

REPORT ON THE INDEPENDENT FINAL EVALUATION

on the

Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria's Regional Development Process

(Rio Conventions Project)

Project 51783

PIMS 3333

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Acknowledgements

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The evaluation process ran very well with no significant problems. The FET has tried to provide a fair and balanced assessment of the Project’s achievements and performance and we have made recommendations aimed at helping to improve project delivery and sustainability and replication of project results, particularly by MRDPW and its structures, as well as to aid in the development and execution of future GEF projects.

Our sincere apologies if anyone should take anything written to be anything other than constructive criticism.

Very many thanks to all for a stimulating and very worthwhile assignment.

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Brief Description of the Project

The Rio Conventions Project was identified as a priority for Bulgaria as a result of the Bulgarian National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Improved Global Environmental Management Project, conducted from 2002-2004, designed to further Bulgaria's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) collectively referred to as the Rio Conventions.

The NCSA identified the need to develop national capacity for mainstreaming global environmental objectives into the regional development process, at national, regional, district and municipal levels. The assessment was that, without intervention, the evolving framework for regional development and spatial planning in Bulgaria was unlikely to mainstream biodiversity, land degradation and climate change.

GEF approved a grant of USD 499,000 on 22 March, 2006, with the official start of the project in November 2007; although the planned end date was in June 2010 an extension was approved, for operations until September 2010, and final closure by the end of 2010.

The long-term goal of the project is to embed global environmental concerns into the processes of regional and local development, as well as spatial planning in Bulgaria.

The project objective is to build capacities for mainstreaming global environmental issues into the formulation and implementation of regional and local development, as well as spatial planning policies. This objective will be realized through the following 3 outcomes.

- Outcome 1: The methodologies, skills, knowledge, and information management system for mainstreaming global environmental considerations into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of regional development and spatial planning policies are in place
- Outcome 2: Institutional changes that support mainstreaming of global environment into regional development and spatial planning are in place.
- Outcome 3: Regional development plans and municipal-level spatial development plans are revised to integrate global environmental objectives in a pilot region or group of municipalities through application of capacities developed in Outcomes 1 and 2.

The project was carried out by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (in particular by Directorate General "Strategic Regional Development Planning and Administrative-Territorial Organization"), with input from the Ministry of Environment and Water, Regional and District Development Councils, Municipal Councils, District Governors, academic institutions and civil society.

1.2 Context and purpose of the evaluation

This final evaluation was carried out according to UNDP GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policies, which have four objectives at project level: (i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts; (ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements; (iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and (iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

The final evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project, looking at early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. It also considered lessons learnt and made recommendations for the remainder of the project and others intended to improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects.

As well as these generic components of a GEF Final Evaluation, the Final Evaluation Team focussed on whether the project had managed to implement recommendations from the Mid Term Evaluation, and issues that arose as important during the Desk Review and interviews. Of particular interest was how the capacity building and methodologies developed were being institutionalized to ensure sustainability of the impacts.

It is clear that the project was well implemented and excellently managed. Financial management was of a high standard and the project was extremely cost effective. There was good Monitoring, Evaluation and reporting which informed correctly conducted Adaptive Management, and stakeholders complimented the project team on the level of participation and transparency.

The activities led to success in that the Outcomes were largely achieved, with 8 of the 10 Indicators being fully achieved (with one being modified during implementation) and 2 partially achieved. Although it is difficult to identify the impacts at this early stage there is every reason to believe it will have significant and lasting positive impact on the development planning process in Bulgaria.

Significant highlights include:

- The project has had, and will continue to have, a positive impact on the Regional Development Planning process in Bulgaria. The Methodological Guidelines, adopted by the MRDPW in 2009 introduces new requirements for the elaboration of the planning documents with extended environmental analysis and monitoring of the environmental performance.
- The development of standardized Terms of Reference for conducting interim evaluations of DDS and updates through piloting in the Plovdiv District Development Strategy seem to be highly valuable, as it will create a model of good practice, which is expected to be replicated to the other district and regional administrations in both formal and informal channels.
- The capacity of the MRDPW in terms of mainstreaming the GEIs was significantly improved. This was clearly stated in many interviews. The impact of this positive change is difficult to assess at this stage.
- There is a certain positive capacity building impact – the number of the trained public employees through the Training courses and the mainstreaming the GEI into the higher education related to the regional development through the Master Course. However, the feedback is not measured.

1.3 Recommendations and lessons learnt

A key lesson from the project is that Environmental Improvement can often be effectively achieved by projects that are driven, and hosted, by line agencies that can impact the environment, rather than being hosted in environmental agencies trying to influence other, often more “powerful” agencies.

However, projects that are trying to deal with the mainstreaming of environmental issues in other sectors should start with analyzing, defining and communicating the root-causes for why the environment has not been traditionally mainstreamed in these processes.

Although the MoEW Focal Points for the Rio Conventions were included in the Advisory Board, and attended training events, neither the planning, nor the implementation, of the project established a clear mechanism whereby the project would ensure that the priority issues identified by the national planning processes for each of the conventions were specifically included in the regional planning. Establishing such a strong linkage could have added value. It is possible that this clear linkage could have made it clearer to the focal points of the conventions as to how the project would have helped them in achieving their own objectives, and hence increased collaboration.

Securing real commitment, and ownership, from key stakeholders is easier at the start than asking them to join an already up-and-running project, and stakeholders need to understand why it is in their interest to participate.

Based on the lessons learnt a number of recommendations, were made regarding:

- Actions to be conducted during the remainder of the Project
- Recommendations which the UNDP Regional Office for Europe and the CIS could forward to the UNDP Headquarters for consideration by GEF Secretariat regarding future Project planning and management
- Sustaining the results
- Building on the initiative at both national and regional levels.

The recommendations included:

R1 The project Final Report, should be a comprehensive description of the process that has been undertaken, rather than just a report that complies with minimum UNDP GEF reporting requirements, so that it can more effectively support the other Rio Convention projects and processes in the region that are also tackling similar issues.

R2 The project should undertake a follow up evaluation of the training to complement look at the impact of the training when back in the work-place

R3 The project is trying to make long-term changes. It is hard to evaluate impact during the project. We would encourage GEF to give further consideration to the inclusion of post project evaluation as a standard, and funded, part of all GEF projects.

R7 Methodologies should be agreed in advance, and recorded, on how co-financing will be reported and monitored.

R8 A representative of the project should meet with the Institute of Public Administration and propose that the training modules developed under the Rio Conventions Project should be included in the Institute of Public Administration's Portfolio.

R11 The links established at Ministerial level should be used to ensure that the Project results, approaches, recommendations and tools feed into the Midterm evaluation of the OPRD, with the clear

recommendations that not only should GEIs be mainstreamed in the OPRD, but that the OPRD should be clearly driven by the Regional, District and Municipal planning processes.

R12 It is recommended that MRDPW clearly monitor how the Environmental Indicators are used, and that there is future refinement of them to bring in a clearer focus on results, such as condition of the environment, rather than just inputs or allocation.

R13 In order to assist the future refinement of the Regional Development Planning process MRDPW should develop a pilot Regional Development Plan that includes an economic, rather than just financial, Cost Benefit Analysis of the different development options that specifically includes any changes in the value of Environmental Service Values.

R14 MOEW and MRDPW should collaborate in the development of an improved system to collate and disseminate environmental / biodiversity data between Ministries, Civil Society, Institutes and academia to ensure planners and other decision makers have information.

R15 MRDPW needs to ensure that there is a further integration of Development Planning and Spatial Planning, with the Spatial Planning driven by the Development Plans and Strategies.

R 16 In order to replicate the pilot approach taken in updating the Plovdiv District Development Strategy into the other 27 districts, the process should be fully written up, by the project on behalf of MRDPW, described as Good Practice, the most critical issues outlined, and a clear process agreed for MRDPW to support the other DAs in implementation.

R18 The UNDP Regional Office for Europe and CIS should consider commissioning a Regional analysis, on identifying and address the underlying reasons as to why the Environment is not mainstreamed in Development – and the consequences of this. As part of this, attention would have to be given to the particular circumstances of each of the countries to ascertain whether just using global analyses would be sufficient, or whether a regional, or even country specific analysis would provide the most useful information. These could of course all be included in the design of one analysis, which would then assist in deciding at what level intervention would be most effective.

R19 There should be a Regional Workshop to support Rio Conventions Projects sharing lessons, either funded out of regional budgets to support the Rio Conventions Projects, or hosted, and funded by one of the Rio Conventions Projects in the region that has sufficient resources left top cover this.

R20 The UNDP Regional Office for Europe and the CIS should use some of the funding for supporting the Rio Conventions Projects to further develop and fully operationalize a Learning Network to link projects working on issues around mainstreaming the Rio Conventions.

1.4 Overall Project Rating

<p>Overall Project Rating</p>	<p>Although the original project design and planning had some gaps, these are more easily seen with the benefit of current understanding on the underlying reasons for, and the effects of, the environmental being treated as separate, or “external”, to economic systems, and development, e.g. as a result of processes such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, than common practice at the time of project preparation.</p> <p>The project team has done an excellent job in delivering the project as it was designed – activities were carried out to a high standard, these led to the achievement of the objectives, which will deliver the outcomes.</p> <p>Despite being only a modest project it will leave a substantial legacy especially in terms of the training courses, the planning and review methodologies which were so well received that they have already been adopted by a formal Ministerial Ordinance. The project has also been significant in establishing the precedent of development plans including environmental Indicators; although there were some issues with the development process, and the current format, of these they represent an excellent foundation.</p>	<p>Highly Satisfactory</p>
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Abbreviations and acronyms

AB	Advisory Board
APR	Annual Progress Report
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
DA	District Administration
DDS	District Development Strategy
EIA	Environment Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
ExEA	Executive Environment Agency
FE	Final Evaluation
FET	Final Evaluation Team
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEI	Global Environmental Issues
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoB	Government of Bulgaria
LL	Lessons Learned
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOEW	Ministry of Environment and Water
MRDPW	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
MTET	Mid-term Evaluation Team
MSG	Medium Sized Grant
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NPD	National Project Director
OPRD	Operational Program for Regional Development
PA	Protected Area
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMC	Project Management Committee
PMU	Project Management Unit
PR	Public Relations
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RDP	Regional Development Plan
RSC	Regional Support Centre
SC	Steering Committee
SEA	Strategic Environment Assessment
TEEB	The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity survey
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

2. Introduction

2.1 Project background

The Rio Conventions Project has been identified as a priority for Bulgaria as a result of the Bulgarian National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Improved Global Environmental Management Project, implemented by the Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The NCSA project took place from 1st December 2002 until 31st December, 2004 to further Bulgaria's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) collectively referred to as the Rio Conventions.

