Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project

Terminal Evaluation Report

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Contents

Project Title: Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project (CIWP)

Country: Islamic Republic if Iran

Agency's Project ID: #980

GEF Agency: UNDP

Executing Agency: IRI Department of Environment

GEF Focal Area: Biodiversity

GEF Operational Program: Coastal, Marine, and Freshwater Ecosystems (OP 2)

GEF Strategic Priority: Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas

Project Duration: January 2005 – April 2013 (8 years and 4 months)

Budget:

GEF Project Component	2,915,000 (22.5%)
GOIRI Contribution	9,190,000 (70.9%)
Netherlands Contribution	600,000 (4.6%)
UNDP Drought Risk Mgt.	200,000 (1.5%)
TRAC Budget for Scaling Up	50,000 (0.4%)
Total	12,955,000 (100%)

Time Frame Terminal Evaluation: 1 January 2005 – 31 March 2013

Duration of Terminal Evaluation: 1 December 2012 – 31 January 2013

Date of 1st draft report: 31 December 2012

Evaluation Team Members: John F. A. Krijnen and Shahryar Rahmani

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0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

0.1 Project Summary Table

Table 0- 1 : Summary Terminal Evaluation of the CIWP

Relevance[1]	The CIWP is of continued high relevance to Iran and contributing to the achievement of regional and global environmental benefits, in which the effects of climate change are mitigated and social economical pressure on water resources factored in to wetland management.
Efficiency[2]	Until 2007, there have been delays in project implementation and in spending. Both Government and UNDP had to get used to the particular cooperation arrangements, particulary regarding the quality of human resources made available. Ever since, financial and human resources were generally speaking sufficient and made available in a timely manner. The GOIRI's share in expenditure was more than 70.9%, which as a proxy indicator for ownership is impressive.
Effectiveness[3]	Since the MTR the CIWP has considerably improved the achievement of its outcomes and outputs. The wetland management system has been institutionalized and the Drought Risk Management Plan has been translated into operational terms, which are major achievements. Alternative livelihood activities, natural resources based conflict settlement and advocacy by civil society organizations remained somewhat underexposed. This might jeopardize the government's political will to take unpopular decision with regards to recovery of ecosystem-services (e.g. closure of illegal wells).
Sustainability[4]	Threats to replication and rolling out of the NWCSAP are policy and management changes, the government's ability to reduce the austerity measures and the continuity of staff positions in key ministries. Another risk could be that the ecosystem approach, as tested in demonstration sites, does not provide sufficient attention to alternative livelihoods in compensation for restrictive wetland management options (e.g. massive closure of illegal wells, reduction of water allocation for irrigation or fishery quota without acceptable compensatory measures, etc.).[5] Linked to this is government's modest capacity to settle natural resource based conflicts.

[1] Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.
[2] Efficiency: A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results
[3] Effectiveness: The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
[4] Sustainability: The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed.
[5] For the directly involved people, awareness raising remains a relative luxury as long as no direct attention is paid to these issues.

0.2 Project Description

1. Iran contains over 1'000 wetland sites, 24 of which are reflecting Ramsar sites and approximately 90 reflecting important wetlands under any kind of protection (either national or international). Like many other countries, as Iran has developed, increasing pressure has been placed on its environment and natural resources, including the wetlands. This culminated in the Ramsar Convention was enacted in 1975. The CIWP is a joint initiative of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran (GOIRI), GEF and UNDP to strengthen protection of the country's important wetland sites, principally by introducing improved systems of wetland management, incorporating human activities bearing an influence on the biodiversity. The project has selected Lake Uromiyeh, Lake Parishan and the Shadegan Wetland (the latter was added after the 2009 MTE) as demonstration sites while the project has been trying to systematically address the following threats: (1) changes to the water regime due to climatic and anthropocentric drivers, (2) environmental pollutions e.g. aquatic pollution, (3) unsustainable exploitation of wetland resources, (4) conversion of wetland habitats, land degradation in watersheds, (5) transport infrastructure, and (6) environmental and ecological changes such as introduction of invasive species.
2. The **goal** of the project is to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of Iran's system of wetland protected areas as a tool for conserving globally significant biodiversity. The **purpose** is to systematically remove or substantially mitigate threats facing globally significant biodiversity and sustainability at two WPA demonstration sites and to scale up lessons learned within the wetlands management system throughout Iran. The **outcomes** were threefold:

   (1) Local WPA management structures (e.g., National Park offices, DoE Provincial offices) possess and use enhanced capacities to effectively manage WPA sites, including dealing with most 'internally arising' threats to globally significant biodiversity,

   (2) Inter-sectoral co-ordination structures, established at provincial and basin level, enhance the sustainability of the WPA system by, inter alia, helping to address threats arising at ecosystem level and,

   (3) National-level WPA management and inter-sectoral co-ordination structures possess and utilise enhanced capacities to strengthen WPA management, inter alia, by supporting the exchange of knowledge and lessons learned through Outcomes 1&2 above.

0.3 Evaluation Ratings

The Evaluation Ratings are based on a systematic evaluation against evaluation questions and criteria, as reflected in annexes 5 and 6. The purpose of the rating is to have a summary view on the quality of programme cycle management (including preparation, formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning).

Table 0-2: Evaluation Ratings[6]

#	Evaluation Category	Rating	#	Evaluation Category	Rating
1	Monitoring and Evaluation		2	IA and EA exécution	
	M&E design at entry	MU		Quality of UNDP implementation	S
	M&E plan implémentation	S		Quality of execution - Executing agency	MS
	Overall quality of M&E	S		Overall quality of implementation / execution	S
3	Assessment of outcomes		4	Sustainability	
	Relevance	S		Financial resources	ML
	Effectiveness	S		Socio-political	MU

[6] RATINGS FOR OUTCOMES/EFFECTIVENESS/EFFICIENCY/M&E: HS=Highly Satisfactory; S=Satisfactory (minor shortcomings); MS=Moderately Satisfactory; MU=Moderately Unsatisfactory (significant shortcomings); U=Unsatisfactory (major problems); HU=Highly Unsatisfactory (severe problems)
SUSTAINABILITY RATINGS: L=Likely (negligible rates to sustainability); ML=Moderately Likely (moderate risks); MU=Moderately Unlikely (significant risks); U=Unlikely (severe risks)

#	Evaluation Category	Rating	#	Evaluation Category	Rating
	Efficiency	S		Institutional framework and governance	ML
	Overall Project Outcome Rating	S		Environmental	ML
				Overall likelihood of sustainability	ML

0.4 Summary of Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons

0.4.1 Conclusions

3. Ecosystem-based Management Plans for three sites including Lake Uromiyeh Basin (LUB), Lake Parishan (LP) and Shadegan Wetland (SW) were finalized and adopted intersectorally; water allocations have been laid down for the LUB. A Drought Risk Management Plan has been approved for the LUB, that factors in reduced precipitation into the provincial level water allocations.

4. Neither has the National Wetland Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (NWCSAP) was approved as a bill to cabinet, nor has the Wetlands Law submitted to Parliament been approved. However, there are several regulatory benchmarks incorporated in the 5th National Five Years Plan. Wetland coordination mechanisms have been institutionalized at national level (LUB) and provincial (LUB, LP and SW) levels. In the future under the auspices of the DOE/Habitat Office the national setup will serve to manage other wetlands, during the rolling out of the NWCSAP.

5. The project design was clear; the logical framework well structured with clear verifiable indicators and risks. The project design is based on a "state-of-the-arts" ecosystem approach based on the Ramsar Convention's 2002 guidelines for management planning with emphasis on *integration* and *participation.* The effective replication in terms of project lessons and experiences is still modest (as a matter of fact the project has not been not designed to implement the management plans but it has been targeting to implement to a limited degree management plans at demonstration sites). However the degree of potential *replicability* and *scalability* of the management and planning methodology is very high.

6. As far as the project implementation is concerned, through adaptive management, the CIWP has managed to determine, agree and approve provincial water allocations in response to lower levels of effective precipitation but generally these allocations have not yet been delivered. Instead of developing parallel institutional arrangements, the project has fully worked through existing administrative and line agency structures. With reference to the austerity measures announced for 2013, during the TE's interviews and meetings at provincial level there was a generally shared pessimism on the effective transfer of budgetary allocations to the provinces. It is hoped that during 2013 and following years, this will not prevent the NWCSAP to be rolled out and implemented.

7. A tabular presentation (see annexes 3-5) is presented on the overall results of the project (according to MTE and TE), followed by an assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, ownership, mainstreaming, sustainability and impact. The CIWP is of continued high relevance to Iran and contributing to the achievement of regional and global environmental benefits. Effectiveness is high: as reflected in annex 5, most of the outputs have been achieved. Nevertheless according Management Plans; pilots on alternative livelihood options have proved to be the project's Achilles' heel. The drought conditions were a major hindrance to this (e.g., re eco-tourism and fisheries). Pilots for organic agriculture and water efficiency have been successful and conclusive. The efficiency of the project has been satisfactory: except for the first two years, the financial and human resources were sufficient and made available in a timely manner. During project implementation, the GOIRI ownership has been remarkable. The project has contributed to mainstream biodiversity in the production systems, particularly in agriculture. There are a number of obvious opportunities for future sustainability of project activities, such as the availability of governance systems supporting Management Plans in demonstration sites,

the availability of supporting budgets, the continuing work on legislation of wetland management and the availability of upscaling plans. However, there are also still a number of threats to sustainability, notably the policy and management changes, the austerity measures, DOE/Habitat Office staff continuity and motivation, unfeasible livelihood options, the fact that water is not priced, as well as, in spite of CIWP's continuous efforts, the marginal role of civil society organizations in wetland management.

0.4.2 Recommendations

8. Follow up actions to reinforce the benefits of the project: notwithstanding the fact that the duration of project has been extended twice, the evaluators are of the opinion that the winding up is still too abrupt. There is likely risk that has arisen as a consequence of delays in national budget allocation that weak government capacity to replicate pilots and to roll out the management plans might jeopardize the sustainability of the project's achievements.

9. It is recommended to support the DOE Habitat Office in the replication of pilot activities and in the rolling out the NWCSAP model over the 50 wetlands. It should not be the intention to finance the replication of pilots and rolling out but rather to continue building the managerial and technical capacity of the DOE Habitat Office, civil society and private sector organizations. The evaluators are convinced that a further two years' UNDP/GEF post-project support is required for scaling-up, conflict resolution and compensatory sustainable livelihoods measures, which altogether form a necessary condition for a sustained management of wetlands in Iran. Plans for mitigation measurues, including feasible livelihoods or resettlement schemes, should form an integral part of future and existing management plans.

0.4.3 Lessons learned

10. Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project: since there will be no further extension of the project in its present form, weaknesses need to be formulated as lessons learned: (1) integrate feasible livelihoods compensation and conflict resolution in the implementation of management plans,, (2) avoid a too detailed activity planning, too far in advance[7], (3) capacitate multi-stakeholders and their civil society representatives to negotiate for compensation measures, and (4) introduce a system of water pricing in order to promote increased water efficiency.

11. Success factors for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project, with a potential for incorporating them into lessons learned are as follows: (1) wetland conservation management needs to include ecosystem services in productive sectors like agriculture and fishery, (2) integration into existing government structures promotes ownership and sustainability, (3) climate change and variability variables need to be factored into the system of water allocations for restoring a wetland's ecosystem functions.

12. Community of Practice for like-minded GEF projects across West and Central Asia and Mediterranean was formulated by CIWP. The first meeting was hosted by CIWP-IRAN in 2010 and the second one was in Nepal in 2012.

[7] It is now generally accepted that detailed activity plans should not be allowed to go beyond the radius of foresight, which is hardly ever more than one year.

Acronyms and abbreviations

APR	Annual Project Report
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CIWP	Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project
DoE	Department of Environment
DRM	Drought Risk Management
EA	Executing Agency
EC-IIP	Environment Component – Irrigation Improvement Project
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EHC	High Council on Environmental Conservation
FAO	Food & Agriculture Organization
FYDP	Five Year Development Plan
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
GO	Government organization
GoI	Government of Iran
GOIRI	Government of Islamic Republic of Iran
IA	Implementing Agency
IBA	Important Bird Area
IFP	Institutional Focal Point
IIP	Irrigation Improvement Project
IUCN	World Conservation Union
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
Km	kilometer
LF	Logical Framework
LP	Lake Parishan
LU	Lake Uromiyeh
LUB	Lake Uromiyeh Basin
LUBMA	Lake Uromiyeh Basin Management Authority
LUEZ	Lake Uromiyeh Ecological Zone
M	million
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOE	Ministry of Energy
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MoJA	Ministry of Jihad and Agriculture
MRT	Ministry of Roads and Transportation
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non-government organisation
NDP	National Development Plan
NP	National Park
NPD	National Project Director
NPM	National Project Manager
NRM	Natural resources management
NWCSAP	National Wetland Conservation Strategy and Action Plan
PA	Protected Area
PCC	Project Coordination Committee
PCO	Project Central Office
PD	Project Document
PDF	Project Development Facility

PIR	Project Implementation Review
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSC	Project Steering Committee
R&D	Research & Development
SEA	Strategic Environment Assessment
SSA	Special Service Agreement
STAP	Scientific & Technical Advisory Panel
TC	Technical Committee
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Tri-Partite Review
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WB	World Bank
WPA	Wetland Protected Area
WWF	World Wilde Foundation

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

13. Iran has been an active founding member of the Ramsar Convention. However, actions previously taken in protecting wetland areas have not been effective in addressing the threats to these ecosystems. Over recent decades, it was noted that more work was needed to actively protect the country's wetlands. Many were becoming seriously degraded, some to the point where the biodiversity and human activities that were reliant on them were dying out. This brought about the gradual development of the Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project.

