

Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office, APR 2015

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		2251	
GEF Agency project ID		4002	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-4	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		UNDP	
Project name		Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Coastal Zone Management in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone	
Country/Countries		Jordan	
Region		Asia	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		BD-2; SP 4 and SP 5	
Executing agencies involved		Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA)	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan; Aqaba Dive Association; Aqaba Cooperative Maritime Society for Glass Boats	
Private sector involvement			
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		May 10, 2011	
Effectiveness date / project start		August 11, 2011	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		June 2014	
Actual date of project completion		June 2015	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.55	0.55
	Co-financing	0.63	Not given ¹
GEF Project Grant		.95	0.95
Co-financing	IA own	.5	0.5
	Government	7.25	7.28
	Other multi- /bi-laterals		
	Private sector		
	NGOs/CSOs		0.03
Total GEF funding		1.5	1.5
Total Co-financing		8.38	7.81
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		9.88	9.31
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		July 2015	
Author of TE		Francis Hurst	
TER completion date		1/21/2016	
TER prepared by		Laura Nissley	
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)		Molly Watts	

¹ It is unclear from the project documents if the co-financing for the PPG materialized.

2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF IEO Review
Project Outcomes	S	S	--	MS
Sustainability of Outcomes		L	--	ML
M&E Design		MS	--	MU
M&E Implementation		S	--	MU
Quality of Implementation		S	--	MS
Quality of Execution		S	--	S
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report		--	--	MS

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The project documents do not cite global environmental objectives separate from the development objective.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The Development Objective of the project is “to mainstream marine biodiversity conservation into the coastal management framework in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ)” (PD pg. 59).

3.3 Were there any **changes** in the Global Environmental Objectives, Development Objectives, or other activities during implementation?

There were no changes to the Development Objective indicated in the project documents or Terminal Evaluation (TE).

4. GEF IEO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

Please refer to the GEF Terminal Evaluation Review Guidelines for detail on the criteria for ratings.

Relevance can receive either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory rating. For Effectiveness and Cost efficiency, a six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess. Sustainability ratings are assessed on a four-point scale: Likely=no or negligible risk; Moderately Likely=low risk; Moderately Unlikely=substantial risks; Unlikely=high risk. In assessing a Sustainability rating please note if, and to what degree, sustainability of project outcomes is threatened by financial, sociopolitical, institutional/governance, or environmental factors.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

4.1 Relevance	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE provides a rating of “relevant” for this aspect of project outcomes. This TER, which uses a different scale, provides a rating of **Satisfactory** for project relevance. The project’s components were consistent with GEF-4 Strategic Objective 2: *To mainstream biodiversity in production*

landscapes/seascapes and sectors. In particular, the project was aligned with Strategic Program 4: *Strengthening the Policy and Regulatory Framework for Mainstreaming Biodiversity*, given its focus on capacity building for integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) (PD pg. 40). The project was also aligned with Strategic Program 5: *Fostering Markets for Biodiversity Goods and Services*, given its focus on the valuation of ecosystem goods and services and the introduction of classification schemes (TE pg. 36).

The project was also consistent with Jordan’s national and international commitments to marine biodiversity conservation. In particular, the project built upon the Gulf of Aqaba Environmental Action Plan (1996-2002) which recommends updating the national coastal zone management plan to focus on waterfront conservation. The project also built upon the Jordan Report on ICZM Experiences (2004) which called for (1) development of a plan for marine waters, (2) assessment of carrying capacity for the entire coastal zone, (3) strengthening of public awareness and education programs, and (4) formal implementation of an ICZM process. As a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, Jordan was also obligated to create a representative system of effectively managed marine protected areas by 2010 and ensure that at least 10% of all biomes are protected, particularly vulnerable habitats such as coral reefs (PD pgs. 41-42).

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE provides a rating of **Satisfactory** for project effectiveness, which this TER revises to **Moderately Satisfactory**. Key achievements of this project included the development of a marine and coastal biodiversity database, the implementation of a bio-friendly certification scheme for hotels and beaches, and the translocation of a coral reef slated for destruction. However, this TER’s assessment is tempered by the lack of available data at the outcome level. As the TE notes, the results framework for this project is inherently flawed and outcome indicators are missing (TE pgs. 3). A summary of the project’s achievements, based on the available evidence, is provided below:

Component 1: Knowledge management systems for planning and investment

Two outcomes were associated with this component: (1) spatial planning and sharing of benefits from marine resources informed by sound knowledge, and (2) trends in status of marine biodiversity documented and causes of changes identified. In support of these outcomes, it was expected that a marine and coastal biodiversity database with GIS support would be developed and the monitoring capacity of regulatory and institutional bodies would be strengthened. At the time of the TE, the database had been established and made publically available through a web-based portal. Additionally, a “State of the Coast Report” describing the status of the marine and coastal environment in Aqaba was published and made publically available (TE pgs. 73-74). Six developments and two proposals have also benefitted from the information available in the database. For example, the Aqaba Special Economic

Zone Authority (ASEZA) rejected a proposal to start fish farming based on monitoring data collected by the Marine Science Station and made available through the database (2014 PIR pg. 10).