The NCSA specifically identified the need to develop national capacity for mainstreaming global environmental objectives into the regional development process, through the integration of these objectives in the formulation and implementation of regional development policies and plans at national, regional, district and municipal levels. In addition, a need for better coordination among the key ministries at the national/central and local/regional levels has been stated as a key to due implementation of the conventions.

Two main interconnected areas of support have been identified in this regard:

- i) support to institutions in the area of cross-sectoral planning, decision-making and information systems; and
- ii) support for decentralized integrated environmental planning and action-oriented approaches.

The main challenge has been to identify the exact linkages between the Conventions in each of the sectors and match those with the desired economic priorities identified by the Government. National and regional development policies should accommodate such principles in order to reverse the current practice of treating global environmental issues as a stand-alone agenda of limited concern to national or local development priorities.

The project overall budget is USD 1,528,000 of which USD 499,000 is a direct financing provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Government of Bulgaria is providing USD 1,029,000 in co-financing.

2.2 Purpose of the evaluation

This final evaluation (FE) is to be undertaken taking into consideration the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policy (<http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/1904>) and the UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (<http://www.undp.org/gef/monitoring/policies.html>). The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP-GEF has four objectives: (i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts; (ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements; (iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and (iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

In accordance with UNDP-GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full-sized projects supported by the GEF should undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation.

According to the Terms of Reference (ToRs), the specific objectives of the FE of Rio Conventions Project are:

- to analyze and evaluate effectiveness of the results and impacts that the project has been able to achieve against the objective, targets and indicators stated in the project document;

- to assess effectiveness of the work and processes undertaken by the project as well as the performance of all the partners involved in the project implementation;
- to provide feedback and recommendations for subsequent decision making and necessary steps that need to be taken by the national stakeholders in order to ensure sustainability of the project's outcomes/results;
- to reflect on how effective the use of available resource has been use; and
- to document and provide feedback on lessons learned and best practices generated by the project during its implementation.

This final evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. It will also identify/document lessons learned and make recommendations that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects.

2.3 Audiences for the evaluation

This Final Evaluation is initiated by the UNDP Bulgaria Country Office (CO) as the Implementation Agency for the Rio Conventions project. UNDP-GEF is primarily interested in analysis of how successful implementation of the project has been, what impacts it has generated, if the project benefits will be sustainable in the long-term and what the lessons learnt are for future interventions in the country, region and other parts of the globe where UNDPGEF provides its assistance.

The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW) is a key audience for the evaluation as it considers the best ways to move from piloting of the approach at the different planning levels, to full implementation in future development planning.

As the UNDP Regional Office is supporting other projects in the region with similar objectives it is also a key audience to enable transfer of lessons learnt between projects.

2.4 Key issues addressed

As well as the generic components of a GEF Final Evaluation, as covered above in Section 2.2, the Final Evaluation Team (FET) focussed on a number of key issues identified in the Mid Term Evaluation (MTE), and issues that arose as important during the Desk Review and interviews.

These specific issues included:

- a) How the management team had managed to address issues about the long-term impacts of the project through ensuring sustainability and institutionalization of project achievements.
- b) How the training programme would be promoted and institutionalized
- c) Whether a strong partnership had been created to implement the demonstration planning
- d) Engagement with the review, and the revision, of the methodological guidelines for regional development, to ensure that project findings could be integrated into them.
- e) The degree of strengthened capacities of MRDPW created by the project to integrate global environmental concerns into development.
- f) The impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the potential for achievement of global environmental goals.
- g) Recommendations for follow-up activities.
- h) Relevance to the process of Regional Development Planning and Spatial Planning in Bulgaria
- i) Contribution to the implementation of the UNCBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC
- j) Stakeholder involvement both in design and implementation phases

- k) Effectiveness and efficiency (taking into account that the project is of middle size but ambitious in its objectives)

2.5 Methodology and structure of the evaluation

The approach to be taken in final evaluations has been standardized by GEF and is presented in evaluators ToRs.

It is stated that the evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. It must be easily understood by project partners and applicable to the remaining period of project duration. The methodology to be used by the evaluation team should be presented in the report in detail. It shall include information on:

- Documentation review (desk study) - the list of documentation to be reviewed is included in Annex 2 to this Terms of Reference and these were provided in advance by the Project Implementation Unit;
- Interviews held with the following organizations and individuals: UNDP Bulgaria, Rio Conventions Project Management Unit, Project Steering Committee members, National Project Director, Sofia University, selected consultants involved in key project assignments after the Mid-term Evaluation, representatives of MRDPW, the Ministry of Environment and Water (MOEW), District Administrations, business associations and NGOs;
- Field visit (an indicative schedule attached in Annex 3);
- Questionnaires;
- Participatory techniques and other approaches for the gathering and analysis of data.

The FE team also provides ratings of Project achievements according to GEF Project Review Criteria. Aspects of the Project to be rated are:

- Implementation approach
- Country ownership/drivers
- Outcome/Achievement of objectives (meaning the extent to which the project's environmental and development objectives were achieved)
- Stakeholder participation/public involvement
- Sustainability
- Replication approach
- Cost-effectiveness
- Monitoring and evaluation

The ratings to be used are:

HS	Highly Satisfactory
S	Satisfactory
MS	Marginally Satisfactory
MU	Marginally Unsatisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
HU	Highly Unsatisfactory
NA	Not Applicable

The key product from this final evaluation is an analytical Final Evaluation Report in English.

The methodology of the evaluation conducted, and the contents of the report, follow the requirements in the ToRs.

The preliminary findings of the FE team has been provided to project stakeholders through a presentation to, and discussion with, the UNDP in-country team and the Project Manager, and circulation of the draft report for comments, meetings and other types of feedback mechanisms.

After the incorporation of comments from project stakeholders a Second draft report will be presented to the Project Management Unit (PMU), UNDP – Bulgaria, UNDP/GEF – Bratislava, Government Counterparts. The finalization of the evaluation report will incorporate the comments received on second draft.

2.6 Limitations and constraints to the FE

The evaluation mission itself was short (one week). In spite of this limitation the FE team met with the key project implementation partners and the most of the stakeholders involved with project implementation, and was able to gather a range of perspectives regarding the project outputs and possible impacts.

The Final evaluation took place in the period of summer vacations, so a number of stakeholders were heavily booked as about to go on leave. We appreciate the efforts by the PMU to ensure maximum participation to the FE mission.

As with many projects that focus on building capacity and piloting new approaches or methods the impacts will only really be visible sometime after the project; trying to evaluate impacts rather than planning and activities during the project is therefore based on assumptions.

3. The Project and its development context

3.1 Project start and its duration

The inception phase of the Rio Conventions Project lasted from June 2006, when the project document was signed, to 21 February 2007, when the Project Inception Workshop took place. The anticipated end date was 27 June 2010. However, an extension was sought, and approved, with operations extended until 27 September 2010, with final closure by end of 2010.

3.2 Problems that the project seeks to address

The pre-project assessment was that without intervention, that the evolving framework for regional development and spatial planning in Bulgaria is unlikely to result in explicit mainstreaming of biodiversity, land degradation and climate change considerations in development planning. The integration between the legislative and policy framework in the fields of regional development planning, spatial planning and environment was likely to be constrained by capacity bottlenecks in MRDPW.

The region-specific global environmental objectives are rarely identified in regional development documents, the related indicator system that is used to monitor and report on implementation of regional development policies does not explicitly address the achievement of Bulgaria's commitments under the global environmental conventions. Similarly, the selection criteria for regional development projects programmed under the Operational Programme for Regional Development (OPRD) do not explicitly include specific global environmental objectives-related indicators.

3.3 Goal, objectives and outcomes of the Project

The long-term goal of the project is to embed global environmental concerns into the processes of regional and local development, as well as spatial planning in Bulgaria.

The project objective is to build capacities for mainstreaming global environment into the formulation and implementation of regional and local development, as well as spatial planning policies. This objective will be realized through the following 3 outcomes.

- Outcome 1: The methodologies, skills, knowledge, and information management system for mainstreaming global environmental considerations into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of regional development and spatial planning policies are in place
- Outcome 2: Institutional changes that support mainstreaming of global environment into regional development and spatial planning are in place.
- Outcome 3: Regional development plans and municipal-level spatial development plans are revised to integrate global environmental objectives in a pilot region or group of municipalities through application of capacities developed in Outcomes 1 and 2.

3.4 Main stakeholders

During the Project Development Process a comprehensive review of stakeholders was undertaken.

The main stakeholders identified were:

- Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (particularly the Strategic Planning of Regional Policy Directorate and Programming of Regional Development Directorate/ Managing Authority of OPRD after 2007)

- Ministry of Environment and Water
- Regional Development Councils (for the 6 regions in Bulgaria)
- District Development Councils (for the 28 districts)
- Municipal Councils (for the 264 municipalities)
- District Governors (of the 28 districts).

3.5 Results expected

The key project results were formulated as project outputs (related to the project outcomes), as follows:

- Accredited training programme on the integration of UNCBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD objectives into regional development and spatial planning processes is established.
- Key staff from MRDPW and MOEW is trained to integrate biodiversity, climate change and land degradation objectives into their regular work activities related to regional development planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Set of uniform indicators and guidance for application are established for measuring the contribution of regional development policy and spatial planning to meeting global environmental objectives.
- A portal website dedicated to integration of biodiversity, climate change and land degradation issues into development planning is operational for all stakeholders (government, NGOs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), businesses, academic and research institutions, public)
- Institutional improvements introduced at MRDPW and MOEW such as Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) to sustain the capacities developed through the training programme for the integration of global environmental objectives into regional development and spatial planning
- Stakeholders have the capacity to monitor, evaluate, adapt, replicate and learn from project strategy
- The Regional Development Plan for the pilot planning region adequately integrates biodiversity, climate change and land degradation issues
- The master plan of 1 pilot municipality adequately integrates biodiversity, climate change and land degradation issues.

4. Findings and conclusions

4.1 Project formulation

4.1.1 Project conceptualization

Bulgaria has ratified the Rio Conventions, and is committed to fulfilling its obligations under them. Bulgaria was therefore an active participant on the regional National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) process, and carried out a comprehensive, and participatory, assessment of its capacity to implement its commitments and obligations under the three conventions, from 2002 - 2004.

Traditionally much of the delivery of environmental obligations, in most countries, has been carried out through specialist environmental agencies, and much of the focus of capacity building to support implementation of environmental conventions has been targeted at those agencies. However, the NCSA in Bulgaria recognized that most of the potential threats to the environment come from decisions made outside of these environmental agencies, and that, very much in line with the CBD's Ecosystem Approach, improving environmental performance to meet national obligations under the Rio Conventions requires genuine mainstreaming into other decision making processes.

The Bulgarian NCSA identified that a priority should be the mainstreaming of environmental issues into the development planning process at Regional, Municipal and District levels. The timing for this was opportune as the preparation process for EU accession had already identified that the planning process should be refined, and that a greater inclusion of environmental issues would be required within the system for compliance, and smooth integration with, EU mechanisms. It was extremely helpful that the NCSA process included high level participation from MRDPW who saw the need and became a "champion" for the process in terms of getting Ministerial approval for not only full and active participation of the Ministry, but for them to take the lead.

