluation considers this a weakness of the approach (even if from a practical point of view there is no other option but to use existing protected area boundaries). A common set of rules for the Caribbean region that could have been applied from the start would have helped the project partners. A GIS facility would also substantially aid the mapping of the IBAs and other protected areas and make management of these sites much more effective (a GIS unit exists within the government of the Bahamas, but the BNT has not been able to access it; the Department of Forestry in Jamaica has one and is looking to incorporate IBA data into its GIS database).

According to the draft Final Report, produced in late September 2007, approximately 50% of the Caribbean's IBAs are currently online, although when accessed on 15 November 2007 only the IBA site sheets for the Dominican Republic were available (the Evaluation understands that the IBAs for the Bahamas and Jamaica are still under review). However, some of the fact sheets for the Dominican Republic were presented in Spanish e.g. Sierra de Bahoruco, and it is recommended that both English and Spanish language versions are produced for all the Dominican Republic IBA sheets<sup>30</sup>. The country IBAs can be presented on a Google Map and facts sheets accessed from the map, which is a very useful feature, although polygons showing the boundaries of the IBAs for the Dominican Republic sites were not presented when the feature was accessed on 15 November. It should be noted however that the resolution of Google Earth varies by country and often within countries so may not be particularly useful in all cases. The production of the Regional IBA Directory was the largest activity of the regional component of the project, and is expected to be published in early 2008 (currently at the layout and final edit stage).

Monitoring of IBAs has followed BirdLife's global IBA monitoring protocol. This provides a basic framework (focusing on assessing "State", "Pressure", and "Response"), which is probably too general to be of much use for monitoring activities at the site level, although for a national overview it is useful. As a result, some sites have incorporated the monitoring of additional features, particularly threats to the sites, e.g. in the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic, where additional fields have been added, particularly relating to threats, e.g. fires, at the sites. The information now available on the IBAs in each country represents a baseline on which monitoring of threats and project impact can be built. Obviously this information baseline was not available at the beginning of the GEF project (at least not in any coherent way), but the baseline has been built for the future.

Although the IBA database entries for the 3 target countries are largely complete they are not yet ready for public use and has not been provided to government agencies, so it is too early to say whether or how it has improved decision-making relating to conservation and management of IBAs in each country. However, participation in the IBA process has given groups in all three countries a better overall perspective of each island's bird conservation status and built capacity and provided important information for more effective advocacy.

## **Rating – Satisfactory**

### ***3. Awareness-raising and educational activities (relevant Outputs 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)***

The project has had a strong focus on awareness-raising and educational activities among stakeholders and the public, and produced a wide variety of high quality and informative materials. Particular mention should be made of: the *Wondrous West Indian Wetlands Teachers' Resource Book* and user-friendly bird identification cards on landbirds, seabirds and endemic species (laminated for use in the field), various Caribbean bird posters, and the *Birds Caribbean* newsletter, all of which feature the GEF logo. Educational aspects of the project have

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<sup>30</sup> The Project Manager commented that "At late September, IBAs were online for DR and 8 other, albeit small, Caribbean countries. The IBA fact sheets are created directly from the database which is managed online nationally in the national language (hence the Spanish language factsheets for the DR, Cuba and Puerto Rico). Each of these countries IBAs are being translated for the Caribbean IBA book, and English pdfs will be available for download once the book is complete."

been incorporated into the BNT core work, and within the Jamaican Environmental Trust's (JET) Schools Education Programme (a cost-effective approach).

The single most successful awareness-raising event, in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica at least, has been the annual Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival (CEBF)<sup>31</sup>. Although this is organised regionally by the SCSCB, who also provide small grants for groups to host national activities associated with the event, it was promoted and national activities in the Bahamas, Dominican Republic and Jamaica have been part funded by the GEF project between 2004 and 2007. In addition, the GEF project has clearly strengthened the CEBF in the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica through the IBA programme, by giving it specific sites that are important for endemic birds (IBAs) where it can target activities. Project staff commented that the CEBF has probably the largest impact on awareness of any of the project outputs, and has a huge potential to grow still further. However, it would be useful to determine the level of impact, through targeted studies, and if there are ways in which it could be modified to improve impact.

## **Rating - Satisfactory**

### **4. Site action projects (relevant Outputs 2.3, 4.1 and Annex 6)**

There is some confusion within the Project Document over the number and location of site action projects to be undertaken by the project. As mentioned previously, one indicator for the Development Objective states 'Conservation status of 6 important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean enhanced by the end of the project'. This suggests that the project will target six sites, although it does not state which 6 sites this refers to. It is presumed to be those sites listed in Annex 6 of the Project Document (Site Action Concepts), but Annex 6 lists 3 projects (for the target countries), not 6, in the initial table and then gives details of projects for 8 sites – 3 in the Bahamas, 2 in the Dominican Republic and 3 in the Jamaica. The picture is further confused by Output 4.1 that states 'Appropriate integrated site conservation action initiated at three (author's underlining) globally important biodiversity sites with changes in biodiversity status, socio-economic importance, uses and threats being monitored against an established baseline', but again, which sites this refers to is not specified. In view of this, the Evaluation assessed all 8 projects given in Annex 6 according to the lists of activities given for each project 'concept'. The Evaluation of these site projects is presented in Annex 8.

## **Overall rating - Satisfactory**

### **5. Advocacy work (relevant Outputs 2.1, 3.4, 4.2)**

In the Bahamas, there has been little advocacy work undertaken, although BNT new Strategic Plan apparently states that priority IBAs on Crown Land will be incorporated into the planning process for presentation of new sites to government for inclusion within the national park system. In addition, BNT has not had a focus on advocacy work in the past because of its unusual status as the official body mandated to manage the country's protected area system. In the Dominican Republic, an IBA workshop held in August 2007 identified advocacy work as a priority for IBA follow-up, and lobbying for biodiversity conservation continues to be a key activity for GJ, especially in and around the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve (which holds three priority IBAs). Undoubtedly, the most successful advocacy work carried out during the GEF project has taken place in Jamaica, where project information on the Cockpit Country IBA provided by the WRC and awareness-raising and lobbying activities by JET have been important elements in a long-running campaign to save Cockpit Country from bauxite mining, with the result that prospecting licences have been suspended pending review of the boundaries of 'Cockpit Country'<sup>32</sup> – an indication that government attitudes have changed. The campaign can be considered Jamaica's first IBA site support campaign and has received tremendous local and international support. Although it can be said that project activities in Cockpit Country, Jamaica and the Jaragua National Park in the Dominican Republic have helped move threats to these sites higher up the political agenda, overall there has been little advocacy work undertaken by the project. However, this is likely to be stepped up once the national and regional IBA directories are published.

## **Rating – Moderately Satisfactory**

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<sup>31</sup> The CEBF aims to increase public awareness of the Caribbean region's high endemism and rich bird life through activities such as talks, nature and birdwatching walks, photographic exhibitions, art competitions, endemic bird postage stamps, articles in the media, and distribution of educational materials about birds to school children and the general public. The 2007 festival, the sixth year it has been run, was held 22 April – 22 May and took as its theme 'Birds in a changing climate'.

<sup>32</sup> As a result of the campaign, the Ministry of Agriculture commissioned a study to formally define the area of "Cockpit Country" (there has been no official boundary or agreement on how to define it), in which the GEF project, through the information management and GIS training received by WRC, played a significant role. This in itself represents an important GEF project achievement.

Project partners and members of SSGs were asked what, in their view, were the successes and failures of the project. This was done because in the Evaluator's experience different individuals can have quite different ideas of what constitutes success and failure and each person's view, at whatever level (site/SSG, national/project partner, regional/Caribbean partners, donors and BirdLife), is valid and can help identify ways to improve a project's outcomes. A summary of their replies, grouped according to island, is given in Annex 9.

## **Overall rating for Achievement of activities and Outputs – Satisfactory**

### ***C. Sustainability***

In the GEF context, sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived outcomes and impacts after the GEF project funding ends. According to its ToR, the Evaluation is required to identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute to or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends, in relation to four dimensions of sustainability: Financial; Socio-political; Institutional Framework and Governance; and, Environmental.

The project placed considerable emphasis on ensuring sustainability of project results and processes from the initial design stage. Particular results that are likely to be sustained at the global level are capacity built and availability of information on key conservation sites to decision-makers.

#### ***1. Financial resources***

Achieving financial sustainability of project results was built into the original project design through inclusion of the following Outputs under Immediate Objective 5:

5.1 - Additional co-financing secured for site action projects and important biodiversity site conservation programs;

5.2 - Long-term funding strategy for important biodiversity site conservation in place, and;

5.3 - Funding proposals developed and potential sources evaluated and actively pursued with the aim of resourcing future program needs, long-term project actions and the implementation of the conservation plan recommendations.

The MacArthur Foundation has developed a specific strategy for site conservation that includes funding activities at IBAs. In the Caribbean, two of their focal areas are Cockpit Country in Jamaica and the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve in the Dominican Republic, from which project follow-up is likely to benefit. In addition, significant funding is likely through Conservation International's (CI) Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), for which the Caribbean is an acknowledged priority (hotspot). An agreement has been reached that IBAs will be an integral focus for the CI grant strategy for the region under this programme. In addition, the BirdLife International Secretariat and the BirdLife Americas Office in Quito, Ecuador, are currently developing a Caribbean regional strategy and there are several proposals in with major donors to fund this. Consequently, funding for follow-up of the regional elements of the project looks optimistic.

Considerable support has been provided to the national partners to build capacity to secure financial resources (co-finance and follow-up funds), through provision of information on appropriate funders and calls for proposals; training in strategic project planning (workshop held in Puerto Rico in 2006); and support in proposal planning, development and writing. Some country staff commented that mentoring by the Project Manager on the development of funding proposals to international donors was particularly valuable, however, they felt that more support would be useful and a workshop on effective fund-raising, including how to approach corporate donors and grant proposal writing, would be very valuable follow-up to the project.

In the Bahamas, in June 2007, the BNT secured a commitment from the Government of the Bahamas for an annual grant of US\$1 million/year to provide for the management of the country's protected areas. These include some existing areas identified as IBAs, e.g. Abaco National Park, and a direct submission to government has already been made to expand the country's network of protected areas to include some of the newly identified IBAs that are not currently protected. The BNT plans to eventually incorporate all the IBAs on Crown Land with the country's protected area system, which will guarantee government funding, although this may take several years. TNC and the BNT have also just been awarded a grant from UNDP for strengthening of the country's protected area system, under GEF's 'Supporting Country Action on the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas' programme, which will contribute to the follow-up on the IBA programme and SSG development.



In the Dominican Republic, GJ has a good track record of fund-raising but the activities and outputs of the GEF project are still reliant on project funding and the Evaluation viewed several proposals that GJ has submitted to international donors for follow-up funding, e.g. IUCN.

In Jamaica, a Forest Conservation Fund (FCF) has been established with US\$18million, following a debt-for-nature swap organised by TNC. The FCF covers the whole of the island but the priority is for action in Cockpit Country and the Blue and John Crow Mountains, which contain several IBAs. A Forest Management Plan for Cockpit Country has just been drafted (under contract with the WRC), that presents 6 proposals to support the development of capacity of the three LFMCs around Cockpit Country. If the draft Plan is approved then the LFMCs will have financial security. Follow-up funds have also been received by WRC from the MacArthur Foundation. Furthermore, JET has integrated much of the project's education activities into its schools programme (SEP), which should increase the sustainability of project results. However, despite success in fund-raising from the corporate sector and government contracts JET usually faces a financial crisis at the end of most years because of late payments from some funders (largely the Ministry of Education for the SEP).

Apart from an emphasis on securing grants, the project has also piloted financial sustainability through the development of small-scale ecotourism. This is most advanced at the Jaragua National Park in the Dominican Republic, where GJ's strategy has been to strengthen the existing local tourism industry, specifically the small 'eco-hotel' at Pedernales and the local groups of bird guides at Laguna de Oviedo and Fondo Paradí, and to build alliances between the relevant local stakeholders, e.g. restaurant owners and the bird guides. However, ecotourism development is still very small scale involving only a few people and to date has required a great deal of support in terms of staff time and frequent visits from members of GJ<sup>33</sup>. In Jamaica, there is great interest among one LFMC to promote trails and caves around Cockpit Country to tourists on the north coast (mostly Montego Bay). In the Bahamas, the ecotourism market is very small compared to the beach or cruise ship market, but a small number of individuals do make a living<sup>34</sup>, although this is not helped by the inadequate support from the Ministry of Tourism which does not market nature tourism in any significant way in their international campaigns. The Ministry's position on this is that "you need to develop the product before you go after the market" (Earlston McPhee *pers.comm* to N.Varty), and that much more emphasis needs to be placed on training of guides in the outlining islands (and there hasn't been an eco-guide course run in the Bahamas for some years and there are believed to be only about 12 active and certified bird guides in the islands).

Whilst efforts to provide alternative livelihoods to communities around the target IBAs are laudable, and experience from other parts of the world shows that SSGs whose members benefit financially from their involvement are among the most stable<sup>35</sup>, the Evaluation has some concerns over the development of ecotourism through the project. To date, there has been inadequate market research and economic modelling to determine the level of interest in visiting IBAs among national and international tourists<sup>36</sup>, what features would attract them<sup>37</sup>, visitor expectations in terms of basic infrastructure and services, or willingness to pay<sup>38</sup>. Nor has there been an analysis of the potential impact of climate change on tourism, e.g. through higher aviation taxes and societal pressure to fly less which is most likely to influence the very group that the local guides are trying to attract. In addition, there is only preliminary information on ecological carrying capacity at the sites, and most of the individuals and groups involved do not appear to work to a business plan. As such it is unclear whether

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<sup>33</sup> A new project "*Organization and Operation of Ecotourism Activities in Laguna de Oviedo through Local Community Micro Enterprises*" will be developed during 2007-2008, jointly by Grupo Jaragua, the government and the community, with the support of AECI-ARAUCARIA, and will be led by a local stakeholder.

<sup>34</sup> The Evaluation interviewed two operators, one on New Providence and another on Grand Bahama. Both offer more than just birdwatching tours, including popular cycling tours through natural areas on the islands, but the operator on Grand Bahama is the more successful in terms of numbers of clients each year, in part because of arrangements her company has with visiting cruise ships. Both. The latter estimated her company handles 20,000 tourists on their tours each year but only 1,000 of these are interested in purely birdwatching (most of the rest are day passengers from cruise ships). Her company also has strong connections with various Audubon chapters in the US who bring down birdwatchers. The operator on New Providence estimates she has around 50 tourists a month, most of whom are birdwatchers but some come for trail biking, but admits she is much less active than her Grand Bahamas colleague and is near retirement. A day's birdwatching on New Providence costs around US\$70 and on Grand Bahama about US\$100.

<sup>35</sup> Coulthard, N., C., Varty, N., & Gatarabirwa, W. (2007). Lessons learned from the Site Support Group and National Liaison Committee approaches in Africa. UNOPS, Africa Regional Office. April 2007. 43pp + 10 Annexes.

<sup>36</sup> It is acknowledged that birdwatchers generally target IBAs when on holiday because they know that these are the places which contain the most interesting (large numbers, rare, endemic, etc) birds so the completion of the IBA fact sheets, databases and Case Studies and their availability through the partner and BirdLife websites, should promote visits to the IBAs among this group. However, for serious birdwatchers – those interested in seeing as many new species as possible (called 'twitchers' in Europe and 'tickers' in North America) - the Bahamas is not a major destination in the Caribbean (far more endemic species occur on Cuba, Hispaniola and Jamaica).

<sup>37</sup> There may be a big disconnect between what the tourist wants, especially if they are used to high biodiversity sites, and what can be provided.

<sup>38</sup> For instance, one of the most experienced bird guides at the JNP in the DR was charging much too little for foreign visitors given the quality of the tour he gave and he had little idea of what he should charge or what the market rate was. As such he was probably subsidizing the tours.

ecotourism offers a viable long-term model for local development and sustainable financing for some IBAs in the Caribbean. Some, such as isolated cays with breeding seabird will clearly not benefit from such developments.

Apart from the financial aspects, there is also an ethical issue that needs to be considered here. Unless alternative livelihood ventures promoted by GEF projects are based on a sustainable business model they are likely to fail, and this may leave those who have changed careers, retrained and committed their own resources on the likelihood of future employment, in a worse situation than they would have been had they sought a more conventional job. While a project cannot take responsibility for people who fail within an otherwise successful framework because of their own limitations, a GEF project should have a duty of care to ensure that those it encourages to change to an alternative (environmentally sustainable) livelihood (and thus take on the risk) are given sufficient information, advice and support to succeed. This is especially important for poorer rural communities, such as around many IBAs, where even small financial losses can be critical to survival and family and social cohesion.

### **Rating – Moderately Likely (ML)**

#### ***2. Socio-political***

New governments came to power in the Bahamas and Jamaica in 2007. In the Bahamas, meetings between the BNT and senior members of the Government indicate that the new administration views environmental matters as a priority. The Prime Minister is on record as stating (in a televised press conference after Tropical Storm Noel hit the islands on 30 October 2007) that there will be a new Town Planning Act by the end of the year and that wetlands must stop being built on because of the flooding risk, and an interview with the Special Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister indicated a recognition on the government's part that environmental issues needed increased attention, with capacity of key environmental institutions (e.g. BEST) built further, especially in relation to the likely impact of climate change on the Bahamas. Also, the Government is also seeking to decentralise and thus SSG initiatives are looked on favourably.

The situation is less clear in Jamaica (in part because there is no institutional base for the project) but a letter sent to the WRC indicated that the new government is likely to prohibit bauxite mining in Cockpit Country. In addition, the Forestry Department will continue to support the development of the IBA programme in Jamaica, although the resource requirements to do so are still unclear.

At the local level, the SSG approach empowers local communities to manage their own sites and is based on "community commitment and voluntary action" and is therefore an attractive and potentially sustainable approach. However, the Evaluation believes that statements that "enthusiastic volunteers are a sustainable source of decentralized commitment" and that "if they are committed and the program is valuable to them they will find the resources. Thus again, it is the commitment rather than the (relatively minimal) resources that is critical" (page 25 and 26 respectively of the Project Document), are questionable, at least for some the SSGs. Interviews with members of SSGs in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica (much poorer groups than the SSGs in the Bahamas) indicated that members hoped (and to some extent expected) that membership of an SSG would lead to improvements in their financial and social conditions (particularly among the younger members). In other words, enthusiasm for wildlife and love of their local area may not enough to sustain membership over the long-term. In addition, several Jamaican interviewees commented that there are few people on the island who are interested in environmental issues and fewer of these are in a position to volunteer their time. Particular concern was expressed in interviews about the lack of interest by the younger generation (that it has embraced a 'throw away, material culture' in Jamaica). Given that the SSGs in the Bahamas and Jamaica are still in the very early stages of development and those in the Dominican Republic no more than 2.5 years old, the Evaluation considered it too soon to assess whether the SSG model will be sustainable in the Caribbean (or at least on the three project islands).

In the Dominican Republic, political elections also regularly impact important biodiversity sites, as the lack of sustained vigilance in the run-up to elections and during the transitional period after elections (held every two years) facilitates land invasions, which has occurred in the buffer zone surrounding the JNP. In addition, there is a generally low national government interest in the protected area system, evidenced by Law 202-04 passed in 2004, which effectively reduced the national system of protected areas in order to facilitate tourism developments. In order to achieve a sustainable future, some interviewees felt that it is important that IBAs are protected first as 'municipal reserves' then promoted at the national level, as unless local communities feel they have a direct benefit from or involvement in (and here the SSG model helps significantly) they will resist or ignore any designation by central government.

## Rating – Moderately Likely (ML)

### 3. Institutional framework and governance

The institutionalization of many project activities is probably the most critical factor in ensuring sustainability of the overall program. This has been recognised by the project and measures have been developed to address this, largely through the inclusion of project result, e.g. IBA programme, into the strategic and programmatic planning of the project partner organisations, which has been achieved to a large extent.

In the Bahamas, the BNT is mandated by government to manage the country's national parks, and the IBAs have been integrated into its Strategic Plan and provide a 'shadow list' of new protected areas to be submitted to government for protection<sup>39</sup>. Those IBAs on crown land can be added to the system relatively easily, but those on private land are more difficult and unless management agreements can be negotiated with the owners are likely to remain unprotected. The three sites chosen by the GEF project – Inagua, Abaco and Harrold and Wilson Ponds national parks are all priority sites for the Trust, and so will continue to receive attention and resources.

In the Dominican Republic, the CEBF and other educational and awareness-raising initiatives centred on JNP are likely to remain with GJ, which has built them into its core activities. However, the IBA programme currently rests with GJ but needs a more permanent institutional home as GJ does not see itself as the long-term host and hopes that another group – perhaps the Hispaniolan Ornithological Society (HOS) will take on the maintenance of the database within the next 5 years, although the Evaluation considers that it would be better based in a government agency. The Wildlife Department of the MENR already undertakes bird censuses and threat assessments at some IBAs, and provided training in monitoring methods to people involved in monitoring other sites, and has used IBA information for setting annual bag limits for duck hunting. Consequently, the Evaluation feels the Ministry would be a more appropriate long-term home for the IBA database, if funding can be found.

The project has paid particular attention to try to 'embed' the IBA programme in Jamaica due to the lack of an institutional base for the project during its implementation, following the loss of BirdLife Jamaica from the project in late 2003. Encouragingly, an MOU is being developed with the Department of Forestry to determine how best to move the IBA framework forward. The Forestry Department sees the value in the SSG approach and they are obvious equivalents to their LFMCS<sup>40</sup>. The Department of Forestry has received significant funding and capacity development over the last 10 years, largely from CIDA, FAO and DFID, and is considered now relatively stable and effective (the consultant has personal experience of its former state in the later 1980s and early 1990s). In addition, the Institute of Jamaica is offering to host the NLC and maintain the IBA database, linked to its role as national host for the CBD's Clearing House Mechanism.

Incorporation of the IBA sites within the protected areas master plans that are currently being developed in each of the three countries will also help to promote sustainability of project results within key national institutions. In Jamaica, this is due to be completed by June 2008, and will include forest reserves and IBAs. Significantly, in Jamaica, the Chair of the Protected Areas Committee is the Conservator of Forests, who is a supporter on the IBA approach as she sees it as complementary to the Forestry Department's own site-based work. The Committee also has a Sustainable Financing Working Group that is looking into ways to sustainably finance the Protected Areas Master Plan. In the Bahamas, the equivalent plan will be delivered in early 2008, and will contain sections on sustainable financing, capacity assessment, and a policy and legal review and assessment, and connectivity between sites (on this the IBA data has been very useful).

At the regional level, IBAs have become a central part of the SCSCB (2008-2012) strategy, and at the international level, the IBA approach is a central feature of BirdLife's global (2004-2008) strategy for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity and the IBA database will be maintained and updated by the BirdLife Secretariat and is built into its work programmes and budgets.

Sustainability of the awareness-raising and school education programmes is also being pursued by the project with some success. In the Bahamas, the BNT's *Trust Notes* and the *Bahamas Naturalist* which carries articles about priority sites, species and conservation actions is seen as an essential publication of the Trust and will therefore continue to receive funding. Also, the CEBF has been adopted by BNT's Education Office and written

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<sup>39</sup> Five new sites have been submitted by the BNT for inclusion within the country's protected area system, three of which are IBAs.

<sup>40</sup> The Jamaica Project Consultant stated that a significant reason why the project has been able to deliver results in Jamaica was because of the collaboration that has developed with the Department of Forestry and, particularly, the WRC, not only through access to information (both ways) but also through WRC's participation in the LFMCS for northern Cockpit Country, and this has helped erode the difficulty of a government agency working effectively with an NGO, a rarity in Jamaica.

into the BNT budget. In the Dominican Republic, the *Grupo Jaragua Informa* has guaranteed funds from MacArthur Foundation and the Spanish Cooperation Agency for the next few years (locals at Laguna de Oviedo particularly valued the *Informa*). In Jamaica, bird issues and IBAs, CEBF, Wetlands Day and other relevant environmental events have been integrated into JET's education programme. At the regional level, the SCSCB has just developed a new institutional Strategic Plan and Workplan (2008-2011), developed in collaboration with the BirdLife Caribbean Programme, in which the IBA Programme and educational components of the project notably the CEBF feature prominently, and SCSCB has established a small grants programme to fund national activities relating to the CEBF. However, the sustainability of producing the *Birds Caribbean* newsletter is an issue, as the cost of translating, layout costs, printing and distribution (and the editorial time) is high.

Insufficient capacity among the project partners has been a problem during project implementation with many staff having to put in considerable extra time into project work. Whilst this is laudable, it is not sustainable and capacity needs to be built for follow-up activities, set out in each group's strategic plan. For instance, the BNT effectively operated with one member of staff assigned to the project for much of the implementation period (due to lack of support for the project from a previous Executive Director). However, BNT funds were reallocated in 2006 and a dedicated IBA/SSG Coordinator was employed, and BNT will hire three new senior staff people in the next few months – a Director of Education, a Chief Warden for Abaco National Park, and a Director of Development – which should further enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the IBA, SSG, educational and advocacy outcome and follow-up of the project.