Component 2: Biodiversity friendly investment and development

Three outcomes were associated with this component: (1) marine biodiversity and ecosystem services accounted for within the ASEZA decision-making, (2) tourism sector contributes to marine biodiversity conservation, and (3) public understanding pressures political commitment for strengthened marine biodiversity conservation. In support of these outcomes, it was expected that ecosystem services would be identified and a 'business case' for marine biodiversity conservation would be prepared. At the time of the TE, this had not been achieved (TE pg. 75). It was also expected that mechanisms for promoting eco-tourism and bio-friendly certifications would be implemented. At the time of the TE, the facilities at the Aqaba Marine Park and aquarium had been expanded and renovated to include educational materials. In addition, ten hotels and beaches received certifications. Lastly, it was expected that a media campaign would be undertaken, which did materialize by the end of the project. However, there is no evidence that this resulted in increased pressure on government agencies (TE pgs. 74-81).

Component 3: Institutional capacity for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and mainstreaming of marine biodiversity conservation

Three outcomes were associated with this component: (1) negative impacts on biodiversity from coastal development minimized, (2) benefits of marine diversity equitably shared², and (3) capacity to ensure implementation of effective ICZM strengthened. In support of these outcomes, it was expected that a marine spatial plan which identified user rights and regulations would be developed and implemented. At the time of the TE, the marine spatial plan had been prepared and approved, and new laws were passed regulating coastal resource allocation. Although no fees from "environmental violations" had been collected by the time of the TE, cases were being considered by the courts. Additionally, it was expected that an ICZM capacity needs assessment would be undertaken and a training for responsible authorities would be implemented based on the needs assessment. It appears that needs assessment was completed and select ASEZA units and key Aqaba Marine Park personnel were trained on ICZM, however no additional information is available (TE pgs. 81-85).

Component 4: Coral Reef Protection

One outcome was associated with this component: southern reef translocated using globally recognized best practices, and all other natural reefs under long-term protection. In support of this outcomes, it was expected that a coral transplantation operational work plan would be developed, appropriate staff would be trained, and coral health and growth rates would be monitored. At the time of the TE, 75% of the coral community at the port site was translocated to the Aqaba Marine Park and an average 80%

² The TE notes (and this TER concludes) that it is unclear from project documents what was expected (and achieved) under this outcome (pg. 83).

growth rate was recorded at the new site. Additionally, ten staff at the Aqaba Marine Park were trained in coral translocation.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE provides a rating of **Moderately Satisfactory** for project efficiency, and this TER concurs. Overall, the project was implemented efficiently, with moderate shortcomings. There was a 28 month-long gap between the approval of the Project Identification Form (January 2009) and the project approval (May 2011). Project documents indicate that two milestone extensions were granted due to challenges securing co-financing and political and personnel changes within the executing agency (2009 & 2010 Jordan Milestone Extension Requests). Project start-up was then delayed an additional five months due to challenges securing the Jordanian government’s signature and endorsement of the Project Document (TE pg. vii). By the time the project began, the construction of the new southern port had progressed significantly. As a result, the project team made the strategic decision to translocate the coral reef community one year ahead of schedule. This decision forced the project team to postpone other project activities, however it did not derail the project (TE pg. 14). Due to these delays at start-up, the project was extended one year in order to allow the team to implement the remaining activities and accommodate the terminal evaluation.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Likely
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The TE provides a rating of **Likely** for project sustainability, which this TER revises to **Moderately Likely**.