It is a little unclear in the project documents as to whether the project is about mainstreaming Global Environmental Issues into development or just into the development planning process – these are not quite the same, and the former one would require much broader understanding and analysis - and set of interventions - than the later one. From discussions held during the FE, and the focus of the project activities, the evaluators understand the intention was that the project was limited to mainstreaming into the development planning process. The rest of the evaluation is based on that interpretation.

Building the awareness, capacity and methodologies of the MRDPW to be able to mainstream environmental issues was clearly required and made a good starting point for assisting Bulgaria can fulfil its obligations under the Rio Conventions.

4.1.2 Project relevance

Many of the stakeholders representatives, confirmed during the interviews, that the project was highly relevant to the country's planning needs, and highly opportune as Bulgaria refines its planning systems for EU harmonization during the 2007 -2013 Planning period. This question was asked to the most people, and particularly those, who were involved in project design. The evaluators fully concur with this assessment.

The overall project conceptualization was about mainstreaming GEIs into the main development planning system, rather than continuing with just separate environmental planning. This is likely to be

more effective in achieving the overall principals of the Rio Conventions at a global level, but within Bulgaria. However, the direct relevance of the project to specific Rio Conventions objectives, as recommended in the Feasibility Study, conducted during project preparation, is not clear and these do not appear to have been a strong driver in project design or delivery. Similarly the Bulgarian National Actions Plans for the Rio Conventions (where they exist) were not a driver in project design, and the project has relatively little relevance to their implementation. It should be noted that the Ministry of Environment and Waters was an active participant in project conceptualization and design.

Although the evaluation focused on the how the project has mainstreamed global environmental issues into the development planning process, according to many people consulted the Regional Development Plans (RDPs), District Strategies (DSs) and Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) are “wish-lists” rather than true implementation plans, so the relevance to development, rather than development planning is not clear at this stage, as the FET is not in a position to predict how close actual development that happens on the ground will be to the planned development.

Because the specific environmental issues addressed in the development plans are directly generated through analysis of the local situation the project is directly relevant to the local environmental issues, as reported to the evaluators, such as access to clean water, sewage treatment, and solid waste management.

Although the project does not explicitly identify, or address, the underlying, rather than just proximate, reasons why Global Environmental Issues are not already mainstreamed in development planning and development, it is directly relevant to them – and provides an excellent foundation that can be broadened out to address these.

Bulgaria has a nested process of planning approaches, and safeguard policies, and the project is directly relevant to enhancing capacity in other planning processes and national environmental safeguard processes, such as Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and SEAs.

4.1.3 Project preparation

Project preparation for the Rio Conventions project was nationally driven, with the lead taken by the MRDPW, with active participation from the MOEW and other stakeholders who participated in the NCSA, together with technical assistance provided by UNDP, in particular on how to structure the required activities as a GEF project.

The focus for the preparation came directly from the priority identified in the NCSA.

The MRDPW and MOEW and others stakeholders consulted during the evaluation are all satisfied that the project was well planned, and the evaluators agree that it was planned to effectively implement its objectives.

The project will bring clear environmental benefits directly related to the objectives of the Rio Conventions, through the training, and the development of indicators, guidelines and methodologies.

Mainstreaming GEIs into development is clearly an important environmental, and development, issue. However, it is very complex, and as well as traditional areas such as environmental information, regulations and safeguards, it includes issues around how the environment is treated in economic systems.

The SWOT analysis, conducted as part of the feasibility study conducted during project preparation identified a number of key issues which would have to be addressed:

- Regional development objectives do not necessarily and fully coincide with the global environmental objectives
- Specific Rio Conventions' objectives are virtually non-existent in regional development plans and projects
- The environment has not yet been recognized – neither as an economic and social driver, nor as investors' appeal

As already mentioned in Section 4.1.1 of this report, the project design focused on developing the capacity and tools for greater inclusion of environmental issues in the technical process of development planning, and the regulations covering this. However, for the project to maximize its environmental impacts it is important that the stronger environmental inputs going into draft development plans are included in the approved plans, and that the plans influence the development that actually happens on the ground. Clearly there are a number of aspects to this that lie outside the scope of the project. However, as they could affect the impacts of the project there would have been advantages in the project preparation giving consideration to them, to at least consider which ones needed to be monitored and managed as “Risks”.

4.1.4 Participation and consultation in planning

There was broad participation in the project preparation from government (MRDPW, MOEW, Agriculture, Forestry), and from Civil Society, though there was no input from the Finance sector or Business. These were not identified during project development as main stakeholders, and so had a more limited role during implementation. If these had have been more closely involved, then the project might have had a broader perspective on the gaps between environmental and development issues, and taken a broader view of how to mainstream Global Environmental Issues into Development (Planning).

4.1.5 Project log frame (logic from analysis to goal, indicators)

The Logical framework matrix, developed and recorded as an annex to the Project document, presents the internal logic of the project. The set of outcomes is not too complicated and is adequate to the size of the project.

Although it is tempting in a project Final Evaluation to evaluate the project logic against current best practice it is fairer to evaluate the logic against standard methodologies at the time. For this reason the evaluators are convinced that the project logic, as laid out in the log-frame, presents a reasoned approach, based on best practice at the time, on how to achieve the objectives. Current best practice would include more on an analysis of the underlying factors as to why the environment is not mainstreamed in development, and therefore have allowed the project to tackle the inclusion of GEIs in Development, rather than just in Development Planning, and a greater likelihood of the outcomes delivering the goal.

Following the project start it was identified that the project indicators were very open and thus difficult to work with. Because of this the Steering Committee, in February 2007, instructed the project to revise the indicators – as was also mentioned at the Project’s inception workshop. Part of the reason for the initial indicators, and the need to revise them during project implementation was a lack of data at the time of project design. A new set of indicators were therefore developed. The Final evaluation team considers that even after the revision, some of the indicators are too challenging, and some not directly relevant. This places the PMU in an unfair situation where the three project outcomes have largely been attained, but this is not apparent from the log-frame indicators. More detailed comments on the Indicators are covered in the results section.

4.1.6 Anticipated budget

Although some refinements were required during implementation the initial budget preparation seems to have been sound. The budget amounts, and allocations, were both realistic and adequate for the project scale and activities.

4.1.7 Strategies for replication and sustainability

A key factor in GEF eligibility is whether initial investment in one project will have broad impact, either through overcoming more widely applicable obstacles, or through the development of methodologies and skills that will be transferable and replicable.

The Rio Conventions Project was specifically designed to develop awareness, skills and methodologies, which should allow its benefits to be sustained.

The inclusion of environmental tasks and the need for environmental skills as a pre-requisite in Ministerial Job Descriptions was innovative in the way it not only focused on the need for environmental thinking in the tasks, but in the way it built in incentives for on-going consideration of environmental capacity building by individuals after the project.

Although developing a replicable model was part of the project design, and has been achieved with the guidelines developed to be used by MRDPW, specific mechanisms to promote that replication could have been better addressed in project design. Although it was anticipated that processes such as the OPRD would sustain activities started under the project, the specific mechanisms to promote, transfer know-how, or incentivise environmental mainstreaming, were not fully designed in.

Although it will normally be necessary to refine the Exit Strategy based on the situation found, and achieved, during the life of the project, the project design did not lay a clear foundation for this, though the project team designed and implemented a sound Exit Strategy during implementation.

4.1.8 Inclusion of participatory mechanisms

Participatory mechanisms were appropriately built into the project during the design phase through the Steering Committee, Expert Groups, an Advisory Group, the website and information dissemination and proposed Public participation in the development planning process. The sustainability of these mechanisms may have been weakened by the use of new groups specifically tied to the project rather than extending the ToRs of, or creating sub-groups within, existing, and already formalized groups whether in MRDPW, or under the Convention processes themselves.

4.1.9 Linkage to other relevant processes (e.g. the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) as required by the UNCBD.

Although the project was well designed, and implemented, to mainstream Global Environmental Issues into Development Planning, direct linkages to the specific objectives of the Rio Conventions at Global, or National, levels were not strongly built into the project.

Mechanisms to link the project to national processes under the Rio Conventions was weak in project design, where more could have been done to ensure that these processes, which establish national priorities, could have had a clearer role in identifying priorities for “change” in the development planning process, or the plans. Although the Ministry of Environment and Water were included in the Steering Committee, and in the Expert Groups, and participated in training activities. Detailed project activities, and the development planning process, were therefore not directly linked to supporting implementation of, or even addressing the priorities under the National Action Plans of the Conventions – where they have been finalized. This probably reflects the identified “gap” between environment and development that was identified during project conceptualization, and the project took the effective option of being housed within “Planning”, rather than “Environment”, However, that probably led to weaker linkages to processes such as National Planning within the Rio Conventions themselves. The project has therefore taken an excellent step towards “mainstreaming” – but there is still more to do.

The Rio Conventions Project was focused mainly on the processes of Regional development planning and Spatial planning in Bulgaria. Besides its direct outputs the project has also contributed to the design and implementation of other linked projects as several INTERREG IVC projects.

The project has good linkage with other UNDP/GEF projects in Bulgaria in the environmental domain such as the Rhodope project (focused on biodiversity conservation), and the Sustainable Land Management Project (applying the principles of UNCCD) and some of the activities were coordinated between the projects.

It is understood that following the regional process of NCSA led to a number of projects in the region that focus on similar issues of how to mainstream GEIs into development, and development Planning. Stronger linkages to these other projects could have provided additional benefits.

The accession of Bulgaria to the EU will clearly have major impacts on development, development planning – and the mainstreaming of the environment. Although it was anticipated in the Project Document that the project would directly influence EU funded development (e.g. through OPRD funded projects), direct links between the project and EU mechanisms, even within MRDPW were not clear.

As the main focus of the Bulgarian government in biodiversity conservation, during the life of the project was on Natura 2000 establishment, the project, and key stakeholders, have also had to interact with this process. The different types of environmental assessments required by the Natura 2000 process, including “Natura 2000 appropriate assessment” of the regional development and spatial plans, were included into the training programmes. However, public opinion on the Natura 2000 process, which was outside the remit of this project, during this period was contradictory, partly due to perceived conflicts between conservation and development objectives, with local authorities

sometimes seeing Natura 2000 as a potential constraint to the development or Land Use they wished to see.

4.1.10 Risks and assumptions

Internal risk factors were identified during the planning process which led to them being effectively monitored and managed during project implementation.

It has already been discussed that the project, based on common practice at the time, was relatively narrow in its approach to “mainstreaming” without understanding, or tackling the reasons for the gaps between development and environmental objectives identified in the Feasibility Study during Project Preparation. However, the Evaluators feel that even if these issues were not specifically tackled in project activities they should have been included as Risks.