14. Two major projects were a prelude to CIWP: (a) Ecosystem management Project for LU-Dutch-Iraninan project which proposed a manangement plan for LU (1998-2002) and (b) IWRM for LUB Project- Iranian Dutch joint project (1999-2005) Water Research Institute (WRI).In 2004, the 4th FYDP (Five Year Development Plan (2004-2009) article 67 mentions that Ecosystem Management Plan for LU to be implemented as a legal requirement. The Project plan was drawn up over six years from 1998 to 2004 by international consultants working with the Government of Islamic Republic of Iran (GOIRI), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Global Environment Facility (GEF).

15. Once the Project plan was completed, the Iranian Department of Environment (DoE) was designated as the Executing Agency. The Ministry of Energy was also brought onboard to assist in implementing the support provided by the Government of Netherlands and coordinating with the GEF/Government components of the Project. Other participating national agencies were: Office of Strategic Planning Affairs and Control of the Government of the IR Iran (SPAC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Jihad Agriculture (MoJA), and the Ministry of Roads and Transportation (MRT). The involvement of these later organizations was largely in assisting in the coordination of the Project through representatives in its steering committee. In accordance with GEF requirements, the UNDP was designated as the implementing agency of the Project.

16. Originally the Project was planned to be completed by the end of 2011, however at the beginning of implementation, there were frequent changes in key staff that resulted in delays. Also, the onset of a continuing drought further hindered implementation. As a result, the project was extended two times for an additional one year and four months on a no-cost basis.

17. Also in light of the severe and continues drought and critical situation in LU, joint UNDP and Project team visits were undertaken in early July 2007. Discussions were held with local stakeholders including local officials, NGOs and communities. As drought has not been included in the project document and it has been recognized as a main threat to the project, it was agreed to develop a drought risk management plan to be integrated into the Project as a new component using USD 200,000 of UNDP TRAC funds.

18. As a result, the Lake Uromiyeh Drought Risk Management Project for Sustainable Livelihoods, Biodiversity and Microclimate Management Project was created. The rational of the project is to provide technical support that would "focus" on building a critical technical knowledge base around climatic variabilities and its impacts on microclimates, persistent droughts and biodiversity.

19. Because previously the designation of Wetland Protected Areas (WPAs) by the DoE had not proven effective, the designers of the Project wished to develop a plan that took a new approach in wetland conservation in Iran "Ecosystem approach". The new approach that was decided upon is characterized by two concepts: (i). *Participation*: for relevant

stakeholders to be appropriately and actively engaged in the conservation effort i.e. creating a participatory decision-making mechanism in wetland conservation and management and (ii) *Integration*: to ensure that decisions about land, water and biodiversity use, which affect wetlands, take into account the diverse influences upon wetlands by all sectors of human and economic development and livelihood activities.

1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

20. Terminal evaluations have a summary character and aim to assess to what extent the program has implemented the foreseen activities and achieved outputs and expected results. Moreover, knowledge has been generated in terms of best practices and lessons learned which serve the purpose of taking them to scale and of replication. The observations and conclusions of the evaluation have been taken into account in assessing the impact of the project at a national and international level.
21. The evaluation has particularly addressed the usual implementation levels and *evaluation criteria* such as:
    (a) Conception: *relevance* (to which extent has the project contributed to find answers to problems identified during the conception phase?);
    (b) Procedure: *efficiency* (timeliness and quality of financial inputs and human resources) and *ownership* (project management, government, beneficiary population));
    (c) Results: *effectiveness*, (addressing quality of outputs), sustainability (at several levels such as financial, environmental, organizational, institutional, etc.) and *impact* (long-term change in knowledge, attitudes and practices on the management of wetlands and livelihoods), and
    (d) Replication: *scalability* (e.g., to what extent have best practices and lessons learned been taken to scale at national and international level; e.g. GEF). Annex 6 contains the basic questions for each of these implementation levels and evaluation criteria.

1.3 Scope and methodology

1.3.1 Preparation

a) Desk Review

22. Before fielding the mission, a total number of 122 documents have been shared with the consultants, a selection of which has been intensively analyzed (e.g. project documents, annual reports, LU, LP and SW management plans, National Wetland Conservation Strategy and Action Plan, as well as MTE report), whereas progress and monitoring as well as financial reports have particularly been used during evaluation workshops and meetings. This analysis has served the purpose of familiarizing the consultants team with the long history of project implementation, the use of the eco-system approach and the gradually increased involvement of authorities at several administrative levels, as well as of the local communities in preparation, implementation and monitoring of eco-system based management planning.
23. This initial reading has provided the team with valuable information on initial project conception, problem identification, institutionalization of planning and monitoring arrangements and participation by the local community, and activities to take the eco-system based management planning to scale, in order to generalize the approach at a national level. In addition, a selection of technical reports on the specific site conditions

such as basin hydrology and climate change and the factors contributing to the falls in wetland water levels due to both, over-exploitation of water, as well as reduced precipitation has been reviewed.[8]

b) Initial briefing by the project management and UNDP

24. Separate briefing meetings have taken place with the project management (1) NPD and NPM, with (2) support staff/national consultants, and with the (3) UNDP/GEF staff. During the two initial meetings (with 1 and 2), general background information has been provided on the project, through brief and concise presentations, followed by Q&A. This has provided the evaluation team with the opportunity to check the relevance of evaluation methodology and process and ask questions of clarification on the project components. Last but not least, the consultants have prepared a one-day workshop with previous and present project managers on the monitoring of project outcome and outputs achieved so far (see annex 5).

25. At the occasion of the briefing session with UNDP, the ToR have been clarified and general background information has been provided on the history of the project, with an emphasis on how the project relates to national and international level policies (replication/scaling-up). A security briefing for the international evaluator was also part of the series of introductory briefing sessions.

1.3.2 Collection of Field Data

26. Three successive visits have been paid to each of the demonstration wetland sites in Shadegan, Uromiyeh and Parishan, respectively. At each site, courtesy calls have been paid to provincial-level authorities, the deputy governor and combined meetings were held with senior staff of provincial DOE and members of the three technical working groups (e.g. water, agriculture and livelihoods) and management committees. At site level separate meetings were held with NGOs and community members/project beneficiaries. During the combined meetings at provincial level the evaluators have facilitated SWOT[9] sessions (see annex 7). During the meetings with the communities, the evaluators have met community leaders as well as women and youth.

27. After each field visit, the evaluation team and project team has reviewed the result of the series of meetings with various stakeholders including provincial authorities, DOE staff, technical working groups and management committees, NGOs and local communities.

1.3.3 Collection of national level data

28. Individual meetings with national and key stakeholders (NGOs, MOE, SPAC, MoJA, MOI and Dr. Morid) had to be postponed to the end of the assignment because of a three days closure of government offices, due to Tehran air pollution. Special emphasis has been given to (i) the institutionalization of the ecosystem approach for all the Iranian wetlands, (ii) participation by beneficiaries in the procedure of wetland management planning, (iii) decisions on controversial management options (e.g. massive closure of illegal wells in LP), (iv) institutional leadership and commitment, (v) required levels of institutional, organizational and technical capacity, integration into national planning and (vi) streamlining of budgetary provisions.

[8] The drought increasingly observed during the last decade has jeopardized the already decreasing water levels of the wetlands, basically a result of overuse and exploitation, which thereby could well reduce the motivation for intervention (whereas the human factor can to a certain extent be controlled, changing the climate is of a different order of magnitude).

[9] Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

1.3.4 Feedback of results

a) Intermediary feedback

29. Halfway during the field visits, the intermediate results of observations, discussions and interviews were shared with the CIWP staff. Thus, methods and tools were adjusted to enhance the performance of the assessment review.

b) Wrap up meeting

30. Before winding up the assignment a wrap up meeting took place with the DOE, UNDP, project staff and some of the national consultants.

c) Draft final report

31. The draft final report is due by 31st December 2012. It will be structured according to the outline of the ToR as described in Annex F. The report contains Annex C to the ToR, Evaluation Questions (attached to the present report as Annex 5), as well as Annex D to the ToR, the Rating Scales, included in chapter 2.

d) Incorporation of comments

32. The Project Office / UNDP will circulate the report among the stakeholders and accommodate the comments from the feedback process. The later are expected by 20th January 2013.

e) Submission of Final Report

33. The final version of the report, containing a track version of follow up to stakeholder comments, is due by 31th January 2013.

1.4 Structure of the evaluation report

34. The structure of the evaluation report will follow the outline given in annex F of ToR (Evaluation Report Outline) with the following headings: an Executive Summary, an Introduction, a Description of Project and Development Context, a chapter on Findings (Project Design/Formulation), Project Implementation and Project Results and, finally a chapter on Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1 Project Start and Duration

35. Iran contains over 1000 wetland sites, over 90 of which are of international significance.[10] Like many other countries, as Iran has developed, increasing pressure has been placed on it's environment and natural resources, among these were the precious wetlands. This pressure did not go unnoticed by authorities and over the 1960's increased international momentum was gained for the establishment of some means of protecting these areas. This culminated in the *Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat* (Ramsar Convention). The Ramsar Convention is an intergovernmental treaty that provides a framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and wetland resources. It entered into force in 1975 and has since then, worked to provide a general framework for the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands worldwide. As States become members to the Ramsar Convention, they must designate at least one national wetland site to be registered as an official Ramsar site. This is done in accordance with criteria set out in the Convention. Needless to say, Iran, where Ramsar, the town on the Caspian Sea where the covention was initially formulated, is located, is a signatory to the Convention and has 24 registered Ramsar sites.

36. The project titled "Conservation of Iranian Wetlands" (CIWP) is an initiative of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran (GOIRI) to strengthen protection of the country's important wetland sites, principally by introducing ecosystem based governance system to govern and manage human activities which threaten the wetland ecosystem including land and water resources, watersheds (river basins) and associated biodiversity. The project was designed using the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Project Development Facility (PDF) between 1998 and 2004. During this project design phase, the UNDP has actively contributed to the project formulation as the GEF Implementation Agency. The CIWP was approved in 2005, with UNDP as GEF Implementing Agency and the Iranian Department of Environment designated as Executing Agency. A 7-year project was planned with a budget of US$12.7 millions, the bulk of which ($9.1 m, 72%) is provided by the GOIRI, augmented by a GEF Full-Sized Project grant of $3.29 m, provided under the GEF-III tranche Biodiversity portfolio.

2.2 Problems addressed

37. The underlying aim of the Project is to conduct a pilot and demonstration conservation operation, which if proven successful, could be adopted by the Government and applied to other wetlands. Initially, two demonstration sites were selected for this: Lake Uromiyeh Basin (LUB) and Lake Parishan (LP). The LUB, as part of a larger wetlands ecological zone, includes Lake Uromiyeh (LU), 13 satellite wetlands of which 5 of them are of international importance, biosphere reserve and a national park. Lake Parishan is a freshwater lake located in Arjan and Parishan Protected Area in Fars Province. Following the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) in 2009, it was also decided to accept Shadegan Wetland (SW), which was a replication site, as the main pilot site for the Project.

[10] Peter Hunnam and Raya Benis, *Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project Mid-Term Evaluation*, Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project, 2009, pp.12 and 15.

38. In the light of previous experience, if it were to be successful, the Project had to address the main threats to the pilot sites, namely:

- Changes to the water regime (dams, diversion, irrigation, wastage);
- Environmental pollutions including aquatic pollution (from agriculture, industry, domestic, boats and aircraft);
- Unsustainable exploitation of wetland resources (over-fishing, over-grazing and over-hunting);
- Conversion of wetland habitats (agriculture and urban development);
- Land degradation in watersheds (deforestation, over-grazing, agriculture);
- Transport infrastructure; and Species introductions, particularly invasive species (accidental and deliberate);
- Biodiversity conservation/management.

2.3 Immediate and development objectives

39. The **goal** of the project is to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of Iran's system of wetland protected areas (WPAs) as a tool for conserving globally significant biodiversity.

40. The **purpose** is: systematically remove or substantially mitigate threats facing globally significant biodiversity and sustainability at two WPA demonstration sites, while ensuring that the lessons learned are absorbed within WPA management systems throughout Iran.

41. The project's **objectives** are (a) to strengthen management capacities and address prevailing threats at three pilot wetland sites of national and global significance, (2) to demonstrate the lessons learned at these sites to reform and (c) to strengthen the governance of wetland systems at national level for sustainable resource use and environmental conservation..

42. The **outcomes** are as follows:

1. Model wetland management system designed and being implemented by DOE and other local stakeholders at demonstration sites to effectively address the most significant 'internally arising' threats to globally significant biodiversity.
2. Model inter-sectoral coordination demonstrated at provincial and basin level enhances the sustainability of the wetland conservation system by, inter alia helping to address threats arising at ecosystem level.
3. National level wetland management and inter-sectoral coordination structures possess and utilize enhanced capacities, and the model system developed through Outcomes 1&2 above is applied to wetlands throughout Iran through strategies, replications, tools and exchange of knowledge and lessons learned.

43. **Baseline indicators** have been drawn up at the levels of purpose, outcomes and outputs. The baseline indicators at an outcome/output level generally are all nil, reason for which no corresponding baseline column has been included. Summarized versions of the tables, at purpose as well as an outcome/output levels are attached as annexes 3, 4 and 5.