One problem that undermines institutional sustainability on all the Caribbean islands is 'brain drain' to North America. There were several instances of individuals obtaining training through the project in North America who then chose not return to their home island as prospects were better in the US or Canada. This has proved to be a particular problem for the bird conservation community in Jamaica over the years, and there is no easy solution and it remains a risk to any GEF project in the Caribbean. Another human capacity issue is that, although the number of women biology graduates is now higher than men (at least at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica<sup>41</sup>), it is very difficult to find trained women who are interested in fieldwork (where action is most needed), largely because of personal security concerns.

#### **Rating – Moderately Likely (ML)**

#### **4. Environmental**

There are a number of specific environmental threats that could impact the sustainability of the project outcomes.

In the Bahamas, a new road has been cut through part of the Abaco National Park to allow a resident along the coast easier access to his property and as a prelude to a proposed hotel development, even though this activity (carried out with a bulldozer) is illegal and destroyed at least one Bahama Parrot nest. Moreover, almost all the coppice forest to the east of the Park, which is the major feeding area for the parrots, is on privately owned land, and under threat from development. Other threats to IBAs in the Bahamas include rubbish dumping and infilling (at HWP, witnessed by the consultant during a field visit), uncontrolled fires (Abaco) and oil spills (Exuma and seabird breeding sites on low-lying cays). It was also noted that events in Cuba can impact the populations of Caribbean flamingos *Phoenicopterus ruber* on Inagua as the birds regularly fly back and forth between the two islands.

In the Dominican Republic, the JNP has been under threat from mining since its establishment in 1983, when the government also awarded a 100-year licence for mining of limestone to Alcoa (now passed to another trans-national) within the park. Unfortunately, there is no publicly available map showing the limits of the mining concession with which to monitor the mining activities but they are thought to have expanded in recent years, although they have been checked due to an awareness and advocacy campaign orchestrated by GJ. The Ministry of Mining is politically very powerful and the UNDP office in Santo Domingo saw no immediate answer to the problem. Mass-market tourism has also been proposed for the JNP area, particularly at the pristine beach of Bahia de Aguilas, although public campaigns, again led by GJ, have reduced interest among investors (although there is constant pressure to develop the site and foreign tourism features prominently in the Government's development policy for the Dominican Republic). GJ has recognised that it needs to offer alternative employment opportunities, so is promoting small-scale ecotourism in the JNP area, although there are clearly limits to this and it cannot provide the scale of employment offered by the mining or the proposed hotel developments within the park, or the port facilities bordering it. The second WWP, at Cabo Rojo, is also under threat from contamination by bauxite from trucks passing the site on their way down to the neighbouring port.

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<sup>41</sup> Catherine Levy pers.comm. to N.Varty.

Many of the trucks do not cover their loads so bauxite dust blows about in the wind settling either side of the road and is gradually filling in and polluting the wetland. However, should be a relatively easy to persuade the truck companies to cover their cargoes.

Other threats to the JNP, which could undermine the project successes at the site, include suspected corruption among the senior park staff - appointment of protected area staff in the Dominican Republic has apparently been influenced by 'political favouritism' in recent years (this is the claim for the JNP), which results in poor management of protected areas<sup>42</sup>. There is also a problem with drug smuggling along the seaward side of Laguna de Oviedo (a route into the island for cocaine from South America, which then goes on to North America). Some locals have established themselves on the beaches where they search for abandoned shipments of drugs thrown overboard at sea, and collect birds (and turtle) eggs for food and clear coastal vegetation for dwellings. Unfortunately, this is not something that the project team can easily address as some of these people (and the dealers) are very dangerous.

In Jamaica, bauxite mining has already destroyed much of the Mount Diablo area and been a major threat to Cockpit Country for many years. However, there has been a recent change in government and although it is still in the early days of the administration, the new government has indicated that it is committed to stopping further bauxite mining in Cockpit Country (evidenced by letter from Prime Minister to WRC/JET viewed by the Evaluation). However, the long campaign to protect Cockpit Country, which has involved input from the project team, notably JET and the WRC, needs to maintain pressure to ensure that there is a final public resolution to the issue, and needs to be a focus for follow-up activities.

There is also an external threat to the project outcomes from climate change, which is being increasingly discussed by Caribbean governments. Climate change predictions for the Caribbean suggest stronger and more frequent tropical storms and hurricanes with associated higher storm surges, flooding and wind damage, although in some places increased drought, but also specific threats to Caribbean ecosystems e.g. damage to mangroves due to huge influx of freshwater from storms. The lower-lying islands, including many islands in the Bahamas, are likely to be most affected (witnessed by the Evaluation consultant when Tropical Storm Noel hit the Bahamas during the mission). A preliminary analysis in the Bahamas (Lynn Gape *in litt* to N.Varty 4/12/2007) suggests that raised sea levels and drought at wetland sites could affect 12 islands and around 75% of the country's IBA. Particularly badly hit would be Exuma and Andros islands and several cays with important seabird-breeding colonies.

**Rating – Moderately Likely (ML)**

#### ***D. Replication<sup>43</sup> and catalytic role***

Although still relatively undeveloped in the Caribbean, the SSG approach has considerable potential for replication both nationally and across the region, and this has already begun to occur in some places. The most successful example is in the Dominican Republic, where the two initial SSGs created from various local groups around the Jaragua National Park and Sierra de Baboruco quickly replicated so, as of 30 September 2007, there were 8 SSGs undertaking activities in seven IBAs from three different regions (southwest, northeast and east), in six provinces (Barahona, Pedernales, El Seibo, Hato Mayor, Santo Domingo, Independencia y La Altagracia) and involving at least 14 local communities (Cachote, Paraíso, Los Tres Charcos, El Cajuil, Oviedo, Pedernales, Manuel Goya, Duvergé, La Descubierta, Sabana de la Mar, El Peñon, Miches, Padre Nuestro, Bayahibe). The project training course on birdwatching and bird guiding could also be replicated to other SSGs in the Dominican Republic. In the Bahamas, there are still only the three SSGs associated with the GEF project but funds have been secured from the USFWS-NMBCA Fund to promote further SSGs, and candidate groups have already been identified on Grand Bahama, Andros and Great Exuma. The SSG model is probably replicable at most sites where there is a local community with a vested interest in their local environment. However, the servicing of the SSG network will require greater coordination capacity at the national level as it expands and sustainability of support could become an issue.

The WWP model is also replicable. Indeed it had already been successful on other Caribbean islands before the GEF project started. In the Dominican Republic, a second WWP was established at Cabo Rojo<sup>44</sup> just outside the

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<sup>42</sup> Partly in response to this, the UNDP DR Country Office has submitted a proposal to GEF to reinvigorate the country's protected area system, which will look at strengthening the institutional system but not specific sites.

<sup>43</sup> Replication approach, in the context of GEF projects, is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated or scaled up in the design and implementation of other projects.

JNP, as it offered an immediate opportunity as an educational resource for the local schools as well as a focus for raising awareness of the diversity of wildlife around the JNP. In the Bahamas, a second WWP is planned at Cuffy Pond (Great Exuma) and a similar ‘Watchable Wildlife Area’ for Matthewtown on Inagua next to the BNT office which will feature a small man-made pond.

Uptake of lessons learned by other GEF projects (or even strong linkage) has not yet occurred but the project has had some impact on other regional projects and programmes. According to project staff, a number of other institutions have shown particular interest in the IBA data generated by the project and have integrated it into their programme activities. For instance, in the Dominican Republic, the NGO Grupo Tinglar is using the IBA denomination to promote a proposal to classify the Laguna de Cabral (IBA no 8) as a Ramsar Site. In the Bahamas, the GEF project ran at the same time as the TNC-funded Parks Partnership Project (TNC-PPP), and the TNC-PPP used a lot of the IBA outreach materials for its project. National IBA data has fed into the gap analyses undertaken by TNC on the three islands and substantially help strengthen the protected area master plans that are being developed for the Bahamas and Jamaica.

Probably the strongest linkage has developed with the West Indian Whistling-duck and Wetlands Conservation Project (WIWD-WC Project) with both projects supporting and influencing each other. The WIWDWC Project designed high quality educational materials, written specifically for a Caribbean audience (available in three languages), with a teacher training course and an excellent associated Teachers Resource Book. The GEF project facilitated the production and distribution of these materials (reprinting and revised versions, and Spanish language versions), and they are now used throughout the Caribbean.

Most international dissemination of project successes has taken place at regional conferences, especially the annual SCSCB meetings. Project presentations at these meetings have been well attended by some of the regional donors, e.g. USFWS, although there is no assessment of impact in project reports.

There was no specific replication plan presented in the Project Document, which would have helped direct this project activity.

#### **Rating – Moderately Satisfactory**

### ***E. Preparation and Readiness***

#### ***1. Project design, logframe and indicators***

The project’s logframe is somewhat confusing and not coherent in places. It is also noted that there are two levels of Objectives (Development Objectives and Immediate Objectives) and Outputs but no Outcomes. Generally, GEF proposals have one goal (=development objective) and one objective (= Immediate objective), with a number of outcomes. In fact, most of the Immediate Objectives could be considered as Outcomes. In addition, there are instances where Outputs overlap and others where the same indicator is used for both Objective and Output level. Project staff in all three target countries commented that initially they did not understand the logframe and had to question the Project Manager at length and in one case (the Dominican Republic) essentially reconstituted it in order to make sense of it. The problem largely lies in flaws in the way the project proposal was designed and reviewed.

The logframe was developed from a problem analysis that was produced during a 3-day design and planning workshop held in the Bahamas in April 2002. However, the problem analysis shows some confusion over what constitutes a threat, root cause and barrier (not uncommon in GEF Biodiversity projects). For instance, in the problem analysis ‘lack of enforcement’ is listed as a threat to biodiversity, whereas it is in fact a **barrier** to achieving conservation of the biological resources. This is important because it is not enough to simply increase enforcement activities without understanding what it driving people to, say, hunt wildlife or clear forest or drain wetlands for agriculture (which are the direct **threats** to biodiversity), as the **root causes** for these behaviours may well be poverty, in which case offering alternative sustainable livelihood opportunities may be the best long-term solution to conserving the biodiversity as poor people will still be driven to make a living even if enforcement is increased, and enforcement on it own will not address the root causes. The problem analysis lays

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<sup>44</sup> This is a small wetland that was established as the first municipal reserve for the area on 5 September 2005. It lies alongside a road and is 30-40 minutes drive from Pedernales so within easy reach of school trips. Its main use is for scientific and educational activities and training in identification and monitoring techniques. The local Council has an environmental management unit that is supportive of the enterprise.

the foundation for what the project will target for intervention, so it is important to ensure that it is as thorough and accurate as possible.

In addition, while the logframe lists many indicators, the majority of these are performance indicators (measure progress of activities and achievement of Outputs), many are not SMART and there are no good biodiversity impact or threat reduction indicators presented. In addition, baselines are not presented, nor were separate baselines, indicators and targets/milestones given for each country and regionally, which would have been useful. More targeted advice from GEF and UNEP during the project-planning phase could have helped develop a more streamlined and effective logframe and set of indicators against which to plan, monitor and report.

UNEP provided support through the project development and approval process, although it is unclear to what extent. The original project proposal was apparently reviewed and commented on by the UNEP-DGEF Task Manager (TM), but it is not clear whether it received any meaningful review at a higher level within UNEP-DGEF or GEF. According to the TM, as was standard practice, the Senior Programme Officer at UNEP-DGEF would have reviewed the document, followed by a technical review undertaken by GEFSEC. Unfortunately, Evaluation requests for copies of the reviewers' comments on the draft project proposal by UNEP and GEF during 2002 could not be met, as the documentation appears to be missing or misfiled. However, according to the Project Manager, the GEFSEC reviewer initially rejected the proposal on the basis that "GEF does not support migratory bird projects". BirdLife appealed, pointing out that the project was not focused on migratory birds (rather it targeted endemics and other regional and globally important biodiversity, and therefore GEF-eligible) and the proposal was resubmitted to GEFSEC. It was passed the second time but without any comments or suggestions for improvement of the project design by the (same) GEFSEC reviewer, with no changes to strengthen the logframe, or identification of appropriate indicators, etc. Therefore, it seems that GEFSEC were negligent in that a full and critical technical review of the proposal did not take place. It is also noted that no one from UNEP-DGEF attended the project design workshop in the Bahamas in April 2002. The Evaluation believes that greater and more constructive input from GEFSEC and UNEP at the proposal review stage could have helped improve the design of the project considerably and would probably have eliminated several of the design failings.

Unfortunately, there was also no joint review of the logframe and indicators during project implementation. There was no inception workshop due to lack of budget and the two UNEP-DGEF TM supervision missions and various Project Manager visits to the Caribbean did not seek to review the logframe to determine if it needed any modification and whether the indicators were the most appropriate to measure results and impacts. The UNEP-DGEF TM did send a request to the Project Manager in 2004, which was passed on to the project partners, to quantify the indicators, but as far as the Evaluation could determine impact or threat reduction indicators were not added to the project at that stage.

Key elements of the project design did incorporate lessons learned from previous GEF and non-GEF projects, particularly with regards to the IBA programme and SSG and NLC development. BirdLife drew on its previous 15-year experience of identifying IBAs and developing IBA programmes, which up to 2003 had been successfully completed for Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and the design of the SSG and NLC components of the project utilised experiences from the successful UNDP-GEF "African NGO-Government Partnerships for Sustainable Biodiversity Action Project"<sup>45</sup>.

## **2. Capacity issues**

Information provided on the BNT, GJ, BirdLife Jamaica (BLJ) and BirdLife International in Annex 13 of the Project Document suggests that all these groups were competent and had adequate resources (funding, staff, facilities) and management structures to execute the project. However, BirdLife Jamaica (BLJ) essentially collapsed shortly after the GEF project started in October 2003. Key members of staff left around this time and were not replaced (there was very limited core funding and it was not possible to retain project-based staff), but interviews revealed that there had also been conflict over the direction and operation of BLJ within the Board in the previous 2-3 years (2001-2003) and key Board members had left during this period. There was no strategic plan or institutional development strategy, no consensus on the future direction of the organisation, and a lack of effective leadership. It seems therefore, that there were indications, apparently known to the BirdLife Partnership, that there were growing and serious problems within BLJ but these were not thought to be serious at

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<sup>45</sup> See Timberlake, J. & Fenton, D. (2003) African NGO-Government Partnerships for Sustainable Biodiversity Action Project. RAF/97/G31 FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION. For UNOPS/UNDP.



the time and not acted upon<sup>46</sup>. Attempts were made by the BL Secretariat and the BL Americas Office (based in Quito, Ecuador) to address these in late 2003 and 2004 but were not successful<sup>47</sup>. The Project Manager commented that BLJ had already been engaged on the IBA programme before the GEF project started with funding from the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica, and had several other significant grants, which probably gave BirdLife International the impression that BLJ had rather more direction, capacity and experience than it really had.

Low capacity (absence of a Director of Parks at the BNT for two years), internal conflict within the BNT (three different Executive Directors in four years), the need to rebuild a lost endowment fund and a very poor level of institutional support during the GEF project negatively impact project results in the Bahamas, especially during the first two years. Indeed, there was a period when the national Project Coordinator (current Deputy Director) was working on the project mostly in the evenings and her spare time to complete project tasks because of a lack of support from the then Executive Director. There were also insufficient financial resources to address the low capacity. Indeed, funds had to be relocated to the budget for the Bahamas in order for the BNT to hire an IBA/SSG Coordinator to be able to deliver the IBA national database and relevant sections for the Regional IBA Directory on time.

There were specific capacity building components to the project – training workshops on strategic and financial planning, how to work with the media, fundraising (funder investigation, project design, proposal development, logframing) and IBA informatics (database use, data collation and interpretation, IBA monitoring etc.), as well as some mentoring and the provision of specific tools to develop specific outputs. However, the assumption in the Project Document that the three lead national partners were sufficiently established and experienced in implementing large projects that they would have no difficulty in taking on the GEF project proved not to be the case with BLJ. Unfortunately, there was no formal requirement for a capacity assessment of the project partners by UNEP-DGEF during the project design and preparation stage or even early in implementation which might have identified problems and led to targeted capacity building or the selection of another lead project partner for Jamaica.

### ***3. Partnership issues***

The selection of the main project partners – the BNT, GJ and BLJ - was based on their previous performance as active national NGOs with a long-established relationship with the BirdLife Caribbean Programme. The BNT and BLJ were also the national BirdLife Partners in their respective countries and so already part of the BirdLife Partnership. However, the initial stakeholder analysis, used to identify additional potential project partners, undertaken at the April 2002 workshop was cursory and was not based on any previous meetings of national stakeholders. Essentially, other project partners were identified by the main national partners. In addition, no stakeholder meetings took place immediately after the project started (there was no official ‘launch’ of the project by the national teams, which would have offered an opportunity). Also, given that in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica there were (and still are) conflicts between BLJ and GJ and other national groups, e.g. between GJ and the Hispaniolan Ornithological Society (largely based on long-standing conflicts between key individuals within the various groups, common in the Caribbean), the identification and involvement of other potential partners, possible roles and responsibilities, by the project design team was not as comprehensive or inclusive as it could or should have been.

### ***4. Ambitiousness of the project***

As a complex, thematically diverse Medium-Sized Project GEF project being implemented in three countries with significant regional outreach, communication, training and informational components, and national elements containing IBA data gathering/processing, education and awareness, communications, advocacy and fundraising often implemented by just one staff person, the project was clearly over-ambitious. The number of activities and Outputs set out in the logframe was unrealistic given the GEF resources and the original timescale (42 months). The time required for some project components, particularly the collation of information for the IBA component of the project (populating the database and writing IBA profiles apparently took an order of magnitude longer than anticipated) and the development of technological outputs, such as the web-based IBA database, was significantly under-estimated, and left some project Outputs incomplete or delivered late. As a result of these delays and the large number of project activities, a 6-month extension to the project completion date was granted.

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<sup>46</sup> It should be noted that BirdLife now has a formal Partner monitoring and assessment procedure (an institutional ‘health check’) that had it existed at the time would have flagged up BLJ for attention. It should also be noted that while BirdLife Jamaica retains the same name, it is no longer a part of the BirdLife Partnership.

<sup>47</sup> BLI offered to facilitate additional funding, requested a strategic plan from the Board and provided technical support to develop one (through a workshop, although there were very few participants on the first day and none the second), but all to no avail.

The level of anticipated policy impact within in the project timeframe was particularly unrealistic for an NGO-led project of this size (a common occurrence), especially given that the IBA approach was new to the Caribbean and there was a low level of awareness of bird conservation needs among participating country governments. Project staff universally agreed that the project had been very ambitious to begin with, yet there was no project revision during the project inception period (and the Evaluation considers the 2-3 hour informal meeting of project partners held at the SCSCB meeting in Tobago in July 2003, after GEF had approved the project, a missed opportunity). The decision to include additional sites in Jamaica (Mount Diablo) and the Bahamas (Abaco National Park), at a late stage of the project design process, was arguably a mistake as it further stretched project resources (staff and funding), and project performance would have been better if the project had stayed with the original proposal to limit activities to a total of 6 sites.

The project should also have reduced the educational and awareness-raising elements as a considerable number of projects focusing on these areas had already been successfully carried out on the three islands, including previous BL projects (although the CEBF has achieved high success). Instead, more emphasis could have been placed on the most innovative aspects of the project, particularly the development of SSGs for effective site conservation. Alternatively, the project should have been submitted to GEF as a small Full-Sized Project, with a budget of around US\$3-5 million, which would have funded sufficient capacity building (nationally and regionally) to deal with some of the issues mentioned above and to deliver some of the Outputs that could not be achieved. As it was, the project team had to raise considerably more co-financing to deliver the project outputs than originally foreseen, and the original budget was clearly underestimated.

It is a testament to the commitment and professionalism of the project team – in all three countries and at the BirdLife Secretariat in the UK - that the project managed to produce the results and impact it did within four years, with many other outputs likely to be completed within the next 6 months. However, it should be noted that the delivery of the project has been achieved, in part, because of the additional time and resources put into the project by the main groups and individuals – BNT on the Bahamas, GJ and the Jaragua SSG in the Dominican Republic, and the WRC, JET and the Jamaica Project Consultant on Jamaica - especially in the last 18 months, and this ‘additional contribution’ is not well reflected in the in-kind contributions of the project partners or sufficiently acknowledged in project reports<sup>48</sup>.

## **Rating – Unsatisfactory**

### ***F. Country ownership/drivenness***

Several of the central project concepts – Important Bird Areas, Site Support Groups and the National Liaison Committees – originated externally and the participating countries were pre-identified by the project developers (BirdLife). Although the IBA approach has a long history and been successfully developed elsewhere, e.g. Europe, Africa, Asia, Middle East, the SSG and NLC models are much more recent and still relatively untested. The joint SSG and NLC approach was largely developed through the UNDP-GEF “African NGO-Government Partnerships for Sustainable Biodiversity Action Project”, which was executed by the BirdLife African Partnership with UNDP as the implementing agency between 1998-2002.

The project was designed during a PDF-A workshop with participants from around the region, but mostly from the Bahamas (where the meeting was held) and the Dominican Republic, with only two individuals from Jamaica (one from BirdLife Jamaica and one from Forestry Department), and there were very few government institutions from the three islands represented.<sup>49</sup> As a result, ownership of the project was largely at an individual level at the start of the project, with some nascent institutional ownership. National project partner ownership was strongest in the Dominican Republic but grew in the Bahamas. Unfortunately, the rapid and catastrophic institutional decline of BLJ shortly after the project began meant that only the IBA identification work was continued (and that was largely concentrated in one individual), so country ownership was very low in Jamaica. Unfortunately, the groups that were subcontracted in Jamaica to carry out the work that was to be done by BLJ were not involved at the project design stage, so initially they also had no ownership of the GEF project.

Ownership has grown among the national governments as they have come to see the usefulness of the IBA process and data, with the Institute of Jamaica likely to house the national IBA database in Jamaica, the Ministry

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<sup>48</sup> For instance, the national Project Coordinator in the Bahamas, estimated that she spent an estimated 30-50% more time on the GEF project than was originally budgeted, and this cost is being effectively picked up by the BNT.

<sup>49</sup> Representatives from the Jamaica Forestry Department, the Protected Areas Department from the Government of Cuba, and UNEP’s Caribbean Environmental Program attended.

of Environment and Natural Resources in the Dominican Republic incorporating IBA sites into their maps and field surveys of some IBAs into the work programme of the Wildlife Department, and the BNT completely adopting the Bahamas IBA sites within their own institutional strategy and submitting IBAs for inclusion in the national list of protected areas. In terms of specific national policy and planning frameworks, the project has contributed to the delivery of the NBSAP for the Bahamas and Jamaica (the Dominican Republic has still to produce a NBSAP). The Bahamas NBSAP does not mention IBAs (it predates the GEF project) but it does highlight the need to protect 'areas important for birds', and therefore the GEF project outputs, particularly the national IBA list, is a valuable contribution to achieving the NBSAP. However, many of the project's most important results have only recently been achieved, e.g. national IBA lists and database, and another 2-3 years will be needed before it is known how effective the project has been in providing and communicating biodiversity information to decision-makers to improve the conservation and management of each country's natural resources. Regionally, IBAs are seen as priorities for action by the SCSCB, but it does not have the capacity to take on the Caribbean IBA programme.

The NLCs were also seen as a key vehicle for promoting national ownership of the project. The Project Document states that the NLCs will ensure '*national ownership, awareness and coordination of the Important Bird Area process*' and '*promote the conservation of priority sites through technical advice and assistance to advocacy programs*' and to ensure ownership should '*consist of representatives from (as appropriate) national government ministries and local governments, international agencies, research organizations and universities, the lead NGO, other national and international NGOs, CBOs and SSGs*' (page 99). However, the NLCs could not be constituted in this form in the Bahamas and in Jamaica the NLC had been properly established with an institutional home before the end of the project. In the Dominican Republic, the NLC emerged as largely a forum for information exchange and did help to build increased ownership of the project particularly among the MENR, but not to the degree originally envisaged.

**Rating – Moderately Satisfactory**

## ***G. Assessment monitoring and evaluation systems***

### ***1. M&E design***

The Project Document sets out a detailed Monitoring and Evaluation plan. It states that the National Liaison Committees (NLCs) will carry out most of the project monitoring and evaluation, meet quarterly and review national project progress against the indicators (page 33, Project Document). In addition, a 'Caribbean Regional Committee'<sup>50</sup> was also supposed to monitor project from a regional perspective. Neither the NLCs nor the regional committee functioned in any coherent fashion in these roles (see section J) and project oversight largely rested with the Project Manager in the UK, who had to take on the additional role of national project coordinator for Jamaica after the withdrawal of BirdLife Jamaica from the project, which resulted in him having to commit significantly more time to managing the project than had been originally envisaged, particularly in the last year when the project increased its activities in order to try to deliver the project outputs before the official end of the project on 30 September 2007.