The project was designed to build the foundations for environmental mainstreaming in development and implementation of regional development plans by raising the awareness and capacity of planners.

However, with the identified gap between development and environmental objectives there was clearly a risk that local decision makers, especially the broad-based, Regional and District Development Council would not fully support the stronger environmental thinking coming through in draft development plans – adoption of plans are the responsibility of the Councils not the Planning staff. If these risks had been identified and their monitoring and management included in the Project Document, different approaches might have been used to engage with some stakeholder sectors. For instance, although government staff was targeted for training there was less engagement with finance and economics staff, and little with the business community; it is believed that the reasons for this were primarily that the project design was developed before the significance of the links between economic processes, and market failure, and the environment were so well understood. This might have led to more use of some of the strong economic arguments now emerging in support of mainstreaming environmental issues in development – and the economic costs of not doing so.

4.2 Project implementation

4.2.1 Project inception

The inception phase of the project lasted from June 2006, when the project document was signed, until February 21 2007, when the Project Inception Workshop took place. The main tasks were to establish operational PMU and Steering Committee, and to prepare the Inception Workshop. Some activities, related to the direct project outcomes also started in this period (e.g. development of the training programme, website elaboration).

The inception process was effective in not only operationalizing the project but in the required revision of budgets and work plans required because of the delay in start-up.

The Inception report comments on the Indicators in the Log-frame, and that there was insufficient data to develop SMART (Specific, Measureable, Realistic, Agreed, Time-bound) indicators at that stage. An attempt to improve them was done later during the project implementation.

4.2.2 Activity Planning and management

Overall management of project implementation has been praised by UNDP, the MOEW, the MRDPW, and Consultants and Experts in terms of how their assignments were managed. The Evaluators fully agree that the project team has done an excellent job in planning and managing the project activities.

Although, as is normal, there was a delay in project start-up this was not of unusual scale and work-plans and budgets were appropriately modified to deal with it.

Staff recruitment fully complied with procedures and ensured fair competition. The Project manager was hired in November 2006 and the fully functioning project management unit was established by the end of December 2006. The positive acceptance of the PMU by the project implementation partners and the good coordination with NPD and SC has ensured the necessary support (particularly by MRDPW and MOEW).

The Project Manager has managed the project to a high level, as confirmed by all parties, the results achieved, and her staff evaluation.

Preparation and refinement of ToRs for consultants were all well done.

Work plans, milestones, outputs, budgets, reports were all jointly approved by the MRDPW and UNDP Programme Analyst.

4.2.3 Financial management

Financial management within, and of, the project has been carried out accurately, in a timely manner, and in full compliance with financial systems. This has been shown by the project receiving a “full compliance” report from the external auditors from its external audit and a full compliance rating from the UNDP financial manager.

Effective financial management went beyond implementation of the prepared budget by including Adaptive management of the budget, e.g. to deal with the issues around the delayed start and the changes to pilot activities. These amendments were planned and conducted with full compliance to procedures.

4.2.4 Cost effectiveness

The project has delivered an impressive set of outputs, especially over the training and development and piloting of model planning methodologies, for a relatively modest GEF budget, and would therefore appear to have been highly cost effective.

The project has been cost effective within UNDP assessment norms.

One way in which the project has effectively kept costs down has been through the majority of the consultancy support having been secured from within the country and region, apart from aspects where UNDP has specifically requested international consultants, such as in the Mid Term, and Final evaluations.

4.2.5 Co-financing and leveraging

When considering the financing of GEF projects an analysis is conducted as to the distribution of benefits that are in the national interest, and those that deliver an incremental global benefit. GEF will normally be asked to finance the global incremental costs, and the country will co-finance the costs of delivering the national benefits. Clearly flexibility has to be taken in this, especially when the global benefits are unlikely to be achieved without the project, with not all governments being able to fully cover the costs of delivering the national benefits. However, an appropriate level of co-financing is always required to demonstrate national commitment.

It is clear that the Government of Bulgaria, as demonstrated by the inputs from MRDPW, the MOEW and Municipal and District Authorities were, and are, fully committed to supporting the project.

In the Project Document it says that most of the \$ 1 million dollars co-financing would come through leveraging resources from the EU co-financed development and co-operation programs as well as support from the pilot Municipality.

A detailed methodology was agreed between the MRDPW and UNDP (CO & BRC) as to how co-financing through other development projects that included mainstreamed Global Environmental Issues. According to the PIR this amounted to \$ 36 million – considerably more than required under the Project Agreement. The Evaluators were not able to independently audit this figure against the methodology but understand from UNDP that it is in compliance with the agreed methodology.

Perhaps because this co-financing figure so significantly exceeds the required co-financing, the reporting of contributions such as the cost of staff time, office and equipment provision, reported in most GEF projects was not included.

4.2.6 Co-ordination mechanisms

As indicated by the successful management and delivery of the project its co-ordination mechanisms were well designed and effectively operated.

The Steering Committee (MOEW, UNDP and MRDPW), worked well, playing a balanced role between overseeing project management, steering the project and dissemination of results to key agencies. Recommendations made through the Steering Group were implemented and were seen by the PMU as beneficial to project implementation.

The Expert Groups that were established proved to be an effective mechanism for providing co-ordinated technical inputs, and in providing two-way communicating with a wider audience than was possible through the Steering Committee.

As has already been mentioned in Section 4.1.9 there was relatively little co-ordination with the Rio Conventions Focal Points. Although the MOEW were able to provide some co-ordination on the overall environmental aspects they did not directly feed in national objectives, priorities or action plans from the 3 Rio Conventions.

4.2.7 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation processes are key parts of project implementation, which (1) allow tracking the progress of activities and how they deliver results and impacts, (2) provide the basis for

Adaptive Management, (3) promote accountability and to (4) allow lessons learnt to be identified and disseminated to improve the planning and management of future projects.

The Monitoring and Evaluation components of the project have been conducted to a high standard following UNDP requirements and as laid out in the Project Document.

Reports prepared by the PMU have been thorough and on time, and have been prepared against the log-frame indicators, and fully complied with the required format, even though the required format which focuses very much on planned activities, reports against the agreed indicators, and tracks the previously identified risks, can be constraining in identifying factors that require change, and adaptive management.

The project has demonstrated good practice in Adaptive Management, utilizing information from the monitoring and evaluation process to identify issues that required change, such as the need to change the piloting process, or in the establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Commission on Sustainable Development.

At the request of the UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS an external consultant was used for the MTE which appears to have been a thorough and useful process. The PMU implemented the recommendations that came out from the MTE and monitored progress against them.

4.2.8 Adaptive management

The monitoring and evaluation and co-ordination correctly identified areas where work plans, budgets, outputs and even indicators needed to be adapted, and then the PMU followed the correct procedures for proposing, and getting endorsement for the required changes - e.g. for the significant change to the Outcome 3 pilot, or the change of the Inter Ministerial Commission to the Expert Group.

4.2.9 Risk management

The PMU has thoroughly tracked, reported on, and managed the risks identified in the Project Document.

As already indicated in section 4.1.10 the project planning did not, identify, consider or establish mechanisms to manage other risks that could impact the ability of the project to achieve its goal – such as key decision makers still perceiving a conflict between development and environmental objectives – and in prioritizing the development objectives.

4.2.10 Institutional arrangements

The institutional links between the UNDP CO, the PMU and MRDPW have been excellent, with the project being well integrated into the Ministry, bringing benefits for both management and institutional support and learning, and in increasing the chances of long term impact.

The MOEW are an active part of the Steering and Expert Groups, though due to a re-organization within the MOEW they informed the FE team that they had reduced their participation in both staff seniority and number in these.

Informal linkages to other Ministries and Groups have been important in supporting the formal processes.

As already mentioned participation of other key stakeholders in MOEW (i.e. the Focal points for the Rio Conventions) has not been strong as expected for such project in spite of the declared political commitment of the both ministries and efforts of the PMU to regularly provide information.

4.2.11 Participation

A sound process for participation was built into the project. However, the Advisory Board (AB), intended as a key Stakeholder Forum, proved to be hard to convene. Many projects “require” these and a small cohort of stakeholders are invited to many, but are not always certain that their inputs are acted on. Although the AB has improved the project visibility and provided opportunity for feedback to the main project products, some interviewed persons expressed the opinion that the project was not visible enough.

Some NGO representatives, interviewed during the FE, described the project as a key opportunity for civil society participation in Regional development process, led by MRDPW. However, they were worried as to whether participation would be sustained beyond the project; although participatory processes have been built into the model process how effective they prove to be will only become apparent in the future.

The MRDPW structures, District and Municipal Administrations were well presented in the project implementation. If pilot sites had been identified earlier it would give the opportunity for their better inclusion in the respective project activities.

4.2.12 Technical and managerial support

During the development and majority of the life of the project the Rio Conventions Project received managerial support from the Country Office of UNDP in Sofia, together with technical support from both the UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS. Now that Bulgaria has acceded to the EU, UNDP is reducing its presence in the country, and the UNDP Country Office was formally closed at the end of 2009.

Since the closure of the Country Office, UNDP has continued to provide excellent managerial and procedural support through a Projects Management Office in Sofia to the outstanding UNDP programme obligations in Bulgaria.

The UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS (UNDP RC) has been available to provide technical support when required.

The UNDP RC has not fully taken up the opportunity of establishing a learning network of the projects dealing with similar issue in the region, which could have added value.

MRDPW and MOEW and Civil Society have all provided a high level of technical input to the Expert and Steering Groups, and a high standard of national and regional capacity has been utilized through consultancies.

4.2.13 Reporting, transparency and dissemination

The in-country UNDP PMO and the MRDPW both confirmed that reporting has been carried out to a high standard; the Evaluators fully concur with this assessment.

The range of Outputs developed through the project activities, such as the training materials, are of a high standard.

NGO members consulted during the evaluation specifically complimented the transparency of the project – and expressed their hope for this to continue within development planning beyond the life of the GEF project itself.

The Project has established an excellent website which not only disseminates the information from the project but also gathers and allows access to relevant Rio Conventions information and documents. Although the website has a high level of hits (14,000 + unique users) it should be noted that the monthly number of hits is not increasing, there is a relatively low percentage of return users, and most users do not seem to penetrate to the key information pages. The reasons for this are not clear.

4.3 Project results

The project has made good progress on achieving its results. The Final Evaluation Team found that the three Project Outcomes has been largely achieved. Almost all the key outputs, planned in the Project document were achieved.