44. Main **stakeholders** are the government institutions at different administrative levels, civil society organizations and people living within Lake Uromiyeh, Shadegan Wetlands, as well as Lake Parishan. Annex 2 contains a list of institutions and individuals, which the evaluators have met during their field visits. Whereas the project's implementing agency is the UNDP, its executing agency is the IRI Department of Environment (DOE), which provides the institutional anchorage of the project at national and provincial level. Other major stakeholders on government side are the provincial governorates (Ministry of Interior), the Ministry of Jihad Agricultural, the Ministry of Energy, which together with NGOs and local community representatives are represented on the Working Groups and Management Committees at basin (LUB) and provincial (LP and SW) and local levels. At the national level, the above-mentioned ministries are joined by the IRI Office of Strategic

Planning Affairs and Control (SPAC), as well as by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The National Committee for the Management of the LUB is headed by the First Vice President. The provincial and/or basin coordination structures for each of the three wetlands, LUB, LP and SW, are headed by the respective governorates, with DOE responsible for the Secretariats. Local coordination structures are managed by the local city-governors (e.g. in Kazeroon). In this manner the management of wetlands has been institutionalized at local, provincial and national levels.

45. **Expected results**: the CIWP is to mainstream the ecosystem approach to wetland management in Iran. To that effect wetland Management Plans were developed for three different demonstration wetland sites, notably the Lake Uromiyeh Basin, Lake Parishan and the Shadegan Wetland, which were to be institutionalized and taken to scale. This was expected to result in the development of the National Wetland Conservation Strategy and Action Plan. Moreover, in reaction to the continuing drought, from 2009 onwards, a Drought Risk Management project was implemented with additional funding, the results of which were to be incorporated into the Management Plan for the LUB. It was the intention to adjust Provincial commitments to water for the wetlands, as laid down in the LUB Management Plan, in function of effective precipitation. The ecosystem approach combines wetland conservation with a sustained use of water and wetland resources. For that reason, based on approved wetland management plans, particular attention is paid to increased water efficiency in agriculture and to a reduced use of agro-chemicals. Last but not least alternative livelihoods are emphasized in order to compensate for the non-sustainable use of wetland resources. This is, among others, done by wetland-based eco-tourism activities. These interventions have the value of pilot demonstrations, the result of which is first to be taken to scale in the three demonstration sites, before being applied in the nationwide wetland management planning and management.

46. UNDP/GEF, GOIRI and CIWP have made a deliberate choice in favor of facilitating, accompanying and institutionalizing the management planning process, testing alternative management practices and livelihoods activities at a pilot level, as well as developing the corresponding national wetland conservation policy. It goes without saying that roll out of this approach to other wetlands is the responsibility of the GOIRI. Notwithstanding this clear distribution of responsibilities, there appears to be a grey area in building capacity for conflict resolution during roll out and implementation of management plans (in particular when government tempts to shy away in front of unpopular measures like e.g. the reduction of water resources for irrigation, or the closure of illegal wells, etc.). Facilitating Management Planning is one issue, the consequent roll out and implementation of Management Plans is yet another one. On the one hand, there has been big change in government's view to support implementation of integrated Management Plans. On the other hand, as the evaluators have witnessed at several occasions during the field visits, imperfections because of the scaling up of pilot activities and resource conflicts inherent to several conservation options[11] must be addressed in a constructive manner. Therefore, it remains questionable whether the GOIRI has the therefore necessary capacity.

[11] Example: the gain in water efficiency at pilot level showed promising; social unrest which could follow the massive closure of illegal wells around LP appears to refrain the government from taking such unpopular decision.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Project design and formulation

47. **Analysis of the Logical Framework**.[12]

The Goal has been clearly formulated in an univoquous way: the project will contribute to a more effective and sustainable conservation of the wetland protected area system. The Project Purpose is formulated in such a manner that threats to a sustained biodiversity can be substantially mitigated. The accompanying indicators provide a quantitative underpinning to what is thought to be substantial. Per outcome/output realistic assumption have been drawn up which show the external risk to each of them. It goes without saying that the series of droughts which occurred since the turn of the century have, at least temporarily, jeopardized the validity of a majority of targets and indicators on biodiversity, as well as a number of more livelihoods oriented activities directly depending on the state of biodiversity, such as eco-tourism.

48. **Analysis of assumptions and risk.**

In spite of repetitious droughts, the Logical Framework and its external risk assessment have been formulated in such a manner, that it allowed for a flexible adjustment to changed conditions. The addition of a Drought Risk Management component, from 2008 onwards, showed that the project applied principles of adaptive management to these changed circumstances. It goes beyond saying unlike the initial version of the Logical Framework, the post-MTE version has served as a clear basis for project management, planning and monitoring, as acknowledged by several project partners during the respective SWOT sessions. A regular monitoring of external risks has provided the project management with the opportunity to timely intervene in case of signalling bottlenecks outside of the influence of project management. The risks, which can be influenced or even eliminated by intervention of the project management team, ought not to be included, e.g. political will, commitment or engagement of partners. On the other hand, without adequate reaction persistence drought might have become a so-called "killer hypothesis" for the project in its original shape. The inclusion of the DRM project can be perceived as an adequate way around this problem by reacting to these conditions, which form a necessary condition for success but which are nevertheless beyond the responsibility of project management.

49. **Lessons incorporated into project design.**

The project design is a based on a state-of-the-arts "eco-system approach", generally applied by international biodiversity organizations (e.g. Wetlands International[13], IUCN) in the field of wetland conservation and management. The requirements for Management Planning, as applied by the CIWP are based on the « *New Guidelines for management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands* » (Valencia, 2002).

50. **Planned Stakeholder Participation.**

Participation in integrated Management Plan preparation and implementation has been one of the two concepts (the other one being *integration*), which has been emphasized in project reports. During initial project planning, apparently time was not yet mature for following a genuine participatory approach to community involvement. It was however

[12] The Goal needs to be formulated in such manner that the project contributes to its achievement. Provided that risk assumptions prove to be valid, the Project Purpose will be entirely achieved if all Outcomes will be achieved (manpower and financial resources are to be transformed in timely made available outputs and provided that risk assumptions prove to be valid, the combination of outputs will lead to the achievement of an outcome).

[13] SIPA Dr. Michael Moser used to be the director of Wetlands International.

attempted to include NGOs, City/district/village Islamic Councils and more thematically oriented civil society organizations (e.g. organized around project themes like eco-tourism) in the preparation and implementation of the Management Plans. Both the technical committees (e.g. the Working Group for Livelihoods) as well as the management committees have a number of local community members and NGO representatives. As understood from project consultants, and as observed in the field, the population living adjacent to wetlands were consulted, on issues like boundary demarcation and land ownership issues, and digging of a pond to maintain biodiversity, whereas a relatively small number of others were included in e.g. groups active in the field of alternative livelihoods activities, water efficiency and reduction of pollutants (eco-tourism training, organic agriculture, water efficient agriculture, women credit group, sustainable fishery, etc.) in one of the pilot sites in LP.

51. The other concept, *integration* takes into account the impacts of developmental activities i.e. socio-economic and anthropocentric drivers on wetlands by all the economic sectors including water resources developments and agriculture. Thus, CIWP initiated and facilitated a great deal of participation by engaging governmental stakeholders in all stages of consulting, planning, developing and coordinating integrated Management Plans. This intersectoral coordination between various ministries at different administrative levels proved to be a genuine innovation in a scattered and uncoordinated institutional landscape. The institutionalization of a national wetland conservation policy, a wetland management process with multitier multi stakeholder platforms at basin level (Regional Council, Technical Working Groups and Management Committees and at national level under auspices of the nation's First Vice President is without any doubt the project's flagship.

52. **Replication Approach.**

The effective replication in terms of project lessons and experiences is still modest (as a matter of fact the project is designed to implement management plans only in the demonstration sites). However the degree of *replicability* and *scalability* is very high. The national government has made available a budget of USD 30 million for establishing the management system of the National Wetland Conservation Policy, reaching out to 50 wetlands. Against the backdrop of budgetary bottlenecks, due to frozen foreign assets, the 2013 Provincial budgetary provisions for Wetland Conservation are thought to be modest only[14]. Again other ministries have maintained relatively high budgetary allocations. Also in 2013, the Ministry of Jihad Agriculture maintains it subsidy levels to more water efficient irrigation equipment (85% in LUB and 50% elsewhere). UNDP, authorities and CIWP are confident that also in the future the CIWP approach to wetland conservation will be effectively taken to scale. Knowledge transfer has taken place through capacity building in key departments. South - south cooperation is being promoted through project visits (e.g. WWF Pakistan) and through CIWP's participation in international conferences and regional training events. Moreover, CIWP was instrumental in launching (and hosting in 2010) a Community of Practice for like-minded GEF projects across West and Centeran Asia and Mediterranean, Subsequently Nepal hosted the second round in 2012.

53. **UNDP Comparative Advantage.**

Environment and Sustainable Development remains one of the four core goals of UNDP's Strategic Plan for 2008-2013. UNDP activities in Environment and Sustainable Development for 2008-2013 will emphasize **mainstreaming of environment and energy**

[14] According to a large majority of government stakeholders interviewed during provincial meetings.

concerns into national development frameworks and **environmental finance** to enable markets to create effective solutions for sustainable development.[15] In case of the UNDP Office in Tehran, the UNDP officer-in-charge and program analyst for the Energy, Environment and Disaster Management Cluster, happens to be the previous CIWP project manager who can claim an in-depth technical knowledge of the problems of wetlands in Iran. Thereby, UNDP is strategically positioned to take the problematic of wetland management in Iran to the fore. This has not only paid off in terms of quality of management and institutionalization of CIWP management planning to a national level, it will equally be important for a possible post-project scaling up.

54. **Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector.**

There is a multitude of linkages between CIWP and interventions in the ecosystem approach to wetland conservation through wetland management and drought risk management planning. As to the external context: first and foremost the project has forged excellent linkages with the media and national universities (e.g. with the Tarbat Modares University in Drought Risk Management) and has been active in south - south partnership development (participation in international wetland conferences, seminars and in a regional community of practice for wetlands, including a dozen of wetland projects in the region), as well as in exchange visits, e.g. by WWF Pakistan and by a Turkish wetlands project). With regards to the internal project context itself, CIWP has been more than successful in forging institutionalized relationships at various administrative levels between, on the one hand the Department of Environment and, on the other hand, Ministries involved in the coordination, preparation and implementation of Wetland Management and Drought Risk Management Plans. Particular mention needs to be made of the national, regional and site coordination efforts under the auspices of the First Vice President, regional, provincial and city governorship, respectively. The project has successfully facilitated Integrated Water Resources Management in the demonstration wetlands, characterized by joint water resource planning at basin level in a fully participatory approach, including all key stakeholders taking and into account environmental priorities. As outstanding examples of interdepartmental cooperation can be mentioned (i) the Ministry of Jihad and Agriculture's contribution to increased water efficiency and (ii) to reduced levels of pollutants through organic agriculture as well as (iii) the participatory IWRM basin water resource planning including environmental priorities. Another good example of strategic thinking and adaptive management is the integration of a Drought Risk Management adjustment to provincial water allocations for Lake Uromiyeh. Within the project equally linkages have been established with civil society organizations and linkages have been institutionalized between civil society organizations and government departments (e.g. in the working groups on livelihoods). Given the weak management, advocacy and technical skills of those civil society organizations, which the evaluators interviewed, it is doubtful whether these institutionalized relations will persist without continued support.

55. **Management arrangements.**

The project followed up and facilitated the process of developing management plans in a participatory process and cooperation with local community, governmental and non-governmental organizations. This process brought the sense of ownership that in urgent environmental situation for the wetlands, these management plans provide a good common basis for further actions and decision. The management arrangements of CIWP have been conducive to a full integration of wetland conservation and management within the government structures. The Project has been successful in having key management structures created for the sustainable management of the Project Sites. However, it will be

[15] UNDP Strategic Plan for 2008-2013; Geneva 2007.

important to ensure that these entities are able to be maintained by national partners into the future. Although a national system of wetland conservation has now been set up with a substantial allocation, the future national and secretariats and management structures for 50 wetlands, still need capacity development for implementing their roles.

3.2 Project implementation

56. **Adaptive management**

For addressing the risk of persistent drought,[16] CIWP has made a report to summarize the impacts of a persistent drought on the expected outcomes of the IRI/UNDP/GEF Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project, presents the mitigatory and adaptive measures that have been taken, and makes a number of recommendations. The most important change has been that required water allocations have been determined, agreed and approved (but not yet delivered), to address lower levels of effective precipitation.

57. **Partnership arrangements**

For the duration of the project, partnership arrangements have been established between, on the one hand, the CIWP and, on the other the Department of Environment (the Implementing Partner), the Ministry of Interior (via governorate structure at different administrative levels), for inter-sectoral coordination between various government departments (e.g. Ministry of Jihad Agriculture, Ministry of Energy) and various NGOs, represented in national, provincial and local wetland management committees and technical subcommittees. Unlike so many other projects, the project has not set up alternative or parallel partnership arrangements. Instead it has been fully working through existing administrative and line agency structures. The added value has been that the project has managed to facilitate intersectoral coordination and coherence between various stakeholders in and institutionalizing this interdepartmental and multi-stakeholder led approach to an extent that it presently has a legal basis for taking the approach of integrated wetland management to scale to another 50 national wetlands. Given the relatively scattered and uncoordinated way in which planning usually takes place this is an innovation the echo of which goes well beyond wetland management.

58. There are various interpretations on the functioning of NWCSAP institutions. Whereas certain interlocutors praise the institutional set up as an innovation, again others emphasize what they consider to be their modest performance. [17] Whatever assessment is closest to reality, in the future it would need regular management reviews to guarantee that these institutions (Regional Committee, Management Committees and Working Groups) function in an optimal way. Failing to do so, one could possibly consider the establishment of alternative institutional options, e.g. the installation of basin-wide management authorities.