The project's reporting system followed that presented in the Project Document although reporting forms were updated by UNEP-DGEF during implementation. The project was required to provide 6-monthly progress reports (which included a financial report) to UNEP-DGEF and an annual Project Implementation Review (PIR), the latter drafted by the UNEP-DGEF Task Manager (TM) and the Project Manager<sup>51</sup> then submitted to GEFSEC. Reporting from the sites to the parent project partner was usually more frequent – weekly, monthly or 3-monthly. Annual workplans were developed jointly between the Project Manager and the project partners then agreed with the UNEP-DGEF TM. Information from the national project partners was collated and synthesized by the Project Manager and then passed to the UNEP-DGEF TM, with feedback passed down in the same way. This seems to have been an efficient system, although the limited contact of national project staff with the UNEP-DGEF TM meant that they did not feel a strong connection to GEF and did not see themselves as part of a 'GEF project'.

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<sup>50</sup> There is some confusion in the Project Document over the name of the regional group that was to advise the project, and also on its exact role and ToR. For instance, on page 5 it is referred to as the Caribbean Steering Committee (CSC), whereas on page 33 and throughout most of the Project Document it is termed the Caribbean Regional Committee (CRC), and in Annex 25 – Institutional Framework - it is termed the Caribbean Regional Advisory Group (CRAG).

<sup>51</sup> The Project Manager stated that he was not clear on the specific value of the PIR to the project (the project already produced several reports a year), and they were not passed down to the national teams for comment or information.

Project partners found reporting difficult initially, as there is little specific guidance in the Project Document, and reporting requirements to UNEP-DGEF were changed during project implementation. Consequently, the original reporting framework was abandoned and instead the partners reported on project activities and deliverables into a modified logframe format, designed by the Project Manager, in order to simplify and streamline reporting, which was much appreciated by the national project teams. The BirdLife International Administration and Finance team also produced a simple financial reporting form for the project staff. Specific training in financial reporting was provided through a workshop on strategic and financial planning held in Puerto Rico in June 2006. Generally, more detailed guidance from UNEP-DGEF on reporting with provision of “good examples” to project executing groups would have facilitated better, more streamlined project reporting.

Project monitoring and evaluation was initially based on the indicators set out in the project’s logframe (see Annex 10 of the Project Document), although these were later limited to the ‘Key Performance Indicators’ (see Annex 30 of the Project Document), which were essentially a smaller set of the logframe Output indicators but with a baseline (although it doesn’t directly match with the entries in the indicator column and is generally vague and not quantitative). Although the national teams found the performance indicators useful for developing workplans and monitoring progress on achievement of Outputs, the large number meant that they spent a significant amount of time reporting on their achievement<sup>52</sup>. Whilst progress monitoring appears to have been acceptable, the logframe and performance indicators - key aspects of a good M&E plan - were not<sup>53</sup>.

### **Rating – Moderately Unsatisfactory**

#### **2. M&E plan implementation**

Copies of reports and workplans reviewed by the Evaluation, produced by the project partners and the Project manager, were informative and comprehensive and generally accurate, although the draft TR contains statements of activities achieved which had, at the time of the Evaluation, not been completed<sup>54</sup>. The three PIRs viewed by the Evaluation (for 2005, 2006 and 2007) are comprehensive and informative with an even assessment of the situation. On the whole the ratings given appeared justified although in some cases the Evaluation feels that they were perhaps a little higher than warranted<sup>55</sup>, and it was difficult for the Evaluation to judge the accuracy of the degree (percentage) of achievement of Outputs presented in table 3.2 ‘Project implementation progress’ of the PIRs.

Special mention should be made of the use of the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT). As mentioned previously this is a requirement of all GEF protected area (BD1) projects. However, little explanation or guidance on its use appears to have been provided by UNEP-DGEF, and none of the project partners appears to have fully understood the usefulness of this tool or what it really told them. For instance, comments to the Evaluation included “What does a score of 50 mean anyway?”, “Is a change of 5 points good?” and ‘Have we failed if the score goes down?’. Project staff viewed it largely as yet another GEF form to complete and not integral to the project. There was no feedback on their scores from UNEP or GEF or how their results compared with those from other protected areas or GEF projects. In addition, the METT really needs to be used over a longer period of time to detect real changes in the effectiveness of protected area management (2-4 years may

<sup>52</sup> The TM noted in her review of the draft Evaluation Report that Project Revision number 3, signed by both parties, and which provided a 3-month extension to the project, states that “Further to a supervision mission in September 2006, Task Manager discussions with all project executants in all three participating countries highlighted the need for additional time to collect data to be able to quantify achievement of project impacts. Mechanisms such as questionnaires and follow up surveys are planned as well as quantification and reporting of project site data. As these activities will enhance the ability of a terminal evaluation, the request for extension from all three national executants and international executing agency is supported.” Unfortunately, the suggested data gathering did not take place to any significant extent and there was no specific quantitative baseline with which to compare ‘follow up surveys’ (which goes back to weaknesses in the original design and selection of impact indicators back in 2002/2003).

<sup>53</sup> The UNEP EOU noted that the current GEF standards for M&E plans were not in place at the time of the project’s approval. However, the evaluator notes that the M&E Plan was not reviewed or revised during implementation by the UNEP-DGEF or the project team.

<sup>54</sup> For instance, the draft TR (dated 30 September 2007) asserts that the bird and IBA posters had been displayed at the Bahamas international airport, whereas they had only just been delivered to the BNT headquarters in Nassau on the final day of the evaluation (2 November 2007), and that IBA data sheets for the Bahamas and Jamaica were available on the BirdLife website, but in fact they are still under review. In his review of the draft Evaluation Report, the Project Manager noted that: “BNT stated that posters were ready and “up” on the understanding that agreements had been given by airports authority and by the time the TR was to be submitted they would have been in place. In fact they were placed in arrivals and departures during the first week of November. Both Bahamas and Jamaica IBA fact sheets had been available on line for about 12 months, but were taken off as the review process started in earnest in June. The expectation was that this process would take a short time, but has taken 6 months as issues with particular sites are ironed out.” The point the Evaluation was making was that they were not completed and available by the formal end of the project (30 October 2007) – the posters were not in the airports and the fact sheets were obviously still drafts (which is presumably why they were removed from the internet, and it is not clear why they were put online originally if they were just drafts), but these are considered minor issues since the posters are apparently now displayed and the national fact sheets for Jamaica and the Bahamas will be completed early in 2008.

<sup>55</sup> To be fair, there is always a subjective element to ranking project progress, which is influenced by a variety of factors including the evaluator’s previous experience of similar projects, so there are likely to be small differences between scores.

not show much change) and several project staff commented that the TNC approach to assessing protected area management was probably more useful regionally (in part because TNC provides a lot of direct support to the Caribbean with a large programme). There is also some debate over whether they are really useful for IBAs since many IBAs are not formerly protected areas (for which the METT has been designed), so a ‘blanket approach’ does not work, and it is not a tool that BirdLife employs regularly. There are acknowledged weaknesses with the use of the METT and it is under revision by both GEF and World Wide Fund (WWF) who along with IUCN designed the approach (Neil Burgess, WWF-US *pers comm.* to N.Varty).

Project monitoring and evaluation was conducted through assessment of the regular reports detailed above and visits by the Project Manager to the region. These took place in November 2004 (Jamaica and the Bahamas), September 2004 (Jamaica), November 2004 (Bahamas), March 2006 (Bahamas) and November 2006 (Dominican Republic). He also attended a number of regional, largely SCSCB or BirdLife Partnership, meetings where project progress was discussed, in July 2003 (Tobago, informal meeting with all the GEF project partners at the SCSCB meeting), March 2004 (South Africa for BirdLife Global Partnership meeting attended by the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic), May 2005 (Belize for the BL Americas Partnership meeting – attended by the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic, as well as Cuba and Puerto Rico), August 2005 (Guadeloupe for a SCSCB meeting which had a IBA workshop), and June 2007 (Mexico for BL Americas Partnership meeting, attended by the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic). However, disappointingly, there does not seem to have been days or sessions at these events that were specifically set aside for reviewing progress on the GEF project, which represent missed opportunities.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to hold annual meetings of the National Coordinators to review project progress (at say the SCSCB meetings) because this had been omitted from the project budget during the design phase (a significant failure of the original project design)<sup>56</sup>. Apart from the value for project monitoring and evaluation, this would have promoted stronger connections between the groups, and given them an increased sense of being part of a bigger network, something which some project staff complained about. Also unfortunately, there has no final regional meeting with all the partners to discuss the successes, failures and experiences of the four years of the project. Again, the Evaluation considers this a failure in project design.

In practice most monitoring of the project was a dynamic process based on regular communication between the Project Manager and the national project staff, who commented that the PM was very responsive to requests for guidance and made their reporting requirements as easy as possible, allowing them more time to engage in the project activities. For the final 7-9 months of the project, the Project Manager drafted a modified workplan that highlighted activities needed to achieve the key deliverables.

The Project Document also presented a risk assessment that discussed risk minimisation (page 26), although it is short on detail and incomplete, and risks and assumptions were mixed together. It lists 8 risks<sup>57</sup>:

1. Conservation stakeholders may not be willing to cooperate or communicate with each other and forge a strong, collaborative network;
2. Awareness might not be increased among the most important people (‘important’ is undefined);
3. Increased awareness may not have an impact on biodiversity conservation;
4. Human resources to undertake survey and monitoring for collection of information on IBAs could be limiting;
5. The site action projects may not achieve measurable conservation gain (the lack of an indicator and baseline here is a problem);
6. Lessons learnt from site projects cannot be successfully disseminated to other site managers/SSGs;
7. Lack of a long-term commitment to the national site conservation programs (not clear by whom);
8. Site action cannot be sustained indefinitely at fairly low cost through volunteer (SSG) input.

Of these, the Evaluation considers that risks 3, 4, 7 and 8 are probably still important, particularly in light of the current environmental risks to the project (see section X.X), but the project itself has significantly reduced risks 1, 2, 5, and 6. Environmental risks, such as expansion of mining operations at key sites (notably JNP in the Dominican Republic) and the negative impact of climate change could be added to this list, as could the risk that a partner does not have the capacity to carry out a significant GEF project, as was the case in Jamaica. The

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<sup>56</sup> Apparently, there were also attempts to hold a specific GEF project meeting at the SCSCB meetings and to have them formally included on the agenda, but due to conflicts between individual SCSCB members, this proved to be impossible (a not uncommon problem in the Caribbean).

<sup>57</sup> It should be noted that additional assumptions and risks are given in the project’s logframe that were not mentioned in the analysis in the main text of the Project Document.

common risk associated with delivery of complex regional outputs that are partially dependent on the performance of others over which the project has no control (in this case the Regional IBA Directory) was also not recognised. Risk monitoring and analysis during project implementation appears to have been restricted to an assessment carried out in 2004 by the Project Manager on the situation in Jamaica following the loss of BLJ from the project in late 2003, and a risk assessment undertaken by the UNEP-DGEF TM on 23 August 2005 and the brief risk assessments presented in the annual PIRs<sup>58</sup>.

The annual PIRs for 2005, 2006 and 2007 present a Risk Factor table. Most of the risks assessments reviewed appeared to be reasonable although on the issue of stakeholder involvement the Evaluation believes that this should have been rated as a 'medium' rather than 'low' risk as some key stakeholders have not been properly involved in the project, e.g. the Hispaniolan Ornithological Society. The 'Top Risk Mitigation Plan' in the 2006 and 2007 PIRs highlight two environmental/political risks – potential bauxite mining in the Cockpit Country IBA, Jamaica and tourism development at Bahia de Aguilas at the Jaragua IBA. Both of these could still potentially jeopardise project outputs and achievements but the situation at these sites are being monitored and there have been encouraging signs that mining may be prevented in Cockpit Country. The Evaluation agrees with the 2007 PIR that the overall risk assessment of the project in the 2007 PIR as 'low'.

### **Rating – Satisfactory**

#### ***3. Budgeting and funding for M&E activities***

There was insufficient allocation for M&E activities in the original project budget. Indeed M&E was not properly identified with a separate set of activities, outputs and an outcome in the Project Document, which should be considered as a weakness in the project's design. The initial budget was miscalculated and did not include sufficient funds for evaluation and supervisory missions by the Project Manager in the UK (which became a key role as neither the NLCs nor the regional committee took on significant project oversight responsibilities). However, increased project funds were allocated following a project and budget revision that took place in late 2005 following a supervisory mission to the Caribbean by the UNEP-DGEF TM, prompted by the need to reorganise project activities in Jamaica following the demise of Birdlife Jamaica.

### **Rating – Moderately Satisfactory**

## ***H. Stakeholder participation/public awareness***

### ***1. Stakeholder consultation***

The 2002 project design and planning workshop produced a list of key stakeholders for each country and regionally. As mentioned earlier this was not based on any previous meeting of potential stakeholders (to be fair there were no funds for this), who were not contacted directly about the project during the project proposal development stage. Consequently, there seems to have been rather limited consultation with many of the stakeholders in the early stages of the project<sup>59</sup>. Unfortunately, this was not picked up at the review stage by UNEP-DGEF or GEFSEC. Stakeholders were also rated in importance in the Project Document (Annex 12) but it is not clear who assigned the ratings as none of the national project partners claim to have been involved and it was clearly not done in a participatory manner.

Local stakeholder involvement and consultation has centred on the SSGs but these were a product of the project and consequently not involved in its design, and in the case of the Bahamas and Jamaica are still in very early stages (see section C). In the Dominican Republic, the SSG at the JNP has taken on an increasing decision-making role on local project activities and become increasingly independent of GJ due the considerable effort focused on building capacity by GJ during the first two years of the project. While one SSG interviewed by the Evaluation (the Friends of the Environment on Abaco) claimed not to have seen the Project Document before and were critical of this, members of another (the Jaragua SSG in the Dominican Republic) were not concerned as they accepted that the national partner (GJ) would make decisions on their behalf, as they had a long-term relationship built on trust and transparency. Originally, local stakeholders, principally the SSGs, were to participate in the project's decision-making process at the national level through the NLCs. However, this did not happen as NLCs were not successful as project oversight bodies.

<sup>58</sup> It should be noted that no risk analysis appears to have been undertaken by the national project teams, which could possibly have helped identify and deal with the BirdLife Jamaica problem earlier. Nor was anyone at the sites asked to identify the risks to the achievement of project results.

<sup>59</sup> The GEF OFP in the DR commented that the government should have been more closely involved with the project design, to ensure closer linkage with government policy.

One disappointing partnership has been that between the project and the SCSCB. It was originally hoped before the start of the GEF project that the SCSCB would play a significant role in the project at the regional level. While it has in terms of promoting the CEBF (including administrating a small grants programme to support the Festival), and has aspirations to do more, it is severely constrained by low capacity.

### **Rating – Moderately Satisfactory**

#### **2. Public/Stakeholder awareness**

Stakeholder awareness of the project, particularly among local stakeholders, was not very good during the early stages of the project, due in part to their lack of participation in the project proposal design stage, but improved towards the end of the project. In the Bahamas, as in the other islands, stakeholders largely learnt of the project through project activities, either through national-level activities, such as the IBA programme, or through work undertaken by the SGGs at the project sites, such as monitoring by the FoE on Abaco. The BNT also raised stakeholder awareness of the project through its newsletter but, as in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, there was no stakeholder meeting or workshop at the beginning of the project, which would have helped raise awareness of the project immediately.

In the Dominican Republic, a considerable effort has been made by GJ to promote the project activities locally. The Laguna de Oviedo WWP was a particular focus, where local stakeholders have used the WWP's facilities and infrastructure for meetings and other social purposes. Indeed, GJ conducted a survey on visitation and awareness of the project activities among local community members around the lagoon and found a high level of awareness, with 21 out of 23 locals interviewed having visited the WWP Centre and observation tower, and all 12 guides had used the observation tower as part of their tours.

In Jamaica, public awareness was particularly low during the first two years of the project due to the loss of BLJ (the Forestry Department commented that the project 'dropped off the radar' for a couple of years) but improved markedly after JET were contracted to take over the national education and awareness-raising components of the project. Work by WRC has also served to promote project activities and awareness in and around Cockpit Country (5 community sensitization workshops were held in Duanvale, the community nearest to the Linton Park Mountain (LPM) community-based restoration site), but this has been limited by the lack of an SSG to work through until recently (LFMCs were only officially created in March 2007 and are still in an embryonic state). Little information was available to the Evaluation on stakeholder awareness-raising around the Negril Watchable Wildlife Pond, as the SSG (NEPT) has become somewhat isolated from the rest of the project activities in Jamaica and did not communicate well with the Project Manager in the UK.

### **Rating – Moderately Satisfactory**

#### **3. Stakeholder participation**

Actual stakeholder participation in the project (as opposed to involvement in the design of the project or decision-making processes) has been very good. The project has been particularly good at engaging schools, although it is recognised that the real challenge lies with persuading adults to change their behaviours. School engagement has been largely focused on recreational and educational festivities such as World Wetland Day, the CEBF and World Bird Festival and visits to the main project sites<sup>60</sup>. The SSGs have facilitated involvement of schools in educational and awareness-raising activities, at least in the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic. Engagement of teachers was seen as a particularly important challenge by the project as it was recognised from the beginning that if the teachers were not informed and motivated then the students wouldn't be<sup>61</sup>. There has also been some involvement of SSGs and local communities in the project follow-up activities, such as input to funding proposals from SSG members in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

### **Rating – Highly Satisfactory**

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<sup>60</sup> In the DR, there has been further participation through the Jaragua Summer School, although the GEF project is not the main funder of this event

<sup>61</sup> Consequently, the project developed some high-quality teacher training workshops and materials or adopted those produced by the WIWD-WC Project, and in at the Linton Park Mountain site in Jamaica, WRC has added a US Peace Corps volunteer and a local employee of another environmental NGO to the roster of field assistants to ensure that students have a variety of enthusiastic teachers to learn from.



## ***I. Financial Planning***

As there was no specific budget for a project audit, a final audit will be conducted as part of the annual audit of BirdLife's portfolio of projects by independent auditors in spring 2008.

The project received US\$255,000 of in-kind financing and US\$2,055,000 of cash co-financing, giving a total of US\$2,310,000 in co-financing (Annex 4). Annex 5 shows the sources of co-financing as anticipated when the project was originally approved in 2003 and as received by 31 July 2007, the last occasion when financial figures were available and as presented by the UNEP to the Evaluation. The project raised 215% more co-financing than originally foreseen and should be congratulated on this achievement. Annex 6 shows the expenditure of GEF funds, broken down according to UNEP reporting requirements. The project's budget was not significantly affected by the decline in the US Dollar relative to other currencies during this period (and in the Bahamas, the currency is pegged to the US Dollar).

BirdLife provided overall financial control, but used the subcontracted grants as a means to build financial management responsibility among the project partners, which was particularly necessary in the case of the Bahamas. In order to ensure good financial management the Project Manager altered the original 6-monthly financial reporting requirement to a 3-monthly regime (not required for UNEP-DGEF), which all the national project staff said helped better manage their budgets and ensure that they had an accurate picture of what funds were available and what needed to be spent.

Following the collapse of BirdLife Jamaica, there was a need to develop alternative executing arrangements, readjust the budget and address the lost co-financing. The subsequent budget revision in March 2006 resulted in increased funding for national consultants in Jamaica and an increased budget for project management (principally for travel for the Project Manager to undertake a supervisory mission to the Caribbean which had been mistakenly left out of the original project budget), the part-funding of a Caribbean Programme Officer based in Puerto Rico to take on some of the IBA-related work being undertaken by the Project Manager, and a reallocation of some funds to the Dominican Republic. **The in-kind co-financing (US\$134,000) from BirdLife Jamaica was replaced by in-kind co-financing from JET (US\$84,000) and the Jamaican Consultant (US\$8,000).** There was an US\$8,000 overspend on project activities in the Dominican Republic, but a US\$8,000 under-spend in the Bahamas.

As far as the Evaluation could determine there were no irregularities in the disbursement and spending of project funds, and overall the expenditure of project funds was very close to that predicted in the revised (post-Jamaica) budget and was within the GEF limit. There were no big discrepancies on material costs, in part because the partners were constrained to stick within their budgets. The major budget discrepancy is for US\$19,000 for the Regional IBA Directory (listed under 'Miscellaneous' in Annex 6), which has yet to be used due to delays over reviewing, editing and publishing the IBA accounts, but which is expected to be spent before the final audit in April 2008 (current publication date for the Directory is February 2008). There were no major issues with disbursement, which was generally quick, usually within a month of a payment request being made to GEF. Annual financial reports (of project income and expenditure), undertaken by the independent auditors Deloitte and Touche LLP<sup>62</sup>, provided further financial control and transparency and show no specific discrepancies for the project.

**Rating – Highly Satisfactory**

## ***J. Implementation approach***

### ***1. Project management structure and performance***

#### ***i. Day to day management***

The project's management and institutional framework is set out in the Project Document (page 37 and Annex 25). BirdLife International was responsible for the day-to-day management of the project, as well as providing technical and logistical support to the country staff, and was led by a Project Manager, based at the BirdLife International Secretariat in Cambridge, UK. Further support was provided by the Secretariat's Financial and Administration (financial support) and Communications teams (project communication and awareness/education components), Science and Policy Unit (support with IBA database training and support) and the Site Action Unit

<sup>62</sup> Deloitte and Touche (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006). Report on Factual Findings, United Nations Environmental Programme – Global Environmental Facility, Project number GF/2713-03-4698 PMS:1020-03-02.

(training in project design). The project management team performed at a high professional level. The Bahamas and the Dominican Republic had a National Project Coordinator, but in Jamaica after the loss of BLJ, the role was taken on by the Project Manager in Cambridge, with national activities contracted out to WRC, JET, a Jamaica Project Consultant and NEPT, the first three of which worked together in a very effective partnership, whereas NEPT became increasingly isolated from the project. The Project Manager provided a flexible, supportive and delivery driven approach that gave individual members in the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, the freedom and confidence to tackle project activities in the way they believed best based on their own local experience. Communication and planning between the Project Manager and these national teams was quick and efficient and built a strong project team that managed to cope well with the demands they faced. The BirdLife Americas Secretariat also provided important support to the project, particularly on strategic issues, identifying potential sources for additional funding, and institutional development.

Intra-project communication was largely undertaken by email and phone, but few people used the project's e-group and it was not a success, and it didn't help build the project team. One national Project Coordinator commented that she hated having to reply to emails (!) so didn't join in, and a bulletin board where messages could be posted would have been more useful. Staff in the Dominican Republic felt frustrated that they didn't get enough responses, and the Dominican Republic felt isolated from the other English-speaking countries to some extent. As result, most project-related issues were addressed directly to the Project Manager<sup>63</sup>.

## *ii. Project oversight*

There was no formal project steering committee to oversee the project. Instead, the National Liaison Committees and a Caribbean Regional Advisory Group (CRAG) were supposed to play key roles in project oversight, monitoring and review.

### *The National Liaison Committees (NLCs)*

Apart from helping to build ownership of the project and facilitate better integration of the IBA framework into national policies and plans, NLCs were originally envisaged as having a significant influence over the direction of the project at the national level, and were supposed to meet quarterly in each country to review project progress, and advise on management issues 'as a result of their project evaluations' (page 33 Project Document and Annex 25). This did not occur in any of the project countries.

In the Bahamas, the BNT failed to establish a functioning independent NLC (only two meetings in the first year of project). This seems to have been due to several factors, including: lack of a budget to bring members to Nassau from other islands; government members already sat on the BNT Board; lack of interest in a specific committee for an IBA framework; lack of interest among the senior management of BNT at the time (particularly the then Executive Director); and, the BNT's special status as the body mandated to manage the country's protected area system and submit candidate sites to government. Consequently, the Avian Records Committee of the BNT functions as the NLC but has only had a limited scientific/review role, does not have wide stakeholder membership as envisaged (no SSG representation, for instance), and has had little influence on, or input into, the management of the project. As such, the Evaluation does not consider that the Bahamas established a functioning NLC.

The NLC in Jamaica was only just being established at the time of the Evaluation – there had been two preliminary meetings to discuss ToRs and membership (in March and June 2007, facilitated by JET<sup>64</sup>). However, the NLC has yet to be properly formed and has no institutional home or lead institution (at present the chairmanship is effectively shared between the WRC, JET and the Jamaica Project Consultant), although the Institute of Jamaica (part of the Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture and Sports) is considering hosting it, which would make it eligible for government funding. The NLC needs to be firmly rooted and championed by a government institution - it will not succeed if pushed purely by the NGO community, as it seeks to influence government policy, legislation and regulations. Furthermore, interviews in Jamaica revealed there is doubt over whether there is a real need for "yet another committee with the same people sitting on it", or whether promotion of the IBA framework would be more effectively achieved if it was integrated into an existing government committee/ working group, e.g. the Government's Biodiversity Working Group. This needs serious examination.