Financial Resources

This TER assesses the sustainability of financial resources to be **Moderately Likely**. The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) has established an Environment and Emergency Fund (previously the Environmental Trust Fund) which raises revenue through fines and penalty payments. In the past, the Fund has been used for financing environmental projects, such as the translocation of the coral component of this project. The TE notes however that the guidelines for how this fund can be disbursed are broad and it is possible that it will be used for non-ecological emergencies rather than biodiversity and mitigation measures (TE pg. 34; 40). Additionally, the TE raises concerns over the continued financing of the Aqaba Marine Park, which was slated to be downgraded from a Department to a Division in the Environment Directorate. Although the project produced a solid management plan for the Aqaba Marine Park, it did not outline a financial plan and strategy (TE pgs. 40-41).

Sociopolitical

This TER assesses the sociopolitical sustainability of the project to be **Likely**. The TE notes that the project has effectively built support for project outcomes among both state and non-state actors. In particular, support has been strong for the translocation of coral, refurbishment of the aquarium, and the improved capacity of the Aqaba Marine Park staff in biodiversity education and awareness (TE pg. 41).

Institutional Frameworks and Governance

This TER assesses the sustainability of institutional frameworks and governance as **Moderately Likely**. Although the ASEZA has a basic policy statement and regulatory framework, it does not have a clear policy document for environmental management (TE pg. 40). There is also the possibility that the mainstreaming of biodiversity will remain subservient to investment opportunities in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone. However, the TE also notes that Jordan has become further integrated into PERGSA (the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden), which strengthens its capacity for biodiversity conservation (TE pg.41).

Environmental

This TER assesses environmental sustainability to be **Moderately Likely**. As the TE notes, the project has contributed to a number of outputs which will contribute to ecosystem resilience, such as the web-based GIS system; certification of beaches and hotels; and increased institutional capacity of the ASEZA for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) (TE pgs. 41-42). However, as indicated above, the continued development of the Jordan's very limited shoreline (27 kilometers) has the potential to impact biodiversity conservation. Although the translocation of coral undertaken during this project was successful, it should be considered a last resort option given that translocated coral is very vulnerable (TE pg. 35).

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

5.1 Co-financing. To what extent was the reported co-financing essential to the achievement of GEF objectives? If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, then what were the reasons for it? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

Co-financing, which was slightly higher than expected (excluding funding for the Project Preparation Grant (PPG)³, has been critical to the achievement of key project outcomes. For example, no GEF funds were allocated for component 4 (the translocation of the coral reef community) in the budget. It was assumed that the Government of Jordan (ASEZA) would provide \$5.7 million of 'in-kind' co-financing for activities under this component. The TE notes that this figure was unrealistic and a significant flaw in the project's design, particularly since cash co-financing was needed to fund this component. ASEZA ultimately contributed \$375,000 to cover the cost of the coral translocation and the project

³ It is unclear from the project documents if co-financing for the PPG materialized.

management reassigned \$20,000 of GEF funds from another component’s budget to cover the cost of international expert advisors (TE pgs. 18-19). The project was also able to leverage an additional \$30,000 from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for the economic valuation of the coral reef systems (TE pg. 19)⁴.

5.2 Project extensions and/or delays. If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons for it? Did the delay affect the project’s outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

As noted above, project start-up was delayed by five months due to challenges in securing the Jordanian government’s signature and endorsement of the Project Document. The project was ultimately extended one year in order to allow the team to implement the remaining activities and accommodate the terminal evaluation (TE pg. vii).

5.3 Country ownership. Assess the extent to which country ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability? Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links:

Country ownership over the project has contributed to the achievement of key project results. The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) was the executing agency for the project and contributed significant resources. In particular, the translocation of the coral reef community was a nationally-driven activity, and would likely not have been as successful without the additional (unplanned for) cash contributions of the ASEZA. Overall, the TE notes that ASEZA and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) have played an active role in the project’s implementation (TE pg. 38).

6. Assessment of project’s Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory=no shortcomings in this M&E component; Satisfactory=minor shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Satisfactory=moderate shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Unsatisfactory=significant shortcomings in this M&E component; Unsatisfactory=major shortcomings in this M&E component; Highly Unsatisfactory=there were no project M&E systems.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

6.1 M&E Design at entry	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE provides a rating of **Marginally Satisfactory** for M&E design at entry, which this TER revises to **Moderately Unsatisfactory**. The project’s results framework outlined in the project document was inappropriate for assessing project performance. This TER agrees with the TE’s assessment that the

⁴ This activity was on-going at the time of the Terminal Evaluation.

results framework “does not provide a clear logical hierarchy for the project’s stated purpose, indeed it appears to be something of an afterthought” (pg. 3). Furthermore, there are no indicators provided for project outcomes. The results framework does include indicators for project components (which is in of and itself confusing since they are not results but rather categories), however they are not SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely). For example, the indicator provided for component four reads, “Coral reefs slated for destruction are protected through a program of transplantation to a suitable site” (PD pg. 69). This is, if anything, a results statement and not an indicator. Baseline values and targets are also largely absent from the results framework.