[16] Lake Parishan demonstration site has now been largely dry since 2009, whilst at Lake Uromiyeh water levels have fallen throughout the project period and salinity has become so high as to inhibit ecological functioning; Lake Uromiyeh's satellite wetlands have been less affected as a result of restoration measures (CIWP Annual Report, 2011)

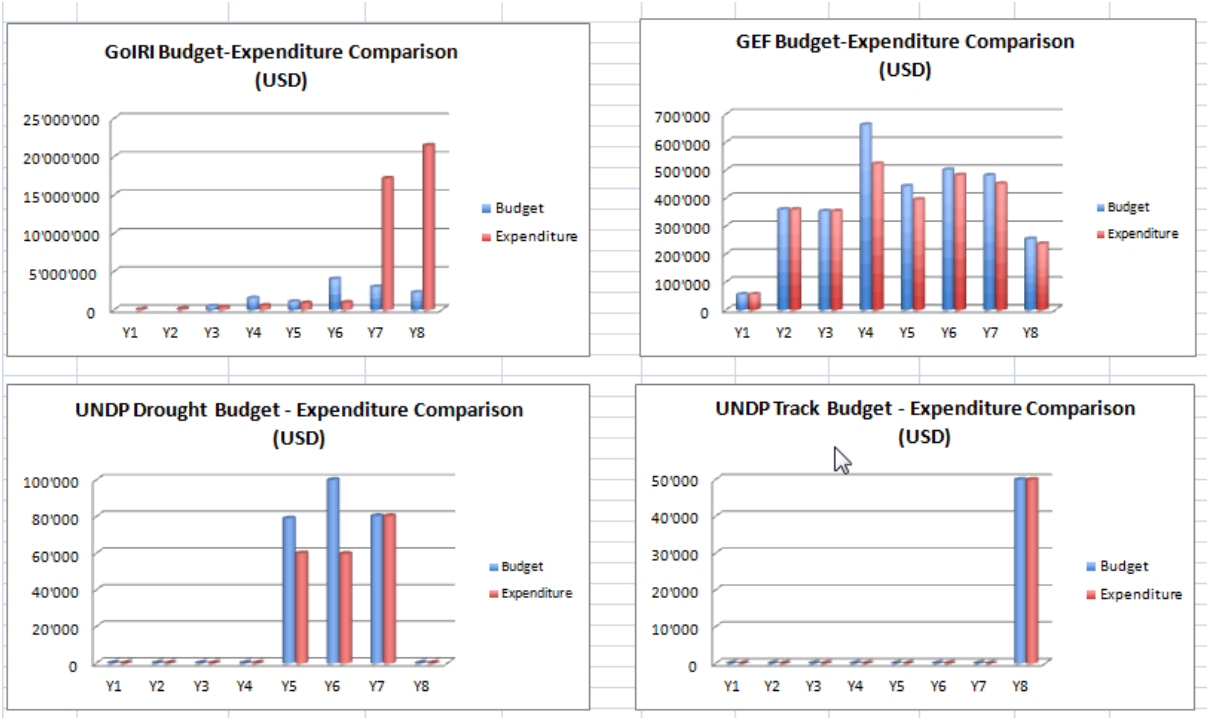
[17] Allegedly (i) the Regional Council for the LUB was dormant throughout the process of negotiations on water allocations; (ii) it took 1 year to arrange National Executive Meeting and RC meeting to announce the results of the allocations; (iii) as yet no budget allocation has been formally approved and announced to the provinces; (iv) since CIWP left the process, only two working groups have been organized.

59. **Feedback from M&E activities**

Throughout its existence, the project has had a detailed activity planning and monitoring system. An intricate system of quarterly activity planning and monitoring, supported by a monitoring calendar (with as highlights a quarterly review of activities related to planning, monitoring, reporting an evaluation) generated the information necessary for progress monitoring and made it possible through the feedback loop to correct for past quarter's weaknesses and delays in next quarter's activity plan. The progress made against planned targets and measurable indicators equally included the monitoring of risk assumptions (external to the management decision but nevertheless a necessary condition for achievement of project outcomes). This provided the project with the opportunity to make stakeholders aware of their critical role in achieving the outcomes of the project. Moreover it provided project management with good quality updated information in order to make well-informed decisions.

60. **Project finance, GOIRI participation**

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran share in the planned budget (including GOIRI, GEF, Netherlands, UNDP DRM and UNDP Track funds) was 70.9%. During the first two years of project implementation, there was no GOIRI budget but modest expenses were nevertheless covered by GOIRI contributions. In the following years (Y3-Y6), gradually increasing GOIRI budget allocations were planned but the expenditure levels were rather irregular (e.g. 24% of planned allocations in Y6). During the last two years (Y7 and Y8), the level of GOIRI planned allocations gradually decreased but the expenditure levels exceeded these allocations by far (expenditure Y7 = 6x budget allocation and expenditure Y8 = 9x allocation): in 2011 USD 17.2 million was spent as compared to a planned budget of 3 million, whereas in 2012 USD 20.9 million was spent against a planned budget of USD 2.3 million. This reflects an active participation of GOIRI in management planning and especially in pilot activities. It is hoped that during 2013 and following years the government will be in a position to equally avail the budget necessary to take the wetland management planning and implementation to scale (allocations for setting up the wetland conservation system at a national level seem to be guaranteed but as yet neither budgetary allocations have been made available for rolling out the implementation at a pilot level nor for replication in other wetlands). For the entire project phase GOIRI the ratio of expenditure to planned budget allocation was 3.35.



Tabel 3- 1: Planned budget against effective expenditure comparison per source

61. **GEF funds**

With another two months to go until phase end, as per 20 January 2013, 91.8% of the Planned GEF funds of USD 3.107.401[18] were spent (thereby the ratio of expediture to planned budget allocation was 0.92). Throughout the entire project duration GEF spending levels have remained slightly below the budgetary provisions.

62. **Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation**

The Logical Framework Matrix, which is part of the initial Inception Report, has been thoroughly reformulated in 2009 addressing MTE recomendations. Except for indicators, the latter equally contains columns for baseline data and targets, which make it easier to measure progress and to apply readjustment and corrective measures. The initial version somewhat confounds the means to the objectives with the objectives or outcomes themselves. The 2009 version corrects this weakness. Moreover, in the initial version activities are planned too far in advance and in too great detail. It is recommended that the radius of action never be allowed to exceed the radius of foresight. It is for that reason that only the first year's plan of operations should be detailed. Outputs (previously sub-outcomes) under outcome 2 have been reduced in number and reformulated (transferred into "single statements"). On the one hand this has gone at the expense of the initial emphasis on developing a water pricing system. On the other hand, in the later version the need for incorporating water allocations have been put to the fore. Last but not least, as recommended by the MTR, project management has been added as a new output under outcome 3. In summary, and with hindsight, the 2009 logical framework shows a more realistic formulation of outputs; thereby it has become more an instrument serving the purpose of adaptive management.

[18] Probably including PDF funds.

63. **UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation** (execution, coordination, and operational)

After a slow and hesitating start[19], both DOE and UNDP have proved to be reliable partners in the coordination and execution of the project. This has much to do with the selection process of both project managers and directors, from 2007 onwards. These changes as well as the later nomination in 2012 of the then project manager as UNDP 's Program Analyst gave UNDP an obvious comparative advantage and strengthened its strategic position in negotiations with the GOIRI. The profile of the present project manager reflected a continuation in both subject matter knowledge and management skills, which contributed without any doubt to a high degree of consensus between the contracting parties. That being said, the long-term support of international consultants as well as their sparring partnership with a number of capable national consultants has gradually contributed to a realistic readjustment of initially rather ambitious expectations. The SIPA's familiarity with ecosystem-based wetland management planning has proved to be of strategic importance, even more so, when the persistent drought, was factored in to the system of water allocation (addition of Drought Risk Management component in 2008).

[19] Ref. the frequent changes in the posts of project managers and directors (DOE).

4. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS

4.1 Conclusions

64. After a lengthy formulation process and a hesitating start during the first two initial years with regular changes in the positions of both, the national project manager and director, the project has picked up very well. The three Management Plans for LUB, LP and SW were finalized and intersectorally and formally adopted; water allocations for LUB have been agreed. In LUB, a Drought Risk Management project was approved, that factors in reduced precipitation into the provincial level water allocations. The NWCSAP bill has not been yet approved. But several articles have been incorporated in the fifth National Five Year Development Plan. The strategy is in final stage of approval by Cabient and formalized by law. Its coordination mechanisms have been institutionalized at national level (LUB) and provincial (LUB, LP and SW) levels.

65. The project design was clear; the logical framework well structured with clear verifiable indicators and risks. The project design is based on a "state-of-the-arts" ecosystem approach based on the Ramsar Convention's 2002 guidelines for management planning. Participation in management planning consisted of including a limited number of local civil society organizations in the working groups and Management Committees (e.g. the one on alternative livelihoods). The second conceptual dimension was the integration of multiple stakeholders in wetland coordination committees at local, provincial, interprovincial and national levels. The effective replication in terms of project lessons and experiences is still modest (as a matter of fact the project is just designed to implement wetland management plans on demonstration sites). However the degree of potential *replicability* and *scalability* of the wetland planning and management methodology is very important. The UNDP-CO is strategically positioned to take the problematic of Wetland Management in Iran to the fore. Given the weak management, advocacy and technical skills of civil society organizations it is doubtful whether they will still play a role of any significance beyond project termination without further strengthening. Although a national system of wetland conservation with a substantial financial allocation has been approved, the DOE Habitat Office and NWCSAP coordination structures for 50 wetlands still need capacity development for implementing their roles.

66. As far as the project implementation is concerned, the CIWP has been successfully working on mitigatory and adaptive measures, e.g. with regards to DRM. Due to climatic variability, fixed water allocations cannot be sustained thus an adaptive allocation strategy was developed, whereby sliding scale reductions to abstractions were used. Required allocations have now been determined, agreed and approved, but generally these allocations have not yet been delivered. Instead of developing parallel partnership arrangements, the project has fully worked through existing administrative and line agency structures. An intricate system of quarterly activity planning and monitoring generated the information necessary for progress monitoring and made it possible to correct for past weaknesses and delays in next quarter's activity plan. With regards to the project finance, until the terminal evaluation, the GOIRI has participated for 70% in project expenditure. At present, 91% of the GEF funds have been spent. It is hoped that during 2013 and following years the GOIRI's austerity measures will not prevent the NWCSAP to be replicated and rolled out. The logical framework has been thoroughly reformulated in 2009.

67. In annex 5, a tabular presentation is shown on the overall results of the project (according to MTE and TE), followed by an assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, ownership, mainstreaming, sustainability and impact. The CIWP is of continued high relevance to Iran and contributing to the achievement of regional and global environmental benefits. Effectiveness is high: most of the outputs as reflected in annex 5 have been achieved. Unfortunately, because of the persistent drought a number of livelihood activities

could not be applied (e.g. ecotourism-trained persons in LP do not have work, because the lake has vanished and therefore there are no tourists). Public awareness of wetland conservation has been promoted through an effective media campaign. However, as can be told from experience in other countries, a sustained biodiversity equally depends on the development of feasible livelihood options as a compensation for losses incurred through the introduction of restrictive or repressive wetland management options. Apparently this has been the project's Achilles' heel. Notwithstanding these weaknesses, pilots for organic agriculture and water efficiency[20] have been successful and conclusive. Therefore in future rolling out of the NWCSAP, sustainable agriculture needs to be emphasized. The efficiency of the project has been satisfactory: except for the first two years, the financial and human resources were sufficient and made available in a timely manner. The GOIRI ownership has been remarkable. The project has contributed to mainstream biodiversity in the production systems, particularly in agriculture. There are still a number of threats to sustainability, notably the policy and mangment changes, the austerity measures, staff continuity, unfeasible livelihood options, the fact that water is not priced, as well as the marginal role of civil society organizations. However, there are equally a number of opportunities such as the wetland planning and management model developed by CIWP and institutionalized at national and provincial levels, conclusive pilot demonstrations, as well as strengthened public awareness and capacity for coordination, planning and implementation of wetland conservation management. As examples can be mentioned: public awareness activities by NGOs, training of local community for Otter protection and monitoring, LP and LU boundary marking, emergency action in drought situation by local NGOs, process of land conflict resolution in LP and issuing title-deed, community empowerment, and the construction of a visitor center at LP.

4.2 Recommendations

68. **Follow up actions to reinforce the benefits of the project**

There have been two project extensions. The first one year's extension, recommended by the MTE was followed by a 4 months' extension based on a TE initial recommendation. Notwithstanding the fact that the duration of the project has been extended twice, the evaluators are of the opinion that the winding up is still too abrupt. As stated here above in the paragraph on sustainability, the delay strengthening the government capacity to replicate pilots and to roll out the management plans might jeopardize the sustainability of the project's achievements.