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<sup>63</sup> In 2006, BirdLife established a Spanish-English Yahoo Group (IBA\_Las Americas) for the IBA programme in the Americas, to discuss the World Bird Database, IBA monitoring, information on meetings and documents, and provide advice on SSGs. This was said to have been more useful to the DR team than the project e-group.

<sup>64</sup> Encouragingly attended by representatives from Forestry Department, Institute of Jamaica, Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust, Windsor Research Centre, BirdLife Jamaica, Dolphin Head Trust, Hope Zoo, BirdLife International, National Environment and Planning Agency and the Ministry of Local Government and the Environment, although few have been senior members of staff.

The NLC appears to have worked best in the Dominican Republic<sup>65</sup>, where it consists of 18 members from 13 institutions and has met 12 times during the project<sup>66</sup>. It has proved an invaluable tool for improving data accessibility and compiling dispersed data, identifying information gaps, and facilitating information exchange. Many of the members have provided regular inputs, mostly in the form of reviewing project documents (e.g. IBA data), and significantly, the NLC in the Dominican Republic appears to have had some success at promoting the IBA concept to government institutions e.g. Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, and other organizations e.g. Grupo Tinglar. However, this success has only been achieved because GJ invested a considerable amount of time and energy in establishing and servicing the NLC, and because its role was limited to less 'political' issues. GJ were particularly intelligent in their support of the NLC. They researched what motivated the individual members and established an email group, used members of the NLC as consultants for some GEF project components, advertising other (IBA- but not GEF-related) consultancies among members, requested members to write articles for GJ newsletters and media events, and advertised opportunities for training, access to information and upcoming events among the membership to keep them interested and that the NLC had personal value for them. As a result, communication between members (formerly very poor) has improved and the NLC has become an 'open space for discussion' that does not exist in the regular government committees. However, it should be noted that after the identification of the IBAs members apparently began to see less point to the NLC, so GJ is now working with fewer members, and small subcommittees have been created to deal with specific issues, e.g. monitoring and databases. Therefore its future, without a clear role to bind members together or personal incentives, is less certain and its remit needs to be re-examined.

NLCs were originally envisaged as having a significant representation from the SSGs. This did not happen, in the Bahamas because the NLC was never properly established, in Jamaica because the NLC is only now becoming operational and it is dominated by government institutions, and in the Dominican Republic because participation by SSG members was deemed too complicated and expensive (instead GJ represented SSG views, acting as the link between the SSG and NLC).

#### ***Caribbean Regional Advisory Group (CRAG)***

There is some confusion in the Project Document over the title and role of the regional body to be established to guide and advise the project. In the early part of the Document (pages 5, 21, 33, 34 and 77) it is referred to as the Caribbean Steering Committee, and its role is defined thus:

*'Regionally a Caribbean Steering Committee (CSC) will provide strategic and technical advice and assist in project monitoring and evaluation and will comprise representatives from national and regional institutions.'* (page 33, Project Document)

However, in Annex 25 – Institutional Framework, a Caribbean Regional Advisory Group (CRAG) is mentioned, the term that was used in all the project progress reports (6-monthly reports, PIRs, draft Terminal Report), and this is the term used in this Final Evaluation report. Its role is given as:

*'The CRAG will be a regional program advisory body... meeting annually to review progress on the basis of feedback from the NLCs and the Caribbean Program Manager. The CRAG will give strategic advice on project development and management at the regional level, reporting back to project staff, the NLCs and to the Americas Regional Partnership of BirdLife. It will assist with, and review the technical and financial reports to UNEP-GEF, and the final project evaluation. The committee will develop Terms of Reference for the CRAG itself during its first meeting.'*

The 10-member group comprised individuals only peripherally involved in the project, and there was no formal structure or chairman, with the result that advice and support was provided on an individual rather than group basis. Individual CRAG members met occasionally at regional conferences (usually SCSCB meetings, and no more than four members at any one meeting), but there were no specific annual meetings of the CRAG as proposed in the Project Document (due to a lack of a budget), although regular conference calls could have been arranged instead. CRAG was also supposed to have representation from each of the NLCs to ensure consistency and transparency between the national projects and regional program, but as mentioned above the NLCs were not operational in the Bahamas and Jamaica. The group communicated largely through email (egroup), but only two or three people appeared to have offered any significant support on anywhere near a regular basis to the

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<sup>65</sup> Interestingly, the DR sought guidance on how it should work from BNT, as did Jamaica. However, the model for NLC didn't really work in the Bahamas, and the information provided by the BNT seems to have been of limited value.

<sup>66</sup> It should be noted that the structure and composition of the NLC in the DR had been essentially established for a previous project funded by the MacArthur Foundation project, and so the GEF project simply built on this structure. The NLC was hosted by the Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD).

project, and this appears to be mostly through personal connections that have developed between individual members of CRAG and project staff, e.g. between the Project Coordinator of the WIWD-WC Project and the National Project Coordinator in the Bahamas. Overall CRAG's engagement with the project was on a rather loose and informal basis and the group has not been proactive. The Evaluation considers it one of the less successful aspects of the project, and it didn't function well, even as an advisory body. There appears to have been no guidance from UNEP-DGEF on the need for or how best to establish and operate a regional project steering/advisory body.

### *iii. Adaptive management*

One of the keys to achieving a successful project is the ability of the management team to adapt to unforeseen circumstances or events to ensure that the project remains on track to meet its objectives. The project management team has shown successful adaptive management measures. The biannual project progress reports are very detailed and set out the variations in activities and results against the workplan and details of remedial action and how they had been integrated into the logframe (sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the reports). As noted earlier, the PIR presented a risk assessment, which was an integral part of the adaptive management process.

Undoubtedly the major challenge the management team had to deal with was the loss of BLJ from the project. In spite of efforts to develop strategic plans and guarantees of funds the NGO became moribund (a state in which it remains 4 years later). The lack of a national institution to lead project activities presented a huge obstacle to project delivery in Jamaica (and overall). A risk assessment was carried out by the Project Manager in late June 2004 and alternative local NGOs were identified and sub-contracted to undertake different national components of the project, initially with WRC (contracted April 2004) to develop site activities at Cockpit Country and Mount Diablo and NEPT to develop a WWP at Negril Great Morass and Royal Palm Reserve (May 2004), and later with JET (October 2005) to undertake the education and awareness-raising, corporate engagement and advocacy elements of the project, and finally a Jamaica Project Consultant (February 2006) to collate and organise the review of the information on potential IBAs. The Project Manager administered the subcontracts and the delivery of project Outputs, project reporting, etc. This arrangement worked well, but meant that the Project Manager had much less capacity to lead on some of the regional issues. In addition, the Evaluation believes that the decision to sub-contract JET should have been made a 12-18 months earlier and the number and extent of project activities on the island should probably have been scaled back with the site action work at Mount Diablo cancelled and its budget reallocated. However, the Evaluation would also like to commend the work that has been carried out on Jamaica, which has been of a high quality and undertaken in a very professional manner, especially given that Jamaica had to deliver its project components in much less time than the other two islands, and the staff of the WRC and JET and the Jamaica Project Consultant deserve significant credit for this achievement.

Another example of a focused but adaptive approach to deliverables, occurred following a project review by the UNEP-DGEF TM and the Project Manager in September/October 2006. A 3-month then 6-month extension to the project was granted from 31 March to 30 September 2007 and the final workplan for 2007 was redrafted to focus on delivery of key results, particularly to finish the IBA identification process and complete the national IBA databases. This was largely successful, although IBA accounts are not yet publicly available on the web for the Bahamas and Jamaica, but it is likely that without this reorientation the project would not have delivered as much as it had by September 2007.

It should be noted that although, as previously noted, many of the logframe indicators were weak, at the national level the logframe was viewed as being flexible (allowing countries to adapt activities to their own cultural circumstances) and not too inter-dependent (allowing actions to continue in Jamaica without a formal national IBA programme or NLC), and the long list of performance indicators did help in work planning.

### **Rating - Satisfactory**

## ***K. UNEP Supervision and Backstopping***

UNEP, as the implementing agency, was responsible for oversight of the project. Information collected during the Evaluation indicated that the UNEP-DGEF Task Manager (TM) played an important oversight role during project implementation. The TM undertook two evaluation missions to the Caribbean (usually only one is expected for an MSP **which reflects the TM's response to concerns over delays on delivery of project outputs**), the first in September 2005 largely in response to the poor project delivery in Jamaica after the collapse of Birdlife Jamaica. This mission acted as catalyst for action in Jamaica, after which the Project Manager in Cambridge invested more time to the Jamaican component of the project. However, the first UNEP-DGEF

supervisory mission was some two years after the project had begun and this mission should have been undertaken, jointly with the BirdLife Project Manager, a year earlier (in late 2004) after it was clear to most individuals (at least most of those interviewed in Jamaica) that BirdLife Jamaica was not going to deliver on its project commitments<sup>67</sup>. The TM undertook a second evaluation mission in September 2006, which focused on identifying the priorities for delivery of the project before the official finishing date in March 2007. This eventually led to workplan revision and a 6-month extension for the project with a new completion date of 30 September 2007. The two reports on the 2005 mission are very brief (but include a useful identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the project in each country) and would have benefited from more detail, but the reports produced for the 2006 mission – one for each country, following the same structure and responding to a standard set of questions developed by the TM for identifying priorities for action for the remaining period of the project, were more informative.

The UNEP-DGEF TM provided relatively little direct guidance to the project partners, as there was an agreement that the Project Manager would act as the central point of contact for the national partners. Consequently, little logistical or project management support was provided by the TM outside of the two field missions apart from brief feedback on project reports sent by the Project Manager. The TM's position was that she viewed BirdLife as 'the experts' on technical matters and experienced in managing large projects and therefore did not need constant support. However, it should be noted that the Project Manager did not have prior experience of managing a GEF project, especially a complex multi-country project, and increased attention from UNEP-DGEF in the first two years of project implementation might have resolved the 'Jamaica situation' sooner. The UNEP-DGEF TM was first made aware of the problems in Jamaica in January 2004 through a project progress report that listed the Project Manager's response<sup>68</sup>, although because contact with the national partners was through the PM, the TM probably did not fully appreciate the seriousness of the situation until much later. In addition, several of the in-country project staff felt that more direct contact with the UNEP-DGEF TM would have been valuable to help build a stronger sense of GEF identity for the project (there was little feeling among the project staff at all levels that they were part of an important 'international GEF project'). Nevertheless, the TM developed a good working relationship with the project staff and they were grateful for, and felt they benefited from, her two supervisory missions. The TM's input was felt to be more useful at the national and regional level, less so at the site level. The TM seems to have had little input to the annual planning of project activities.

Unlike UNDP, UNEP have no country offices (CO), although they do have a regional office in Kingston (which played no role in project implementation). In UNEP-DGEF projects with discrete national and site-based activities, it might be worth investigating a UNEP-UNDP linkage with some oversight role delegated to the UNDP COs. If this had happened for Jamaica for instance, it is likely that the BLJ situation would have been picked up sooner as UNDP has a presence on the island and would have been monitoring the situation locally. It would also have been useful to have invited UNDP in the project design stage, as (in the consultant's experience) they have considerable experience on project design and indicators and M&E of site-based projects. GEF's three main Implementing Agencies – UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank - have different strengths and weakness, and there is no reason why GEF projects could not be designed to use the comparative advantages of each IA.

### **Rating – Satisfactory**

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<sup>67</sup> The EOU stated that it believed that resources available for supervision missions were constrained by travel limitations imposed by DGEF top management in the early part of the project (subsequently rescinded), so the TM was not able to undertake an earlier mission.

<sup>68</sup> The Project Manager noted that the project progress report submitted to UNEP in January 04 stated "The major bottleneck for starting this project has been in Jamaica where BirdLife Jamaica is going through significant institutional problems such that project management of the level required by this project is not currently possible. The Caribbean Program Manager visited Jamaica in early November to explore remedial options. The option being pursued at present is for BirdLife International to hire a Jamaica Project Manager who will be under the direct management of the Caribbean Program Manager. They will be based at BirdLife Jamaica (and hired with BirdLife Jamaica agreement), and the long-term goal would be to pass management back to BirdLife Jamaica before the end of this GEF project. BirdLife International will also establish MoAs with the two site action projects in Negril and Cockpit Country (NEPT and WRC respectively) to maintain some direct management control over these activities. BirdLife Jamaica will be contracted for individual pieces of work within the context of this GEF project. MoAs are being drawn up with NEPT and WRC so that site action work can be started whilst we continue the search for a suitable Jamaica Project Manager." This was a sensible approach to a difficult situation by the PM, but Birdlife Jamaica proved unable to even take on the reduced set of tasks identified for them, and this revised arrangement should have been reviewed sooner by both the PM and TM, and certainly before the end of 2004. With hindsight, it would have been better to have scheduled a full project review with a visit to the region in October 2004, a year after implementation began.

## 4 – Lessons Learned

### 1. Project design and proposal development

There were significant failures during the project proposal development phase in 2002 and 2003 due to a confused problem analysis and logframe and a poor set of indicators, made worse by limited stakeholder participation (lack of direct input from governments and local stakeholders) and inadequate review of the draft proposal by UNEP-DGEF, GEFSEC and the BirdLife Secretariat during the proposal review stage. These created problems during project implementation, particularly relating to demonstrating impact of the project in an objective, quantifiable manner. The development of a simple, measurable logframe is absolutely critical for complex, multi-country projects. UNEP-DGEF needs to ensure that adequate advice is given on logframe design and selection of indicators with the appropriate level of detail, including a baseline and mid-term and final targets, and it is recommended that all future UNEP-DGEF multi-country projects have separate targets for each country built into the logframe. Particular attention needs to be given to the identification of appropriate SMART indicators and how to measure them (what, when, where, and who will measure them and resources identified). It should also be noted that development of indicators in a more participatory fashion with the key stakeholders and those who were to measure them would probably have led to the choice of more efficient indicators. If UNEP-DGEF is looking for well-constructed, realistic and effective projects then it needs to ensure that every proposal goes through the whole GEF review process, and individual Task Managers need to pay particular attention to the initial project design stage and attend the proposal development workshops, which this project illustrates can be critical.

### 2. Project monitoring and oversight

There was no inception workshop and no official ‘launch’ of the project, consequently no opportunity to review the logframe or implementation arrangements at an early stage. This, in part, allowed the crisis caused by BirdLife Jamaica to continue longer than it should have<sup>69</sup>. Nor did National Liaison Committees function as national project steering committees, an arrangement that would have probably benefited the project, and would have forced a resolution to the loss of BirdLife Jamaica from the project much sooner. There was also no regional project steering committee. Instead, a Caribbean Regional Advisory group (CRAG) was created. It had no leadership or clear mandate for project oversight, lacked a budget for meetings, and the members were largely disengaged from the project and operated in only a loose and informal way. It is clear that the membership is critical and development of a regional advisory group needs to be built from the partners upwards, with the partners driving the process (rather than the international agency). Interestingly, a former chairman of the SCSCB said that if the project was to be repeated then it would be very important to gain a better understanding of the ‘conservation politics on each island’ in order to make a better choice of project partners and individuals for the CRAG. In future, UNEP-DGEF should insist on some form of project review at the outset of a GEF project, particularly if there has been a significant delay between project design<sup>70</sup> and approval by GEF and a formal project steering committee empowered with decision-making authority and an adequate budget to function properly.

### 3. Capacity of executing agencies

Whilst NGOs have comparative advantages over other bodies in project implementation – they can be very cost-effective compared to government agencies and have relationships with and access to stakeholder groups that governments often have difficult connecting with, particularly local people – their survival can be precarious. Despite a significant track record with large projects and an established history with an elected Board, office facilities and project funding, BirdLife Jamaica, effectively collapsed around the time the GEF project began which significantly reduced project delivery in Jamaica (and overall project delivery) for nearly two years. The lesson here is that it is essential to ensure that any NGO involved in a GEF project has sufficient institutional structure and capacity, is self-sustaining and has a clear strategic plan in place before taking on a role in project implementation. The presence of a comprehensive institutional strategy is considered particularly important and UNEP-DGEF needs to ensure that all project partners have one at the project design stage (the absence of such a plan was one of the reasons for the collapse of BirdLife Jamaica). Capacity building is an important element of most GEF projects but there needs to be a minimum level for the project to begin. In future UNEP-DGEF should ensure that an independent institutional and capacity assessment (‘health check’) is carried out of NGO-

<sup>69</sup> Although as noted in the footnote above the Project Manager arranged subcontracts for some of the Jamaican activities with other groups during the first half of 2004, some activities still rested with BirdLife Jamaica and the Project Manager still hoped that BirdLife Jamaica would be able to regroup and deliver its reduced set of commitments. Unfortunately, this did not happen and their national education and advocacy activities had to be subcontracted to JET over a year later.

<sup>70</sup> New GEF procedures are intended to speed up project development but worryingly there are very limited funds for stakeholder involvement during the project preparation phase



executing agencies at the project design stage or before project implementation starts, and institutional capacity and performance should be highlighted in the annual project evaluation (it is covered in the risk assessment sections of the PIR but needs greater prominence).

#### **4. Integrating the IBA framework into national policy and programmes**

NGO-led projects generally have limited influence over government policy, something that was not sufficiently recognised in the Project Document, especially since very few government officials participated in the original project design workshop held in April 2002, or in the subsequent implementation of the project. As a formal mechanism for promoting and integrating the IBA Programme within government the project's National Liaison Committee (NLC) arrangement did not work well. One of the reasons the NLCs have not been as successful in this role, even in the Dominican Republic, is that the NLC process was driven by NGOs and not governments. Advocacy to government on IBA issues was always going to be a problem when the NLCs were not initiated and driven by governments and contained government representatives who obviously would not engage in lobbying activities. It is questionable whether the NLC model as it stands has much functionality in the Caribbean.<sup>71</sup> However, it may be worth investigating whether establishing some form of NLC to oversee all GEF projects in a country has value, as it would offer GEF a more permanent link to a range of government sectors for all its projects (this could be chaired by the OFP). The model developed in the Dominican Republic – a forum for sharing information for the IBA programme with an additional benefit of helping to build trust between stakeholders that rarely cooperate - seems a very useful one for the Caribbean as the BirdLife Partnership seeks to build its IBA programme regionally and could be particularly useful for developing and ensuring wide ownership of the National IBA Conservation Strategies.

Promoting policy change based on the results of an NGO-led project may be an area where the national GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) could have an increased role. The extent of involvement of the Operational Focal Points in GEF project varies but they are a key link with government. The role of the OFPs in project design, development, implementation and follow-up is an area which GEF should review, as they could be potentially extremely effective routes/facilitators for uptake of project results by national governments. For instance, OFPs could advocate for IBAs to be considered for inclusion in any planned revisions of the NBSAP for Jamaica and the Bahamas, and for the Dominican Republic should one be developed.

#### **5. Engagement of the corporate sector**

The project had some success in securing donations from the business sector for specific project activities, most successfully in the Bahamas<sup>72</sup>. However, the development of a deeper, more meaningful dialogue with the corporate sector leading to changes in corporate attitudes and policy towards the environment as a result of the project do not seem to have been achieved. It takes time to develop trust and respect, and NGOs need to “speak the language” of business if they want to move beyond the ‘sponsorship’ stage. This requires specialist capacity within the national NGOs, the development of which needs training or additional resources and institutional commitment. The corporate engagement components of the project would have benefited from a specific strategic approach being developed in each country and at regional level, and it would have been useful if representatives from the corporate sector had participated in the initial design of the project, at a project launch (perhaps initially through a donor workshop) or had been represented on the NLCs. Better ‘branding’ of the project and use of marketing techniques to ‘sell’ the project concepts to the corporate sector would have also helped. NGOs have no comparative advantage in engaging the business communities over government and public sector institutions and they need to recognise that they may not have the experience and capacity to deal with the corporate sector. From UNEP-DGEF's point of view, it needs to consider providing concrete guidance on how NGOs can best engage with the corporate sector on GEF projects, perhaps through a series of case studies, but also screen project proponents more carefully on their track record of interaction with this sector if they are proposing major engagement.

#### **6. Achieving effective site conservation action**

In most cases, site action has been successful, particularly at the Harrold and Wilson Ponds, Bahamas, Laguna de Oviedo in the Jaragua National Park, Dominican Republic, and at Cockpit Country in Jamaica. A key reason for

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<sup>71</sup> Interestingly, the NLC model in Africa has been largely a failure. In Africa, NLCs were largely viewed as project steering committees and once the GEF project came to a conclusion, members in most countries saw little point in their continued existence.

<sup>72</sup> The BNT has built successful relationships with donors by researching what they hope to gain from the sponsorship and how best to provide that, establishing a long-term relationship, and carefully targeting them for specific funds (not general mail shots). This sometimes requires a considerable investment. For instance, BNT commissioned an expensive but high quality concept/development plan for the Harold and Wilson Ponds National Park. It then approached Bacardi Ltd for funding for the infrastructure for the site using the document and associated DVD. They were successful because Bacardi were able to clearly visualize what would be done and how their money was to be spent.



this success is the presence of the project implementer at the site. For instance, the WRC is situated within Cockpit Country and close to the communities with which it is working (and with whom it has invested 10 years of outreach and education). BNT has a park administration office in Inagua and headquarters close to Harrold and Wilson Ponds. Grupo Jaragua has an office in Jaragua National Park from which it works directly with SSGs in the vicinity. Conversely, the attempts to establish a new project at Mount Diablo, Jamaica, met with limited success, probably because WRC did not have a base in the area. Consequently, GEF needs to pay particular attention to the existing linkages/relationships between project proponents and communities at sites where action is to be targeted to ensure that proposed projects will be effective.

### ***7. Measuring project success in changing attitudes and behaviours towards biodiversity***

Education and awareness-raising activities aim to build knowledge and awareness, and through these challenge attitudes, create new understandings and change behaviours. However, there seems to be particular uncertainty over how to best measure changes in awareness, attitudes and behaviours brought about by project activities (impact of awareness-raising and educational activities)<sup>73</sup>. Changing deep-seated attitudes can take many years, and may require a generational change. Consequently, it is often difficult to say if project has had an effect on public perceptions and behaviours towards biodiversity issues during its 3-4 year lifetime. What is needed is a follow-up assessment of impact some years (say 5 years) after the project has finished. GEF should consider identifying money in proposals to undertake post-project evaluations, or perhaps as a regional examination of the effectiveness of awareness-raising activities of all its GEF Biodiversity projects.

### ***8. Delivering complex regional programmes***

The gathering, review and analysis of the IBA data for the Caribbean took a long time – much more time than was originally envisaged - as it was important to ensure it was done in a participatory fashion to generate trust, collaboration and ownership. As a result, the completion of project Outputs such as IBA fact sheets, National IBA Conservation Strategies, Case Studies and the Regional IBA Directory was delayed. Designers of large multi-faceted projects need to be careful, particularly when dealing with multiple countries, that they do not aim for project deliverables that are heavily dependent on the delivery of other products over which the project has no control, as happened with this project. In other words, project designers need to be careful not to introduce additional external risks.

### ***9. Establishing and maintaining SSGs***

Based on his previous experience with SSGs, the evaluator took a participatory approach to assessing how SSGs had been established and what lessons were learned. Project staff and members of SSGs in the three countries were questioned about their experiences in developing SSGs so far – what worked, what didn't, what they would do differently the next time. A summary of their responses is given in Annex 10. It should be stated, however, that the SSG model is new to the Caribbean – the first SSG was only established in mid-2004 – consequently, there is still very limited experience in establishing and maintaining SSGs and the Evaluation believes it is too soon to say which will be successful, survive and grow, and why, and a additional assessment will be needed in 4-5 years time. The main message to take away from the assessment of experience of establishing and sustaining an SSG so far, is that a great deal of staff time and resources (and therefore organisational commitment preferably with a dedicated SSG Coordinator) are required, and that the investment needs to be particularly intense in the first two years.

## **5. Recommendations**

Recommendations to further strengthen the project's outcomes and future projects are given below. Each recommendation is assigned a priority level – high, medium and low - as an indication of when the Evaluator feels the action should be taken by.

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<sup>73</sup> For the current project, possible indicators could have included: number of articles per year (in baseline year) in selected national newspapers compared with last 12 months of the project (gives an indication of uptake of the conservation message by the media); number of government press releases and policy statements mentioning IBAs in baseline year compared to last year of the project; number of requests to the project team from private landowners, real estate developers, lawyers, for information on IBAs in baseline year compared to last year of the project; number of requests to the project team from local travel agents, cruise ship operators and taxi firms, for information on IBAs/birdwatching sites in baseline year compared to last year of the project; adoption of the IBA programme by a government department, including guaranteed funding from government budget; membership and attendance at SSG meetings as a measure of local interest in biodiversity.