4.3.1 Performance against the Project Activities, Outputs, Outcomes and Objectives

Project Objective	
To build capacities for mainstreaming global environmental issues into the formulation and implementation of regional and local development, as well as spatial planning policies.	
Indicator 1 – New guidelines for national and municipal planning are adopted by MRDPW	100% achieved as the new Methodological Guidelines were adopted in 2009.
Indicator 2 – Percentage of projects under the OPRD funded after 2008, which contain GE indicators relevant to the individual projects, as well as report on them.	Partially Achieved. All projects funded by OPRD report on one GE indicator, namely, emissions of CO2 equivalent, emitted as a result of the project implementation. This indicator was officially approved by DG "Regional Development" at the European Commission at the launch of OPRD. MRDPW officials stated during the interviews that introduction of more GE sensitive indicators, developed by Rio Conventions Project in OPRD is planned for the next planning period (2014-2020), as the procedure for amendment of OPRD is lengthy and cumbersome.
Outcomes	Progress and comments
Outcome 1 The methodologies, skills, knowledge, and information management system for	Key Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8 ten-day advanced training courses on GEI integration organized and successfully conducted at Sofia University (SU) for 141 employees from MRDPW and MoEW and their regional structures,

<p>mainstreaming global environmental considerations into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of regional development and spatial planning policies are in place</p>	<p>as well as for employees from municipalities and district administrations, trade unions and employer organizations.</p> <p>The interviewed employees from MRDPW and MoEW were all highly complementary about the training. The development of comprehensive training materials and the presence of capable trainers were mentioned as main success factors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Twenty seven one-day introductory training courses on GEI integration were organized and successfully delivered in 27 DAs. More than 200 participants attended this option, nominated by district administrations, municipalities and MRDPW's regional territorial units. ▪ The Master programme developed under the project is institutionalized in SU and operational. This programme therefore mainstreams the GEI into the educational system. Its transfer in other educational structures specifically targeted at the Bulgarian public administration (such as Institute of Public Administration) is not clear yet. ▪ More than 110 relevant news articles regarding the Rio Conventions implementation were researched, translated and uploaded onto the project web site¹, and 9 electronic newsletters² were sent to a database of over 850 stakeholders. ▪ The Website is informative and had more than 21,000 visits since its launch in June 2007 till June 2010, out of which 14,858 are unique visits. 85% of the users come from Bulgaria and 15% are international. However, no monitoring and analysis were done before the FE. The site statistics shows that the number of visitors is stable over the time (not increased). ▪ Publications are useful and well distributed although their impact is difficult to assess. ▪ Three new INTERREG IVC projects were initiated as a result of an exchange visit of MRDPW staff to UK.
<p>Indicators</p>	
<p>Indicator 3 At least 130 staff members are applying their training (developed by the project) in their review of plans, projects and programmes.</p>	<p>100% achieved.</p> <p>The number of people trained exceeded the Indicator target value, and the training was of high standard. There was broader participation in the training than originally planned which should enhance the chance of long-term project impact.</p> <p>As part of the final evaluation, the international team leader has recommended to perform an electronic survey among the participants in the trainings to</p>

¹ <http://www.rioconventions.org/en/The-Rio-Conventions/Events-and-Publications.html>

² <http://www.rioconventions.org/en/Publications/newsletter.html>

	<p>assess the extent to which they actually apply the skills and knowledge taught during the course. The results of the survey are summarized in Annex 9.</p>
<p>Indicator 4 GE indicators identified and used in evaluating the implementation of RDPs (regional development plans) and MDPs (municipal development plans) and projects.</p>	<p>100% achieved.</p> <p>GE sensitive indicators has been developed and integrated into the regional development planning process through the Ordinance for the update of RDPs and MDPs.</p> <p>However, the target value of using indicators to verify “zero negative impact on the environment” was “over-ambitious” in its formulation.</p> <p>The GE Indicators have been developed with detailed technical passports and the tools for using and mapping them. The selection of the indicators was based on their use at EU level and the availability of uniform and reliable data. However, the FE team could not find an evidence that the project beneficiaries will use the data collected by the GE indicators in practice for management response to the negative impacts (e.g. for development of alternative development scenarios depending on the GE information during the planning process).</p>
<p>Indicator 5 – The established web-site for “GE integration into local and regional planning” is viewed and used as a useful information source in work related matters by municipal and regional planners, interested stakeholders and Government staff (MRDPW etc.)</p>	<p>100% achieved.</p> <p>The Web-site is up and running with a high number of visits and many publications. However, there is no structured way to monitor users (eg trough regular analysis of the visits statistics or feedback forms) to allow refinement, not to see if successful.</p> <p>Achieving the outcome would also require improved data management systems, and data, to be available to planners.</p>
<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Institutional changes that support mainstreaming of global environmental into regional development and spatial planning are in place.</p>	<p>Key Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job descriptions reviews were implemented in 12 directorates at MRDPW and approximately 130 job descriptions for 332 ministerial employees were included in the review (app. 50% of the total employees at MRDPW). The actual improvement of the job descriptions has covered 1 directorate, which is the most involved into the Regional Development Planning Process. ▪ Development of a short list of 7 strategic indicators relevant to the Rio Conventions implementation in Bulgaria and agreed with MRDPW and a Task Force of experts from other key state and scientific organizations. <p>This has been commented on by most interviewees, and is reported as a key legacy of the project. It is obviously excellent that Indicators have been included in the Ordinance and will be included in the planning process, the plans and in their monitoring and evaluation. The process for developing the Indicators has fully complied with the Project’s structure and process. The Indicators should play an important role in ensuring GEIs are mainstreamed. The current indicators represent an excellent starting point, and establish the</p>

	<p>principal of the inclusion of Indicators in the process; this means they can be refined and developed.</p> <p>The indicators were developed in a broad consultation with the project Indicator Expert Group and MRDPW and the criteria for their selection were widely accepted. Besides, most of the selected indicators are also widely used and accepted at the EU level and by Eurostat and constitute a good base for a comparison between the different Member States.</p> <p>In the same time the FE Team finds some weaknesses, which may lead to limitations in the practical use of the indicators. The selection of the indicators was based on the data availability and data comparison at EU level rather than on the identification of the real decision making questions, which the indicators are expected to answer. In this way many of the current indicators allow reporting but do not really assist development planning decision making. The linkages to GEIs are often weak, and may be hard to interpret (even as to whether a change in the indicator should be seen as positive or negative).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An assignment was implemented regarding the identification of relevant projects funded by relevant MRDPW operated funding schemes, which contribute to the Rio Conventions implementation in Bulgaria and which can be counted towards the ministry's own financial contribution under the project. In brief: 47 projects from 3 funding schemes included in the review. A short list of 20 projects, amounting to 20.5 million euro, selected to be included in MRDPW own financial contribution . ▪ A Prototype GIS component was developed to be the uniform information system for regional planning of MRDPW, focusing on GEI integration. This was identified by many people consulted as a key project result. However, the most of interviewed representatives of the project beneficiaries could not describe how the Prototype GIS will be upgraded and used in practice. ▪ Study visit to Cornwall, UK to review Good Practices for Protection of the Environment in Utilization of Structural Funds was provided for 11 public officials and experts from MRDPW, MoEW, Varna DA and National Association of Municipalities in Bulgaria. ▪ As a result of the Cornwall study visit MRDPW became an official partner in three Interreg IVC projects on the following topics: <i>“Regions for Sustainable Change”</i>, <i>“University Collaboration in Regional Development Spaces”</i> and <i>“Geopower”</i>. ▪ The Steering Committee and Advisory Board regular meetings has served as decision-making / advisory bodies to the project but also provided feedback and communication between the stakeholders.
Indicators	
<p>Indicator 6 – Staff participation (MRDPW, district administrations and municipalities) in (6240 hours of trainings, seminars and</p>	<p>The target value of the indicator is considered to be achieved. The participation of the relevant staff in trainings, seminars and workshops related to “green” development planning with the support of the MRDPW has significantly improved during the project implementation. The trainings</p>

<p>workshops related to “green” development planning and implementation through Ministry support (as well as from other funding sources).</p>	<p>provided by the projects were of high quality..</p> <p>The total number of 12142 academic hours are reported for relevant trainings, organized and financed by the Project and by MRDPW. 96 hours of participation in workshops and seminars related to "green" development planning by experts from DG "Strategic Regional Development Planning" at MRDPW in the framework of the two Interreg IVC projects implemented by the directorate in 2010. A total of 2082 hours of training related to "green" development planning was financed by MRDPW, municipalities and DAs from other sources. The project budget also financed 27 training workshops with one-day duration, in each of the 27 district centres (2 workshops per week, taught over a six-month period) with a total equivalent 1600 academic hours (200 participants x 8 academic hours of training per participant). In addition, the project budget supported the delivery of training workshops with ten-day duration at Sofia University (taught over one-and-a-half-year period, 40 weeks in total) with a total equivalent of 8460 academic hours (141 participants x 60 academic hours). Both type of courses (one-day and ten-day) were delivered by qualified instructors from Sofia university.</p>
<p>Indicator 7 – 100% of job descriptions and performance evaluation forms within the relevant departments and structures of Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (app. 50) have been updated in accordance with the Methodological Guidance, so as to outline the specific task required, by the individual positions, to ensure overall integration of GE into the Ministry’s activities.</p>	<p>Partially achieved.</p> <p>The scope of the study comprised 12 Directorates, 130 job descriptions for a total of 332 people on payroll (app. 50% of the total employees at MRDPW). Following the approval of a new administrative structure at MRDPW after the parliamentary elections in July 2009 an update of the job descriptions was produced in February 2010 and re-submitted with an official letter to the Chief Secretary of MRDPW to be considered in forthcoming job descriptions update. 34 job descriptions were updated at DG "Strategic Regional Development Planning" in February 2010..</p>
<p>Indicator 8 – Number of meetings held by an inter-ministerial expert Task Force aimed at exchanging experience and best practices and developing a proposal for integrating GE concerns into the work of other ministries.</p>	<p>The Project tried to have Inter-Ministerial Commission on SD, but this proved impossible to deliver due to legislative requirements for such “Inter Ministerial Commissions”, so the project went through the correct process of revision to change this to more informal inter disciplinary expert groups. These proved effective.</p>
<p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Regional development plans and municipal-level spatial development plans are revised to integrate global environmental objectives in a pilot region through application</p>	<p>Key Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Methodological Guidelines have been developed and a model ToR produced for conducting Mid-Term Evaluations (MTE) of DDS which should take place by the end of 2010 according to the changes in the Regional Development Act from August, 2008. ▪ Developed model contents for the MoEW required annual reports on the implementation of the ecological measures prescribed in the EA

