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MFAT Management Response to an Evaluation

MFAT Management Response to Low Emission Climate  
Resilient Development Programme Mid-term Review Report  
March 2026

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Evaluation Report Recommendation	MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
<p>1. Consider concentrating effort on a smaller number of implementation-ready reforms over the remainder of Phase 2. The programme could consider giving greater priority to a limited number of reforms in each country that show a strong combination of government demand, institutional anchoring, and realistic prospects for implementation. This would help shift attention from completion of upstream outputs alone toward implementation readiness, including legal instruments, operational procedures, institutional arrangements, financing pathways, or enforcement mechanisms where relevant. Programme MEL and reporting could also be used more deliberately to inform decisions about where to sustain, scale back, or deepen support.</p>	<p><b>Partially Agree</b> – MFAT agrees with the sentiment but with less than a year until the end of this phase, and GGGI's country project plans approved, MFAT believes GGGI should continue with the outputs that have been agreed with the partner governments. MFAT will consider the implications of this recommendation for a future phase.</p>
<p>2. Make implementation pathways more explicit at both project and programme level. For priority activities, GGGI could more systematically articulate what needs to happen after a strategy, study, policy, or framework is completed for it to influence practice. This might include identifying likely next steps, responsible institutions, approval points, financing requirements (and possible other donor support), implementation partners, and major assumptions or risks. These pathways could be reflected more clearly in Project Idea Notes, reporting, and periodic management discussions.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> – and suggest this section is added to the Project Idea Note template to encourage this early thinking from country governments, GGGI and MFAT. Will request GGGI identifies these pathways for the projects during the close-out of current phase, and consider this in any future phase for those outputs from phase 1.</p>

<p><b>Evaluation Report Recommendation</b></p>	<p><b>MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)</b></p>
<p>3. Introduce more structured decision criteria and trigger points within the existing flexible delivery model. While the programme benefits from adaptive management, decisions on adjusting activities are largely informal and relationship based. MFAT and GGGI could consider defining clearer criteria and predefined triggers (e.g. progress against milestones, evidence of uptake, changes in context, or implementation feasibility) to guide decisions on whether activities should continue, be scaled, adapted, or discontinued. This would support more transparent, consistent and timely resource allocation while preserving flexibility.</p>	<p><b>Partially Agree</b> – the decision criteria and trigger points conversations are occurring, and any adjustments to project scope, timing, costs, metrics etc. are documented in the six-monthly progress reports, but MFAT agrees these can be summarised to make more explicit for MFAT activity managers. Consider introducing a shared decisions register to record changes to approved Project Idea Notes, and include this in six monthly progress reporting, and in MFAT Activity Management Assessments which are reviewed and approved by MFAT management.</p>
<p>4. Refine MEL to better capture uptake, use, and follow-on effects, not only output delivery. The revised MEL architecture is an improvement on Phase 1, but the programme may benefit from a sharper focus on what happens after outputs are produced. For selected priority activities, monitoring could place greater attention on whether outputs are endorsed, used, updated, operationalised, financed, or incorporated into institutional processes. A small number of practical uptake markers may be more useful than a larger set of activity-focused indicators. Strengthening this aspect of MEL may require additional resourcing, particularly to support post-delivery tracking, follow-up engagement with partners, and periodic assessment of implementation progress.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> – and will speak with GGGI how we might implement this for the current phase. For a future phase, consider looking at the uptake, use, and follow-on effects of outputs already implemented which may have implications for the selection of new projects. This additional work will have cost implications for a future phase budget.</p>

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<p>5. Consider bringing GESI analysis earlier into activity selection and design, while strengthening approaches to build partner demand for inclusion. The Review suggests that GESI integration has become more visible in Phase 2, but often after activities were already broadly defined. The programme could consider involving GESI analysis earlier in the project cycle so that it informs problem diagnosis, activity choice, consultation design, and implementation pathways from the outset. At the same time, navigating the balance between a partner-led model and advancing GESI will likely require a stronger focus on demand creation rather than compliance. This could involve more explicitly demonstrating how GESI contributes to core sector outcomes (e.g., improved policy effectiveness, increased access to finance, or more feasible implementation pathways) so that inclusion is seen as integral rather than additional. Together, these approaches may help move GESI integration beyond process and participation toward stronger influence on the substance of activities, while remaining context-sensitive and partner-led.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> – Consideration of any future phase should also consider country-based GESI support to inform problem diagnosis, government and non-government stakeholder engagement, and implementation approaches.</p>

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<p>6. Articulate LECRD's distinct value proposition more clearly within the broader climate portfolio. The programme occupies a credible upstream niche, but the Review suggests that its role is not always clearly differentiated from other technical assistance mechanisms. MFAT and GGGI could consider communicating more explicitly how LECRD complements, rather than duplicates, other New Zealand-supported initiatives, particularly by positioning it as an embedded and enabling mechanism that supports governments to move from climate ambition toward implementable policy, institutional, and financing conditions. This includes clarifying how LECRD adds value alongside bilateral programmes, regional initiatives, and other partners by focusing on upstream systems, coordination, and investment readiness. This clearer positioning could be reflected more consistently in reporting, programme communications, and engagement with New Zealand High Commissions/Consulates and partners.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> – MFAT needs to better articulate how LECRD complements other MFAT supported initiatives within a country, and within the wider climate and International Development Cooperation Programme. This value proposition should be reflected in GGGI messaging around the LECRD programme.</p>
<p>7. Consider making more deliberate use of cross-country learning where there are emerging examples of traction. The Review points to some potentially replicable approaches, but cross-country exchange remains limited. The programme could consider packaging and sharing practical lessons, institutional models, and implementation experience across countries where reform challenges are comparable. This is particularly relevant where countries are working on related issues. Learning opportunities could also be extended beyond programme teams to relevant external stakeholders (e.g. government counterparts in other countries, regional bodies, and development partners) who may benefit from and adapt emerging approaches. This could be supported through more deliberate communication and knowledge-sharing mechanisms to promote uptake, replication, and wider programme visibility.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> – MFAT could support GGGI in their efforts to do this and continue to encourage GGGI to collaborate with other delivery partners that MFAT works with.</p>

<p><b>Evaluation Report Recommendation</b></p>	<p><b>MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)</b></p>
<p>8. If future support is considered, a more selective portfolio model could be explored early. The Review suggests that the LECRD model remains relevant and worth sustaining, but that future performance is likely to depend on sharper prioritisation and clearer pathways from upstream reform to implementation. If MFAT and DFAI consider a subsequent phase, they could consider a portfolio with fewer, more focused reform initiatives where New Zealand/Irish funding can play a strategic catalytic role, allowing for deeper and more sustained resourcing of priority initiatives rather than resources being spread too thinly across a large number of activities, supported by clearer selection criteria, stronger implementation logic, and more deliberate attention to institutionalisation, financing alignment, and outcome-oriented MEL.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> – to be done in collaboration with partner governments.</p>