## ***1. Recommendations for BirdLife and project partners to strengthen project outcomes and impacts (in no particular order)***

### ***i. General recommendations***

1. The project's Terminal Report (TR) should include an annex that sets out project follow-up aims and activities, how these will be funded and implementation arrangements, as these are not identified in a coherent fashion in the draft TR (the UNEP-DGEF structure for the TR does not allow for this). This should differentiate what is needed for each island and regionally. **(high)**
2. If possible, the project team should re-examine the objective-level indicators and try to identify a small number of biodiversity impact and threat-reduction indicators that could be used to quantify impact of the project. This will mean reconstituting the baselines (identifying and quantifying the situation at the start or before the GEF project began). The METT scores for the three sites identified in the Project Document (Inaqua National Park in the Bahamas, Laguna de Ovideo in the Dominican Republic and Cockpit Country in Jamaica) could also be presented here but there will need to be a brief analysis of the changes in these scores and their significance. These analyses should be included in the Terminal Report. **(high)**
3. In the absence of a final regional project workshop, BirdLife and the project partners should aim to collect, synthesise and publish information on the SSG experience to date, perhaps through a special edition of *Birds Caribbean*, as this would be particularly valuable for other developing SSGs in the Caribbean. BirdLife should also consider developing a simple newsletter for the growing number of Caribbean SSGs to document successes, failures, news and events. This would help to build a stronger network, generate a sense of being part of a larger 'family', and serve as a source of information on developments, experiences and ideas. Alternatively, an 'SSG News and Events' section to *Birds Caribbean* could be considered. **(medium)**
4. BirdLife International and the project partners together with the national governments need to re-examine the role and utility of the NLCs in each country as they may not be the most efficient route to integrate the IBA programme into national policy and programmes. The national governments need to see a clear value to these and understand what problems they are trying to address, or they will not be supported. **(high)**
5. To further emphasize the value of the project results, it is recommended that a separate analysis be produced by the project team to identify the project's specific contributions to the 2010 targets and MDG7, and also, because of the socio-economic contribution of the SSG model, the contribution to MDG1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), so these can inform the national and regional discussions that will take place. These analyses could be included as an annex in the project's TR. **(high)**
6. The project has produced many publication (both national and regional manuals, press releases, posters, booklets, etc.) but these are not available at a central location. All project publications and relevant documents should be made available on the BirdLife's Caribbean Programme webpage (perhaps as a specific project page with a summary of the main project findings and lessons learned). **(high)**
7. Delays over the publication of the Caribbean IBA Directory and IBA site accounts reduced the opportunity for advocacy at the national policy level and some years will be needed before it is known how effective the project has been in providing and communicating biodiversity information to decision-makers to improve the conservation and management of each country's natural resources. Consequently, the extent of uptake of the IBA programme should be assessed in 2-3 years from the conclusion of the project, perhaps at a SCSCB meeting or through a BirdLife regional partnership meeting. **(low)**

### ***ii. Country and/or site-specific***

1. In Jamaica, emphasis was placed on identifying forest IBAs. As a result, wetlands, offshore islands, as well as dry, mangrove and coastal forests are probably under-represented. Project follow-up resources need to be found to undertake additional field and literature searches to address these other habitat types. This should be treated as a priority so any additional IBAs can be incorporated within the Jamaica Protected Area Master Plan, due to be completed in summer 2008. **(high)**
2. Some SSG members interviewed had high hopes for ecotourism as a model for local development, but these may not be realistic. The partners and BirdLife have proposed further development of ecotourism as part of project follow-up work and it will be promoted as part of the general work of GJ in the Dominican Republic and the BNT in the Bahamas. However, it is suggested that the project partners need to conduct more detailed analyses of the market for bird tourism and re-examine the economic

case for ecotourism development at each of the project sites to construct adequate business models, as part of their follow-up activities and before further promoting these activities at IBAs. **(medium)**

3. The BNT needs to develop MoUs with the SSG on Abaco (Friends of the Environment) and Inagua (the Sam Nixon Bird Club) as a matter of urgency, as there is uncertainty over what SSGs are legally able to do within the national parks. Without these, there is a risk that the SSG experiment in the Bahamas may falter. **(high)**

## **2. Recommendations for UNEP-DGEF/UNEP/GEF for future projects (in no particular order)**

1. GEF has funded many projects that have had awareness-raising and education components. There have also been a great many such projects funded by other donors in the Caribbean. However, in the context of the Caribbean at least, it is not clear which are the most effective methods for behaviour change or how best to measure changes in awareness, attitudes and behaviours (indicators). GEF needs to ensure that a project's proposed approach and methodology is cost-effective and evidence-based. Consequently, it would be valuable if GEF commissioned a review of experiences in the region, perhaps as a series of case studies, to guide future project proponents on the most effective approaches<sup>74</sup>. **(medium)**
2. UNEP-DGEF should ensure that OFPs are kept informed of project progress and encourage them to become more involved with the monitoring and evaluation of UNEP-DGEF projects, e.g. attending project steering committee meetings, particularly those led by NGOs with no direct government involvement in implementation. **(medium)**
3. UNEP-DGEF should consider linkage with UNDP COs where there are strong national elements to projects (as in this case) because of UNDP's on-the-ground presence and capacity to react to immediate events, and the additional value the UNDP staff could bring to project design, supervision, capacity building and linkage to national level policy makers. **(medium)**
4. UNEP-DGEF should provide more detailed guidance to project proponents on reporting with provision of "good examples" in order to facilitate more complete, streamlined project reporting in the future. This would certainly have facilitated project reporting on the current project. **(high)**
5. The Evaluation recommends that UNEP-DGEF consider introducing a formal capacity assessment of project partners before project implementation begins, particularly for NGO-led projects. **(high)**
6. With regard to the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), none of the project partners appears to have fully appreciated the aim or usefulness of the METT, and saw it as largely yet another GEF form to complete. It is recommended that UNEP suggest to GEFSEC that an explanation of the tracking tools and their utility become a standard part of project documentation and inception meetings. GEF also needs to consider the length of time over which the METT is employed, as 2-4 years may not show much change, and its usefulness for areas that are not fully incorporated within formerly protected areas, as many IBAs are not. **(medium)**
7. Awareness of the value and benefits (economic and otherwise) of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Caribbean is poor, and there has been little research on the topic. UNEP should commission a review of information on the value of the ecosystem services provided by selected biodiversity rich and protected areas in the region (including IBAs), as such a study would greatly enhance the effectiveness of advocacy associated with these sites. The WRC has just been awarded a grant from the MacArthur Foundation to look at this issue in Cockpit Country and this work could be expanded to other IBAs if successful. **(medium)**
8. Given that the SSGs in the Bahamas and Jamaica are still in the very early stages of development and those in the Dominican Republic no more than 2.5 years old, the Evaluation considers it too soon to assess the success, impact and sustainability of the SSG model in the Caribbean (at least on the three project islands). Although initial signs are encouraging the Evaluation has concerns about the sustainability of the model once partner support is withdrawn (which it must be at some stage), and recommends that UNEP commission an evaluation of the SSG experience four years after completion of the project, possibly as a Caribbean-wide review of the SSG experience. **(low)**

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<sup>74</sup> RARE ([www.rareconservation.org](http://www.rareconservation.org)) have undertaken a number of awareness raising campaigns in the Caribbean, including in the Bahamas and Jamaica, and are developing a robust methodology for assessing impact (in terms of changed awareness, attitudes and behaviours) of such programmes. It is recommended that RARE be approached for advice. The WIWD-WC Project ([www.whistlingduck.org](http://www.whistlingduck.org)) has also sought to quantify changes in knowledge and awareness, and uses questionnaires before, immediately after and 1-2 years after its workshops to measure how much has been retained by the participants. Again, the GEF project team could learn from the WIWD-WC Project, and it is surprising, given the linkage between the two projects, that more exchange of ideas and experiences on this issue has not taken place. In addition, it might be worth examining approaches used by other fields, such as health which has had successful campaigns to reduce harmful behaviours such as smoking and excessive drinking, and promotional and marketing techniques used by major businesses.

### ***3. A final lesson***

Multi-country, regional projects aiming to deliver a broad range of outputs such as in this project (education, awareness-raising, scientific publications, conservation action, local stakeholder development, national capacity building) are best funded as a Full-Sized Project (FSP) with project preparation activities establishing some of the frameworks, tools and protocols necessary for project delivery. GEF MSPs are usually overly ambitious (the UNEP-DGEF made the comment that this is not necessarily a bad thing as it drives and motivates people). However, the risk here is that the project will not be able to deliver. GEF and UNEP need to ensure that in future MSPs are more focused with a realistic set of objectives and activities and adequate capacity and budgets. The Evaluation believes that this project should have been submitted to GEF as a small Full-Sized Project (again something that doesn't appear to have been properly considered during the crucial project proposal design and review stage), with a budget of around US\$3-5 million, which would have allowed for greater capacity (nationally and regionally) to deal with some of the issues mentioned above and to deliver some of the Outputs that could not be achieved.

## 6. Evaluator's ratings of the project and summary comments

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
<b>A. Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)</b>	Although poor 'achievement' indicators mean that it is difficult to show the extent to which the Development Objective has been met, the immediate Objectives have largely been achieved. The project was also overly ambitious and should have been a FSP rather than a MSP given its complexity and number of activities and deliverables.	<b>S</b>
A. 1. Effectiveness	Some significant results but late delivery of several key outputs, e.g. Regional IBA Directory, means that there has been insufficient time to demonstrate impact in some areas, particularly on changes of policy and public awareness in favour of biodiversity conservation, and advocacy work has been limited. A follow-up assessment in 4-5 years is needed to see how well the IBA programme and SSG model has become embedded in national policies and programmes.	<b>MS</b>
A. 2. Relevance	The IBA programme on all three islands has made a significant contribution to identifying the remaining (terrestrial) sites of global biodiversity importance, and the data has fed into the protected area master planning processes.	<b>S</b>
A. 3. Efficiency	The project has proved to be very cost-efficient. Built on a good foundation of previous work, had very good use of volunteers (SSGs and for IBA information collection and review), and raised significant co-financing (over twice that anticipated at project start).	<b>HS</b>
<b>B. Achievement of outputs and activities</b>	Project has achieved most of its outputs, and several others e.g. Regional IBA Directory, will be delivered in next 3 months.	<b>S</b>
<b>C. Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)</b>	Project placed considerable emphasis on ensuring sustainability of project results and processes from the initial design stage. Particular results that are likely to be sustained at the global level are capacity built and availability of information on key conservation sites to decision-makers. Environmental risks could pose a significant problem at two sites and need to be addressed.	<b>ML</b>
C. 1. Financial	Achieving financial sustainability of project results was built into the original project design through a specific Objective, and fund-raising and other schemes have been very successful. However, funding for SSGs is not yet guaranteed, and there is no specific sustainable financing plan for follow-up activities, and the Evaluation has some concerns about the development of ecotourism at some sites as there has been inadequate market research and little if any promotion by government tourism agencies.	<b>ML</b>
C. 2. Socio-Political	Political situation is stable and new governments in the Bahamas and Jamaica look supportive of environment, but there is some concern whether SSGs will survive based on a purely voluntary model.	<b>ML</b>
C. 3. Institutional framework and governance	Good adoption of IBA programme in the Bahamas (embedded within the BNT), less so in the Dominican Republic and at present it has no institutional home in Jamaica (but likely to be the Forestry Department), but sites are being included in gap analyses for Protected Area Master Plans. Education components, e.g. CEBF better institutionalized. Institutional capacity of the project partners remains a concern.	<b>ML</b>
C. 4. Ecological	Environmental risks <u>could</u> threaten the sustainability of project outcomes at two of the 8 sites (Cockpit Country and Jaragua National Park) and need to be monitored and adequately addressed.	<b>ML</b>
<b>D. Catalytic Role</b>	Very limited uptake of project results by others (in part because of delays on delivery). SSG model has high potential for replication and some has occurred in the Dominican Republic but not on Jamaica or the Bahamas. No replication plan was presented in the Project Document.	<b>MS</b>
<b>E. Preparation and readiness</b>	The project document was much too ambitious for the time and resources available to the project, and should have been submitted as a Full-Sized Project.	<b>U</b>

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
	The project design had significant weaknesses (poor set of indicators and stakeholder input) but these were not corrected at the proposal review stage (the project proposal review process seems to have had little significant input from UNEP-DGEF or GEFSEC, and GEFSEC in particular seems to have been negligent). Furthermore, there was no project review until around the mid-term point. Most serious capacity issue was the loss of BirdLife Jamaica (BLJ) just as the project started. There had been no institutional or capacity assessment of project partners and it was assumed there was no problem with BLJ. The identification and involvement of other potential partners, possible roles and responsibilities, by the project design team was not as comprehensive or inclusive as it could or should have been.	
<b>F. Country ownership / drivenness</b>	Several of the central project concepts – Important Bird Areas, Site Support Groups and the National Liaison Committees – originated externally and the participating countries were pre-identified by the project developers (BirdLife). However, national ownership has grown and is now established particularly in the Bahamas (through BNT), and becoming stronger in Jamaica (with the interest of the Forestry Department) and the Dominican Republic. Regionally, IBAs are seen as priorities for action by the SCSCB, but it does not have the capacity to take on the Caribbean IBA programme.	MS
<b>G. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating)</b> <b>Sub criteria (below)</b>	Project monitoring and evaluation was rather mixed. Good performance by the Project Manager overcame deficiencies in the M&E system as it was designed.	MS
G. 1. M&E Design	The Project Document includes a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, although it is not very specific. The NLCs and regional committee/group did not function in a project oversight role as envisaged. Whilst progress monitoring appears to have been acceptable the logframe and performance indicators (key aspects of a good M&E plan) were not.	MU
G. 2. M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)	Quarterly progress reports were submitted to UNEP-DGEF, the project successfully submitted Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) to the GEF, and the project has drafted a Terminal Report, and were of good quality. However, METT not properly used. Identification of risks in Project Document was not very comprehensive and a little confused and risk assessment and monitoring does not seem to have taken place at the national level.	S
G. 3. Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	Insufficient allocation for M&E activities in the original project budget	MS
<b>H. Stakeholders involvement</b>	Stakeholder consultation was poor at the project design phase. However, it is now very strong in the DR, at local level through the SSGs and national level through the NLCs, and reasonable and growing in the Bahamas and Jamaica (although the latter still lacks an institutional home for the NLC and IBA programme which would help). Project awareness has increased considerably and is now generally good. Stakeholder participation in project activities has been very good, especially with schools, and through the various environmental festivals, particularly the CEBF.	S
<b>I. Financial planning</b>	Some project management costs were left out of the original financial planning, and costs of NLCs and CRAG meetings were not budgeted adequately. In addition, loss of BLJ from project resulted in loss of co-financing. , but this was made up from other sources of co-financing. Nonetheless, these financial requirements were successfully met through budget and project revision in 2005, additional co-financing and other adaptive management measures, and the project was not required to sacrifice any significant components as a result of these changes. There were no problems with financial control and level of disbursement. Overall the expenditure of project funds was very close to that predicted in the revised (post-Jamaica) budget and was within the GEF limit.	HS
<b>J.</b>	Daily management of the project was excellent by project staff at BNT, GJ,	S



Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
<b>Implementation approach</b>	WRC, JET and the Jamaica Project Consultant, who worked to high standards and in a very professional manner. As a result, there was a strong, capable project team that showed good adaptive management capacity. However, NLC and CRAG did not function as intended in their project advisory and oversight roles.	
<b>K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping</b>	Two supervisory visits to the Caribbean by the UNEP-DGEF TM (as opposed to the usual one). Limited direct contact with national teams but the TM and Project Manager (PM) had an agreement that most management activities would be channeled through the PM who would act as the link between the national groups and the TM. Resources available for supervision missions were constrained by travel limitations imposed by DGEF top management in the early part of the project (subsequently rescinded).	<b>S</b>



## 7. Annexes

### *Annex 1: Evaluation Terms of Reference*

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### **Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP GEF project “Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats: Strengthening a Regional Network for a Shared Resource.”**

**Project Number: GF/1020-03-02**

### **1. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW**

#### **Project rationale**

The Caribbean islands are of critical importance for global biodiversity conservation as large percentages of each species group are endemic to the region and often to particular islands. The region is one of the world’s 25 biodiversity “hotspots”. The ultimate problem impacting on the region’s biodiversity is the continuing loss and degradation of natural habitats/ ecosystems such that important biodiversity sites throughout the Caribbean region are being lost before effective action can be taken to protect them. In order to address the threats to biodiversity in the Caribbean, this project was to combine a local approach to site conservation action with national leadership of the process, and regional and global information exchange, to identify and conserve sites of global priority.

The overarching developmental objective goal of the project was stated as ‘*Conservation status of globally important sites for biodiversity in the Caribbean is enhanced through strengthened local and national partnerships and increasingly aware national and international networks of public and private sector stakeholders and decision-maker.*’

The objective indicators of this project included:

- Enhanced cooperation, communication and consensus among biodiversity conservation stakeholders through the coordination of a strengthened network of NGO, government agency and regional institution partnerships;
- Increased awareness of Caribbean biodiversity and the issues affecting it amongst local, national and international stakeholders and decision-makers;
- Documentation of globally important Caribbean biodiversity sites and establishing a framework within which information gaps are evaluated and conservation requirements are assessed, advocated and acted upon for the highest priorities;
- Communicate/exchange site conservation experiences throughout the network of NGOs, government agencies and regional institutions through the establishment (and inclusion) of globally important site action projects;
- Set in place a strategy and mechanism to ensure sustainability for the conservation and management of globally important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean.

## **Relevance to GEF Programmes**

By integrating prioritized action for key biodiversity sites into plans and policies at local, national, Caribbean and global levels, across four GEF Operational Programs, the process will lead to the sustainable management of key biodiversity conservation areas in the Caribbean. At the same time, a cadre of expert, committed conservationists will continue to monitor and act to maintain the biological integrity of each site long after GEF input to this highly sustainable process ceases. By scaling-up existing activities, this GEF project will accelerate the take-up of ideas enshrined in the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD), particularly identifying priorities, research, monitoring and interventions at sites, and the concept of sustainable use. The region where the project was to be executed suggested that a holistic “island ecosystem” approach was necessary to provide a useable conservation framework, thus within the GEF focal area of biodiversity, the proposed project activities were consistent with all four GEF operational programs, namely:

- OP#1 arid and semi-arid ecosystems
- OP#2 coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems (including wetlands)
- OP#3 forest ecosystems
- OP#4 mountain ecosystems

## **Executing Arrangements**

The Secretariat of the BirdLife Partnership was the main executing agency for the project, with co-executors in each country, namely BirdLife Jamaica, Grupo Jaragua (Dominican Republic), and the BNT. At the regional level, other major collaborators were the SCSCB (formerly the Society of Caribbean Ornithology), Bird Studies Canada and the West Indian Whistling-duck and Wetlands Conservation Project (a major initiative of the SCSCB). At the national level, each of the co-executors was to work in close collaboration with a number of stakeholders, primarily government agencies/institutions, but also other national NGOs. These are listed in the Stakeholder analysis table in the project document. The Stakeholder analysis also lists other major stakeholders who were to either participate in this project or would have been affected by it in some way. All listed groups/institutions were to be invited to participate in the project.

## **Project Activities**

The project duration was initially 42 months starting October 2003 to March 2007, which was later revised and extended to be completed in July 2007, making a total duration of 44 months.

The project had five components:

- (a) Enhance cooperation, communication and consensus among biodiversity conservation stakeholders through the coordination of a strengthened network of NGO, government agency and regional institution partnerships;
- (b) Increase awareness of Caribbean biodiversity and the issues affecting it amongst local, national and international stakeholders and decision-makers;
- (c) Document globally important Caribbean biodiversity sites and establish a framework within which information gaps are evaluated and conservation requirements are assessed, advocated and acted upon for the highest priorities;
- (d) Communicate/ exchange site conservation experiences throughout the network of NGOs, government agencies and regional institutions through the establishment (and inclusion) of globally important site action;

- (e) Set in place a strategy and mechanism to ensure sustainability for the conservation and management of globally important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean

## **Budget**

The total budget was US\$ 1,971,850 with GEF: US\$974,200, Co-financing: US\$ 948,750, and PDF cost US\$ 48,900 (including US\$25,000 from GEF).

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION**

### **1. Objective and Scope of the Evaluation**

The objective of this terminal evaluation is to examine the extent and magnitude of any project impacts to date and determine the likelihood of future impacts. The evaluation will also assess project performance and the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results. The evaluation will focus on the following main questions:

- Conservation status of 6 important biodiversity sites in the Caribbean enhanced by the end of the project
- Stakeholder networks subscribing to national site conservation strategies as a framework for site action
- Awareness of biodiversity conservation issues raised throughout the network

### **2. Methods**

This terminal evaluation will be conducted as an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby the UNEP/DGEF Task Manager, key representatives of the executing agencies and other relevant staff are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation. The consultant will liaise with the UNEP/EOU and the UNEP/DGEF Task Manager on any logistic and/or methodological issues to properly conduct the review in as independent a way as possible, given the circumstances and resources offered. The draft report will be circulated to UNEP/DGEF Task Manager, key representatives of the executing agencies and the UNEP/EOU. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to UNEP / EOU for collation and the consultant will be advised of any necessary or suggested revisions.

The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:

1. A desk review of project documents including, but not limited to:
  - (a) The project documents, outputs, monitoring reports (such as progress and financial reports to UNEP and GEF annual Project Implementation Review reports) and relevant correspondence.
  - (b) Notes from the Steering Group meetings.
  - (c) Other project-related material produced by the project staff or partners.
  - (d) Relevant material published on the project web-site:  
[www.birdlife.org/regional/caribbean](http://www.birdlife.org/regional/caribbean).
2. Interviews with project management and technical support including Jamaica Environmental Trust, Grupo Jaragua (Dominican Republic), and the Bahamas National Trust (BNT) and Birdlife International. Additionally SCSCB (formerly the Society of

Caribbean Ornithology), Bird Studies Canada and the West Indian Whistling-duck and Wetlands Conservation Project (a major initiative of the SCSCB).

3. Interviews and Telephone interviews with intended users for the project outputs and other stakeholders involved with this project, including in the participating countries and international bodies. The Consultant shall determine whether to seek additional information and opinions from representatives of donor agencies and other organisations. As appropriate, these interviews could be combined with an email questionnaire.
4. Interviews with the UNEP/DGEF project task manager and Fund Management Officer, and other relevant staff in UNEP dealing with Biodiversity related activities as necessary. The Consultant shall also gain broader perspectives from discussions with relevant GEF Secretariat staff.
5. Field visits to project staff

### **Key Evaluation principles.**

In attempting to evaluate any outcomes and impacts that the project may have achieved, evaluators should remember that the project's performance should be assessed by considering the difference between the answers to two simple questions "*what happened?*" and "*what would have happened anyway?*". These questions imply that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions and trends in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. In addition it implies that there should be plausible evidence to **attribute** such outcomes and impacts **to the actions of the project**.

Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions and trends is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the evaluator, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the evaluator to make informed judgements about project performance.

### **3. Project Ratings**

The success of project implementation will be rated on a scale from 'highly unsatisfactory' to 'highly satisfactory'. In particular the evaluation shall **assess and rate** the project with respect to the eleven categories defined below:<sup>75</sup>

#### **A. Attainment of objectives and planned results:**

The evaluation should assess the extent to which the project's major relevant objectives were effectively and efficiently achieved or are expected to be achieved and their relevance. The "achievement" indicators provided in the log frame of the project document should be used together with any additional monitoring tools including the GEF Biodiversity Tracking Tools<sup>76</sup>.

- *Effectiveness*: Evaluate how, and to what extent, the stated project objectives have been met, taking into account the "achievement indicators". The analysis of outcomes achieved should include, *inter alia*, an assessment of the extent to which the project has directly or indirectly assisted policy- and decision-makers to apply information supplied by

<sup>75</sup> However, the views and comments expressed by the evaluator need not be restricted to these items.

<sup>76</sup> [http://gefweb.org/projects/Focal\\_Areas/bio/bio\\_tracking\\_tools.html](http://gefweb.org/projects/Focal_Areas/bio/bio_tracking_tools.html). The evaluator should comment on the relevance of these tracking tools to the overall approach adopted by the project.

biodiversity indicators in their national planning and decision-making. In particular:

- Evaluate the immediate impact of the project on conservation awareness in the Caribbean region and conservation status of IBA sites.
- As far as possible, also assess the potential longer-term impacts considering that the evaluation is taking place upon completion of the project and that longer term impact is expected to be seen in a few years time. Frame recommendations to enhance future project impact in this context.
- *Relevance*: In retrospect, were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies? Ascertain the nature and significance of the contribution of the project outcomes to the CBD and the wider portfolio of the GEF.
- *Efficiency*: Was the project cost effective? Was the project the least cost option? Was the project implementation delayed and if it was, then did that affect cost-effectiveness? Assess the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation and to what extent the project leveraged additional resources. Did the project build on earlier initiatives, did it make effective use of available scientific and / or technical information. Wherever possible, the evaluator should also compare the cost-time vs. outcomes relationship of the project with that of other similar projects.