<p>of capacities developed in Outcomes 1 and 2.</p>	<p>of the respective RDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produced six model annual reports for 2008 on the implementation of the ecological measures prescribed in the respective EA of the six RDPs ▪ Submitted list of PMU proposed recommendations to MRDPW with respect to the ministry developed Updated Document on the National Strategy for Regional Development. The recommendations focus on how GEI integration should be better emphasized in the proposed Updated Document and the relevant sections in it that tackle the ensuing update of RDPs, DA Strategies and MDPs ▪ One model update of District Development Strategy of Plovdiv District and Practical Guidelines as to the GEI integration, based on the project 7 strategic indicators, in the update of DDS that will be distributed among all other DAs. ▪ 7 working seminars with DA experts conducted in the first half of 2010 to discuss the practical integration of the 7 GE sensitive indicators in the forthcoming DDS updates and midterm evaluations (MTE).
<p>Indicators</p>	
<p>Indicator 9 – The new GE sensitive guidelines adopted by MRDPW, for regional and municipality planning are introduced to a set of municipalities and the 28 district administrations.</p>	<p>100% achieved.</p> <p>The GE sensitive guidelines were adopted by MRDPW in 2009 and they guide the update of all levels of strategic planning documents in Bulgaria: RDPs, DDS and MDPs. As a special annex to the Guidelines were included the project developed 7 strategic indicators for GE..</p>
<p>Indicator 10 – Number of public hearings that is held for each of the development plan reviewed and an equal number of seminars on civil participation in plan development and plan monitoring held.</p>	<p>100% achieved.</p> <p>2 public hearings were organized with respect to the update of Plovdiv DDS. In addition, 7 working seminars were organized with experts from 26 District Administrations (DAs) in order to reflect their comments and recommendations into the developed Methodology and a model ToR for DDS midterm evaluation (MTE).</p> <p>Increased awareness and capacity of GEIs and their relevance to development planning in government staff</p>

4.3.4 Impacts – achievement of Project Goal

It is difficult the FET to have the complete picture of the project impacts at this stage but some key aspects could be outlined:

- The project has a positive impact on the Regional Development Planning process in Bulgaria. The Methodological Guidelines, adopted by the MRDPW in 2009 introduces new requirements for the elaboration of the planning documents with extended environmental analysis and monitoring of

the environmental performance. This positive impact is expected to continue after the project end as a result of the new requirements that were adopted by the MRDPW.

- The development of standardized Terms of Reference for conducting interim evaluations of DDS and updates through piloting in the Plovdiv District Development Strategy seem to be highly valuable, as it will create a model of good practice, which is expected to be replicated to the other district and regional administrations in both formal and informal channels.
- It is unclear at this stage what will be the impact from the indicators and GIS to the planning process. Indicators were developed following the Eurostat indicators and methodologies, with the priority criteria being on the availability of data. There is no clear analysis of the needs and the key decision-making questions, that the Indicators will be used to answer have to answer. At this stage there is therefore no evidence that the mainstreaming will be achieved through these.
- The capacity of the MRDPW in terms of mainstreaming the GEIs was significantly improved. This was clearly stated in many interviews. The impact of this positive change is difficult to assess at this stage.
- It is likely that some additional impact will be seen in the Regional development strategies and plans in the next planning period 2014 – 2020.
- There is a certain positive capacity building impact – the number of the trained public employees through the Training courses and the mainstreaming the GEI into the higher education related to the regional development through the Master Course. However, the trainees' feedback could not be adequately measured during the project's lifetime. Initial feedback was very positive about the way that the course raised awareness and understanding and indicated that it has led to changed ways of working.

4.3.5 Unanticipated benefits of the Project

The project has improved both formal and informal links between people in different Ministries and Institutions, which should have positive benefits in future integrated planning.

4.3.6 Effectiveness and cost effectiveness

The Rio Conventions project was a relatively small GEF project yet is likely to leave a large legacy (training courses, capacity, planning and review methodologies, and the inclusion of environmental indicators).

It has therefore been highly cost effective.

4.3.7 Sustainability

For a relatively small project the Rio Conventions Project has brought about a number of significant results that should ensure its sustainability.

The Guidelines and methodology it has developed have already been adopted through a formal Ministerial Ordinance, which includes the use of Environmental Indicators. These will remain in place until at least the end of the current round of development planning – i.e. 2013.

The courses developed under the project have not only built the capacity of individuals during the project, but as the courses have already been included in a Masters Programme at Sofia University they will continue beyond the project. The project also supported the development of a set of training materials that will live beyond the project.

It is normally anticipated that a project that builds awareness and capacity will bring sustainable benefits. However, this can be weakened when there is no process to use the new skills, nor recognition of the enhanced capacity of individuals. This project has addressed both of these through the formal adoption of the methodology, and by the inclusion of environmental skills as a required component in the Job Specifications for staff in MRDPW.

The project has deliberately engaged with EU planning processes as these should ensure that the focus on inclusion of Environmental Issues in development planning is maintained in Bulgaria.

Although it is outside of the scope of the current project, and therefore of this evaluation, it is suggested by the evaluators that follow up activities that emphasize the dependence of sustainable development on healthy function ecosystems, ideally included environmental economic arguments, that overcome the perception of a gap between environmental and development objectives will be important in ensuring sustainability of the benefits beyond development planning into development.

The PMU developed Exit strategy following the MTE recommendations. The strategy is clear on the transfer of the assets and many particular measures to ensure outputs sustainability. The GIS will remain for use in MRDPW. However, it is not clear to what extent the GIS will mainstream the conventions provisions into the planning process (or used more for reporting and providing illustrative maps).

After the project official end the project will be "fed" with relevant news on the Rio Conventions Implementation via RSS feed from appropriate domestic and international web sites: e.g. Bulgarian Climate Coalition, UNCBD, UNFCCC, GEF Climate Evaluation Portal, etc. PMU conducted a couple of meetings with the Secretariat of the Bulgarian Climate Coalition and it was agreed that they will support the update of news of the Rio Conventions Project web site after its official end. Both MoEW and MRDPW have added a link to the project web site on their official sites, as well.

The project's long-term impact regarding the mainstreaming of the GE issues into the EU funding (through OPRD) is difficult to evaluate at this moment. This important aspect of the sustainability is highly dependant of the MRDPW's will and possible follow-up actions. Such follow-up actions could be the use of environmental indicators and methodologies, developed by the project in the process of mid-term evaluation and adjustment of OPRD.

4.3.8 Replicability

The project was seen by the MRDPW as developing and piloting a methodology that would then be rolled out across the whole country.

The adoption of the Ministerial Ordinance means that replication is probable.

Further development of methodologies and criteria for mainstreaming should take place in Spatial planning at municipal and district levels (as the spatial planning is separate process from the Regional development planning in BG).

Although in-country replication will be effective regional level replication could have been enhanced by closer links between with the other UNDP supported projects in the region that are also addressing similar issues.

4.3.9 Contribution to national capacity building

- High during project and likely to be continued due to the developed Training Programmes Package (one- and ten-day courses and a Master course) and training manuals and materials
- Direct contribution through the most of the project outputs: methodologies, indicators, GIS, trainings and job descriptions
- Indirect – the integration of the project with MRDPW (office in the ministry, participation in SC, direct contact at expert level) has its footprint in regard to the capacity of the MRDPW and their awareness of Environmental Issues relevant to development.

5. Recommendations

5.1 During the remaining period of the Project

R1 The project Final Report, whose format will be agreed by the Steering Committee in September, 2010 should be a comprehensive description of the process that has been undertaken, what has and hasn't worked, and why, and information on how to access products produced by the project, rather than just a report that complies with minimum UNDP GEF reporting requirements, so that it can more effectively support the other Rio Convention projects and processes in the region that are also tackling similar issues.

R2 To allow more accurate assessment of the success of the project the PMU should conduct a follow up evaluation of the training specifically looking at:

- How much has the awareness and knowledge of the target group been improved?
- How have they been able to apply this knowledge?
- What they find particularly useful and what not?
- Which practices are changed in result of the
- This evaluation should be carried out immediately so that the results are available to be included in the project Final Report.

A suggested format for the evaluation questionnaire is attached as Annex 9.

5.2 Recommendations which the UNDP RC could forward to the UNDP Headquarters for consideration by GEF Secretariat regarding future Project planning and management.

Although many of these may seem outside the scope of an evaluation of one project, UNDP and GEF Secretariat also evaluate, and propose changes, based on a body of evidence so the FET feel it is appropriate to include them.

R3 The project, like many other GEF projects, is trying to make long-term changes. It is hard to evaluate impact during the project. We would encourage UNDP / GEF to give further consideration to the inclusion of ex-post project evaluation as a standard, and funded, part of all GEF projects, with funding seen as a global incremental cost and benefit.

R4 GEF Medium Sized Projects MSGs have a lower budget and normally a small PMU, but have to follow the same operational procedures as full sized grants. We would recommend that UNDP / GEF Secretariat give further consideration at its next Review of GEF implementation as to how to streamline MSG management systems.

R5 The teams involved in project conceptualization and preparation are frequently not those involved in implementation. For this reason it is recommended that UNDP / GEF revises its Guidance notes, training on GEF Project Preparation to ensure that more of the logic in choices, based on a recorded Evaluation of Options, is included. That explains why it is believed that each stage in project logic will bring about the anticipated effects at the next stage as the current log-frame structure does not do this adequately.

R6 Either stronger guidelines are required on the preparation of log-frames in project preparation, or more thorough reviewing, to ensure that objectives, outcomes and indicators are SMART so that they are of more assistance to the Project Implementation Team as they track and refine progress.

R7 Methodologies should be agreed in advance, and recorded, on how co-financing will be reported and monitored.

5.3 Sustaining the results

Maintaining the training is likely to be a key factor in ensuring sustainability. It is therefore recommended that:

R8 A representative of the project should meet with the Institute of Public Administration and propose that the training modules developed under the Rio Conventions Project should be included in the Institute of Public Administration's Portfolio.

R9 The Master's programme should be actively promoted by the Sofia University, with active support from the Project where possible, e.g. in including them as speakers in any final meetings to be able, in order to increase the annual number of the students attending.

R10 Discussions should be held by a representation of the Project with other providers of training for planners in Bulgaria on inclusion of modules on mainstreaming the environment into their development planning training courses.

R11 The links established at Ministerial level should be used to ensure that the Project results, approaches, recommendations and tools feed into the Midterm evaluation of the OPRD, with the clear recommendations that not only should GEIs be mainstreamed in the OPRD, but that the OPRD should be clearly driven by the Regional, District and Municipal planning processes.

5.4 Building on the initiative

5.4.1 National

R12 The legal adoption of GE Indicators in the MRDPW's Guidelines which sets the planning and reporting process, is an excellent start. It is recommended that MRDPW clearly monitor how they are used, and that there is future refinement of them to bring in a clearer focus on results, such as condition of the environment, rather than just inputs or allocation.

R13 In order to assist the future refinement of the Regional Development Planning process MRDPW should develop a pilot Regional Development Plan during the next programming period (2014-2020) that includes an economic, rather than just financial, Cost Benefit Analysis of the different development options that specifically includes any changes in the value of Environmental Service Values (Environmental or Ecosystem services are the benefits people obtain from ecosystems. These include *provisioning services* such as food, water, timber, and fibre; *regulating services* that affect climate, floods, disease, wastes, and water quality; *cultural services* that provide recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits; and *supporting services* such as soil formation, photosynthesis, and nutrient cycling that would occur under the different Development Options).

