PIMS 10081 - Umbrella Programme to Support NBSAP Update and the 7th National Reports - St Vincent & the Grenadines

B0482 - Barbados - Bridgetown

REPORTING PERIOD 2024- 2027

Narrative

REPORT DATE: 29-07-2026

1. Executive Summary

This report covers the period from January 1 to June 30, 2025, during which the project successfully transitioned from mobilization to active implementation.

The primary achievement was the establishment and operationalization of the project's national governance structure. The National Project Steering Committee (PSC) was formally established and convened its first two meetings, providing critical strategic oversight and feedback.

Key activities included the presentation of the draft Annual Work Plan to the PSC and the active participation of national stakeholders in the Global Inception Workshop. This has laid a robust foundation for the rollout of technical activities in the next reporting period.

2. Background

Umbrella Programme to Support NBSAP Update and the 7th National Reports" (PIMS 9678), is a GEF-funded, UNDP-implemented global programme.

Its primary objective is to provide financial and technical support to 69 countries to revise their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The project also supports countries in preparing and submitting their 7th National Reports on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The project form parts of a programme of inter-related GEF-7 and GEF-8 biodiversity enabling activity projects that support the development, finance and reporting of the NBSAPs. These projects are being implemented simultaneously and are intended to be synergistic and complementary.

3. Key Results Achieved

- **Level of Reporting:**

  Output level results

  Project Outputs:

  Component 1 Revision and updating of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

  Contributing Outcomes:

Outcome 3 Management of natural resources and ecosystems, resilience UNMSDCF 6 Caribbean countries manage natural resources and ecosystems strengthening their resilience and enhancing the resilience and prosperity of the people and communities that depend on them.

Contributing Outputs:

OUTPUT_3.2 Natural resource planning, data collection, analysis and management National agencies and community organizations have strengthened capacities for natural resource planning, data collection, analysis and management.

Progress Note:

During this reporting period, the foundational governance and planning framework for Component 1 was established. The National Project Steering Committee (PSC) was formally constituted and convened its first two meetings on Feb 21 and Apr 23, 2025, providing strategic oversight for the NBSAP revision process. Furthermore, the Draft Annual Work Plan (AWP), which details the operational steps for revising the NBSAP, was developed and presented to the PSC for feedback. National stakeholder participation in the Global Inception Workshop also ensured that the national work plan is aligned with the project's global methodologies.

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

Project Outputs:

Project Management Cost

Contributing Outcomes:

Outcome 3 Management of natural resources and ecosystems, resilience UNMSDCF 6 Caribbean countries manage natural resources and ecosystems strengthening their resilience and enhancing the resilience and prosperity of the people and communities that depend on them.

Contributing Outputs:

OUTPUT_3.2 Natural resource planning, data collection, analysis and management National agencies and community organizations have strengthened capacities for natural resource planning, data collection, analysis and management.

Progress Note:

Key project management structures were put in place this period to enable the delivery of all technical components. The Draft Annual Work Plan (AWP) was developed, establishing the operational, budgetary, and scheduling baseline for all national activities. This plan was subsequently reviewed by the National Steering Committee to ensure alignment with national priorities.

4. Key Challenges Encountered

- **Level of Reporting:**

  Project level results

  Contributing Outcomes:

  Contributing Outputs:

  Progress Note:

  As the project transitioned into its active implementation phase, its momentum was severely impacted by a critical leadership vacancy. The departure of the Multi-Country Coordinator created an immediate administrative bottleneck, leading to an extensive backlog of pending financial and operational approvals that stalled decision-making at a critical juncture. This institutional challenge was further compounded by limited procurement capacity within the Country Office.

5. Project Risks and Issues

Risk 1: Compressed Implementation Timeline

- **Description:** The cumulative effect of past start-up delays and the current approval backlog creates a severe risk of schedule compression.
- **Impact:** Rushed stakeholder consultations and compromised quality of technical deliverables, potentially jeopardizing the project's ability to meet global CBD reporting deadlines.
- **Management Action:** The Annual Work Plan is being revised to prioritize critical-path activities and explore opportunities for parallel workstreams to recover lost time once leadership is restored.

Issue 1: Loss of Multi-Country Coordinator and Approval Backlogs

- **Description:** The vacancy of the Multi-Country Coordinator position has left a leadership gap and caused a backlog in crucial project approvals.
- **Impact:** Delayed decision-making, slower disbursement of funds, and stalled progress on national work plans.
- **Management Action:** The MCO is actively expediting the recruitment process to onboard a new Multi-Country Coordinator. In the interim, temporary acting arrangements are being explored to clear the approval backlog.

Issue 2: Ongoing Procurement Delays

- **Description:** Internal capacity for procurement remains a significant operational constraint.

- **Impact:** Continued risk of delaying the recruitment of national experts and the timely launch of technical activities.
- **Management Action:** A formal request for dedicated procurement support will be submitted to the UNDP Country Office to streamline upcoming assignments.

6. Lessons Learned

- **Business continuity plans must be established for key regional/multi-country roles**. The departure of the Multi-Country Coordinator demonstrated that multi-country project structures are highly vulnerable to single-point-of-failure leadership gaps. Future project designs must include pre-approved interim delegation of authority protocols to ensure approvals do not stall when a key coordinator departs.

- **Dedicated procurement support should be secured during project inception**. Experience shows that for projects requiring significant national consultancy services, assessing the executing office's procurement capacity is critical at the design stage. Where capacity is limited, a plan to secure dedicated support must be an integral part of project mobilisation.

7. Conclusions and Way Forward

While the project successfully established its national governance framework by convening the Project Steering Committee, substantive progress during this reporting period was significantly impeded by a critical leadership gap. The departure of the Multi-Country Coordinator created an approval backlog that stalled the finalisation of the Annual Work Plan and the initiation of planned technical activities. As a result, the project remains in an extended mobilisation phase, awaiting the leadership required to move forward.

The Way Forward:

The project's immediate future is contingent on resolving the leadership vacuum. The priorities for the next reporting period (July-Dec 2025) are:

1. **Resolve Leadership and Approval Bottleneck**: The absolute top priority is the urgent recruitment and onboarding of a new Multi-Country Coordinator. In the interim, establishing temporary acting arrangements to clear the existing backlog of administrative and financial approvals is critical.
2. **Finalise and Approve the Annual Work Plan (AWP)**: Immediately upon restoration of leadership, the project will incorporate the PSC's feedback into the draft AWP and secure final approval to unlock the operational budget.
3. **Accelerate Procurement and Technical Start-Up**: Once the AWP is approved, the project will fast-track the procurement of a consultant to begin work on the 7NR and a firm to

implementation of Component 1, with an emphasis on support strategic communications and stakeholder engagement, as recommended by the PSC.
4. **Re-engage with Stakeholders**: The project will reconvene the National Steering Committee to present the approved AWP and a revised, accelerated implementation timeline.

8. Other Reporting Requirements

- No items to display.

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