#### **B. Sustainability:**

Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived outcomes and impacts after the GEF project funding ends. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends. Some of these factors might be outcomes of the project, e.g. stronger institutional capacities or better informed decision-making. Other factors will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not outcomes of the project but that are relevant to the sustainability of outcomes. The evaluation should ascertain to what extent follow-up work has been initiated and how project outcomes will be sustained and enhanced over time.

Five aspects of sustainability should be addressed: financial, socio-political, institutional frameworks and governance, environmental (if applicable). The following questions provide guidance on the assessment of these aspects:

- *Financial resources*. Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? What is the likelihood that financial and economic resources will not be available once the GEF assistance ends (resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and trends that may indicate that it is likely that in future there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)? To what extent are the outcomes of the project dependent on continued financial support?
- *Socio-political*: Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see

that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project?

- *Institutional framework and governance.* To what extent is the sustenance of the outcomes of the project dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? What is the likelihood that institutional and technical achievements, legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes will allow for, the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? While responding to these questions consider if the required systems for accountability and transparency and the required technical know-how are in place.
- *Environmental.* Are there any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits? The TE should assess whether certain activities in the project area will pose a threat to the sustainability of the project outcomes. For example; construction of dam in a protected area could inundate a sizable area and thereby neutralize the biodiversity-related gains made by the project; or, a newly established pulp mill might jeopardise the viability of nearby protected forest areas by increasing logging pressures; or a vector control intervention may be made less effective by changes in climate and consequent alterations to the incidence and distribution of malarial mosquitoes.

#### **C. Achievement of outputs and activities:**

Delivered outputs: Assessment of the project's success in producing each of the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality as well as usefulness and timeliness.

#### **D. Catalytic Role**

Replication and catalysis. What examples are there of replication and catalytic outcomes? Replication approach, in the context of GEF projects, is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated or scaled up in the design and implementation of other projects. Replication can have two aspects, replication proper (lessons and experiences are replicated in different geographic area) or scaling up (lessons and experiences are replicated within the same geographic area but funded by other sources). Specifically:

- Do the project outputs and impacts have potential for additional replication in the region?

If no effects are identified, the evaluation will describe the catalytic or replication actions that the project carried out.

#### **E. Assessment monitoring and evaluation systems.**

The evaluation shall include an assessment of the quality, application and effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, including an assessment of risk management based on the assumptions and risks identified in the project document. The Terminal Evaluation will assess whether the project met the minimum requirements for 'project design of M&E' and 'the application of the Project M&E plan' (see minimum requirements 1&2 in Annex 4). GEF projects must budget adequately for execution of the M&E plan, and provide adequate resources during implementation of the M&E plan. Project managers are also expected to use

the information generated by the M&E system during project implementation to adapt and improve the project.

#### **M&E during project implementation**

- *M&E design.* Projects should have sound M&E plans to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators (see Annex 4) and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should have been specified.
- *M&E plan implementation.* A Terminal Evaluation should verify that: an M&E system was in place and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period (perhaps through use of a logframe or similar); annual project reports and Progress Implementation Review (PIR) reports were complete, accurate and with well justified ratings; that the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs; and that projects had an M&E system in place with proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities.
- *Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities.* The terminal evaluation should determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and was funded in a timely fashion during implementation.

#### **F. Preparation and Readiness**

Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of executing institution and counterparts properly considered when the project was designed? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place?

#### **G. Country ownership / drivenness:**

This is the relevance of the project to national development and environmental agendas, recipient country commitment, and regional and international agreements. The evaluation will:

- Assess the level of country ownership. Specifically, the evaluator should assess whether the project was effective in providing and communicating biodiversity information that catalyzed action in participating countries to improve decisions relating to the conservation and management of the IBAs in each country.
- Assess the level of country commitment to the generation and use of Project outputs during and after the project, including in regional and international fora.

#### **H. Stakeholder participation / public awareness:**

This consists of three related and often overlapping processes: information dissemination, consultation, and "stakeholder" participation. Stakeholders are



the individuals, groups, institutions, or other bodies that have an interest or stake in the outcome of the GEF- financed project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by a project. The evaluation will specifically:

- Assess the mechanisms put in place by the project for identification and engagement of stakeholders in each participating country and establish, in consultation with the stakeholders, whether this mechanism was successful, and identify its strengths and weaknesses.
- Assess the degree and effectiveness of collaboration/interactions between the various project partners and institutions during the course of implementation of the project.
- Assess the degree and effectiveness of any various public awareness activities that were undertaken during the course of implementation of the project.

#### **I. Financial Planning**

Evaluation of financial planning requires assessment of the quality and effectiveness of financial planning and control of financial resources throughout the project's lifetime. Evaluation includes actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co- financing. The evaluation should:

- Assess the strength and utility of financial controls, including reporting, and planning to allow the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for a proper and timely flow of funds for the payment of satisfactory project deliverables.
- Present the major findings from the financial audit if one has been conducted.
- Identify and verify the sources of co- financing as well as leveraged and associated financing (in co-operation with the IA and EA).
- Assess whether the project has applied appropriate standards of due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits.
- The evaluation should also include a breakdown of final actual costs and co-financing for the project prepared in consultation with the relevant UNON/DGEF Fund Management Officer of the project (table attached in Annex 1 Co-financing and leveraged resources).

#### **J. Implementation approach:**

This includes an analysis of the project's management framework, adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management), partnerships in implementation arrangements, changes in project design, and overall project management. The evaluation will:

- Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document have been closely followed. In particular, assess the role of the various committees established and whether the project document was clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation, whether the project was executed according to the plan and how well the management was able to adapt to changes during the life of the project to enable the implementation of the project.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency and adaptability of project management and the supervision of project activities / project execution

arrangements at all levels (1) policy decisions: Steering Group; (2) day to day project management in each of the country executing agencies and UNEP-WCMC.

#### **K. UNEP Supervision and Backstopping**

- Assess the effectiveness of supervision and administrative and financial support provided by UNEP/DGEF.
- Identify administrative, operational and/or technical problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project.

The *ratings will be presented in the form of a table*. Each of the eleven categories should be rated separately with **brief justifications** based on the findings of the main analysis. An overall rating for the project should also be given. The following rating system is to be applied:

HS	= Highly Satisfactory
S	= Satisfactory
MS	= Moderately Satisfactory
MU	= Moderately Unsatisfactory
U	= Unsatisfactory
HU	= Highly Unsatisfactory

#### **4. Evaluation report format and review procedures**

The report should be brief, to the point and easy to understand. It must explain; the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used. The report must highlight any methodological limitations, identify key concerns and present evidence-based findings, consequent conclusions, recommendations and lessons. The report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible and include an executive summary that encapsulates the essence of the information contained in the report to facilitate dissemination and distillation of lessons.

The evaluation will rate the overall implementation success of the project and provide individual ratings of the eleven implementation aspects as described in Section 1 of this TOR. *The ratings will be presented in the format of a table with brief justifications based on the findings of the main analysis.*

Evidence, findings, conclusions and recommendations should be presented in a complete and balanced manner. Any dissident views in response to evaluation findings will be appended in an annex. The evaluation report shall be written in English, be of no more than 50 pages (excluding annexes), use numbered paragraphs and include:

- i) An **executive summary** (no more than 3 pages) providing a brief overview of the main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation;
- ii) **Introduction and background** giving a brief overview of the evaluated project, for example, the objective and status of activities; The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, 2006, requires that a TE report will provide summary information on when the evaluation took place; places visited; who was involved; the key questions; and, the methodology.
- iii) **Scope, objective and methods** presenting the evaluation's purpose, the evaluation criteria used and questions to be addressed;

- iv) **Project Performance and Impact** providing *factual evidence* relevant to the questions asked by the evaluator and interpretations of such evidence. This is the main substantive section of the report. The evaluator should provide a commentary and analysis on all eleven evaluation aspects (A – K above).
- v) **Conclusions and rating** of project implementation success giving the evaluator's concluding assessments and ratings of the project against given evaluation criteria and standards of performance. The conclusions should provide answers to questions about whether the project is considered good or bad, and whether the results are considered positive or negative. The ratings should be provided with a brief narrative comment in a table (see Annex 1);
- vi) **Lessons (to be) learned** presenting general conclusions from the standpoint of the design and implementation of the project, based on good practices and successes or problems and mistakes. Lessons should have the potential for wider application and use. All lessons should 'stand alone' and should:
  - Briefly describe the context from which they are derived
  - State or imply some prescriptive action;
  - Specify the contexts in which they may be applied (if possible, who when and where)
- vii) **Recommendations** suggesting *actionable* proposals for improvement of the current project. In general, Terminal Evaluations are likely to have very few (perhaps two or three) actionable recommendations.

*Prior to each recommendation, the issue(s) or problem(s) to be addressed by the recommendation should be clearly stated.*

A high quality recommendation is an actionable proposal that is:

1. Feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available
2. Commensurate with the available capacities of project team and partners
3. Specific in terms of who would do what and when
4. Contains results-based language (i.e. a measurable performance target)
5. Includes a trade-off analysis, when its implementation may require utilizing significant resources that would otherwise be used for other project purposes.

- viii) **Annexes** may include additional material deemed relevant by the evaluator but must include:
  1. The Evaluation Terms of Reference,
  2. A list of interviewees, and evaluation timeline
  3. A list of documents reviewed / consulted
  4. Summary co-finance information and a statement of project expenditure by activity
  5. The expertise of the evaluation team. (brief CV).

TE reports will also include any response / comments from the project management team and/or the country focal point regarding the evaluation findings or conclusions as an annex to the report, however, such will be appended to the report by UNEP EOU.

Examples of UNEP GEF Terminal Evaluation Reports are available at [www.unep.org/eou](http://www.unep.org/eou)

### **Review of the Draft Evaluation Report**

Draft reports submitted to UNEP EOU are shared with the corresponding Programme or Project Officer and his or her supervisor for initial review and consultation. The DGEF staff and senior Executing Agency staff are allowed to comment on the draft evaluation report. They may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such

errors in any conclusions. The consultation also seeks feedback on the proposed recommendations. UNEP EOU collates all review comments and provides them to the evaluators for their consideration in preparing the final version of the report.

#### **5. Submission of Final Terminal Evaluation Reports.**

The final report shall be submitted in electronic form in MS Word format and should be sent to the following persons:

Segbedzi Norgbey, Chief,  
UNEP Evaluation and Oversight Unit  
P.O. Box 30552-00100  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel.: (254-20) 7624181  
Fax: (254-20) 7623158  
Email: [segbedzi.norgbey@unep.org](mailto:segbedzi.norgbey@unep.org)

With a copy to:

Shafqat Kakakhel, Officer-in-Charge  
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The Final evaluation will also be copied to the following GEF National Focal Points.

#### **COOPER, Donald**

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The final evaluation report will be published on the Evaluation and Oversight Unit's web-site [www.unep.org/eou](http://www.unep.org/eou) and may be printed in hard copy. Subsequently, the report will be sent to the GEF Office of Evaluation for their review, appraisal and inclusion on the GEF website.

#### **6. Resources and schedule of the evaluation**

This final evaluation will be undertaken by an international evaluator contracted by the Evaluation and Oversight Unit, UNEP. The contract for the evaluator will begin August 15, 2007 and end on October 15, 2007 (25 days) spread over 8 weeks (13 days of travel, to Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and 10 days desk study). The evaluator will submit a draft report on October 15, 2007 to UNEP/EOU, the UNEP/DGEF Task Manager, and key representatives of the executing agencies. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to UNEP / EOU for collation and the consultant will be advised of any necessary revisions. Comments to the final draft report will be sent to the consultant by October 31, 2007 after which, the consultant will submit the final report no later than November 15, 2007.

The evaluator will after an initial telephone briefing with EOU and UNEP/GEF conduct initial desk review work and later travel to 3 project countries as listed above and meet with project staff at the beginning of the evaluation.

In accordance with UNEP/GEF policy, all GEF projects are evaluated by independent evaluators contracted as consultants by the EOU. The evaluator should have the following qualifications:

The evaluator should not have been associated with the design and implementation of the project in a paid capacity. The evaluator will work under the overall supervision of the Chief, Evaluation and Oversight Unit, UNEP. The evaluator should be an international expert in biodiversity management or conservation with a sound understanding of biodiversity issues. The consultant should have the following minimum qualifications: (i) experience in international biodiversity issues; (ii) experience with the Caribbean region; (iii) experience with project evaluation. Knowledge of UNEP programmes and GEF activities is desirable. Fluency in oral and written English and Spanish is a must.

#### **7. Schedule Of Payment**

The consultant shall select one of the following two contract options:

**Lump-Sum Option**

The evaluator will receive an initial payment of 30% of the total amount due upon signature of the contract. A further 30% will be paid upon submission of the draft report. A final payment of 40% will be made upon satisfactory completion of work. The fee is payable under the individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) of the evaluator and **is inclusive** of all expenses such as travel, accommodation and incidental expenses.

**Fee-only Option**

The evaluator will receive an initial payment of 40% of the total amount due upon signature of the contract. Final payment of 60% will be made upon satisfactory completion of work. The fee is payable under the individual SSAs of the evaluator and is **NOT** inclusive of all expenses such as travel, accommodation and incidental expenses. Ticket and DSA will be paid separately.

In case, the evaluator cannot provide the products in accordance with the TORs, the timeframe agreed, or his products are substandard, the payment to the evaluator could be withheld, until such a time the products are modified to meet UNEP's standard. In case the evaluator fails to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP, the product prepared by the evaluator may not constitute the evaluation report.

## Annex 1. OVERALL RATINGS TABLE

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
<b>A. Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating)</b> Sub criteria (below)		
A. 1. Effectiveness		
A. 2. Relevance		
A. 3. Efficiency		
<b>B. Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating)</b> Sub criteria (below)		
B. 1. Financial		
B. 2. Socio Political		
B. 3. Institutional framework and governance		
B. 4. Ecological		
<b>C. Achievement of outputs and activities</b>		
<b>D. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating)</b> Sub criteria (below)		
D. 1. M&E Design		
D. 2. M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)		
D. 3. Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities		
<b>E. Catalytic Role</b>		
<b>F. Preparation and readiness</b>		
<b>G. Country ownership / drivenness</b>		
<b>H. Stakeholders involvement</b>		
<b>I. Financial planning</b>		
<b>J. Implementation approach</b>		
<b>K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping</b>		

## RATING OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Satisfactory (S): The project had minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The project had significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Unsatisfactory (U) The project had major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project had severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

**Please note:** Relevance and effectiveness will be considered as critical criteria. The overall rating of the project for achievement of objectives and results **may not be higher** than the lowest rating on either of these two criteria. Thus, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes a project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness.

## RATINGS ON SUSTAINABILITY



- A. Sustainability will be understood as the probability of continued long-term outcomes and impacts after the GEF project funding ends. The Terminal evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends. Some of these factors might be outcomes of the project, i.e. stronger institutional capacities, legal frameworks, socio-economic incentives /or public awareness. Other factors will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not outcomes of the project but that are relevant to the sustainability of outcomes..

Rating system for sustainability sub-criteria

On each of the dimensions of sustainability of the project outcomes will be rated as follows.

Likely (L): There are no risks affecting this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Unlikely (MU): There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability

Unlikely (U): There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

According to the GEF Office of Evaluation, all the risk dimensions of sustainability are deemed critical. Therefore, overall rating for sustainability will not be higher than the rating of the dimension with lowest ratings. For example, if a project has an Unlikely rating in any of the dimensions then its overall rating cannot be higher than Unlikely, regardless of whether higher ratings in other dimensions of sustainability produce a higher average.

**RATINGS OF PROJECT M&E**

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing project with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, its design, implementation and results. Project evaluation may involve the definition of appropriate standards, the examination of performance against those standards, and an assessment of actual and expected results.

The Project monitoring and evaluation system will be rated on ‘M&E Design’, ‘M&E Plan Implementation’ and ‘Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities’ as follows:

Highly Satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Satisfactory(S): There were minor shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were moderate shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The Project had no M&E system.

“M&E plan implementation” will be considered a critical parameter for the overall assessment of the M&E system. The overall rating for the M&E systems will not be higher than the rating on “M&E plan implementation.”

All other ratings will be on the GEF six point scale.

GEF Performance Description	Alternative description on the same scale
HS = Highly Satisfactory	Excellent
S = Satisfactory	Well above average
MS = Moderately Satisfactory	Average
MU = Moderately Unsatisfactory	Below Average
U = Unsatisfactory	Poor
HU = Highly Unsatisfactory	Very poor (Appalling)

## Annex 2. Co-financing and Leveraged Resources

### Co-financing (basic data to be supplied to the consultant for verification)

Co financing (Type/Source)	IA own Financing (mill US\$)		Government (mill US\$)		Other* (mill US\$)		Total (mill US\$)		Total Disbursement (mill US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
- Grants										
- Loans/Concessional (compared to market rate)										
- Credits										
- Equity investments										
- In-kind support										
- Other (*)										
-										
-										
-										
-										
-										
<b>Totals</b>										

\* Other is referred to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

### **Leveraged Resources**

Leveraged resources are additional resources—beyond those committed to the project itself at the time of approval—that are mobilized later as a direct result of the project. Leveraged resources can be financial or in-kind and they may be from other donors, NGO's, foundations, governments, communities or the private sector. Please briefly describe the resources the project has leveraged since inception and indicate how these resources are contributing to the project's ultimate objective.

**Table showing final actual project expenditure by activity to be supplied by the UNEP Fund management Officer. (insert here)**

## Annex 3

### Review of the Draft Report

Draft reports submitted to UNEP EOU are shared with the corresponding Programme or Project Officer and his or her supervisor for initial review and consultation. The DGEF staff and senior Executing Agency staff provide comments on the draft evaluation report. They may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. The consultation also seeks agreement on the findings and recommendations. UNEP EOU collates the review comments and provides them to the evaluators for their consideration in preparing the final version of the report. General comments on the draft report with respect to compliance with these TOR are shared with the reviewer.

### Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

All UNEP GEF Mid Term Reports are subject to quality assessments by UNEP EOU. These apply GEF Office of Evaluation quality assessment and are used as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluator.

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

GEF Report Quality Criteria	UNEP EOU Assessment	Rating
A. Did the report present an assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives in the context of the focal area program indicators if applicable?		
B. Was the report consistent and the evidence complete and convincing and were the ratings substantiated when used?		
C. Did the report present a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes?		
D. Were the lessons and recommendations supported by the evidence presented?		
E. Did the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?		
F. Did the report include an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?		
UNEP EOU additional Report Quality Criteria	UNEP EOU Assessment	Rating
G. Quality of the lessons: Were lessons readily applicable in other contexts? Did they suggest prescriptive action?		
H. Quality of the recommendations: Did recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented? Did the recommendations specify a goal and an associated performance indicator?		
I. Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)		
J. Did the report structure follow EOU guidelines, were all requested Annexes included?		
K. Were all evaluation aspects specified in the TORs adequately addressed?		
L. Was the report delivered in a timely manner		

**GEF Quality of the MTE report =  $0.3*(A + B) + 0.1*(C+D+E+F)$**

**EOU assessment of MTE report =  $0.3*(G + H) + 0.1*(I+J+K+L)$**

**Combined quality Rating =  $(2* \text{'GEF EO' rating} + \text{EOU rating})/3$**

The Totals are rounded and converted to the scale of HS to HU

#### Rating system for quality of terminal evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = 0.

## **Annex 4 GEF Minimum requirements for M&E**

### **Minimum Requirement 1: Project Design of M&E<sup>77</sup>**

All projects must include a concrete and fully budgeted monitoring and evaluation plan by the time of Work Program entry (full-sized projects) or CEO approval (medium-sized projects).

This plan must contain at a minimum:

- SMART (see below) indicators for project implementation, or, if no indicators are identified, an alternative plan for monitoring that will deliver reliable and valid information to management
- SMART indicators for results (outcomes and, if applicable, impacts), and, where appropriate, corporate-level indicators
- A project baseline, with:
  - a description of the problem to address
  - indicator data
  - or, if major baseline indicators are not identified, an alternative plan for addressing this within one year of implementation
- An M&E Plan with identification of reviews and evaluations which will be undertaken, such as mid-term reviews or evaluations of activities
- An organizational setup and budgets for monitoring and evaluation.

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## Minimum Requirement 2: Application of Project M&E

- Project monitoring and supervision will include implementation of the M&E plan, comprising:
- Use of SMART indicators for implementation (or provision of a reasonable explanation if not used)
- Use of SMART indicators for results (or provision of a reasonable explanation if not used)
- Fully established baseline for the project and data compiled to review progress
- Evaluations are undertaken as planned
- Operational organizational setup for M&E and budgets spent as planned.

**SMART INDICATORS** GEF projects and programs should monitor using relevant performance indicators. The monitoring system should be "SMART":

1. **Specific:** The system captures the essence of the desired result by clearly and directly relating to achieving an objective, and only that objective.
2. **Measurable:** The monitoring system and its indicators are unambiguously specified so that all parties agree on what the system covers and there are practical ways to measure the indicators and results.
3. **Achievable and Attributable:** The system identifies what changes are anticipated as a result of the intervention and whether the result(s) are realistic. Attribution requires that changes in the targeted developmental issue can be linked to the intervention.
4. **Relevant and Realistic:** The system establishes levels of performance that are likely to be achieved in a practical manner, and that reflect the expectations of stakeholders.
5. **Time-bound, Timely, Trackable, and Targeted:** The system allows progress to be tracked in a cost-effective manner at desired frequency for a set period, with clear identification of the particular stakeholder group to be impacted by the project or program.

