

SVG Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project

SVGCMEMS-C-IC-16

Terms of Reference Mid-Term Review Consultant

1. Background

The SVG Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project seeks to address the challenges for coastal and marine management in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, including anthropogenic pressures, institutional fragmentation, policy and regulatory inadequacies, and lack of adaptive capacity through data-driven solutions. The Project is funded by a GEF Trust Fund grant in the amount of US\$3.65 million and will contribute to the GEF-7 biodiversity focal area—to maintain globally significant biodiversity in landscapes and seascapes—through improved management and protection of the country’s coastal and marine biodiversity.

The project includes three key interacting components implemented in parallel. Component 1 supports institutional strengthening for coastal and marine management across all relevant sectors and will address challenges of institutional fragmentation and policy and regulatory inadequacies primarily through support to better operationalize the National Ocean Coordination Committee (NOCC) and achieve actions under the National Oceans Policy and Strategic Action Plan (NOPSAP). These activities will indirectly affect anthropogenic pressures through more robust and consistent enforcement of policies and monitoring to ensure the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources.

Component 2 aims to pilot spatial planning, innovative financing, environmental management, participatory conservation, and nature-based tourism across four sites: Brighton, Union Island and Tobago Cays Marine Park, Richmond Beach/Chateaubelair Bay, and Colonaire Beach. These pilots will test strategies to reduce human pressures on coastal and marine resources, informing policy (Component 1) and data management (Component 3). Activities include technical assessments, capacity building, and public-private-community partnerships to enhance sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation. Regional or local NGOs with proven expertise will implement these initiatives, ensuring gender-inclusive participation and sustainable natural resource use. With regards to the latter, Component 3 supports the development of a permanent and publicly accessible knowledge and data repository within a new National Environmental Data and Information Platform (NEDIP), beginning with existing coastal and marine data. Relevant and available biophysical and planning information will be maintained there, as well as information on pilot activities. This component addresses the challenges of adaptive capacity by enhancing data, analysis, and monitoring of coastal and marine resources to inform data-driven approaches. The NEDIP will help provide data to guide decision-making and reduce some uncertainties and institutional conflict and also serve as a primary mechanism for ensuring accountability for results by facilitating effective monitoring and evaluation of the project and sharing of timely, relevant, and unambiguous information about the Project’s monitoring & evaluation findings with the project’s beneficiaries and stakeholders.

The Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) under the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development & Culture is responsible for implementing the project with fiduciary support provided by the Public Sector Investment Programme Management Unit (PSIPMU).

2. Aim and Objectives of the Mid-term Review

The aim of the mid-term review is to assess the project implementation progress, progress towards achieving the project development objectives, key implementation challenges, performance, effectiveness and efficiency of implementation, achievements, and lessons learnt to date and to use these to ensure that the project is adjusted as and where necessary in order for it to have maximum impact by the end of its lifespan and to achieve the project development objective.

The consultant is expected to lead in the preparation of the MTR report, working closely with the PIU and other key counterparts.

The overall purpose of the MTR is threefold:

- (i) **Accountability and identification of gaps in stipulated project Implementation Plans:** The mid-term review is an accountability instrument for the project. Consequently, it will be used to assess whether or not project plans have been, or will be, fulfilled and also determine the extent to which the project's resources have been used in a responsible and effective manner. **It will also identify gaps** to ensure that project implementation is in tandem with the Project Operational Manual (POM) which is the guidance document for the project. Where there has been deviation from the POM in project implementation, the MTR will identify these and recommend corrective measures.
- (ii) **Learning and improvement** as a building block for future work: It is intended that the outcomes of this mid-term review will provide useful and relevant information to the on-going work; explore why implemented actions and interventions have been successful, or not and to provide guidance on how to better implement new work, possibly as a new project, after the current phase of the project has been completed;
- (iii) **Assessment of sustainability:** The outcomes of the mid-term review should assist in assessing the sustainability (or otherwise) of the activities, approaches, and structures initiated or supported by the project, and crucially, should also provide recommendations for the future.