69. It is recommended to support the DOE Habitat Office in the replication of pilot activities and in rolling out the NWCSAP model over the 50 wetlands. It should not be the intention to finance replication and rolling out themselves, but rather to continue building the managerial and technical capacity of the DOE Habitat Office, civil society and private sector organizations. The evaluators are convinced that it needs further two years of UNDP/GEF post-project support is required for scaling-up, conflict resolution and mitigation measures, like e.g. resettlement or compensatory livelihoods options, which altogether form a necessary condition for a sustained management of wetlands in Iran. The highlights of such continued support could be as follows:

- The development of feasible mitigation measures (livelihood options, resettlement) in compensation for lost ecosystem benefits, due to the introduction of restrictive wetland management options (e.g. closure of illegal wells). It is recommended that each Wetland Management Plan will contain a sub-plan on mitigation measures, which will have the

[20] On pilot sites a gain in water efficiency of 40% is claimed; according to national water authorities, scaling up such measures can, however, hardly ever exceed a gain of 10% in water efficiency.

same mandatory status as the Drought Risk Management Plan in LUB: mitigation measures need to be factored in into wetland management planning. Just as much as water allocation depends on effective rainfall, it equally depends on the feasibility of mitigation measures like e.g. alternative livelihoods or government-supported resettlement schemes. Failing to take mitigation measures sufficiently into account it can, reasonably speaking, not be expected that the wetlands will be managed in an inclusive, consensual and sustainable way.

- The strengthening of the government's capacity to solve natural resources-based conflicts in a collaborative and inclusive manner (e.g. win-win scenarios) and to integrate feasible mitigation options into wetland management planning.
- The strengthening of managerial (proposal writing, general management skills, advocacy and negotiation skills, conflict management) and technical skills (e.g. in feasibility and market analysis of alternative livelihood options, or the development of niche markets for organic agriculture) of civil society organizations.
- Undertake a study on the feasibility of pricing of irrigation and drinking water, so that the relatively scarcity is reflected by a price differential. It is expected that this will contribute to increased water efficiency. Water demand management needs to be reflected in the future rolling out of the NWCSAP.

4.3 Lessons learned

70. Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project: in case there will be no further extension of a project, corrective actions need to be formulated as lessons learned.

- Logical frameworks need to be formulated in such manner that emphasis is put on outcomes and outputs instead of activities. It is simply not realistic to pretend precise activity planning five years in advance. Never allow the radius of action to exceed the radius of foresight.
- Wetland conservation plan implementation in replication of pilots and rolling out to other wetland areas needs capacity building in feasible livelihoods compensation and conflict resolution.
- Wetland conservation management creates maximum ownership if from the outset onwards a participatory approach is used through which multi-stakeholders are capacitated to negotiate for feasible livelihood alternatives as a compensation for restricted ecosystem services.
- In order to promote water efficiency it is recommended to introduce a system of water pricing.
- Measures for increased water efficiency ought to be integrated into a comprehensive integrated water resources management plan in which sustainable water offer and demand are matched.

71. Success factors for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project, with a potential for incorporating them into lessons learned are as follows:

- Wetland conservation management needs to include ecosystem services in productive sectors like agriculture and fishery.
- Wetland conservation management creates maximum ownership if from the outset onwards planning methodology, coordination and implementation are fully integrated into existing government structures.
- Climate change variables need to be factored into the system of water allocations for restoring a wetland's ecosystem functions. In case this leads to a loss in ecosystem

services and thereby in income, farmers need to be financially compensated for the incurred losses.

72. Establishing a Community of Practice: A good practice implemented by the Project was the establishment of a regional community of wetland management practice. This action helped bring together wetland management experts from various countries in the region so that experiences and knowledge could be easily shared. This will serve as a useful tool in the future for ensuring the mutual improvement of WPA management practices across the region. This is also a demonstrable example of South-South cooperation.

73. Project exit strategy and safe ending: Developing an exit strategy for the final years of the project, provided a good basis for a gradual shift of project technical responsibilities to related stakeholders and a plan for staff exit from the project.

74. The process, and not just the results or outcomes, of projects like CIWP should be evaluated. As these projects are being implemented in a complex and dynamic context, many complementary activities need to be incorporated into the project cycle in order to better prepare the context for adopting new approaches. Therefore, the evaluation of this kind of project should be based also on the results of building the capacity of local structures, procedures and authorities for institutionalizing eco-system and/or integrated approaches.

5. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Itinerary

Tentative Dates	Action	Time
Prior to 1 Dec	Consultants prepare for review at home and develop preliminary evaluation methodology	
1 Dec	Meeting with NPD Meeting with NPM Meeting with Doe Habitat Office Meeting with NPD Consultant	10:30 11:30 14:30 15:30
2 Dec	Briefing session with project staff and consultants Security Briefing Meeting with UNDP Flight to Khuzestan	9:00 – 12:30 13:30- 16:00 18:15
3 Dec	Meet Khuzestan DOE DG+ members of technical committees+ deputy governor Meet Shadegan governor/ DOE manager Field visit to Shadegan Wetland/ accompanied by local communities Flight back to Tehran	8:00-12:30 14:45 15:15 23:30
4 Dec	Government Department became closed because of Tehran Air Pollution then Some Meeting Canceled Internal meeting of TE team Meeting with National Consultant Flight to LUB Meeting with National Consultant	11:00-12:45 12:50 16:40 19:30-21:00
5 Dec	Meet West Azerbaijan Governer+DOE DG+ technical committee members Field visit (kaniborazan+Solduz+Naghadeh)+Gole Village	8:30 13:30
6 Dec	Departure to Tabriz Visit Lake Uromiyeh Meet East Azerbaijan DOE+ some NGOs Field Visit Flight back to Tehran	7:30 18:40
7 Dec	Refining methodology and develop report outline based on stakeholder comments, and further desk review	
8 Dec	Meeting with MoI Meeting with MoJA Meeting with National NGOs Flight to Fars	10:30-11:30 12:20-13:30 14:30-16:00 18:15
9 Dec	Meet Fars DOE DG	8:00 -

Tentative Dates	Action	Time
		09:30
	Meet LP technical committee members in governorship	10:00-11:40
	Departure to Kazerun+ visit Lake Parishan Observations of project field sites;	12:00-18:00
10 Dec	Meet Kazerun Governor	7:30-8:05
	Meet Deputy of Kazerun Governor	8:05-8:50
	Meet Technical Committee	9:00-10:15
	Meet local committee members+ Local NGOs	10:30 - 12:15
	Visit Ghale Narenji Village to meet with local communities and visit sustainable agriculture sites	14:00-17:00
	Departure to Shiraz and flight back to Tehran	18:00 23:15
11 Dec	Workshops with CIWP former NPM and Current NPM	10:30-15:00
	Meet Deputy Minister for Water and Waste Water Affairs	16:00-17:45
12 Dec	Wrap up meetings with NPD/UNDP/Project staff	10:00 - 12:15
	Meet National Consultant for Socio-economic, Alternative Livelihood, and Local Communities	12:30 – 13:30
	Meet A member of water Resources Department of Tarbiat Modares University	13:30 - 14:45
31 Dec	Submission of first draft to UNDP for further circulation and clarification	
1-20 Jan	Incorporation of comments in report	
31 Jan	Submission of Final Report	
	Post to UNDP and GEF Evaluation Center	

Annex 2: List of persons interviewed

Province	City	Date	Time	Name	Title and organization
Skype		29 November 2012	18:00 – 19:00	Dr. Michel Moser	Senior International Project Advisor (SIPA)
Tehran	Tehran	1 December 2012	10:30 – 11:15	Dr. Asghar Mohammadi Fazel	National Project Director- Deputy of DoE
			11:30-14:30	Mr. Mohsen Soleymani Roozbahani	National Project Manager of CIWP
			14:30-15:30	Dr. Naser Moghadasi	General Director of DoE Habitat Office
				Dr. Masoud Bagherzadeh Karimi	Deputy Director General on Wetlands in DoE Habitat Office
			15:30-16:40	Dr. Mostafa Panahi	
		2 December 2012	9:20-11:00	Mr. Hamid Farahanirad	National Consultant on Institutionalization
			11:00-12:30	Mrs. Mehri Asnaashari	Public Awareness & Communications Coordinator
				Mr. Mehdi Oskoei	Finance officer
				Mr. Farhad Arabpoor	Drought Risk Coordinator
				Mr. Ardeshir Sayah	Documentation Cordinator
				Mrs. Sara Koochaki	Technical Assistant
			14:00-16:00	Dr Ali Nazaridoust	UNDP Program Analyst
Khuzestan	Ahwaz	3 December 2012	8:00-8:15	Mr. Lahijanizadeh	Provintional Director General of DoE
			8:30-9:15	Mr. Pooya	Deputy governor of Khuzestan Province
			9:30-10:0	Mr. Moola	Deputy Director General of Khuzestan DoE Habitat Office
			10:00-12:30		Technical Commite
	Shadegan		14:45-15:15	Mr. Saeed Feyvazi	Shadegan Governor
			15:30-16:00		Local People (Women)
			16:05-16:20		Villagers
Tehran	Tehran	4 December 2012	12:50-14:10	Mr. Ahmad Lotfi	National Consultant of Planning Wetland Managing Plan
West Azarbayjan	Uromiyeh		19:30-21:00	Mr. Mohamad Sharifimoghdam	Sustainable Agriculture National Consultant
		5 December 2012	8:45-9:30	Mr. Mahmodi	Deputy of Uromiyeh Governor
			9:30-11:00	Mr. Kazem Farjadnia	Member of Technical Committee/Representative of Uromiyeh MoJA
				Mr. Behrouz Khezerlo	Member of Technical Committee/Representative of Uromiyeh MoJA
				Mr. Mehrang Dosti Rezaei	Member of Technical Committee/Representative of

Province	City	Date	Time	Name	Title and organization
					Uromiyeh Water Authority and the Head of Water Resource Research Department
				Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Torabi	Member of Technical Committee/Representative of Uromiyeh Water Autorithy
				Mr. Hojat Jabari	Member of Technical Committee/Secretary of permanent Secretariat of Regional Council of LU
				Dr. Alireza Seyyed Ghoreyshi	Member of Technical Committee/Site Coordinator
					Uromiyeh General Director of DoE
	Gharedagh village/Bird Watching Tower		14:00-15:00		General Director of Khorkhor Ecotourism Service Cooperation
					General Director of Gharedagh Ecotourism Service Cooperation
			16:00-16:30		Head of Naghadeh MoJA
	Gole Village		16:30-17:15		Representatives of Farmers who Implemented Sustainable Agriculture
East Azarbayjan	Tabriz	6 December 2012	10:40-13:40	Mr. Masod	Member of Technical Committee/NGO
				Mr. Reza Nikpiran	Member of Technical Committee/Natural Resource Management Organization
				Mr. Habib Mehrpoya	Member of Technical Committee/MoJA
				Mr. Armanfar	Member of Technical Committee/Water Authority
				Mr. Abase Bahiri	Member of Technical Committee/Governorship
				Mr. Ahmad Hajizadeh	Member of Technical Committee/DOE
				Mr. Davod Fanipoor	Member of Technical Committee/DoE
				Mr. Mirmohsen Ghomi	Member of Technical Committee/DoE
				Mr. Abolfazl Jamali	Member of Technical Committee/DoE
				Mr. Majid Rahmani	Member of Technical Committee/Helper of Green Life (NGO)
				Mr. Jamal Babae	Member of Technical Committee/DoE
				Mr. Mehdi Taheri	Member of Technical Committee/DoE
				Mr. Mohamad Hassanzadeh	Member of Technical Committee/Helper for Green Life (NGO)
			14:30-17:00	Mr. Mohamadi	Provincials MoJA
				Mr. Mohebati	
					Bostanabad MoJA
					Reperesentatives of a

Province	City	Date	Time	Name	Title and organization
					Agriculture Villagers
Tehran	Tehran	8 December 2012	10:30-11:30	Mr. Hosseininejad	DG of Technical Department of MoI
				Mr. Kasraei	Deputy of Technical Department of MoI
				Mr. Nouri	Expert of Technical Department of MoI
			12:15-13:30	Mr. Shahpasand	DG of Extension Department of MoJA
				Mrs. Banihashem	Head of MoJA Women Affaires
				Mr. Paloje	Expert of Extension Department of MoJA
			14:30-16:00	Mr. Hamed Moshiri	Plan for land (NGO)
				Mr. Varjavand	Damoon (NGO)
Fars	Shiraz	9 December 2012	8:00-9:30		DOE DJ
			10:00-11:40		Technical Committee
	Kazeron		15:00-17:00	Mr. Khodabakhsh	Head of Kazeron DoE
				Mrs. Pezeshkyan	CIWP Site Assistant
					Villagers Representatives
		10 December 2012	7:30-8:05	Mr. Sadegh Abedini	Kazeron Governer
			8:05-8:50	Mr. Afshar	Deputy of Kazeron Governor
			9:00-10:20	Mr. Saeeidi	Member of Technical Committee/ head of water authority
				Mr. Mohagheghzadeh	Member of Technical Committee/ Repersentative of MoJA
			10:30-12:00	Mr. Seyed Ali Kazemeyni	DG of 13 Farvarding (NGO)
				Mr. Safar ali	Member of Salamat and Tabiat (NGO)
				Mr. Saeeid Poloui	Member of Salamat and Tabiat (NGO)
				Mr. Kourosh Afshar	Member of Salamat and Tabiat (NGO)
				Mr. Ghasem Karimi	Member of Salamat and Tabiat (NGO)
				Mr. Hamdolah Rezaei	Member of Salamat and Tabiat (NGO)
				Mrs. Zahra Jokar	Member of Salamat and Tabiat (NGO)
Tehran	Tehran	11 December 2012	10:30-15:00	Dr. Ali Nazaridooot	Former CIWP NPM
				Mr. Mohsen Soleymani	CIWP NPM
			16:00-17:45	Mr. Alireza Daemi	Deputy Minister of Energy for Water and Waste Water Affairs
		12 December 2012	12:20 -13:30	Mrs. Nastaran Moosavi	National Consultant for Socio-economic, Alternative Livelihood, and Local Communities
			13:30-14:45	Mr. Saeeid Morid	A member of water Resources Department of Tarbiat Modares University