The project document does however provide details on the M&E activities, including a baseline, end-of project study of project indicators, data collection, annual reporting, lessons learned, and an external evaluation. The M&E plan includes details on the responsible party for each M&E activity, and the associated budget and timeframe. The M&E plan also provides for an inception workshop, during which the results framework was to be reviewed and indicators revised and finalized. A budget of \$105,000 was dedicated for M&E activities (PD pgs. 79-83).

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE provides a rating of **Satisfactory** for M&E implementation, which this TER revises to **Moderately Unsatisfactory**. The results framework was not revised at the inception workshop or during project implementation. It is the TE’s position that this was the right decision, as revising the framework would have caused significant delays and possibly resulted in a loss of coral in the project’s first year, as the port construction could not be halted (TE pg. 23). This TER, however, disagrees. Although the project was able to implement key activities, it is very difficult to assess the project’s performance without a coherent M&E plan. It should be noted that the project management unit (PMU) diligently reported on project activities and made an effort to collect data for component-level indicators, however it is likely that many of the project’s achievements were not captured. Overall, the M&E system was insufficient for tracking results and influencing management decisions.

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 Quality of Project Implementation	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE provides a rating of **Satisfactory** for the quality of UNDP implementation. This TER downgrades this rating to **Moderately Satisfactory**, largely due to the weaknesses in the project’s design, but recognizing the support provided by the UNDP Country Office to the Project Management Unit during implementation. As described above, the results framework was inadequate for tracking project performance. The TE also makes the case that the intervention design was not logical, in particular that the fourth component, “coral reef protection,” is not clearly linked to the project’s objective of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation (TE pg. 2). Furthermore, UNDP underestimated the resources needed for implementing this component, and cash contributions had to be solicited after project start-up.

It should also be noted here that there was a 28 month-long gap between the approval of the Project Identification Form (January 2009) and the project approval (May 2011). Project documents indicate that two milestone extensions were granted due to challenges securing co-financing and political and personnel changes within the executing agency (2009 & 2010 Jordan Milestone Extension Requests). By the time the project began, the construction of the new southern port had progressed significantly. As a result, the project team made the strategic decision to translocate the coral reef community one year ahead of schedule and the UNDP Country Office was able to quickly mobilize resources in support of this activity (TE pg. 14).

Overall, the UNDP Country Office provided considerable support to the Project Management Unit (PMU). UNDP representatives made regular visits to the project site and liaised closely with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) and Ministry of Environmental Affairs (MEA) to facilitate the completion of project activities (TE pg. 26).

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE provides a rating of **Satisfactory** for project execution, and this TER concurs. The executing agency for the project was the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), a para-statal authority which replaces the usual municipal government structures in the economic zone (TE pg. 6). The project was managed by a Project Management Unit (PMU) embedded in the ASEZA, which was headed by a Program Manager employed by UNDP. At the inception workshop, the project team decided not to form a Project Steering Committee as its responsibilities would have overlapped significantly with the already established Project Board and Project Advisory Committee. The TE notes that the management arrangements established at the beginning of the project were effective throughout the life of the project (TE pg. 15). The Project Board and Advisory Committee met regularly and provided oversight on

strategic initiatives, such as the State of the Coast Report (TE pg. 23). The PMU was able to adapt effectively to the significant changes in the project's work plan during the first year of implementation. The TE also notes that the PMU actively engaged local non-institutional and non-state actors and developed strong partnerships with the ASEZA Directorates (TE pg. 17)

8. Assessment of Project Impacts

Note - In instances where information on any impact related topic is not provided in the terminal evaluations, the reviewer should indicate in the relevant sections below that this is indeed the case and identify the information gaps. When providing information on topics related to impact, please cite the page number of the terminal evaluation from where the information is sourced.

8.1 Environmental Change. Describe the changes in environmental stress and environmental status that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

As a direct result of project activities, 75% of the coral community at the port site was translocated to the Aqaba Marine Park and an average 80% growth rate was recorded at the new site (TE pg. 35). Additionally, the TE notes that the coral damage from anchor lines has reduced due to the existing mooring buoys and surveillance by the Aqaba Marine Park rangers (TE pg. 33).

