



### **Decision on SECU Case. No. SECU 0012**

UNDP takes note of the compliance review conducted on Case No. SECU 0012 and wishes to thank the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) for the final report.

UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) are a mandatory requirement for all parts of the organization – in all programmes and projects – as part of UNDP's quality assurance and risk management process.

The purpose of SECU is to ensure accountability to those individuals and communities with whom we work. It is important that these voices are heard, and that UNDP has an opportunity to respond to and address the issues that they raise.

In my capacity as Administrator of UNDP, I have carefully reviewed SECU's findings and recommendations and our responsibility to comply fully with our Social and Environmental Standards (SES).

The final SECU report dated 30 October 2020 on the *Mainstreaming Biodiversity into the Management of Coastal Zone in the Republic of Mauritius* project has been thoroughly analyzed by the UNDP Country Office in the Republic of Mauritius, the Regional Bureau for Africa and the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support.

The report highlights a number of positive elements in the project, including its contribution to mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services into coastal zone management through integrated management of the land and seascape.

The report also confirms that UNDP understood and complied with our SES, ensuring effective stakeholder participation through extended and wide-ranging consultations during project design and implementation.

Nevertheless, the report finds that there are opportunities to do more to support the vision for conservation and effective management of fragile coastal zones in the Republic of Mauritius, and to ensure that the project remains relevant and in compliance with our SES.




Specifically, the Report recommends that before its completion, the project should raise its level of ambition by supporting the Government to adopt legislation for biodiversity protection in Mauritius. It also recommends upgrading the project's risk framework to reflect new challenges to activities, including the delayed passage of legislation for biodiversity protection, weak coordination across public and private sectors, and the potential impacts on the project of the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNDP has discussed the findings and recommendations of the report with our Government and NGO partners and the report has been shared with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat and GEF Council members. Following these discussions, UNDP:

- a) Takes note of the work of the Government of Mauritius towards the adoption of proposed legislation to protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas, and will provide technical assistance where requested, given the importance of protecting the integrity of coastal zones in Mauritius.
- b) Will revisit the risk framework to ensure the project remains in compliance with the SES and to identify preemptive measures to mitigate and reduce the potential for project failure.
- c) Will further strengthen stakeholder engagement, communications and outreach by the project.
- d) Will ensure ongoing effective implementation and oversight of the project towards completion.

UNDP remains firmly committed to continue providing support for the protection and management of biodiversity and ecosystems in close partnership with the Government of Mauritius.

I would like to reiterate my strong personal commitment to ensuring that sound environmental standards underpin all that we do.

  
Achim Steiner  
3 March 2021