R14 MOEW and MRDPW should collaborate in the development of an improved system to collate and disseminate environmental / biodiversity data between Ministries, Civil Society, Institutes and academia to ensure planners and other decision makers have information.

R15 MRDPW needs to ensure that there is further integration of Development and Spatial Planning, with the Spatial Planning driven by the Development Plans

R 16 In order to replicate the pilot approach taken in updating the Plovdiv District Development Strategy into the other 27 districts, the process should be fully written up, by the project on behalf of MRDPW, described as Good Practice, the most critical issues outlined, and a clear process agreed for MRDPW to support the other DAs in implementation.

R 17 Although integrated planning should bring better results for the country the proposed process MRDPW estimated that it is approximately 20-25% more expensive. It is recommended that the Ministerial budget reflects this.

5.4.2 Regional

Because the Project in Bulgaria is ending, but other Rio Conventions linked projects are being supported in the Region the following are proposed as UNDP RC actions:

R18 The UNDP Regional Office for Europe and CIS should consider commissioning a Regional analysis, on identifying and address the underlying reasons why the Environment is not mainstreamed in Development – and the consequences of this. As part of this, attention would have to be given to the particular circumstances of each of the countries to ascertain whether just using global analyses would be sufficient, or whether a regional, or even country specific analysis would provide the most useful information. These could of course all be included in the design of one analysis, which would then assist in deciding at what level intervention would be most effective.

R19 There should be a Regional Workshop to support Rio Conventions Projects sharing lessons, either funded out of regional budgets to support the Rio Conventions Projects, or hosted, and funded by one of the Rio Conventions Projects in the region that has sufficient resources left to cover this.

R20 UNDP Regional Office for Europe and the CIS should use some of the funding for supporting the Rio Conventions Projects to further develop and fully operationalize a Learning Network to link projects working on issues around mainstreaming the Rio Conventions.

R21 There could be a Regional Workshop, perhaps co-hosted between the Global Compact Initiative and the Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum, on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity as part of the **Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) roll out**. (TEEB is a major international initiative to draw attention to the global economic benefits of biodiversity, to highlight the growing costs of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, and to draw together expertise from the fields of science, economics and policy to enable practical actions moving forward.) The workshop should include a focus on environmental economics policies in the EU, including offsets, Payments for Ecosystem Services PES, and rehabilitation.

6. Lessons learnt

Environmental Improvement can often be effectively achieved by projects, such as the Rio Conventions Project, that are driven, and hosted, by line agencies that can impact the environment, rather than being hosted in environmental agencies trying to influence other, often more influential agencies.

Projects that are trying to deal with the mainstreaming of environmental issues in other sectors should start with analysing, defining and communicating the root-causes for not mainstreaming, or respecting, the environment into the respective sector, and to include specific components that build awareness on the values and drivers for the sustainable environmental management .

Projects, which aim to improve regional development planning and spatial planning have to provide information on the financial mechanisms in place to support the implementation of the development strategies and plans. Based on this, intervention on the funding mechanisms should also take place.

Such projects should also include an analysis of the decision making processes within the system(s). They are considering working with, together with an analysis of the key decision makers, rather like the “stakeholder analysis” that is more normally included, and the analysis needs to be supported by an engagement strategy with the key decision makers. If this analysis of decision making, and decision makers had been included, then it would have been easier to target key decision makers as well as Municipal staff for participation in the generic project training on mainstreaming GEIs into development planning. In addition, other methods of engagement of key decision makers, and securing their active participation, could have taken place. This improved participation of the municipalities was recommended by several interviewed people as the municipal level is where the capacity development and practices changes are most needed. As the Final Evaluation is being conducted before full approval of the plans, it is not possible to ascertain how well the draft plans fare in decision making, and funding allocations, how important an issue the focus on the technical staff rather than all decision makers was, cannot be judged at present.

MoEW focal points for the Rio Conventions were included in the Advisory Board and attended training events – However, despite this there was never a clear link between the development of national strategies and plans under each of these conventions and the detailed activities of the project. Reasons for this are unclear, but the easy assumption would be that they were never motivated as to how the project could assist them in achieving **their** objectives. It is appreciated that this was only one of many projects linked to the supporting the Rio Conventions, and others were more directly linked to developing and implementing the national strategies and action plans. However, perhaps as this was a Rio Conventions Project Focal Points could have been asked to prepare a paper specifically outlining the key priorities for implementation of their conventions in the country and a strategy for how refinement of the development planning process could help implement their priorities.

Participation in projects needs to be based on the Stakeholder Analysis, and fully included in the project methodology, and needs to be secured from the start. Securing real commitment, and ownership, from key stakeholders is easier at the start than asking them to join an already up-and-running project.

7. Annexes

Annex 1 – Project Rating against GEF Criteria

Annex 2 – ToRs

Annex 3 – Capacity development monitoring scorecard

Annex 4 – Documents reviewed

Annex 5 – List of People interviewed

Annex 6 – Reviewers

Annex 7 – Itinerary

Annex 8 – Implementation of recommendations in MTE

Annex 9 – Proposed Post training evaluation Questionnaire

Annex 1 - Project Rating against GEF Criteria

Rating Area	Comments	Rating
Implementation Approach	<p>The Project was extremely well implemented against the Project Document. All activities were well planned, budgeted, managed, conducted by competent personnel, and well written up.</p> <p>The only weak point during delivery, rather than during design, was in the development of the Indicators, but even in this the PMU correctly followed the method proposed by the technical Expert Group for this work.</p>	Highly Satisfactory
Country ownership/drivers	<p>The project conceptualization came from the Bulgarian National Capacity Self Assessment, a Country driven, and participatory process that considered what was needed to allow Bulgaria to be able to effectively meet its obligations under the Rio Conventions.</p> <p>The project preparation then followed this was also country driven, and by the Ministry responsible for Regional Development Planning – with direct input from other key stakeholders. As a result of this the project was highly relevant to the country’s planning needs.</p> <p>UNDP provided technical assistance in how to turn the aspirations of the planning group into a fundable GEF project.</p> <p>However, the project was not specifically driven by either the Rio Conventions specific objectives, nor by the country Strategies or Plans under these.</p>	Satisfactory
Outcomes / Achievement of Objectives	<p>The project has been very successful in delivering on its required outcomes.</p> <p>Achieving these Outcomes will allow the project to directly achieve its objective.</p> <p>Achieving the Objectives should directly contribute to achieving the overall project goal – but this is not yet achieved, and there are unaddressed risks between the Objectives and the Goal.</p>	Highly Satisfactory
Stakeholder Participation/public	<p>Prior to this project Stakeholder participation was not standard in development planning in Bulgaria. It is clear that</p>	Satisfactory

involvement	<p>not only was stakeholder/public participation good within the project but it has established a process that includes stakeholder/public participation in the development planning, and review, processes.</p> <p>Within the project participation in the Steering and Expert Groups worked well, but not so well in the Advisory Board.</p> <p>Dissemination of results from the project to broader stakeholders has been good, even though the project was small and with relatively low visibility.</p> <p>The MTE did comment on the need for greater stakeholder participation, and the PMU did incorporate those concerns during the second half.</p>	
Sustainability	<p>For a relatively small project the Rio Conventions project has brought about a number of significant results that should ensure its sustainability.</p> <p>The Guidelines and methodology it has developed have already been adopted through a formal Ministerial Ordinance, which includes the use of Environmental Indicators.</p> <p>The courses developed under the project have not only built the capacity of individuals during the project, but as the courses have already been included in a Masters Programme at Sofia University they will continue beyond the project. The high quality training materials developed to support the courses will continue to be used.</p> <p>It is normally anticipated that a project that builds awareness and capacity will bring sustainable benefits, However, this can be weakened when there is no process to use the new skills, nor recognition of the enhanced capacity of individuals. This project has addressed both of these through the formal adoption of the methodology, and by the inclusion of environmental skills as a required component in the Job Specifications for staff in MRDPW.</p> <p>The GIS tools and capacity developed to support the use of the Indicators will remain in MRDPW, though their maintenance may be problematic.</p> <p>The project has deliberately engaged with EU planning processes as these should ensure that the focus on inclusion of Environmental Issues in development planning is</p>	Highly Satisfactory

	<p>maintained in Bulgaria.</p> <p>Although it is outside of the scope of the current project, and therefore of this evaluation, it is suggested by the evaluators that follow up activities that emphasize the dependence of sustainable development on healthy function ecosystems, ideally included environmental economic arguments, that overcome the perception of a gap between environmental and development objectives will be important in ensuring sustainability of the benefits beyond development planning into development.</p>	
Monitoring and evaluation	<p>The Monitoring and Evaluation conducted throughout the project was thorough, timely, and directly linked to Adaptive Management.</p> <p>The MTE made a number of useful suggestions to the PMU which were implemented.</p>	Highly Satisfactory
Replication approach	<p>The project was seen by the MRDPW as developing and piloting a methodology that would then be rolled out across the whole country.</p> <p>The adoption of the Ministerial Ordinance means that replication is probable.</p> <p>Although in-country replication will be effective regional level replication could have been enhanced by closer links between with the other UNDP supported projects in the region that are also addressing similar issues.</p>	Highly Satisfactory
Cost effectiveness	<p>The Rio Conventions project was a relatively small GEF project yet is likely to leave a large legacy (training courses, capacity, planning and review methodologies, and the inclusion of environmental indicators).</p> <p>It has therefore been highly cost effective.</p>	Highly satisfactory
Overall Project Rating	<p>Although the original project design and planning had some gaps, these are more easily seen with the benefit of current understanding on the underlying reasons for, and the effects of, the environmental being treated as separate, or “external”, to economic systems, and development, (e.g. as</p>	Highly Satisfactory

	<p>a result of processes such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment³) than common practice at the time of project preparation.</p> <p>The project team has done an excellent job in delivering the project as it was designed – activities were carried out to a high standard, these led to the achievement of the objectives, which will deliver the outcomes.</p> <p>Despite being only a modest project it will leave a substantial legacy especially in terms of the training courses, the planning and review methodologies which were so well received that they have already been adopted by formal Ministerial Ordinance. The project has also been significant in establishing the precedent of development plans including environmental Indicators; although there were some issues with the development process, and the current format, of these they represent an excellent foundation.</p>	
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³ The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment assessed the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being. From 2001 to 2005, the MA involved the work of more than 1,360 experts worldwide. Their findings provide a state-of-the-art scientific appraisal of the condition and trends in the world's ecosystems and the services they provide, as well as the scientific basis for action to conserve and use them sustainably

Terms of Reference

for

Independent Final Project Evaluation

(International Team Leader)

**Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria's Regional Development Process
(Rio Conventions Project)
Project 51783**

PIMS 3333

I. Background information on the project

I. 1. General Context

The GEF-funded Rio Conventions Project (full title: *Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria's Regional Development Process*) aims at promoting a proactive integration of global environmental issues into the very process of regional and local development, as well as spatial planning, both of which are managed by Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW). This would be achieved by developing the capacity of MRDPW and Ministry of Environment and Water (MOEW) to integrate global environmental objectives into the regional and local development policies and practices, as well as into spatial planning documents.