**Annex 5 List of intended additional recipients for the Terminal Evaluation (to be completed by the IA Task Manager)**

Name	Affiliation	Email
Aaron Zazueta	GEF Evaluation Office	azazueta@thegef.org
<b>Government Officials</b>		
<b>GEF Focal Point(s)</b>		
<b>Executing Agency</b>		
<b>Implementing Agency</b>		
Carmen Tavera	UNEP DGEF Portfolio Manager	



## Annex 2: List of interviewees, and Evaluation timeline

Name	Institution and position	Date interviewed
<b>International</b>		
Kristin MacLaughlin	(By phone) UNEP-DGEF Task Manager, Washington DC, US	5/10/07
David Wege	Project Manager, BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK	9/10/07
Mike Evans	(By Phone) IBA Data Conservation Manager, BirdLife International, UK	3/12/07
Lincoln Fishpool	(By Phone) Global IBA Coordinator, BirdLife International, UK	3/12/07
Lisa Sorenson	(By phone) Manager, WIWD-WC Project Coordinator, member of CRAG, Vice-President SCSCB	4/12/07
<b>Jamaica</b>		
Catherine Levy	Project Consultant	12-13/10/07
Diane McCauley	Chief Executive Officer, Jamaica Environmental Trust	11/10/07
Nadia Watson-Spence	Senior Project Coordinator, Jamaica Environmental Trust	11/10/07
Tracy Commock	Director, Institute of Jamaica	11/10/07
Sean Townsend	Senior Research Officer, Institute of Jamaica	11/10/07
Marilyn Headley	Conservator of Forests, Forestry Department	12/10/07
Owen Evelyn	Resource Planning Manager	12/10/07
Alli Morgan	Director, Technical Services, Forestry Department	12/10/07
Leonie Barnaby	GEF Operational Focal Point, Government of Jamaica	13/10/07
Mike Schwarz	Manager, Windsor Research Centre, Treasurer of northern Cockpit LFMC	14-16/10/07
Susan Koenig	Chief Scientist, Windsor Research Centre	14-16/10/07
Laurna Williams	Secretary, Northern Cockpit LFMC	15/10/07
Asberga Harwood	Member, Northern Cockpit LFMC	15/10/07
<b>Dominican Republic</b>		
José Almante	GEF Operational Focal Point, Planning Directorate, SEMARN	18/10/07
Sésar Rodríguez	Director, Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD)	18/10/07
Laura Perdomo	IBA Coordinator, Grupo Jaragua	18-23/10/07
Yvone Arias	Director, Grupo Jaragua	18-23/10/07
Esteban Garrido	Member of Voluntario Comunitario de Jaragua (VCJ), member of Grupo Jaragua Board, and local liaison for Grupo Jaragua	21-22/10/07
Héctor Jiménez	Boat Captain, Oviedo Lagoon group, Jaragua National Park SSG	21/10/07
Saturnino Santana	Local nature guide, Oviedo Lagoon group, Jaragua National Park SSG	21-22/10/07
Pablo Feliz	Member of Oviedo Lagoon group, Jaragua National Park SSG	21/10/07
Francisco Saldane	President of local guides, Oviedo Lagoon group, Jaragua National Park SSG	22/10/07
Héctor Andujar	Member of Fundo Paradi group, Jaragua National Park SSG	21-22/10/07
Jaino Isaa Matos	Member of Fundo Paradi group Jaragua National Park SSG	22/10/07
Luis Manuel Cueras	Local guide and Member of Voluntario Comunitario de Jaragua (VCJ)	22/10/07
José Manuel Perez	Local guide and President, Voluntario Comunitario de Jaragua (VCJ)	22/10/07
Olga Vidal	Member of Voluntario Comunitario de Jaragua (VCJ), member of GJ Board	22/10/07
Katia de Vilomar	Manager of Hotel Doña Chava	21/10/07
Sixto Incháustegui	UNDP Country Office, and member of CRAG	23/10/07
Juana Peña	Wildlife Department, SEMARN and focal point for Ramsar Convention	23/10/07
Bolívar Cabrera	Wildlife Department, SEMARN	23/10/07
<b>The Bahamas</b>		
Lynn Gape	Deputy Executive Director, Bahamas National Trust	25/10 – 2/11/07
Predensa Moore	IBA Officer, Bahamas National Trust	25/10-1/11/07
Anita Knowles	Office Manager, Friends of the Environment, Abaco	29/10/07
Nancy Albury	Friends of the Environment, Abaco	29/11/07
David Knowles	Agricultural Officer for Abaco, and member of Friends of the Environment	29/10/07
Henry Nixon	(by phone) Head Warden, Inagua National Park	31/10/07
Stacey Moultrie	TNC (Bahamas) and former BEST employee	31/10/07
Deon Stewart	Senior Technical Officer, BEST	31/10/07
Teresa Butler	Special Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister and GEF Political Focal Point	31/10/07
Carolyn Wardle	(by phone) Nature tour guide, New Providence	1/11/07
Erika Gates	(by phone) Kayak Nature Tours, Grand Bahama	1/11/07

Eric Carey	Executive Director, Bahamas National Trust, Board member of SCSCB	2/11/07
Casper Burrows	Head Warden, Harrold and Wilson Ponds	2/11/07
Sheila Cox	Head of Ecotourism Unit, Ministry of Tourism	2/11/07
Earlston McPhee	Sustainable Tourism, Ministry of Tourism	2/11/07

### **Annex 3: A list of documents reviewed / consulted**

#### ***i. Key Project-related documents reviewed***

- Project Document - Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats: Strengthening a Regional Network for a Shared Resource. Project Number GEF 2713-03, PIMS GF/1020-03
- Draft Terminal Report on the Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats: Strengthening a Regional Network for a Shared Resource. Project Number GEF 2713-03, PIMS GF/1020-03
- UNEP-GEF Project Implementation Review Financial Year 2007. (1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007). 26pp.
- UNEP-GEF Project Implementation Review Financial Year 2006. (1 July 2006 to 30 June 2006). 29pp.
- UNEP-GEF Project Implementation Review Financial Year 2005. (1 July 2006 to 30 June 2005). 29pp.
- UNEP Supervision Mission 2005: feedback on comments and recommendations. 10pp.
- BirdLife Caribbean Program (David Wege). BirdLife Jamaica and the GEF Program in the Caribbean: risk assessment following removal from the Partnership. 25 June 2004.
- Biannual Project Progress Reports for Jan-Jun 2004, Jul-Dec 2004, Jan-June 2005, Jul-Dec 2005, Jan-Jun 2006, Jul-Dec 2006.
- Draft Project Case Study for Inagua National Park (Bahamas).
- Draft Project Case Study for Abaco National Park (Bahamas).
- Draft Project Case Study for Harrold and Wilson Ponds (Bahamas).
- Draft Project Case Study for Laguna de Oviedo (Dominican Republic)
- Draft Project Case Study for Fondo Paradi (Dominican Republic)
- Draft Project Case Study for Cockpit Country (Jamaica)
- Draft Project Case Study for Mount Diablo (Jamaica)
- Deloitte and Touche (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006). Report on Factual Findings, United Nations Environmental Programme – Global Environmental Facility, Project number GF/2713-03-4698 PMS: 1020-03-02.
- Williams, S.A. (2007). Strategic Management Plan for the Royal Palm Reserve and the Negril Great Morass. Draft. Prepared for the Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust. 46pp.
- Reporting Progress at Protected Area Sites: Data Sheet for Jaragua National Park (Oviedo Lagoon), January 2005, March 2006, October 2007.
- Grupo Jaragua (2005). Programa Areas Importantes para la conservación de las aves. Sistematización de la formación de grupos locales de apoyo – Glas. 8pp.

#### ***ii. Other key documents reviewed or consulted***

- BirdLife Caribbean Program (David Wege). Biodiversity conservation in the Insular Caribbean: catalyzing site action through local, national and regional partnerships. Final, end of project (2002-2004) report to the MacArthur Foundation for Grant No: 01-69342.
- Sorenson, L.G., Bradley, P.E., and Sutton, A.H. (2004). The West Indian Whistling-Duck and Wetlands Conservation Project: a model for species and wetlands conservation and education. The Journal of Caribbean Ornithology. Special Issuing Honoring Nedra Klein. Pp72-81.
- Sorenson, L.G., Wallace, K., and Mugica, L. (2005). Education, awareness and community training initiatives – expanding on what works and ideas for new initiatives. Journal of Caribbean Ornithology 18:84-86.
- The Bahamas National Trust (2007). General Management Plan: Abaco National Park. (Draft).
- Windsor Research Centre (2007). Draft Forest Management Plan – Cockpit Country/Martha Brae Watershed, Jamaica.
- Jamaica Environmental Advocacy Network (JEAN) (2007). Save Cockpit Country Fact Sheet. 8 pages.
- JET (2006). Earth News. Newsletter of the Jamaica Environment Trust. June 2006 Edition. 4 pages.
- Global Environment Facility (2002). GEF Business plan FY 03-05. Prepared for GEF Council May 15-17, 2002. 50pp.
- Global Environment Facility (2003). Strategic Business Planning: Direction and Targets. Prepared for GEF Council May 14-16, 2003. 43pp.

**Annex 4: Co-financing and Leveraged Resources (data as of 31/7/2007, supplied by UNEP)**

Co financing (Type/Source)	IA own Financing (mill US\$)		Government (mill US\$)		Other* (mill US\$)		Total (mill US\$)		Total Disbursement (mill US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants	0.974	0.955			0.681	2.055	1.655	3.01	1.655	3.01
Loans/Concessional (compared to market rate)										
Credits										
Equity investments										
In-kind support					0.291	0.255	0.291	0.255	0.291	0.255
Other (*)										
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0.974</b>	<b>0.955</b>			<b>0.972</b>	<b>2.310</b>	<b>1.946</b>	<b>3.256</b>	<b>1.946</b>	<b>3.256</b>

\* Other is referred to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

***Leveraged Resources***

Leveraged resources are additional resources—beyond those committed to the project itself at the time of approval—that are mobilized later as a direct result of the project. Leveraged resources can be financial or in-kind and they may be from other donors, NGO's, foundations, governments, communities or the private sector. Please briefly describe the resources the project has leveraged since inception and indicate how these resources are contributing to the project's ultimate objective.

### Annex 5: Sources of project co-financing (cash and in-kind contributions)

Source of Co-financing	Cash Contributions			In-kind Contributions		
	Budget at time of GEF approval	Budget latest revision (forecast)	Received to date (actual)	Budget at time of GEF approval	Budget latest revision (forecast)	Received to date (actual)
Wetlands International	59,000	56,810	56,810			
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	22,500	22,500	22,500			
MacArthur Foundation	250,000	250,000	250,000			
British Birdwatching Fair	194,945	210,000	210,000			
Canadian International Dev. Agency	50,000	48,000	48,000			
US Fish and Wildlife Service	105,000	138,000	138,000			
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	0	8,823	8,823	47,000	47,000	47,000
BirdLife International				11,000	11,000	11,000
Bahamas National Trust				87,400	62,400	57,300
BirdLife Jamaica				134,905	0	0
PDF-A in-kind co-funding				10,900	10,900	10,900
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	0	5,000	5,000			
DGIS - Dutch Government	0	25,530	25,530			
TMF - Dutch Government	0	11,000	11,000			
American Bird Conservancy	0	7,500	7,500			
Neotrop. Migratory Bird Cons. Fund	0	100,000	100,000			
Neotrop. Migratory Bird Cons. Fund	0	99,550	70,000			
US Fish and Wildlife Service	0	50,500	50,500			
Jamaica Environment Trust				0	500	500
Jamaica Environment Trust				0	46,000	46,000
Jamaica Environment Trust				0	23,450	23,450
Jamaica Environment Trust				0	5,400	5,400
Jamaica Environment Trust				0	8,750	8,750
Hispaniolan Orn. Soc.				0		950
Morton Bahamas Ltd				0	6,700	6,700
Eagle Optics				0	1,800	1,800
Inagua workshop facilitator				0	1,750	1,750
MacArthur Foundation	0	0	0			
MacArthur Foundation	0	375,000	375,000			
ZoosHelp Holland	0	8,425	8,425			
CANARI + 3 Municipalities	0	73,000	73,000			
Society for Cons. Study Carib. Birds				0	20,000	20,000
National Aquarium, Santo Domingo				0	410	410
Asociacion de Guias de Turismo de la Republica Dominicana, Inc.				0	180	180
International Resources Group				0	620	620
Wayne State University		1,593	1,593	0	3,993	3,993
US Fish and Wildlife Service	0	21,000	21,000			
US Fish and Wildlife Service	0	50,000	50,000			
USFWS Winged Ambassadors Program	0	34,000	34,000			
US Environmental Protection Agency	0	40,000	40,000			
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	0	8,780	8,780			
National Fish and Wildlife Foundaton	0	50,000	50,000			
UN Food and Agriculture Organisation	0	16,000	16,000			
MacArthur Foundation	0	58,000	58,000			
Disney Wildlife Foundation	0	16,000	16,000			
Family Guardian Insurance Co.	0	10,000	10,000			

Commonwealth Bank, Bahamas	0	5,000	5,000			
MacTaggart Third Fund	0	10,000	10,000			
Private Donors, New Providence	0	100,000	100,000			
Jamaica consultant				0	8,000	8,000
Boston University				0	549	549
Environmental Foundation of Jamaica	0	75,000	75,000			
EU via UNESCO	0	200,000	100,000			
<b>Total</b>	681,445	2,185,011	<b>2,055,461</b>	291,205	259,402	<b>255,252</b>

**Annex 6: Sustainable Conservation of Globally Important Caribbean Bird Habitats Project actual reported expenditure by area (for period 1/10/2003-31/7/2007, data supplied by UNEP)**

	Project Component	Project budget	Cumulative Expenditure	Unspent balance of budget
		REVISED	Cumulative to 31 July 07	Cumulative to 31 July 07
		US\$	US\$	US\$
<b>PROJECT PERSONNEL</b>				
1101	Caribbean Program Manager	100,390	100,390	(0)
1101	Caribbean Program Assistant	0	0	0
1102	Communications Officer	12,037	12,037	(0)
<b>1199</b>	<b>Sub-total - Project Personnel</b>	<b>112,427</b>	<b>112,427</b>	<b>(0)</b>
1201	Media/communications training staff	7,638	7,638	(0)
1200	Caribbean Consultant	12,000	12,488	(488)
1201	Communications editor	2,800	2,937	(137)
<b>1299</b>	<b>Sub-total - Consultants</b>	<b>22,438</b>	<b>23,064</b>	<b>(626)</b>
1301	Finance and Contract Administrator	13,556	13,556	(0)
<b>1399</b>	<b>Sub-total - Administrative support</b>	<b>13,556</b>	<b>13,556</b>	<b>(0)</b>
1601	Regional meetings and workshop	14,828	13,890	938
<b>1699</b>	<b>Sub-total - Travel on official business</b>	<b>14,828</b>	<b>13,890</b>	<b>938</b>
<b>1999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>163,249</b>	<b>162,936</b>	<b>313</b>
<b>SUB-CONTRACT</b>				
2201	NEPT	28,500	29,778	(1,278)
2201	Windsor Research Centre	74,850	74,915	(65)
2201	BirdLife Jamaica	2,166	2,166	(0)
2201	Jamaica Environment Trust	50,000	50,141	(141)
2201	Jamaica consultant	12,000	12,141	(141)
2201	NHD	500	0	500
2202	Grupo Jaragua, Dom. Rep.	222,100	230,111	(8,011)
2203	Bahamas National Trust	199,700	190,360	9,340
2204	SCSCB	78,800	79,191	(391)
2205	Bird Studies Canada	64,500	62,555	1,945
<b>2299</b>	<b>Sub-total - Sub-contracts</b>	<b>733,116</b>	<b>731,357</b>	<b>1,759</b>
<b>2999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>733,116</b>	<b>731,357</b>	<b>1,759</b>
<b>TRAINING</b>				
3201	Media training workshop	4,457	4,457	(0)
3202	Strategic conservation planning workshop	1,500	2,573	(1,073)
3203	Finance training workshop	2,000	1,057	943
3204	Site manager exchange visits (additional countries)	4,000	4,127	(127)



3200	Regional meetings, workshops		1,991	(1,991)
<b>3299</b>	<b>Sub-total - Group training</b>	11,957	14,205	(2,248)
3301	Regional BirdLife Partnership meeting	4,691	4,691	0
3302	Caribbean IBA Program meeting	20,400	21,007	(607)
<b>3399</b>	<b>Sub-total - Meetings/conferences</b>	25,091	25,698	(607)
<b>3999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>37,048</b>	<b>39,902</b>	<b>(2,854)</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT &amp; PREMISES</b>				
4201	Computer hardware	6,000	6,354	(354)
<b>4299</b>	<b>Sub-total - Non-expendable equipment</b>	6,000	6,354	(354)
<b>4999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>6,354</b>	<b>(354)</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>				
5201	Regional newsletter and leaflets, brochures etc.	15,787	14,216	1,571
5202	Regional IBA directory	19,000	0	19,000
<b>5299</b>	<b>Sub-total - Reporting costs</b>	34,787	14,216	20,571
<b>5999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>34,787</b>	<b>14,216</b>	<b>20,571</b>
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>974,200</b>	<b>954,766</b>	<b>19,434</b>
				19,434

## **Annex 7. Short Profile of the Evaluator**

**Nigel Varty**, BA (Oxford), PhD (London) has over 20 years experience of conservation, including 6 years as a Programme and Projects Manager at BirdLife International, and 2 years as a consultant for the World Bank. He has particular experience in strategic conservation policy and planning (e.g. NBSAPs); biodiversity and wildlife issues (both marine and terrestrial systems) and the sustainable utilisation of natural resources (including sustainable land management, fisheries, hunting and ecotourism). He has worked on many site-based and protected area projects, including the development of a Management Plan for the Morne Diablotin National Park, Dominica in the Caribbean, that included island tourism development, sustainable natural resource management and building capacity of the government protected area department, and was part of a UNOPS/UNDP funded team that reviewed the lessons learned from the Site Support Group/National Liaison Committee approaches in Africa in early 2007.

He has worked on projects in over 20 developing countries, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union, including Brazil, Colombia, Dominica, Jamaica, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Cameroon, Somalia, the Seychelles, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Tunisia, as well as regional projects covering the Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Red Sea, Africa, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Southern Ocean, and the wider Caribbean.

He has long experience in project design, development and planning, preparation and coordination of successful funding proposals to major bilateral, multi-lateral and private sector donors, including GEF (Biodiversity, International Waters and Land Degradation Focal Areas) and EU (LIFE, Tropical Forest and Environment, other budget lines) and undertaken many project evaluation and supervisory missions including GEF projects for UNDP and the World Bank. He has good multi-cultural and interpersonal abilities with proven diplomatic and leadership skills, and his NGO background has provided considerable experience of participatory approaches to the management of natural resources and to solving environmental problems and conflicts.

**Annex 8: Assessment of achievement of site action projects (given in Annex 6 of Project Document)**

Project and Purpose	Planned Activities	Assessment of achievement of planned activities and comments
<b>Nature tourism and community income generation at Inagua National Park (Bahamas)</b>		
<p>1. Initiate activities that support both long-term conservation and community involvement in the Park’s protection</p> <p>2. Expand bird guide training opportunities for local citizens and promote entrepreneurial opportunities in ecotourism</p> <p>3. Provide the necessary equipment to support resource protection goals in the park</p>	<p>1. Survey and monitor the birds and vegetation of the park to establish baseline data from which to develop management plans</p> <p>2. Train local community volunteers in survey and monitoring techniques through a “citizen science” program</p> <p>3. Promote alternative income opportunities for local citizens through enhanced bird tour guiding training and certification</p> <p>4. Provide education on Inagua National Park biodiversity and conservation to local schools and communities</p> <p>5. Provide the infrastructure and equipment necessary to support conservation/ protection /training objectives</p>	<p>Progress on the island has been very slow. Most surveys are complete and the SSG group (Sam Nixon Bird Club - very active with members as young as 5 participating) is established and trained and carrying out monitoring (about once a month depending on weather and transport). The management plan does not exist and BNT’s view is that as the site is isolated, difficult to get to and has few visitors (and their access is controlled because of the difficult terrain), a plan is not a priority compared with other national parks in the Bahamas and will probably only be done in 3-4 years. The project sought to diversify local livelihoods to provide an alternative to the main employer on the island through nature tourism, but this has still not been successfully developed. There is only one certified bird tour guide on the island although several others are ready to take the exam but haven’t. However, opportunities for bird/nature tourism are very limited due to the difficulty and expense of reaching the island (requires a minimum 3-day trip because of flight connections), and not been successful (current Head Warden, the only qualified guide, estimates he gets no more than 10 nature tourists/year). There is no specific marketing of Inagua National Park for ecotourism by the Ministry of Tourism and bird tourism considered too specific (it is clear that the Ministry could do more to promote ecotourism in the Bahamas, particularly outside of Grand Bahama). Instead, Inagua needs a range of options, e.g. deep-sea fishing, diving, wilderness experience, birdwatching and perhaps health-centred holidays (e.g. spa, yoga, etc). A group of about 30 specialist travel consultants from the North America and Europe (e.g. Naturetrek), recently visited the island (trip organised by the Ministry of Tourism) to look at the possibilities for ecotourism. Ecological carrying capacity for the island has not been determined (although the key areas within the national park are off limits to visitors during the flamingo breeding season), but there is a very limited number of beds on the island (no more than 100) so this is not likely to be a significant issue in the near future. Any ecotourism follow-up for the project needs to be linked to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) work – the ‘Inagua Development Plan’, which is being led by the government’s Planning Department. Successful schools programme carried out by the project, and equipment has been supplied to support conservation/ protection /training objectives, including a vehicle. Moreton Bahamas, the salt company on Inagua and chief employer of the population, has been a keen supporter of the BNT, and donated the Moreton Museum as an office for the Inagua National Park and the IBA programme. The Evaluation has a concern that the results of the project may be jeopardised on Inagua if the salt company should collapse, as many of the local inhabitants would be forced to leave the island in search of work.</p> <p><b>Rating – Satisfactory</b></p>

<b>Abaco National Park expansion, management and monitoring (Bahamas)</b>		
<p>1. Annex “Hole in the Wall” to the Abaco National Park</p> <p>2. Assess impact of introduced predators and fire on the distribution and population of the globally threatened Bahama Parrot through surveys and monitoring</p> <p>3. Develop an introduced predator control program</p> <p>4. Develop a forestry management plan</p> <p>5. Assess the status and distribution of the park’s avifauna, especially endemic species and the globally threatened West Indian Whistling-duck</p>	<p>1. Develop and implement a plan of action to annex “Hole in the Wall” to Abaco National Park</p> <p>2. Develop local capacity for site surveys and forest management through training workshops</p> <p>3. Undertake avian surveys of the park to establish the status and distribution of the park’s priority species, including the globally threatened Kirtland’s Warbler and West Indian Whistling-duck</p> <p>4. Carry out surveys to establish current Abaco status and distribution of the Bahama Parrot</p> <p>5. Assess the impact of introduced predators on the parrot population and develop options for predator control</p> <p>6. Raise the awareness of the local communities through school visits to the park and outreach materials</p>	<p>This additional site was chosen because along with the Inaqua National Park it is only site for the Bahamas Parrot <i>Amazona leucocephala bahemensis</i>. ‘Hole in the Wall’ was not annexed as investigation showed it to be on private land rather than public as originally thought. Successful training workshops in bird identification, survey and monitoring were held for SSG (Friends of the Environment) members. Monitoring, largely of the parrot, was carried out by the SSG but not regularly or as extensive or regularly as they would have liked it due to lack of funds for transport and logistics. There is considerable uncertainty among SSG members over what they are empowered to do within the Park as there is still no formal agreement (MoU) with the BNT, which has legal responsibility for the site. Predator control and fire management programmes have been designed and are being carried out (involving the SSG). A draft management plan, developed in a participatory fashion, involving almost all of the surrounding communities and including the SSG, has been developed and waiting final approval. Some awareness-raising activities have been undertaken by the project but there has already been a huge amount of this on the island from previous projects. Research undertaken as part of the project shows that the nesting area of the parrot is not confined to the Park and that the birds regular feed considerably further north and along the coastal section in ‘coppice’ forest, much of which is under private ownership and not protected. Consequently, there is a case for expanding the Park (which has much local support even among hunters), as the parrot population is not completely safe. The FoE claimed that there is hunting on the island, as the younger generation is less interested, which they attribute to environmental awareness-raising campaigns over the last 15 years, including from the GEF project.</p> <p><b>Rating – Marginally Satisfactory</b></p>
<b>Bahamas Watchable Wildlife Pond: Harrold and Wilson’s National Park (Bahamas)</b>		
<p>1. To protect the critical avian habitat located at Harrold and Wilson Ponds</p> <p>2. To develop the park as the country’s first watchable wildlife site</p> <p>3. To promote Harrold and Wilson Ponds’ value for teaching, learning, and enjoying birds and their habitats</p>	<p>1. Complete a survey of the site to formalize and mark the park boundaries</p> <p>2. Work with local land owners and other stakeholders to participatively plan for the parks conservation and educational/recreational use</p> <p>3. Establish a Site Support Group</p> <p>4. Identify best areas for, and install viewing platforms, boardwalks and feeding platforms as appropriate</p> <p>5. Install interpretive signage to help identify most commonly seen bird life in the area</p> <p>6. In collaboration with Min. Tourism, promote bird watching at the site, with and without formal guides</p> <p>7. Develop instructional/training programs in field survey and monitoring techniques</p>	<p>Survey of site as been completed and some of park boundaries marked (but not obvious in most places). Questions over ownership, boundaries and access to the site and legal challenges have delayed development of the site. Conflicts with local landowners are still not fully resolved but a solution for relocation of the owner of a small chicken farm at the site has been found. Engagement of local communities has been less successful, with the SSG comprising the BNT’s Ornithology Group (not local), management of park not yet participatory, and hostility from some communities bordering site (rastafarian ‘community’ at one site on southern edge). However, some 200 local people attended the official opening of site by the (former) Prime Minister in March 2007, and the BNT undertaken some efforts to engage local communities around the WWP in site activities through door-to-door outreach and the production of a special ‘neighbours’ brochure. There is plan to establish a local community park management group as an initial step to creating an independent SSG. There is recognition at the BNT that it will take 2-3 years to properly engage local communities/housing estates and increased effort will go into this. A professional ‘concept plan’ for the site was produced with a vision of how the infrastructure of the site could be developed, with a focus on interpretation and local public use and environmental restoration, and will provide an urban wetland experience, which is innovative for the Caribbean. The document was key in convincing local donors to give money for the site, e.g. Barcadi gave US\$150,000, as it provided</p>

	8. Develop a participative plan of action for controlling alien invasive species	<p>the opportunity to demonstrate the vision of how the National Park will look, and although it was expensive to produce it is judged money well spent. At present there are few money-making opportunities at the Ponds for residents. Bird watching tours to the site have not yet been established as the infrastructure is only partially complete (two access points to the Park with small defined parking areas, a trailhead and some interpretation signage were present during the Evaluation visit). A RARE project, which will promote the site as a WWP with a special emphasis on educational activities and building local pride in the site, due to start site activities in December 2007. There is a threat from infilling and rubbish dumping and some hunting by locals (evidenced by the Evaluation), but these have apparently been reduced. Restoration and clearance of invasive species begun, and some site monitoring has taken place (although this was halted in March 2007 because of other work). However, the site does not have a management plan or financial sustainability plan for the park.</p> <p><b>Rating - Satisfactory</b></p>
<b>Oviedo Dry Forest in Jaragua National Park (Dominican Republic)</b>		
1. Contribute to the sustainable use and conservation of habitats in Jaragua National Park buffer areas through the establishment of a sustainable use project site in the Jaragua National Park buffer zone	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and develop a network of stakeholders of the area</li> <li>2. Establish a database of pertinent information including land use</li> <li>3. Develop a participatory management plan for the sustainable use of the northern buffer zone</li> <li>4. Establish a community bird watching forest</li> </ol>	<p>The SSG comprises four local groups and communities. The status of the ‘database’ is unclear although there has been collection and collation of information on the site by GJ. A management plan for the northern buffer zone of the JNP was already largely complete before the GEF funds came on line, using funds from an earlier MacArthur Foundation grant. The plan was updated and extended with the GEF funds (not viewed by the Evaluation) to include new land use issues that had resulted due to changes in local government (the new mayor bought up and enclosed land). However, it is unclear whether the plan has been adopted by local landowners and the extent to which it is being implemented. A community bird-watching forest has been established at Fondo Paradí, building on previous projects<sup>78</sup>, which constructed trails, signage and a camp site. The local group (members of the Jaragua NP SSG), are developing alternative income activities from bird tours, selling locally produced honey and a tree nursery for native and endemic species (including wild seed collection), although all of these activities are very small scale (apparently there are less than 100 visitors a year on the bird tours, much less than occurs at the neighbouring Laguna de Oviedo) and the Evaluation has some doubts over their long-term sustainability (although follow-up funding proposals and funds provided by Spanish Cooperation and others are likely to help). Significant educational and awareness-raising activities have been carried out at the site to promote sustainable use of the buffer zone through a variety of routes, including a school summer camp and simple but informative leaflets. Members of the group are also involved in various research (as field assistants). There is a blogspot <a href="http://visitajaragua.blogspot.com">visitajaragua.blogspot.com</a> for the JNP, which includes reports on project activities within the area.</p> <p><b>Rating - Satisfactory</b></p>
<b>Dominican Republic Watchable Wildlife Pond: Oviedo Lagoon, Jaragua National Park (Dominican Republic)</b>		
1. To protect the critical	1. Work with local people and other	Development of the Watchable Wildlife Pond has been very successful. Key project achievements

<sup>78</sup> Most importantly the “Community Ecotourism for bird watching in the Oviedo Dry Forest”, which was developed with support by the DGIS/LNV Project Site Action Component.