Annex 3: Monitoring indicators and targets

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Baseline (av 2003-2006 / av 1970s)		Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[21]
0.1	Purpose	Population of indicator bird species in LU & wetlands	• Flamingos >2,500 breeding pairs/y • White Pelicans >200 breeding p/y • 4 globally threatened sp:+25%/y[22]	• 209 pairs • 110 pairs • 9/40/27/1	20,000 1,300 --	Water bird counts	Flamingos : 1350 White Pelicans : 0 Marmaronetta angustirostris : 96 (the decreased level of water in the lake and its wetlands seem to be the main reason for the decrease in the number of observed waterbirds) Oxyura leucocephala: 0 Aythya nyroca: 7 Branta ruficollis: 0
0.2		Lake Uromiyeh's status and salinity levels	• Status of hyper saline with scenic beauty at risk due to increased salinity levels and decreased water levels • Salinity level<250g/liter	• Status at risk: • 258.46 g/liter		Annual management reports	Drought crisis has further reduced water levels and scenic beauty Salinity: 380-400 gr/lit
0.3		Area of protected satellite wetlands around LU increased	• 1000 ha satellite wetlands gain increased protection	• 0 ha		DOE list of protected areas	• 230 ha Gorigol increase to Non hunting area, • Ghregheshlagh 48000 ha increased toNon hunting area, • Kanibarazan (977 ha) designated as a Ramsear Site and gained its designation Feb 2011 as Iran 24th site.
0.4		Breeding population of globally threatened Dalmation Pelican at Lake Parishan	30% increase by end of the project	0 p 64 winter	10 p	Water bird counts	Wintering: 0 (Jan 2012) due to sever drought 0 breeding pairs
0.5		Area of disputed	Reduced by 50%	XXX ha		Annual	• LP land resolution action plan was finalized

[21] CIWP project implementation report, 2012

[22] Marbled Teal
White-headed Duck
Ferruginous Duck
Red-breasted Goose

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Baseline (av 2003-2006 / av 1970s)	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[21]
		agricultural lands encroached into Lake Parishan			management reports	• The process of issuing a title deed for LP has commenced. •72 ha from the farm lands, which were encroached to the wetland territory were dispossessed and 20 ha is under process of dispossession • The draft of wetlands land resolution guideline was prepared.
0.6		Ecosystem approach being applied strategically to WPAs at national level	Ecosystem approach to WPAs being promoted through national strategy by end 2010 and being implemented in minimum 5 provinces by EoP	No strategy 0 provinces	**NWCSAP**	• Final version of National Wetland Conservation Strategy and Action Plan has been sent to Cabinet for ratification • A five years plan entitled" Integrated Ecosystem Management Plan for Iranian Wetlands" with allocated budget above 30 million dollars has been approved which will be implemented in 50 wetlands located in 24 provinces • Pre-final draft of a plan for legal support of Iranian wetlands base on ecosystem approach was developed by cooperation of parliament representatives and is ready to be presented in parliament for approval

Annex 4: Monitoring at an output level.

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[23]
1.1	Ecosystem-based management plans developed, approved and regularly evaluated by well trained DOE and key stakeholders	Number of staff of DOE and other key stakeholders trained in ecosystem-based management	Training provided in a minimum of 4 key subjects for at least 25 staff of DOE and other key stakeholders at demonstration sites by 2010	Training course reports	• 355 experts of related authorities at provincial level in Lake Parishan were trained. • 570 experts of related authorities in two provinces around Lake Uromiyeh were trained. • 310 experts at provincial and local level of Shadegan Wetlan were trained. • 190 experts at National Level were trained. • Note 1. The experts were mainly trained on ecosystem approach and management plans implementation in three demonstration sites. • Note 2. There have been many training sessions carried out for diffrent target groups in forms of seminars, workshops and training course.
		Signed Management Plans	LU and LP management plans designed and approved by end 2009 and Shadegan by end 2010, with 1 review carried out for each by end 2011	Signed management plans Review reports	• The LU MP was endorsed by GOIRI Cabinet on April 2010. • The LP MP has been approved by government on 30th of April 2009. • The SW MP has been approved by Khuzestan governer on Januaray 2011.
		Number of successful priority actions from management plans	50% of priority actions delivering improvements by EoP	Reports	• For Lake Uromieh (LU): 31% of LU management plan priority actions were completed and more than 40% of actions are ongoing or initiated. • For Lake Parishan (LP): 35% of management plan priority actions were completed and more than 32% of actions are ongoing or initiated. • All these actions are planned and approved for implementation through Established national, provincial and local management committees; • For Shadegan Wetland (SW): SW management plan were approved by Khouzestan Planning Provincial Committee, and was officially notified to the related authorities by governorship for implementation.

[23] CIWP project implementation report, 2009-2012

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[23]
1.2	Conservation of wetland biodiversity enhanced by implementation of management plans	Area of wetland habitats conserved and restored	Wetland boundaries identified and marked by end 2009, 1000 ha satellite wetlands better protected by end 2010, and 500ha wetlands restored by end 2011	Annual reports	• Land conflict resolution of LP is still ongoing: • 4 Km boundary marking in non-conflict areas and high sensitivity zone completed in LP ; • More than 90% of LU boundaries were marked ; • LP Endemic fish conservation: • Out-situ pond were equipped for captive breeding of endemic fishes and planning for captive breeding has started; • Two in-situ dikes were constructed; • Genetic studies on LP fisheries were carried out; • LP Otter conservation and restoration project: • Public awareness for three target groups of local students, teachers and guards regarding Otter conservation • A volunteer local group were established for the propose of Otter conservation and monitoring; o Otter conservation management plan was developed • Otter baseline report was developed; • LP Typha conservation project: • A local NGO was assigned for regular Typha monitoring; • Wetland's water allocation for LU satellite wetlands, which are under threats were approved; • Gorigol (satellite wetland) boundary marking was finalized (200 ha) • Kanibarazan (satellite wetland) boundary marking was finalized (927 ha).
1.3	Sustainable use of wetland/local resources reducing direct threats to the lake and providing alternative livelihoods by implementation of management plans	Implementation of sustainable ecotourism strategies	Ecotourism Zoning plans developed and approved by end 2009 (Shadegan, 2010). Sustainable eco-tourism strategies approved LP by end 2010, Shadegan by end 2011, and 3 ecotourism initiatives sustained by EOP	Zoning plans Strategies Annual reports	• Final version of ecotoursm strategy was approved by LP Local Managment Committee.
		Implementation of sustainable fisheries strategies	Fisheries Zoning plans developed and approved by end 2009 (Shadegan, 2010), Sustainable fishery strategies approved by end 2010 for LP and 2011 for Shadegan and 1	Zoning plans Strategies Annual reports	• SW Fishery strategy was prepared.

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[23]
			cooperative operating by EOP		
		Eco-villages initiatives	Pilot eco-villages selected / activated for LP by end 2010, LU and Shadegan by end 2011	Reports	
1.4	Local communities aware of values and actively participating in management of demonstration sites	Awareness of local communities	20% of local population have been engaged by direct "wetland" awareness raising activities by end 2010 (LP/LU) and 2011(Shadegan), and "Wetland" awareness of local communities raised by 20% by EoP	Activity reports	LU: 60% LP: 50% LU Festival for public awarness of local population was conducted across the LU basin. 5000 copies of environmental books distributed to school libaries in schools around LP Public awareness surveys were carried out in Tehran and project provinces.
		Civil society involvement in governance	NGOs and local communities strengthened and represented on management committees by end 2008	Management Plans	• Three NGOs and 5 representatvies of LP local community are present in LP local management committee ; • One national NGO and 6 local NGOs cooperating with CIWP in demonstration sites • A two section training package (8 days) was held for NGOs around demonstration sites • Meetings with NGOs and local representatives of LP for their better engagement in management committees and technical working groups; • Two representatives of Shadegan Wetland local community were designated as SW provincial management committee members and 4 representative are members of local management committee; • A national NGO and local societies are directly engaged in Otter restoration and conservation project in LP.
		Community participation in priority activities from management plans	Local communities participate in 25% of priority actions of management plans by EOP		• LU: 75% LU • LP: 80% • Restoration process of two LU satellite wetland by local NGOs, • Participation of local NGOs and cummunities in development of Ghoorigol management plan, • LP local communities participated in the development of a proposal for otters. Local communities participated in the management of grazing areas. • LP local community represetatives are involved in most technical sub-committees to review and decide on projects implementation,

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[23]
					• Local community around nominated LU satelite wetlands are also involved in all management planning and implementation activities.) • LP local community are involved in field projects like developing sustainable agriculture around LP, saving endangered species like endemic fishes and otters. • LU local community are mainly involved in activities related to restoring, conservation and sustainable use of satellite wetlands. • Two villages in the vicinity of Ghare gheshlagh wetland were involved directly in alternative livelihood studies. • 4 villages in the vicinity of Ghare gheshlagh wetland were engaged in development of ghare geshlagh management plan. • Local communities in the vicinity of LP are directly engaged in implementation of sustainable agriculture project and Otter restoration Project . • A Local tour guide team has been formed in LP, who are involved in local public awareness activities and supporting tourism related activities around LP. • LP women facilitators are involved in wetland management related activities. • Local communities in the vicinity of Ghare gheshlagh Wetland were engaged in the process of the wetland management plan. Furthermore, local communities was considered to have an active role in the local management committee.
2.1	Inter-sectoral governance and institutional mechanisms established at demonstration sites	Appropriate high level, inter-sectoral governance	Lake Uromiyeh Basin Council or Authority established by end 2009 and meeting minimum once per year	Declaration	• LU Regional basin council had 4 meeting . • LU national management committee had 8 meetings
		Management committees	Inter-sectoral management committees established by end 2009 (2010 Shadegan) and meeting at least twice per year	Management plans	• LP local management committee had 16 meetings for the purpose of reviewing proposals from local authorities for management plan implementation. • LP provincial technical committee had 8 meetings until present. • SW provincial management committee had 3 meetings until presen. • SW local management committee had 5 meetings until

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[23]
					present.
		Working Groups	3 Inter-sectoral working groups for LU and LP established by end 2007 (end 2010 for Shadegan) and meeting at least twice per year	Project reports	• Lake Parishan working groups: Water and agriculture: 11 meetings Alternative livelihood : 16 meetings Ecotourism: 15 meetings Land conflict resolution working group: 23 meetings Biodiversity working group: 3 meetings • Lake Uromieh working groups: Biodiversity: 6 meetings Public awareness and participation: 9 meeting Water and agriculture: 2 meetings • Shadegan Wetland working groups: Water and agriculture: 9 meetings Participation and public awareness: 5 meetings Biodiversity: 5 meetings
		Secretariats	Secretariats established for LU and LP by end 2010 and Shadegan end 2011	Project reports	• The secretariats of the LU council established by end 2009 ; • The secretariats of the LP council established by end 2010 ; • The secretariats of the SW council established by end 2010 ;
2.2	Water requirements of wetlands secured through successful implementation of IWRM	Water allocations to environment	Provincial water allocations to LU approved by end 2009 (mid 2011 for Shadegan), and being implemented by end 2011 (EOP for Shadegan)	Project reports	• LU :1.5 billion cubic meters water has been allocated to LU from three provinces. • LP: legal supports and enforcements are now available for banning illegal ground water exploitation. • National level : Wetlands' Water allocation model and guideline is being prepared(50%)
		Drought / climate change adaptation measures	Drought protocols for LU by end 2010, Shadegan end 2011	Protocols	• LU drought risk mangment plan was approved. At provincial level.
		Sustainable abstraction of groundwater	Strategy for sustainable abstraction of groundwater at LP agreed by mid 2010 and being implemented by 2010	Report	
2.3	Sustainable agriculture, land and waste management practices reduce threats to wetlands	Reduction in pollutant discharges from key point sources to wetlands	10% reduction in 2/5 most damaging inputs to LP and LU by EoP	Baseline Reports	• LP pollution management and action plan was adopted within local management committee. • Kazeroun governor office has provided 2 more garbage collection vehicles to some of villages around LP
		Reduction in fertiliser and pesticide/herbicide applications within 1 km of wetlands	10% reduction around LP and 2 LU satellite wetlands by EOP	Baseline Reports	• Integrated pest management is part of sustainable agriculture development around LP has been practiced.

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[23]
		Irrigation efficiency	Irrigation efficiency improves 3% for LP and LU by EOP	Strategy Reports	• Gorigul Wetland's water canals were modified.
3.1	National DOE and inter-sectoral capacity to apply the ecosystem approach to wetlands raised	Raised capacity for ecosystem approach	Capacity of 50 key staff from DOE, MOE, MOJA and other key sectors raised to address the ecosystem approach to wetlands, by end 2010	Training course and workshop reports	• 290 experts from national authorities including Department of Environment, Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Jihad Agriculture were trained through 4 tailored training workshops. • Frame work and main body of project toolkit as a tool for sharing project achievements and lessons learnt for wetland management was prepared .
		Evidence on threats and management effectiveness	Assessment of threats and management effectiveness at all nationally important wetlands in Iran available by mid 2010	Report	
3.2	National system established to plan and roll-out demonstration model approach to wetlands throughout Iran	Wetland conservation policy and implementation plan	Policy / Plan approved by end 2010, with clear "ownership", by national committee	Policy / plan	
		Policies influenced in direction of ecosystem approach	Project influences at least 3 key policy issues in direction of ecosystem approach for wetland management	Project reports	• Pre-final draft of a plan for legal support of Iranian wetlands base on ecosystem approach was developed by cooperation of parliament representatives and is ready to be presented in parliament for approval ; • Guidelines and Codes of practice of 5th 5-year national development plan were developed; • Application of Ecosystem approach to wetland management was approved in the 5th national 5-year development plan 2010-2014 both in cabinet and parliament .
		Iran Wetland Database and Guidelines	National tools, including wetland database and 4 key guidelines, available by EoP	Project reports	• Online and offline versions of wetland data bank is developed and launched and data entry process has begun by related experts from DoE .
		Number of provinces using the system	All provinces introduced to the system, and 3 new provinces starting implementing it by EOP	Project reports	
3.3	Public awareness of wetland values is raised	Public awareness of wetlands	National public awareness of wetland values raised by 20% by EOP	Awareness Survey	• Public awareness activities carried out at the national level. Activities included the broadcasting of a series of 15 video clips (Tab-e-Ab), holding public awareness fairs, and media interviews by project management. • A national level wetland awareness survey was carried out.