The specific objectives of the mid-term review are as follows:

- Evaluate the outputs and any outcomes of the project already delivered and determine and assess their contribution to delivery of the overall project's overall aims and objectives;
- Review the Theory of Change for the project: is the project still valid and should any changes be considered in project implementation methodologies.

- Provide guidance on aspects or specific issues that will be useful in undertaking the planned project impact assessment through the use of scenario thinking to be done at the end of the project, i.e. how would the situation look like on the ground without this project;
- Assess the long-term sustainability of project interventions;
- Identify key ‘lessons learnt’ to date, particularly with regard to strategic processes and the mechanisms chosen to achieve the project’s objectives to date,
- Make clear, specific and implementable recommendations to improve the project performance in the remaining two years of implementation and provide guidance on the scope of future work; and
- Determine the extent to which the project and its associated actions are relevant to the existing and likely future needs of its stakeholders and the environment/s in which it is being implemented;
- Review the adequacy of project implementation and management arrangements in terms of staff, effectiveness in use of existing systems (fiduciary, safeguards, M&E), contract management capacity, reporting, etc.
- Assess extent of cooperation with other relevant donors, partners, and institutions within the sector as well as the clarity of roles and responsibilities, effectiveness of decision-making, etc.
- Assess adequacy of implementation support arrangements (approach, resources), usefulness to anticipate problems, and effectiveness of follow-up recommendations
- Assess the degree of compliance with the project's fiduciary and safeguards aspects and with project legal covenants in the Grant Agreement
- Reassess project risks, identifying any new risks that need to be taken into consideration.

3. Scope and Focus of this evaluation:

Within this framework, specific issues (and questions) to be assessed will include, but not be limited to, the following:

Effectiveness

- i. Are the activities implemented in accordance with the project plans? If not, why?
- ii. What outputs have been achieved? To what extent do they contribute to the objectives?
- iii. How effective are the approaches and structures in delivering the desired outputs? How can they be improved?
- iv. Do the partner organizations work together effectively? Is the partnership structure and the geographical focus effective in achieving the desired outputs? How can the partnership be improved?

Efficiency

- i. Are the available technical and financial resources adequate to fulfil the project plans?

- ii. Are the funds being spent in accordance with project plans and using the right procedures?
- iii. Have there been any unforeseen problems in terms of resources (technical and financial) allocation and utilization? How well were they dealt with?
- iv. Are the capacities of the partners adequate?
- v. What have been the roles of the partners and staff and are they appropriate?
- vi. Is there an effective process, built into the management structure for self-monitoring and assessment, reporting and reflection? How could it be made better?

Relevance

- i. Establish whether or not the design and approach of the project are relevant in addressing the identified needs, issues and challenges.
- ii. To what extent is the project contributing to the strategic policies and programmes of Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and that of the partners? How could relevance be improved in future?

Sustainability

- i. Is the approach used likely to ensure a continued benefit after the end of the project?
- ii. Are all key stakeholders sufficiently and effectively involved? Are their expectations met and are they satisfied with their level of participation?
- iii. Are alternative or additional measures needed and, if so, what is required to ensure continued sustainability and positive impact?

Impact

- i. Has the project achieved the set goals with regard to management of marine and coastal ecosystems?
- ii. Has there been visible evidence in the development and improvement in vegetation cover and coastal protection in the areas where the project is being implemented?
- iii. Is the project bringing about desired changes in the behavior of people and institutions?
- iv. Have there been any unintended positive or negative impacts arising from particular outcomes/results?
- v. What could have been the likely situation (of the environment and its management?) without the project?

The midterm evaluation aims to determine if the project supported activities are beginning to bring about the change anticipated at the outset of the project and assess the likelihood of the project achieving its project development objectives within the current project timeframe. It also aims to examine which factors are proving critical in making change happen (or in hindering change) and which changes to the project design would be required to ensure achievement of the stated objectives.