<p>avian habitat at Oviedo Lagoon</p> <p>2. To develop the Oviedo Lagoon as the country's first Watchable Wildlife site</p> <p>3. To promote Oviedo Lagoon's value for learning and enjoying birds and their habitats</p>	<p>stakeholders to participatively plan for the Lagoon conservation and educational/recreational use</p> <p>2. Further discuss the WWP concept with members of the Co-management Committee and other stakeholders</p> <p>3. Build a viewing platform on the mainland shore</p> <p>4. Install interpretive signage to help identify most commonly seen bird life in the area</p> <p>5. In collaboration with Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Tourism, as well as the private tourist sector representatives, promote bird watching at the site, with guidance provided by local guides</p> <p>6. Develop instructional/training programs in field survey and monitoring techniques</p> <p>7. Produce promotional materials</p>	<p>include: participation of stakeholders in the creation of a co-management plan for Laguna de Oviedo and a co-management committee; construction of an observation platform (with GEF logo displayed prominently) and design and erection of signage; development of professional bird tours among a group of local boatmen and guides with training and resources supplied, and they have formed their own association (La Asociación de Guías de la Naturaleza de Oviedo) to better coordinate activities and improve visitor experience; high quality interpretative materials including bird identification sheets (laminated for field use) that significantly enhance the visitor experience and are very popular with local schools. Particular attention has been paid to ensuring the active engagement of local communities - one local said that "The project has made conservation more democratic" (Esteban Garrido <i>pers.comm.</i> to N.Varty). There has been some engagement with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MENR) which certifies the guides, but less so with the Ministry of Tourism due to a conflict with GJ over hotel developments in important biodiversity areas in the DR, especially over proposed hotel development of Bahía de las Aguilas. In 2006, GJ and the MENR conducted a study of mechanisms to strengthen local organization and participation in the Laguna de Oviedo WWP, and the use of the newly constructed Visitor Centre at the site (funded by AECI-ARAUCARIA), which resulted in the design of five ecotourism packages and agreements on the use and rental of spaces within the Centre (e.g. gift shops, offices)<sup>79</sup>. However, the Visitor Centre still lacked most facilities at the time of the Evaluation. Ecotourism is still at a low level - the guides interviewed at Laguna de Oviedo estimated that they have 1,000-2,000 visitors a year (c.70% of visitors are families and adults and 30% are from schools)<sup>80</sup>, but there has been an increase in 2007 due to the new Visitor Centre and more promotional material about the site both on the internet and through word-of-mouth. Additional training, especially in small business management skills, and additional resources (particularly lifejackets for the boat tours, ship-to-shore radios and uniforms) are required by the local guides. There is also an issue over insurance, since none of the guides or boatmen carry public indemnity insurance and it is unclear what would happen if a visitor/tourist was injured or drowned during a tour (visitors are given a set of 'rules' about how to behave during the boat trip but are not asked to sign a waiver). This needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. There is also concern over the ecological carrying capacity, which is unknown, and the impact of tours on breeding birds on the cays, or those supporting iguanas (they were habituated to human presence on the cay visited by the Evaluation and indeed compete for food scraps from visitors which may affect territorial behaviour, population size, etc). There is very good promotion of the site by GJ, with lots of media coverage. Significant educational and awareness-raising activities are carried out, with World Wetlands Day, the CEBF and the World Bird Festival being particularly successful. The Spanish International Cooperation Agency has committed support for further infrastructure, equipment and maintenance of the WWP, including paying for a local coordinator for the WWP and developing micro-enterprises by guides. Local stakeholders use also facilities and infrastructure at the WWP for meetings and other purposes and consequently benefit in other ways from the project.</p>
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<sup>79</sup> As far as the evaluation could determine, there was no EIA for these developments, and GJ could be accused of double standards as they oppose hotel developments as unsustainable but cannot demonstrate that their own ecotourism development plans for the JNP are sustainable.

<sup>80</sup> The Ministry of Environment records national and foreign visitors, as the site is within the Jaragua National Park, but visits by locals are not recorded and the exact number of visitors is unknown.

		<b>Rating – Highly Satisfactory</b>
<b>Sustainable forest management in Cockpit Country (Jamaica)</b>		
1. Plan and implement the sustainable use and conservation of forest along the Burnt Hill Road, a drive road traversing the primary forest of the Cockpit Country	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare a zonation plan for the forest corridor impacted by human activities along Burnt Hill Road</li> <li>2. Establish sustainable forest use in identified buffer zones</li> <li>3. Implement pilot projects to control invasive species and rehabilitate degraded areas in identified key conservation zones</li> <li>4. Promote alternative income generation through ecotourism along Burnt Hill Road</li> <li>5. Provide education on Cockpit Country biodiversity and conservation to local schools and communities</li> </ol>	<p>Site action was changed to Linton Park Mountain (LPM) in June 2004 after WRC took on this component of the project as the site is closer to WRC's Windsor base, included a forest reserve, had good community support, and offered a greater possibility for ecological restoration projects with the local community. Consequently, activities 1 and 4 were not undertaken. The project has focused on educational activities with local schools (practical, outdoor lessons on ecology and watershed management in line with the National Curriculum) and has a major research component on reforestation (investigation of the potential of different pioneer species of tree to recolonise cleared areas of forest that have become grassland). The fact that locals have not cut down the seedlings at the LPM site is considered a measure of success. Successful bird-banding and schools programmes have been established at site. There is a strong engagement with the local community, including their participation in research activities, and the project is clearly valued by local people. Importantly, WRC staff are providing key support to the development of LFMCs in the area (north Cockpit LFMC in particular), working in conjunction with Forestry Department. Also heavily involved in campaign to save Cockpit Country from bauxite mining. WRC also involved in drafting a Forest Management Plan for the Cockpit Country/Martha Brae Watershed, which includes the Cockpit Country IBA, in collaboration with Forestry Department and the three Cockpit Country LFMCs, with the support of USAID-Parks-in-Peril funding.</p> <p><b>Rating - Satisfactory</b></p>
<b>Jamaica Watchable Wildlife Pond – Negril Great Morass (Jamaica)</b>		
1. Implement a Watchable Wildlife Pond project at the Royal Palm Reserve in the Negril Great Morass, and assist in the formulation and implementation of a conservation strategy for the area	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a re-assessment of the bird fauna in the Negril Great Morass including a study of the breeding population of West Indian Whistling-ducks</li> <li>2. Produce a management strategy for the protection of the wetland birds and their critical habitats, focusing on the Royal Palm Reserve.</li> <li>3. Assist with the training of NEPT personnel to manage the resource</li> <li>4. Develop a visitor program that highlights the biodiversity values of the ecosystem, with a special emphasis on education of school children, and income generation from visiting tourists</li> </ol>	<p>The Evaluation found it difficult to assess activities and results from this site as there was insufficient resources and time for the consultant to visit the site during the Evaluation, and there have been poor communication and reporting by the NEPT to the Project Manager. Consequently, there is relatively little information on the current status of the development of the WWP. However, a 'Strategic Management Plan for the Royal Palm Reserve and the Negril Great Morass' was drafted in January 2007, a review of which indicates that the WWP has had some success in engaging local communities and is a biological diverse wetland site, with an important population of West Indian Whistling-ducks. According to the Project Coordinator of the WIWD-WC Project a wetlands workshop was carried out in 2004, and 'faunal assessment' of the site has been completed.</p> <p><b>Rating - On evidence available to Evaluation - Satisfactory</b></p>
<b>Jamaica Conservation Plan: Mount Diablo (Jamaica)</b>		
1. Assess conservation needs and opportunities in	1. Carry out a detailed assessment of habitat quality, avifauna, and human impacts on the	Originally selected as the third site for local action in Jamaica because of the occurrence of the Jamaican Blackbird, which is considered to be the most threatened of the Jamaican endemic



<p>the forests of Mount Diablo</p>	<p>forest  2. Identify opportunities for initiating a conservation project  3. Work with local stakeholders to advance such a project and establish a Site Support Group</p>	<p>species, and because of its potential as a focus for rehabilitation of worked-out bauxite ‘cockpits’ that cover large areas of north-central Jamaica. Habitat quality, avifauna, and human impacts surveys were carried out successfully. Opportunities for initiating a conservation project were identified but very limited, as it proved impossible to develop an SSG at this site to take on responsibility for managing local activities. This was due to: the absence of any real local community (the mining company had relocated people to the edge or outside of the area) and local communities didn’t feel part of Mountt Diablo with no serious connection to the site; a poor level of awareness of biodiversity issues among people living in the surrounding area; the considerable distance (2+ hour drive) of the WRC team from the site (so they were not able to give the support that SSGs need in the initial stages). In conclusion, this IBA proved to be inappropriate for the kind of community based conservation activities envisaged by the project. The site had been very damaged by bauxite mining and it is clear from the research at this site that bauxite mining cannot be allowed in Cockpit Country or it will destroy the site beyond repair.</p> <p><b>Rating – Marginally Satisfactory (but valuable lessons learned)</b></p>
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## **Annex 9: Project successes and failures as perceived by the project staff and participants**

### **1. Successes (in no particular order)**

#### ***Bahamas***

- BNT gained increased experience of project and financial management (little before)
- Bird survey and monitoring workshops new to the Bahamas and considered a good training model
- Very useful handbook on site survey and monitoring methods
- Draft management plan for the Abaco National Park with full participation of local communities and users
- BNT gained useful experience of working on a regional project, something it had little experience of before
- The IBA identification process, based on rigorous internationally agreed criteria, brought many different groups and sources of information together
- Project highlighted the importance of areas for birds, which has been weak in the Bahamas in the past
- Uptake of the phrase 'Important Bird Areas' and 'IBAs' by government officials
- Sites with an IBA status will have increased chances of government including them within the official protected area system, as it is an internationally recognised designation (IBA status has given additional 'conservation value' to important biodiversity sites)
- Project funded a high quality conceptual plan for the HWP site, which directly led to significant donor support
- Funds to construct the broadwalks at HWP, thereby opening the site to greater local community involvement and public and especially school education activities
- Facilitated provision of an office to the Head Warden at Inagua National Park, who had been without one for 15 years and improvement in the relationship with Moreton with an upgraded 3-bedroom house made available for BNT use
- Use of birds as a measure of conservation value (first project that the BNT has focused on bird habitat as an indicator of conservation priority)

#### ***Dominican Republic***

- Availability of several evaluation mechanisms such as METT, questionnaires and IBA Monitoring Framework has encouraged people to start to think about quantifying results and impact
- IBA process, which uses a rigorous scientific approach based on widely accepted international criteria has identified gaps in the protected area system and complemented other methods, e.g. TNC gap analysis
- The IBA programme gave the SSG members and other volunteers a framework to work with and the feeling that they were part of a much larger and very important network
- Good involvement of the communities in the IBA process
- Grupo Jaragua was able to better advocate for the protection of Bahía de las Águilas, which also helped establish a better network that can be used for other advocacy programmes
- The NLC provided a 'coordination space' within which different groups operating at different scales could come together, discuss how best to collect information for the IBAs and who should do it
- The NLC helped bring together the ornithological groups that have been splintered for some years and offered the opportunity for GJ and the HOS to discuss their differences although it has not led to a resolution
- The project promoted contact between specialist and local people in a simple manner (scientists tend to be viewed as distant from locals when in the field)
- Significant increase in the capacity of school teachers to teach environmental education nationally and especially around the project sites
- Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival a great success and helped raise awareness among general public
- SSG model is helping to strengthen local environmental groups to serve as 'watchdogs' for environmental threats that will then be more effectively communicated to the national level and make it more likely that action will be taken
- Motivated groups to try to build relationships with the private sector
- Very cost-effective project
- Brought national, local and regional levels together and different groups could take different components of the project and 'make them their own' e.g. monitoring by Ministry of Environment and IBA database interested TNC
- Branding of conservation projects, e.g. WWP and IBA, was useful as it helped everyone understand the project better, and made the team think about conservation being a 'product' that needed to be sold
- Project helped develop work-planning capacity, reporting, financial management, business skills, monitoring and general project management of GJ

- Existing CBO (notably the Voluntarios Comunitarios de Jaragua) gained leadership and networking skills and project management experience, including on reporting, evaluation, and hosting meetings
- The groups within the Jaragua SSG have gained in confidence and knowledge which is especially important because the south-west of the Dominican Republic is one of the poorest and least developed
- Members of the Jaragua SSG said that they had benefited through increased capacity, money from nature guiding, better protection of local natural resources, and increased knowledge
- The local community around Jaragua National Park has benefited in other ways from the project, e.g. through a training course on motorboat engine repair, and the local boatmen and guides have formed an association to discuss joint issues (improved communication between different local groups)
- Project helped strengthen the relationship between GJ and other environmental institutions
- Improved channels of communication between GJ and the BNT and the SCSCB
- Helped build a network of people involved with the identification of high biodiversity sites (specifically birds and IBAs)
- Helped build trust between groups at all levels on information sharing and exchange where there was previously none
- SSG network and methodology viewed as a potentially useful model for local community conservation
- Project helped to consolidate key environmental dates, e.g. Earth Day, Wetlands Day, and engage people in them
- Project encouraged GJ to ‘think outside the box’ – to build relationships with media and artists that it would not have done otherwise
- The project has highlighted the need for GJ to develop a strategic plan
- Site action at the Laguna de Oviedo and Fondo Paradí has increased visitor numbers and led to increased livelihood opportunities
- The project made people think about the link between birds, places and people
- Connected local people with environmental authorities and with a national group (GJ) which helped empower them, and in the words of one SSG member ‘The Project has made conservation more democratic’ (Esteban Garrido pers. comm. to N.Varty)
- Gave a focus for art work for local school children around Laguna de Oviedo and Pedernales (who won awards)
- Increased awareness and knowledge of biodiversity and conservation needs among parents through the children (evidenced by parents asking teachers about what their children were doing)
- The IBA identification brought together a very large number and wide range of stakeholders

### *Jamaica*

- Good quality educational materials that have been warmly received by teachers and students
- The 2007 CEBF gave the opportunity to discuss climate change more widely on the island
- IBA information useful for development of Protected Area Master Plan in Jamaica
- Increased awareness among staff of Department of Forestry through training (bird identification and monitoring) and work with WRC and the Jamaica Project Consultant
- Linkage between IBAs and Forest reserves serves to strengthen both
- IBA database and mapping will help the Forestry Department to better define more ecologically sustainable forest reserves
- The Cockpit Country IBA includes private, public, watershed, and reserve designations and illustrates how a multi-faceted conservation approach can work
- Draft Forest Management Plan for Cockpit Country, draft by WRC and using data and analyses developed by the GEF project, is being promoted as a good model for other forest reserve and watershed areas in Jamaica
- Project brought together disparate bits of information on birds and other biota, that hadn’t been collectively analysed previously
- Project has provided government with an rigorous analysis that it has not had before – centres of bird endemism in Jamaica, which has allowed the project to ‘speak to government’
- Cooperation between the project team and the Forestry Department and the Institute of Jamaica has been particularly productive (NGOs are rather weak in Jamaica without government backing, they need to work with government or can achieve nothing)
- The project inputted to the campaign to save Cockpit Country from bauxite mining which has achieved at least a temporary halt to licences, although this is recognised as the culmination of many little projects over an extended period, with the WRC working with JET, TNC, Forestry and others
- Project support to the developing LFMCs (the SSGs at Cockpit Country) means that a community meeting can be called to discuss the LFMC at Duanville and 60 people will attend
- Mining bauxite in Cockpit Country has become the most important and publicised environmental issue on Jamaica and the Government is now receptive to representations on Cockpit Country (team can get to see government ministers)

- The Linton Park Mountain can be used as a model for removal of invasives, local/community involvement
- Project got people together including groups that seldom meet

## 2. Failures (in no particular order)

### *The Bahamas*

- Poor communication between the project partner (BNT) and some of the Abaco SSG, leading to a feeling of isolation of the members of the SSG with reduced interest in activities at Abaco National Park and antagonism with the BNT
- Failure to secure the 'Hole in the Wall' area within the Abaco National Park
- Lack of a set of procedures for SSG development (little input from BirdLife on this)
- Lack of government support in establishing park boundaries, evicting the squatter and adding the additional crown land requested at HWP
- Lack of a dedicated full-time project manager from the beginning (would have delivered greater results)
- Unable to establish a functional NLC and didn't have a national project steering committee
- The SSGs are not as developed as expected them to be and should have put the effort into just one, rather than three
- Logframe could have been clearer and set out better

### *Dominican Republic*

- Project results were not 'visible enough' within government, and needed to be promoted more
- Continued need to integrate the IBA/bird approach with local realities (IBA programme still seen as specialist and peripheral)
- NLC only had a focus on birds and IBAs, but the group should also have addressed the benefits to local people from the project
- Little business skills training and as a result questionable business models and practices at present
- IBA programme still not institutionalised enough in government and the approach still needs to be sold more to senior politicians
- Poor engagement of the private sector, apart from some sponsorship
- Underestimated the resources needed to develop the SSGs, in terms of staff time and funding
- IBA site monitoring form is not user-friendly and difficult for SSG members to interpret
- Conservation success has created suspicion and conflict with hunters around Jaragua National Park and with some figures in the management authorities, including those responsible for management of the Park
- Logframe could have been clearer and set out better

### *Jamaica*

- Collapse of BirdLife Jamaica
- No project funds to enable the NLC to operate
- Poor government ownership of the project and failure to embed the IBA programme within the government agencies (although this is beginning to occur within the Department of Forestry)
- Private sector engagement very weak, apart from some limited sponsorship
- Key stakeholders not involved in the design of the project e.g. Department of Forestry, WRC, JET, (BLJ simply identified stakeholders they wanted to work with)
- Logframe could have been clearer and set out better
- Low awareness of project ('low key project') due to demise of BLJ and minimal activities until the contracting of JET, WRC and the national Project Consultant
- IBAs still don't have a high enough profile and, according to the Conservator of Forests, the IBA programme (or aspects of it) is still not discussed in many environmental committees
- Disconnect between the person/people collecting the bird data for the IBA, and the person compiling and analysing the information and, finally the person (Project Consultant) presenting the national IBA sheets (not a team effort), which led to a significant delay over delivery of the national IBA accounts
- Analysis of data and criteria for assignment of IBAs in Jamaica was opaque and undertaken by single individual (now dead), little other biodiversity information was collected at the same time, and boundaries were done very roughly (there was little advice from the BL Secretariat on data collection and analysis)

## **Annex 10: Establishing and maintaining Site Support Groups – Early experiences from the Caribbean**

Project partners and members of SSGs were interviewed on their experiences of establishing the SSG model in the Caribbean – what worked, what didn't, what is needed in terms of resources and other inputs, what is important in establishing and maintaining SSGs. Below is a summary of the main lessons (in no particular order) they have learned, and including the Evaluators assessment, and advice they would give to groups/partners in the Caribbean who may be contemplating establishing an SSG. This was the first time many of them had been specifically asked to think about what they had learned.

### ***Establishing SSGs***

- SSGs need to exist first in another form - co-opt another organisation, rather than establishing a new one
- Avoid raising unrealistic expectations among the local communities
- Don't invest in an area where you don't already have a site base (GJ already had considerable experience of developing CBOs in the south-west of the DR which was essential when they created the SSG at JNP, and in Jamaica, the project was unable to establish an SSG at Mount Diablo in part because the WRC team lived over two hours drive away)
- Greater resources and support are needed from the Partner to develop SSGs in poorer communities and a local socio-economic-political analysis should be conducted before establishing an SSG
- SSGs require an intense commitment from the partner, involving capacity building, provision of equipment, training and other support, particularly in the first two years
- Partners need to hire a dedicated IBA/SSG Coordinator and provide sufficient resources (travel funds, equipment, communication costs) to offer dedicated on-going support to the SSGs, which is especially important in the first year (GJ employed a specific individual to work directly with the Jaragua SSG in the field for much of the first year, input was gradually reduced during the second year (visits every 2-3 months) and in the third year visits were largely restricted to monitoring with some support)
- There is a general trend that local governments are being given more power and so it is important that SSGs try to link more with local government from the beginning
- Use a questionnaire when starting an SSG to determine why people joined and what motivates them, and keep these considerations in mind when planning SSG development
- Providing sufficient binoculars and copies of the bird identification guides to groups to the group helps to promote birdwatching and strengthen interest and commitment in the local IBAs
- Make a special effort to get the children involved from the start, including representation on the Board of the SSG, as it is possible to generate interest and increase awareness among parents through their children, as children are seen as apolitical and without agendas
- It is essential to develop and maintain good communication channels between the project partner and the SSG from the start
- SSGs should be given a specific role and responsibilities at the IBA, e.g. survey and monitoring work, and offered training in order to carry out these tasks
- It helps, particularly for SSGs created in poorer communities, if sustainable livelihood generation, e.g. ecotourism, is a part of the initial development of the SSG activities, which should include a simple business plan, but partners need to be aware that this will require additional support and it carries a risk of failure
- Prepare a clear written document on the goals of the group and review this each year to see if still appropriate
- Try to produce a quick 'result', something highly visual that can build immediate confidence and sense of achievement as this will retain members

### ***Maintaining SSGs***

- It is essential to reimburse members' travel and out-of-pocket expenses and provide necessary equipment in order to keep the group together (especially important for poorer SSGs)
- Try to identify the group's 'champions' (well-respected members who can articulate the SSG's position in the community) early on and give them training and additional support
- Strengthening and capacity building are essential but need to be culturally sensitive
- Avoid big grants at first as could cause the group to 'burn out' and create conflict between members over who receives money for what activities
- If there is an issue within the SSG the partner should respond immediately (and therefore need resources and capacity to give immediate support to the developing SSG)

- Developing a business plan for an SSG is a challenge for the poorer groups where the level of education can be low
- Inform and involve other local groups of SSG activities where possible, e.g. churches, schools
- Exchanges between the groups is very important as it helps build confidence and knowledge and importantly helps generate a sense of 'family' among the groups<sup>81</sup> and should be promoted with resources need to be made available to cover transport and other costs
- All the partners have found that maintaining their SSGs required considerably more time, administration and financial resources (the project needed to raise additional financing for most SSGs) than initially anticipated
- Most SSGs are also a focus for social activities, and meetings need to provide food and drink to be successful and well attended (and therefore need a budget) – the social importance of the group's activities is important and should not be underestimated
- Ensure there are a variety of activities – a mix of indoor and outdoor activities, and invite outside speakers to give talks on wider environmental and social issues - as this keeps people interested and retains members, and make sure that the activities are participatory and 'fun'
- Involve all SSGs in the major environmental days, especially the CEBF
- Develop some form on newsletter (linked with the other SSGs) to report on successes, failures, experiences, news, events, etc. as this helps build group cohesion and a sense of being part of a larger SSG 'family'
- To be most effective, the partner/SSG needs to build a relationship with all the local community, not just a select group
- Encourage members to work through the SSG rather than individually, as it's more cost-effective and easy to obtain equipment (and credit) if legally recognised
- Strengthen alliances with other groups but research carefully which ones to form an alliance with, and recognise that you can't work with everyone

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<sup>81</sup> Experience from Africa has shown that feeling part of an SSG 'family' is a major factor in why some SSGs stay together even if they receive no financial benefits.