8.2 Socioeconomic change. Describe any changes in human well-being (income, education, health, community relationships, etc.) that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

The TE does not cite any significant changes in socioeconomic status that had occurred by the end of the project. The TE does note that the project created linkages between the artisanal fishing groups and the University of Jordan Faculty of Marine Sciences. The University is partnering with the fishing communities to address issues of sustainability in fish stocks (TE pg. 39).

8.3 Capacity and governance changes. Describe notable changes in capacities and governance that can lead to large-scale action (both mass and legislative) bringing about positive environmental change. "Capacities" include awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and environmental monitoring systems, among others. "Governance" refers to decision-making processes, structures and systems, including access to and use of information, and thus would include laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc. Indicate how project

activities contributed to/ hindered these changes, as well as how contextual factors have influenced these changes.

a) Capacities

The TE notes that the institutional capacity of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) for mainstreaming biodiversity into coastal zone management has been increased as a result of the project (TE pg. 44). A marine spatial plan identifying users rights and regulations has been developed, along with a marine and coastal biodiversity database with GIS support (TE pg. 31; 82). Select ASEZA units and key Aqaba Marine Park personnel were also trained on ICZM, and ten staff at the Aqaba Marine Park were trained in coral translocation (pg.35; 84).

b) Governance

The TE does not cite any significant changes in governance that occurred by the end of the project. The TE does note that new laws were being passed relating to the regulation of coastal resource allocation, however it does not provide any additional information (TE pg. 82).

8.4 Unintended impacts. Describe any impacts not targeted by the project, whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects. Indicate the factors that contributed to these unintended impacts occurring.

The TE does not cite any unintended impacts that occurred by the end of the project.

8.5 Adoption of GEF initiatives at scale. Identify any initiatives (e.g. technologies, approaches, financing instruments, implementing bodies, legal frameworks, information systems) that have been mainstreamed, replicated and/or scaled up by government and other stakeholders by project end. Include the extent to which this broader adoption has taken place, e.g. if plans and resources have been established but no actual adoption has taken place, or if market change and large-scale environmental benefits have begun to occur. Indicate how project activities and other contextual factors contributed to these taking place. If broader adoption has not taken place as expected, indicate which factors (both project-related and contextual) have hindered this from happening.

The TE notes that knowledge and experienced gained from the coral reef translocation effort has been applied in other cases, such as a gas terminal development site, where employees requested that the Aqaba Marine Park Staff trained through the project do the translocation (2013 PIR pg. 18). Additionally, key initiatives of the project have been mainstreamed into coastal zone management in AZEZ, such as spatial planning, bio-friendly certification schemes and coral reef monitoring.

9. Lessons and recommendations

9.1 Briefly describe the key lessons, good practices, or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report that could have application for other GEF projects.

The TE states the following lessons learned (or “best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success) (pgs. 48-49):

- **Worst practice:** The TE has stated repeatedly that the project’s design, while it provided a strategy which could equate more or less to mainstreaming, was confusing. However, it also appears to have fallen into the trap of trying to fix the “whole problem” without ensuring that it was fully resourced and had sufficient time. Section 3.1.1 discussed how a single outcome (outcome 3.2), indeed just one output, contained so many activities that it would be physically impossible to have actually followed the narrative of the Project Document in the implementation and results of the project. The TE postulates that this results from two issues; starting the process of project design with a given budget rather than designing the project and fitting a budget to it when the scope of the challenge was known, and; the pressure on project designers to meet the expectations of GEF operational programs within a limited budget and timeframe. A more realistic approach for a small project would be to focus on a single set of policy instruments such as those for providing information for biodiversity policies, although this carries the risk that even though information is available, it is not acted on.
- **Best practice:** It is clear that between the design and the implementation the project was “dealt a poor set of cards”. Ordinarily the TE would recommend that the inception phase should have stopped and used this part of the project cycle to adaptively manage it by substantially redesigning it. However, a number of factors came into play. Firstly there was a protracted period between the design phase and the project start up, and secondly by the time the project did start those responsible for implementing it had not been part of the design phase, indeed several key positions were newly appointed. Thirdly when the project did start up the need to translocate the corals from the new port facility was urgent due to the international contract, it had to be done immediately or it would be destroyed.