4. Methodology

The consultant should propose a methodology (with justification) to be used to carry out the review in their application, the proposed methodology for adoption should update the preliminary issues and questions outlined within the ToRs, specifying the specific review issues, questions, methods of data collection and analysis that will be undertaken. It should encompass a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods. It should also allow for wide consultation with all interested partners and stakeholders. It is suggested that the methodology should include, but not be limited to the following; but consultants must propose their own methodology and justify and explain that proposal:

Methodologies will comprise:

- a) A desk review- of reports (narrative and financial), audit reports, review of key project documents including monitoring and evaluation frameworks. **A desk review** of all relevant documentation, including (but not limited to): The project document, contracts and related agreements/Work-plans and budgets/ Progress Technical and Financial Reports
- b) **Face-to-face interviews** and discussions with all key stakeholders involved in the project to ensure that the review is carried out in a participatory manner. A list of key partners and stakeholders would be identified at an early stage and a consultation process developed. All stakeholders consulted should be in a position to present their views in confidence to the team and to identify issues, opportunities, constraints and options for the future

The PIU will review the planned methodologies proposed by the consultant and provide feedback before the review process begins.

5. Final Output

The main body of the report should not exceed 30 pages and should include an executive summary and recommendations. Technical details should be confined to appendices, which should also include a list of stakeholders interviewed. Background information should only be included when it is directly relevant to the report's analysis and conclusions.

The consultant should support their analysis of project achievements and failures with relevant data and state how this has been sourced. Recommendations should also include details as to how they might be implemented.

6. Timing and Schedule

The consultant should develop and submit a detailed schedule for the review work, taking into account the following general guidance: the review is scheduled to take place from April 7, 2025 and as such the Consultant should be able to deliver a draft report approximately three weeks prior to the planned MTR – preparation of the report is expected to include an in-country visit in March, 2025; the consultant is also expected to join the MTR mission in April, 2025. It is suggested that

the tasks may be broken down as follows, but consultants must consider this and propose their own timeline and schedule:

- a. Review of background documentation and preparation of the methodology
- b. Discussion and agreement on proposed methodology with project partners
- c. Assessment of project progress and performance – including field visits and interviews with project partners and key stakeholders
- d. Analysis of findings and production of draft report
- e. Debriefing - presentation and discussion of MTR report findings to the client and key partners
- f. Participation in the MTR mission
- g. Finalization/revisions of the report and submission

As a separate deliverable, the consultant will be expected to prepare a power point presentation on key MTR findings and present it to senior management.

7. Duration of Services

The assignment is for a period of 2 months to complete the tasks outlined in Section 6 above.

8. Payment Schedule

The timeframe for deliverables by the firm and percentage distribution of payables are outlined below:

Tasks	Deliverables	Schedule	Percentage of contract amount
1	Commencement of assignment	March 1, 2025	10
2	Submit draft Midterm Review Report	March 17, 2025	40

3	Submit final Midterm Review Report	April 28, 2025	50
Total		2 months	100

9. Qualifications

The successful candidate will be expected to have the following qualifications and experience:

Compulsory

- A post-graduate degree (masters) in environmental or natural resources management or any related field;
- At least seven (7) years of work experience in Project Management and evaluation;
- Excellent level of written and spoken English;
- Proven strong communication skills

Preferred

- Self-motivated, dynamic and able to quickly understand Project implementation issues and challenges;
- Strong interpersonal, group facilitation and teamwork skills.

10. How to apply

Interested individuals are requested to submit their application clearly demonstrating their suitable skills and experience for the review process, including a brief methodology as well as the review timing and schedule. They should also submit their financial proposal indicating how much the review work will cost. Applications should be sent electronically (email) or in person to the Director of Economic Planning, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology at cenplan@svgcpd.com and copy tourism@gov.vc, scstewart@svgcpd.com, medwards-john@svgcpd.com, jjames@gov.vc, by **March 28, 2025**. For any clarification on the assignment, please contact Mrs. Abena White, Policy and Institutional Development Specialist/ Project Coordinator at svggef7@gmail.com/awhite.svggef7@gmail.com or the Sustainable Development Unit at emdsvg@gmail.com or telephone 456-1111 Ext. 3619.

11. Administrative Arrangements and Reporting

The Consultant for this assignment will report to the Project Director/s within the PIU and will work closely with the PIU staff.

The PIU team will facilitate all introductions required and will provide full access to the project documents, project reports, and any other relevant information required by the consultant for the assignment. The PIU will update Results Framework in time for the MTR.