#	Level	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Level at end of 2012[23]
					• Different Public awareness activities carried out at the national level. CIWP supported preparation of different TV series about wetlands value, threats and functions. Project also participates in different national fairs, produced public awareness materials. • CIWP is in close relationship with the media. CIWP also participates in different national fairs, produced public awareness materials. • In addition, CIWP have had a bold presence in media by having many TV, radio and newspaper interviews regarding subjects such as wetlands and ecosystem approach. In this reporting period CIWP has carried out the following activities regarding national public awareness in national level: • Holding training workshop for media reporters • Participating in International environment exhibition • Frequent updates of CIWP website • Publishing updated CIWP introduction brochure .
3.4	Effective project management	Evaluation results	Mid-term and Terminal Evaluations give Satisfactory assessments	MTE, TE	
		% annual activities achieved	PCO management delivers at least 80% of annual work plan activities	SIPA reports	

Annex 5: Terminal Evaluation of CIWP outputs

#	Outcome/Output	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability	Comments
1	**Outcome 1: Model wetland management designed and being implemented by DOE and other stakeholders at demonstration sites to effectively address the most significant "internally arising" threats to globally significant biodiversity**				
1.1	Ecosystem-based management plans developed, approved and regularly evaluated by well-trained DOE and key stakeholders	++ Financial and human resources sufficient and made available in timely manner ++ High quality support in capacity building by SIPA and international advisor on IWRM, followed up by national consultants	+ + Management plans ready and approved ++ Managers and key stakeholders trained in ecosystem-based management - - SW management plan: low level of popular engagement (time pressure)	+ Even NGOs follow up, people ask for implementation - Threats: policy and management changes and continuity of key staff ++ 5 provinces have applied for support with eco-system approach: opportunity to share existing MPs to roll out to other provinces	2009: MP for LUB and LP 2010: SW 2012: DRM
1.2	Conservation of wetland biodiversity enhanced by implementation of management plans at demonstration sites	++ Community-driven approach is much more efficient than top-down approach ++ LP festival (2007) proved to be very efficient in forging awareness around importance of wetland biodiversity	++ Land use conflict around LP settled with support of national consultants ++ Boundary markers installed in LUB and LP +- Fish ponds and otter project achieved but put on hold pending the persistent drought ++ High level of popular awareness ++ NGOs involved in management planning - Visitor centre rather a status symbol (too high priority during persistent drought)	-- As long as compensation of loss in livelihoods due to implementation options for management planning is not feasible, important social unrest can be expected (e.g. following closure of >200 illegal wells in LP). This will not motivate government to take such unpopular measures.	Economic aspects of local development should have been factored in a much more pronounced degree
1.3	Sustainable use of wetland/local resources reducing direct threats to the lake and providing alternative livelihoods by implementation of management plans	-- Alternative livelihoods activities tried out by the project either have proved not to be profitable, or could not be put into practice because of persistent drought	+ Fishery strategy for fishery in LP developed + 25 persons trained in eco-tourism + Visitor centre constructed and almost operational	-- Feasible alternative livelihoods have not been explored by the project: in-depth discussions with NGOs showed that not even one single activity proved to be profitable	Economic and financial feasibility of alternative livelihoods, which form a compensation for prohibited unsustainable use of wetlands, form a necessary condition for a sustainable use of natural

#	Outcome/Output	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability	Comments
		-- The project has not availed the necessary international and national support to support local economic development			resources / wetlands
1.4	Local communities aware of values and actively participating in management of demonstration sites	++ Local festival in LP communities was an efficient manner to promote local ownership of promoting conservation of biodiversity	+ NGOs involved in preparation and implementation of management plans ++ NGOs participate in technical subcommittees for livelihoods	- Sustainability of continued participation of NGOs in management planning and implementation dependent on political climate	No clear distribution of tasks and responsibilities between government, private sector and civil society, based on comparative advantages To put "awareness" in context: "*Food comes first, than ethics* ," B. Brecht;
2	**Model intersectoral coordination demonstrated at provincial and basin level enhances the sustainability of wetland conservation system by, inter alia, helping to address threats arising at ecosystem level**				
2.1	Intersectoral governance and institutional mechanisms established at demonstration sites	++ Highly efficiently managed by CIWP	++ All 3 provincial management committees regularly meet, and so does the national committee for LUB as well as the technical subcommittees ++ Planning and management capacities of multi-stakeholders built +- Secretariat for LU is operational	+- Rolling out of demonstration site management plans (LUB, LP, SW) dependent on budgetary allocations at provincial level (DOE, Ministry of Jihad and Agriculture, Ministry of Energy, etc.)	Stakeholders at provincial level are worried about provincial budget effectively made available in 2013 for the implementation of the management plans
2.2	Water requirements of wetlands secured through successful implementation of IWRM	++ Excellent quality of support by international IWRM expert and Tarbiat Modares University + Exchange visits for DRM kept affordable by selecting national site (70 persons for one third of budget)	++ Drought Risk Management Plan finalized, relating to water allocations in LUB management plan ++ Capacity of major stakeholders for DRM built	++ Calculation model for drought sensitive provincial allocation of water to LU remains valid notwithstanding the persistent drought in LUB +-Application of the allocation model depends on political courage and on the massive application of water efficiency measures in agriculture	Excellent quality of Management Plans and DRM plans; however how the human dimension will be factored in; how will financial losses caused by sustainable water allocation be compensated (in principal the GOIRI has decided to compensate for these losses

#	Outcome/Output	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability	Comments
				++ CIWP has merely facilitated, the Water Authority has hosted -- Water utilization is subject to free riding; pricing system for irrigation and drinking water needs to be developed, reflecting its relative scarcity	
2.3	Sustainable agriculture, land and waste management practices reduce threats to wetlands	- CIWP is less strong on water quality + A number of university studies were performed of good quality	++ Demonstration program on organic agriculture responds to international standards in integrated pest management and, at least at a pilot level, proves to successfully combine reduced utilization of chemical pollutants with higher productivity levels	+- Scaling up organic agriculture to implementation level (169 sites planned) and to other provinces needs the development of a niche market and a monitoring system for organic agriculture -- Throughout implementation and rolling out attention needs to be given to untreated sewage discharge in wetlands	Tabriz has own sewage system, Shadegan has not (the evaluators met with wetland villagers voicing their opinion on the pollution of he wetland. DOE has its own monitoring system for measuring the water quality and a fining system is in place
3	**National level wetland management and inter-sectoral coordination structures possess and utilize enhanced capacities, and the model system developed through outcomes 1 & 2 above is applied to wetlands throughout Iran through strategies, replications tools and exchange of knowledge and lessons learned**				
3.1	National DOE and inter-sectoral capacity to apply the ecosystem approach to wetlands raised	+ Cost effective half-day seminars to reach out to mid-level management ++ Workshops and seminars with integrated field exposure ++ Mass media to reach out to a large public (TV exposure by CIWP)	++ Study visits organized to demonstration sites and capacity built of managers and senior experts from national DOE, MOE and MJA ++ CIWP is presently, during the final 4 months working in close collaboration with the DOE Habitat Office in order to prepare the NWCSAP implementation at replication sites ++ CIWP Is presently introducing all provincial staff with important wetlands to the eco-system approach (toolkit,	++ Seven surveys were held at field level in order to measure the impact ++ An exit strategy is under implementation in order to gradually withdraw and hand over responsibilities to the DOE Habitat Office	Employment opportunities are shared with project collaborators Letters of Recommendation are prepared

#	Outcome/Output	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability	Comments
			management plans, DRM): 16 provinces trained ++ An exit strategy is under implementation in order to gradually withdraw and hand over responsibilities to the DOE Habitat Office		
3.2	National system established to plan and roll out demonstration model approach to wetlands throughout Iran	++ Highly efficient through important ownership with high GOIRI institutional, legal and financial commitment	++ NWCSAP has been formally approved by parliament and has a legal basis ++ Toolkit under development to be rolled out in a systematic way, containing: management plans, DRM, community based development, wetland zoning and institutional arrangements ++ National level budgetary allocation of USD 30 million secured to set up the national system for NWCSAP roll out ++ Wetland dBase finalized and ready for sharing on DOE website	-- Budgetary provisions for replication in other sites of demonstration wetlands not yet allocated -- Budgetary provisions for rolling out the eco-system approach of other provinces not yet allocated (however: the MJA has a large budget for subsidizing investments in water efficiency)	It is generally acknowledged that in 2013 the GOIRI will be faced with austerity measures; However project and DOE are optimistic about the long-term government commitment to respect its financial allocations.
3.3	Public awareness of wetland values is raised	Seen the high government participation in the project, good value for money was received	++ During the last three years, many documents were published aiming at increased public awareness on wet land conservation ++ CIWP participated in the Ramsar Convention in Romania where it participated in the formulation of Community of Practice (#11) ++ South-south partnership:	++ For the directly involved stakeholders awareness measures needs to be backed up by feasible alternative livelihoods options	

#	Outcome/Output	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability	Comments
			exchange of delegations with Turkey and Pakistan		
3.4	Effective project management	++ Monthly / quarterly monitoring of work plan and feedback into readjusted planning has been very efficient but took a considerable time	++ Monthly / quarterly monitoring of work plan has been informative ++ Exit strategy is under implementation; transfer of assets in process +- Final Report still pending ++ Terminal Evaluation fielded in time	++ Monitoring system organized according to international standards +- How these planning and monitoring skills can be transferred to the Habitat Office; Is any capacity building in this field supported by the CIWP? +- Is there any evidence that the DOE Habitat Office and national and provincial wetland management committees are ready to cope with conflict resolution occurring during plan implementation? +- Is there an opportunity to plan post-project support in rolling out the planning and particularly in the implementation of conflict-related wetland management options? (e.g. application of water allocations (LUB) or closure of illegal wells (LP))	During field visits at several occasions the evaluators have observed that government is reluctant to implement unpopular management options. It was generally felt that government does not master resource related conflict management and therefore tends to shy away. Another issue is the low profile that the project has kept with regards to feasible economical alternatives as an effective compensation for restriction in access to ecosystem functions. What opportunities exist to accompany the Habitat Office with these issues?

Annex 6: Evaluation Questions

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?			
• How relevant is the project in terms of respecting of, and contributing to international conventions like UNCBD or the Ramsar convention on wetlands?	• Priorities of international conventions incorporated in project design	• Project documents • Stakeholders • Project management	• Desk review • Interviews
• Is the project relevant to Iran's environment and sustainable development objectives?	• Priorities of Iran's national policies in environmental and sustainable development	• National policies • National multi-year plans	• Desk review • Interviews
• Were local beneficiaries and stakeholders adequately involved in project design and implementation?	• Degree of participation in design and implémentation	• Project documents • Stakeholders/ beneficiaries	• Desk review • Interviews
• How relevant has been the project design in terms of internal logic and coherence?	• Horizontal and vertical logic	• Logical Framework	• Desk review • Workshop
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
• Has the project been effective in achieving its objectives and three outcomes?	• Evolution of Progress indicators over time	• Progress reports	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• Has the project been effective in achieving the outputs?	• Evolution of Progress indicators over time	• Progress reports	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• To what extent the project has incorporated and monitored assumptions for coping with external risks	• Assumptions, risks made explicit	• Project document • Progress reports	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?			
• Were the institutional and implementation arrangements from government side sufficiently efficient?	• Decisions on institutional and implementation arrangements effectively taken • Institutional arrangements for eco-system approach working efficiently • Implementation arrangements, ibid	• Project work plan and progress reports	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• Were the financial means of the project sufficient to achieve planned outputs in a timely manner?	• Budget - release - expenditure comparison • Time between funding/liquidity request and effective transfer	• Project accounts	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop

• Were the financial means of the project managed according internationally accepted accountancy standards?	• Observations from internal and external auditing (if available for different sources)	• Audit reports	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• Were the human resources made available for the project of sufficient quality to achieve the projects outputs in a timely manner?	• Long-term and short-term project personnel, including national and international consultants available; planning compared to effective achievement	• List of long-term and short-term project personnel, including national and international consultants	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• How efficient was procurement of goods and services?	• Goods and service made available at reasonable costs and in a timely manner	• Time comparison between order and delivery • Market prices	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
• To what extent has the eco-system approach to wetland management been scaled up to a national level?	• National policy on wetland management • Replication of project approach to other wetlands	• Policy documents • Written information on effective and potential réplication	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• Are budgetary provisions sufficient for a general application of the integrated management of wetlands?	• Government budgetary provisions as compared to investment need on integrated wetland management	• Government national and provincial budget (DOE, MJA. etc)	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• To what extent is there sufficient political clout to decide in favor of management options (e.g. reduction of water for agriculture) and do the mitigation measures have enough popular support (ownership)?	• Examples of effectively taken decisions on management options • Buy-in by project beneficiaries	• Written information • Stakeholders and beneficiaries	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• To what extent do the demonstration sites provide sufficient environmental clout to serve the institutionalization of the eco-system approach at national and provincial levels?	• Long-term environmental trends in LU, LP and LS • Expected impact of management plan mitigation measures on environmental trends • Degree of institutionalization of eco-systems approach at national and provincial levels	• Written information • Stakeholders and beneficiaries	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?			
• To what extent has the application of management plans contributed to reduced environmental stress?	• Progress indicators to outcome 1, referring to environmental stress	• Progress reports • Stakeholders • Beneficiaries	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• To what extent has the application of management plans contributed to improved ecological status?	• Progress indicators to outcomes 1 and 2	• Progress reports • Stakeholders • Beneficiaries	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop
• To what extent and under what frame conditions can, under current demographical/climatic conditions and acceptable land-use and management options, the eco-systems approach provide a solution to a sustained conservation of wetlands in Iran?	• Information on application of mitigation measures and buy-in by local government and population	• Progress reports • Stakeholders • Beneficiaries	• Desk review • Interviews • Workshop

Annex 7: Results of SWOT exercises with Provincial Staff DoE and members of technical committees

Strengths

Formulation of National Strategy and Action Plan for Wetland Conversation during lifetime of the project;

The project team knew where they were going to;

They understood the concept of the project, its vision and approach;

Project team focused on ecosystem approach;

Annual work plan of the project especially after 2007 that had been prepared correctly and carefully;

The role of the NPMs after 2007 and their individual capacity in facilitation and analyzing the stakeholders;

Project team worked according to their annual work plan;

Good teamwork atmosphere in CIWP since 2007;

Strong national and international consultant;

Working out the exit strategy for the final steps;

Patience of CIWP managers and staff;

Recruiting according to the manual resulted in detection of competent persons

Financial filing,

To have internal finance data bank,

Trying to use participatory approach at all level by CIWP;

Formulation of NWCSAP for wetland conservation;

Involvement of NGOs and Stakeholders;

Planning using clear project documents;

Existing studies used in the project development;

Facilitation approach was successful;

Documentation of wetland issues to large public;

Setting up the CIWP sub-offices under authority of governorship;

Good atmosphere through teamwork.

Weakness

Ownership feeling of the project;

Mainstreaming of the project to DoE habitat office; the project focused on it since last 2 years;

For some of CIWP staff the working days became decreased in exit strategy but the amount of tasks are the same as before;

Providing and implementing the exit strategy was new for a project such as CIWP;

Some unexpected events caused some changes in exit strategy;

The unstable situation of the CIWP staff in the last year of the project;

Highly ambitious work plan of the CIWP could be tiring;

Human resource management especially during the exit strategy didn't motivate the staff to continue the project like before;

Many managerial changes in DoE and other stakeholders;

Budgetary allocations not guaranteed;

Implementation not part of project phase;

Lacking continuity of government management posts;

There is no plan for alternative livelihoods.

Opportunity

The toolkit that CIWP are going to publish;

The last and current drought situation helped the government to focus on wetland management at national level;

5th national development program focused on wetland to be conserved for future;

Those capacities that have been built for government staff;

The possibility of sharing the CIWP experiences on financial issue with others;

5th NDP mentioned the eco-system approach;

Water rights for wetlands;

Inter-sectoral collaboration;

Raised awareness of public and government;

Development plans and priorities of other ministries.

Threats

It isn't possible that the CIWP staff and national consultant participate in any other activities;

DoE Habitat office isn't ready to take the ownership of the project and to continue the project, they need capacity development program;

Maybe DOE is not up to the task of replication;

Establishment of ecosystem approach but not implementation;

A lot of activities in annual work plan that CIWP worked base on, is unusual and over the capacity of movement staff who are going to continue the project;

Possibility of changes in DoE attitudes;

Allocations are not followed up by transfers;

Government mainly sees natural resource conflict as a security issue;

Not paying for ecosystem services puts in danger the sustainable use;

Roll of NGOs in wetlands management becomes weaker after project.

ANNEX 8 : MANAGEMENT REMARKS BY REVIEWERS AND FOLLOW UP ACTIONS BY TE - TEAM

Para.	Remark	Follow Up
0.0	Budget figures on summary page need to be updated	Done as suggested.
0.0	Duration of TE on summary page only reflects the time spent in the field	Duration has been corrected and now includes the entire duration of the assignment, including reporting.
0.0	Cover photo does not represent project activities.	The photo shows a dry LU against beautiful mountains on the background; Moreover the black and white picture continues the style set by the authors of the MTE report. Since several comments were received, the evaluators have decided to replace the image by a photo mosaic.
0.0	Use logo's on cover page.	Request CIWP to provide logo's of project and DOE (UNDP is available).
0.1	Project summary table: several comments made show that their authors are not familiar with the particular language used in logical frameworks and in result-based management. The OECD glossary (standard for RBM) does not mention the word "efficacy" which appears to be a Gallicism equivalent to "efficacité", in English translated by "effectiveness".	The evaluation criteria mentioned in the table are in line with OECD jargon, hence the word "efficacy" was not used. Factual mistakes on the legal status of the water allocation system have been corrected. Opposing visions on the sustainability of the project achievements were taken into account.
0.1	Wording on sustainability of project achievements is to optimistic.	Sustainability of project achievements has been put in perspective (added: working groups have slowed down); Conclusion that DRM has been operationalized is not correct and has been formulated.
0.1	I think positive words have been used for Threats, and I think it's better to use Lack of political stability, lack of government's ability, etc.	Reformulated according to suggestion.
1	Omit numbering of paragraphs (confusing).	Paragraph numbering has been maintained, they are very helpful as a reference (see also MTE Rapport).
1	The number of Ramsar sites in Iran is not correct.	The number has been specifically mentioned as 24.
1	CIWP is a joint project.	Joint has been added.
1	Noise pollution has not been addressed because it was not deemed relevant.	Noise pollution removed.
2	The outcomes should be defined as in the initial Inception Report and Project Document.	Done.
0.3	Evaluation ratings are contradictory.	This is a matter of interpretation. However, we agree that the quality of execution by DOE, Habitat Office and UNDP should not be rated at the same level. That being said, the rating of the executing agency has been lowered by one level.
0.3	There is no internal consistency between rating for outcomes and sustainability.	We do not agree. Outcomes have been relatively positively rated but that was not the case with sustainability, simply because not all conditions are united to guarantee a successful replication at national level for reasons mentioned in the text.

Para.	Remark	Follow Up
3	To keep the integrity of the text, I suggest using Uromiyeh in the whole text.	Done as suggested.
4	The legal status of NWCSAP has not been worded correctly.	Modified in line with suggestions.
5	The idea of *replicability* does not conform with the fact that every ecosystem is unique- I suggest to use *applicability* of the concept or the framework which was used- replication or duplication is not accurate	It is not the ecosystem, which is replicated but the management planning and implementation for wetlands. This methodology developed and tested at demonstration sites will either be replicated, to other wetland sites or fully implemented In the demonstration wetlands.
6	This is a little optimistic. The required allocations have been determined, agreed and approved, but generally these allocations have not yet been delivered.	The text has been adapted in line with this comment.
7	Too much stress on threats to sustainability.	This paragraph has been balanced by including a number of opportunities for sustainability
7	The drought conditions were a major hindrance to this (e.g., re eco-tourism and fisheries)	Partially true but also the fact that no feasible options have been identified (quite some livelihood options were discussed but none proved to be profitable, e.g. carpet weaving).
7	Those options are the project's downfall.	Needs further explanation.
12	Wetland projects and legal approaches, which were a prelude to CIWP should be mentioned.	This information has been incorporated in the text.
13	Detail lacking in description of project preparation.	Modified taking into account proposed detailed information.
15	Detail lacking in description of project extensions.	Idem.
17	Climate change does not necessarily cover the identified problem but rather climatic variability.	Idem.
24	What is a security meeting? Health and safety?	The security briefing is part of the initial briefing done by UNDP by the security officer. This briefing is to share with foreign consultants the security risks in the country of their assignment.
25	Do u mean the working groups such as water and agriculture working groups?	Yes we do. This issue has been more specifically mentioned.
25	SWOT analysis made in annex 7 has been edited- it is very unclear and needs an urgent reassessment.	As long as the statements made by participants to the provincial meetings have been well translated into English, there is nothing more to add: this is what participants perceived as major strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and strengths of the project (whether you like it or not).
29	Should be "some of the national consultants….", I was excluded for example.	Has been corrected. Yes we can see from your comments that you were not included.
34	The founding role of Iran in the establishment of the Ramsar Convention should be mentioned more explicitly.	Done, apparently an omission to forget to mention this generally known fact.
35	The mentioned sites are rather demonstration than pilot sites.	Modified.
37	Noise pollution was not an issue.	Erased.
38	Usually goal or aim should come first.	Done.

Para.	Remark	Follow Up
44	What is effective rainfall.	Different from average long-term precipitation. It is the actual precipitation e.g. in a year's time which is factored into water allocation calculations.
47	Note that this presumably applies to the post MTE version, rather than the original (of the logical framework), which the team found difficult to work with.	This is correct. The distinction has been made in the text.
47	One of the reviewers understands our definition of "drought as an external risk", as "climatic conditions being external to the wetlands".	External risks in Results Based Management jargon are risks, which are external to the reach or influence of project management. Reviewers are kindly requested to update their knowledge on RBM before launching this sort of high-handed comments.
49/50	Integration and participation are not merely "catchwords".	The evaluators agree with these suggestions, these are important concepts.
51	Replication approach: it is not correct that the management plans were not supposed to be implemented; management plans were supposed to be implemented on demonstration sites.	This has been added; still the evaluators are convinced that the full implementation of management plans goes well beyond a few pilots at demonstration sites.
51	Might be worth noting that CIWP was instrumental in launching (and hosting) a Community of Practice for like-minded GEF projects across W Asia.	This information has been added.
53	We have to understand that the main role of the NGO's are to foster and strength the environmental discourse within local communities and to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and the technical know-how- thus I am not convinced that NGOs to become like technical departments.	There are several types of NGOs, the ones active in advocacy (negotiating on behalf of a given constituency with government), in service provision (e.g. the ones providing support in ecotourism to their members). After long discussions with the national consultant in livelihoods and many NGO representatives in the field we are convinced that neither one, nor the other type of NGOs have been sufficiently supported in their advocacy, technical and management practices.
53	IWRM should be specifically mentioned as joint experience for basin level water resource planning.	Added to the text.
54	I think this is a repeat of so called institutionalizing management structures within existing structure- but have they worked? What are the challenges- more meet on the bone is needed- have they been effective? What is the efficacy of the process? What was the overall performance?	After discussing with so many stakeholders, we are of the opinion that the institutionalization of the wetland management and drought risk management at different levels, as well as the coordination across sectors and multiple actors have been major achievements. Is it perfect? No. Are there weaknesses? Yes, as described in the text, at least another two years of capacity building is required to take DOE, Habitat to the required level.
56	Make it clear that DOE is the implementing agency of the project.	Had been mentioned already before but that statement was repeated.
59/60	Comments were made with regards to the validity of financial figures.	With the help of the CIWP financial administrator these figures were updated as per 20 January 2013. These paragraphs have been reformulated.
61	Can the evaluators substantiate the high figures on government's financial participation during the last two years?	Based on updated financial report of CIWP financial administrator.
64	This is misleading- see my previous comment in fact at the age of facebook revolution NGO will play a major role as witnessed throughout Middle East.	This is at the same time a political statement and wishful thinking, the bearing of which goes beyond our mandate. After discussing with NGOs and national livelihoods consultant, we are convinced that these NGOs are weak in many aspects. Apparently the project has

Para.	Remark	Follow Up
		omitted to support these NGOs in (i) advocacy, (ii) management, (iii) conflict resolution (simply how to effectively represent a constituency's legitimate interest towards government).
66	Hand of God? Droughts a normal feature of Iran's climate- this is an excuse for not succeeding in some of the activities.	Whoever's hand is behind this, so many activities did not materialize due to the drought condition. An example: what about the NGO people around LP trained in ecotourism, if there is no singe tourist visiting the area because the lake has dried up completely?
66	So a weakness within can bring the downfall of a strong system- Achilles' heel?	Exactly. As long as there are no feasible economic activities developed in order to compensate for losses occurred by reduced wetland management options (example: closure of hundreds of illicit wells in LP), the system may be strong …. but might be jeopardized.
67	Details about project extensions lacking.	Details have been added as suggested by the reviewers.
68	To escort by whom? Do u mean that CIWP somehow be accommodated in the DoE Habitat Office?- this should be clear and pronounced.	"Accompany" has been replaced by "support".
68	Water demand management should be highlighted.	Highlighted as suggested.
69/70	CIWP are invited to add more lessons learned.	In a meeting with CIWP NPM some of lessons learned added to this report.
An. 3&4	It is recommended to add another column to these two tables in order to measure quantified progress against baseline indicators.	Progress has rather been assessed at an outcome level in annex 5. However, the new column added and were filled with the help of the CIWP team.
An. 7	SWOT exercise was not appreciated by all reviewers.	These results show a translation in English of the forms, which have been filled in Farsi by the participants to four provincial management committee meetings. It is not to the evaluators to make any changes in the perception of the participants.