A decision was made to proceed without revision to the strategy (although there were significant revisions to the budget across the components and outcomes). Ordinarily the TE would be highly critical of such a move but in this instance (and with hindsight) it appears to have been the correct decision under the circumstances. While the TE would not recommend every project faced with a similar dilemma to take such a course of action, in this instance it was possible because most of the key decision-makers already had experience of working together, they knew each other’s capabilities and they were supported by the institutional decision-making process. This allowed the project (Implementing and Executing Agencies, PMU, etc.) to quickly analyze a situation, assess the risk and rapidly make a decision while always keeping an eye on the overall objective. Had the project gone down the route of substantially redesigning

the project (which admittedly would have been the TE's preferred option after reading the Project Document prior to the field visit and validation) then it is likely that the project would have become "bogged down" and effectively disintegrated.

To extract a lesson from this it would be necessary to identify the selection of highly capable individuals for key positions, excellent communication within the project, the confidence to take decisions at different levels within the project based upon the understanding of the problem (and to recognize those decisions that were wrong and correct them). In this way the project, while it was "dealt a poor set of cards" at the beginning has "played those cards" very well.⁵

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE states the following recommendations (pgs. 45-46):

- **Recommendation 1: Financial Plan developed to support the AMP management plan:**
Financial Planning with the AMP: A simple financial planning exercise should be carried out with the AMP. This would entail:
 - Costing the various activities and developments required by the AMP Management Plan.
 - Determining the current expenditures on the management of the AMP including five years of historical data.
 - Identifying current sources of funding.
 - Identifying future sources of funding.
 - Identifying funding gaps.

Critically the financial plan should be arranged around the work programs (e.g. administration, infrastructure, conservation, enforcement, education, etc.) in the management plan. This exercise is essentially an intellectual exercise. It need not be expensive and could be run without external inputs as an in-house exercise thus maximizing the capacity building and training aspect. There are a number of useful web-based resources where information on how to carry out the process and templates for spreadsheets can be obtained without any charge. The resulting financial plan can then be a "dynamic document" providing a useful tool for management planning.

A financial plan differs from a business plan. The financial plan is intended to provide the AMP management with greater control over their future and a means to implement the management plan to its fullest potential given the resources available. It is not about commercializing the AMP [Aqaba Marine Park], indeed a financial plan differs from a business plan in the sense that it does not have to prove profitable. It is about being efficient and cost-effective and taking

⁵ The TE seems to be stating here that the project team was highly capable and able to overcome the flaws in the project's design and implement an effective project. This TER agrees that the project team was capable, however it is very difficult to assess the extent to which the project was effective without a coherent project design. This TER also thinks it is a stretch to claim that the project would have "disintegrated" if it had been redesigned.

control of the financial future of the AMP even if it is not fully in control of the funding mechanism.

An issue repeatedly raised during the TE was the unwillingness of the AMP to charge for access to one of the last remaining public beaches in the ASEZ [Aqaba Special Economic Zone]. There is nothing wrong with this, arguably a public beach should be free to access for all. The AMP should not necessarily be profitable because it provides a valuable public service on many levels. However, it is very useful to know how much that services costs, how much is actually available and where the funds are coming from, where the gaps exist in the funding and what are the plausible scenarios for filling those gaps.

- **Recommendation 2: The AMP completes a Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) for the AMP.**

This is a fairly straightforward process which can be carried out as a self-assessment exercise with the direction of the PMU [project management unit]. One should have been completed during the PPG [project preparation grant] but was not so there is no baseline but it is important to complete one now to establish a baseline for the AMP.

10. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

A six point rating scale is used for each sub-criteria and overall rating of the terminal evaluation report (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory)

Criteria	GEF IEO comments	Rating
To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	The report could have provided a more comprehensive assessment of the project's outcomes. Although the tables provided are helpful, the effectiveness section could have provided a fuller analysis. However, this TER acknowledges the challenge of assessing a project with a poor project design.	MS
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is internally consistent and provides some evidence to support its assessments. Gaps in evidence are largely due to the flawed M&E design and M&E implementation. On the whole, its ratings are somewhat optimistic.	MS
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report provides a satisfactory assessment of project sustainability.	S
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons learned are comprehensive and supported by the evidence provided. However, the recommendations could have been more extensive. As it stands, they are limited to financial planning and management tracking.	MS
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report includes the actual project costs and actual co-financing used. Co-financing figures for the PPG are not included, however.	S
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report provides a thorough assessment of the project's M&E design. More detail could have been provided on M&E implementation, and overall, this TER disagrees with the report's conclusions in terms of M&E implementation.	MS
Overall TE Rating		MS

11. Note any additional sources of information used in the preparation of the terminal evaluation report (excluding PIRs, TEs, and PADs).

2009 & 2010 Jordan Milestone Extension Requests