Based on the findings of the National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) and subsequent discussions with key stakeholders during the PDF-A, the project strategy is to promote a proactive integration of global environmental issues into the very process of regional and local development, as well as spatial planning, both of which are managed by MRDPW. This would be achieved by developing the capacity of MRDPW to integrate global environmental objectives into the regional and local development policies and practices, as well as into spatial planning documents.

To implement the project strategy, it will be essential to involve and build ownership of the project among the following key stakeholder groups – MRDPW at all levels, MOEW, Municipal Mayors, local NGOs and private enterprises. All of these groups are essential to influencing and changing the current practice in terms of how regional and local development and spatial planning documents are formulated and implemented. A particularly important opportunity that this project is capitalizing on is the interest expressed by MRDPW to pursue such an approach during their involvement in the NCSA process. The project strategy will be realized through the following 3 outcomes:

OUTCOME 1: The methodologies, skills, knowledge, and information management system for mainstreaming global environmental considerations into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of regional development and spatial planning policies are in place

OUTCOME 2: Institutional changes that support mainstreaming of global environmental into regional development and spatial planning are in place.

OUTCOME 3: Regional development plans and municipal-level spatial development plans are revised to integrate global environmental objectives in a pilot region or group of municipalities through application of capacities developed in Outcomes 1 and 2.

So far the project has been subject to one independent evaluation – Mid-term evaluation from the end of 2008. The overall evaluation of the project was “*Satisfactory*”. Along with this, the implementation approach and effectiveness of the project were evaluated as *Satisfactory*, as

was the outlook for the sustainability of the project. Some of the main recommendations from the MTE included:

- It is recommended that the project management team put more focus on long-term sustainability and institutionalization of project achievements. Long-term impact and long-term sustainability are closely related and are ultimately the main drivers for the success of a project. All achievements should be well institutionalized within the Bulgarian system;
- It is recommended to promote the 60-hours training programme within the public sector, the civil society and the private sector. Some project resources are used to deliver the programme to 130 Officers as per the MOU between the MRDPW and MOEW. However, in parallel to this training delivery, the project should focus on creating a demand for this course;
- It is recommended a stronger partnership to implement the demonstration. One of the first tasks should be to set-up a working group to oversee the implementation of the demonstration (outcome #3), including representatives of key national institutions such as MRDPW, MOEW, EEA but also key representatives from the district and municipal level such as Governors, Mayors, Planners, Environmental Officers, etc.. Ideally, the partnership should include a co-financing of the demonstration;
- It is recommended that the project support the review and the revision of the methodological guidelines (currently underway) for regional development planning to ensure that all project findings so far are integrated into these guidelines. It is an important milestone for mainstreaming the conventions obligations into the formulation and implementation of regional and local development plans. Following the new Law on regional development, these guidelines need to be revised; again this is an excellent opportunity for the project to institutionalize these obligations into the official methodological guidelines to produce these local development plans.

The management response to these and other recommendations will be included in the documents package to be provided to the evaluator.

II. Final Evaluation – introduction, evaluation audience, objectives and scope, expected products

II.1. Introduction

The independent Final Evaluation will take place at the end of project implementation, focusing on the same issues as the mid-term evaluation, but with special emphasis on identification of the degree of strengthened capacities of MRDPW to integrate global environmental concerns into development. The final evaluation will also look at impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the potential for achievement of global environmental goals. The Final Evaluation should also provide recommendations for follow-up activities.

This final evaluation is to be undertaken taking into consideration the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policy (<http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/1904>) and the UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (<http://www.undp.org/gef/monitoring/policies.html>).

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP-GEF has four objectives: (i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts; (ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements; (iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and (iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

In accordance with UNDP-GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full-sized projects supported by the GEF should undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation.

This final evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. It will also identify/document lessons learned and make recommendations that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects.

II.2. Evaluation audience

This Final Evaluation is initiated by the UNDP Bulgaria CO as the Implementation Agency for the Rio Conventions project. UNDP-GEF is primarily interested in analysis of how successful implementation of the project has been, what impacts it has generated, if the project benefits will be sustainable in the long-term and what the lessons learnt are for future interventions in the country, region and other parts of the globe where UNDP-GEF provides its assistance.

II.3. Evaluation objectives and scope

This evaluation is expected to provide professional assessment of the project implementation successfulness against the set objectives and indicators, including contribution of the project to achieving global environmental benefits. The evaluation will also collate and analyze lessons learned and best practices obtained during the period of the project implementation that can be further taken into consideration during development and implementation of other GEF projects in Bulgaria and elsewhere in the world.

Specifically this final evaluation has the following objectives:

- (i) to analyze and evaluate effectiveness of the results and impacts that the project has been able to achieve against the objective, targets and indicators stated in the project document;
- (ii) to assess effectiveness of the work and processes undertaken by the project as well as the performance of all the partners involved in the project implementation;
- (iii) to provide feedback and recommendations for subsequent decision making and necessary steps that need to be taken by the national stakeholders in order to ensure sustainability of the project's outcomes/results;
- (iv) to reflect on how effective the use of available resource has been use; and
- (v) to document and provide feedback on lessons learned and best practices generated by the project during its implementation.

III. Products expected from the evaluation

The key product expected from this final evaluation is a comprehensive analytical report in English.

III.1. Contents

The evaluation report should, at least, include the following contents:

- Executive summary
 - Brief description of the project
 - Context and purpose of the evaluation
 - Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

- Introduction
 - Project background
 - Purpose of the evaluation
 - Key issues addressed
 - Methodology of the evaluation
 - Structure of the evaluation

- The Project and its development context
 - Project start and its duration
 - Problems that the project seek to address
 - Goal, Objective and outcomes of the project Main stakeholders
 - Results expected

- Findings and conclusions
 - Project formulation
 - Project Implementation
 - Project Results

- Recommendations

- Lessons learned

- Annexes: TOR, itinerary, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.

More detailed break down of the evaluation report into sections and ratings is given in Annex 1.

III.2. Additional notes to the report

Formatting:	Times New Roman – Font 11; single spacing; paragraph numbering and table of contents (automatic); page numbers (centred); graphs and tables and photographs (where relevant) are encouraged.
Length:	maximum 30 pages in total excluding annexes
Timeframe of submission:	<p>first draft: 18 days after the end of the in-country mission. Tentative date: 10 August 2010;</p> <p>second draft: 5 days after receiving comments from Rio Conventions Project Management Unit, UNDP Bulgaria and UNDP/GEF Bratislava. Tentative date: 25 August 2010;</p> <p>final draft: 5 days after receiving comments from Rio Conventions Project Management Unit, UNDP Bulgaria, Government Counterparts and UNDP/GEF Bratislava. Tentative date: 10 September, 2010</p>
Should be submitted to:	UNDP Bulgaria

If there are discrepancies between the impressions and findings of the evaluation team and the aforementioned parties these should be explained in an annex attached to the final report.

IV. Methodology or evaluation approach

An outline of an evaluation approach is provided below. However, it should be made clear that the evaluation team is responsible for revising the approach as necessary. Any changes should be in-line with international criteria and professional norms and standards (as adopted by the UN Evaluation Group⁴). They must be also cleared by UNDP before being applied by the evaluation team.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. It must be easily understood by project partners and applicable to the remaining period of project duration.

The methodology to be used by the evaluation team should be presented in the report in detail. It shall include information on:

- Documentation review (desk study) - the list of documentation to be reviewed is included in **Annex 2** to this Terms of Reference and these will be provided in advance by the Project Implementation Unit;
- Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at minimum: UNDP Bulgaria, Rio Conventions Project Management Unit, Project Steering Committee members, National Project Director, Sofia University, selected consultants involved in key project assignments after the Mid-term Evaluation;
- Field visit (an indicative schedule attached in **Annex 3**);
- Questionnaires;
- Participatory techniques and other approaches for the gathering and analysis of data.

The consultant should also provide **ratings** of Project achievements according to GEF Project Review Criteria. Aspects of the Project to be rated are

1	Implementation approach
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⁴ See <http://www.uneval.org/>

2	Country ownership/drivers
3	Outcome/Achievement of objectives (meaning the extent to which the project's environmental and development objectives were achieved)
4	Stakeholder participation/public involvement
5	Sustainability
6	Replication approach
7	Cost-effectiveness
8	Monitoring and evaluation

The ratings to be used are:

HS	Highly Satisfactory
S	Satisfactory
MS	Marginally Satisfactory
MU	Marginally Unsatisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
HU	Highly Unsatisfactory
NA	Not applicable

V. Evaluation team – qualifications and requirements

A team of two independent evaluators will conduct the evaluation. The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The evaluation team will be composed of one International Team Leader and one National Consultant. The evaluators shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Former cooperation with GEF is an advantage.

The selection of evaluators will be aimed at maximizing the overall “team” qualities in the following areas:

- (i) Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- (ii) Experience applying participatory monitoring approaches;
- (iii) Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- (iv) Recent knowledge of the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy;
- (v) Recent knowledge of UNDP’s results-based evaluation policies and procedures
- (vi) Competence in Adaptive Management, as applied to capacity development natural resource management, spatial planning and regional development projects;
- (vii) Recognized expertise in the cross-cutting area of environmental protection and regional development / spatial planning;
- (viii) Familiarity with regional development, spatial planning policies and administrative-territorial division in Bulgaria is an asset;
- (ix) Demonstrable analytical skills;
- (x) Work experience in relevant areas (regional development and spatial planning, environmental management and planning, SEA) for at least 10 years;
- (xi) Experience with multilateral or bilateral supported capacity development projects;
- (xii) Project evaluation experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
- (xiii) Excellent English communication skills.

The evaluators must be independent from both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of assistance. Therefore, evaluators who have had any direct involvement with the design or implementation of the project will not be considered. This may apply equally to evaluators who are associated with organizations, universities or entities that are, or have been, involved in the Rio Project’s policy-making process and/or delivery of the project. Any previous association with the project, the Project Administration, MRDPW, MoEW, UNDP Bulgaria or other partners/stakeholders must be disclosed in the application.

If selected, failure to make the above disclosures will be considered just grounds for immediate contract termination, without recompense. In such circumstances, all notes, reports and other documentation produced by the evaluator will be retained by UNDP.

VI. Evaluation team – specific tasks

The International Team Leader will have overall responsibility for the delivery and quality of the evaluation products. Specifically, the International Team Leader will perform the following tasks:

- Lead and manage the evaluation mission;
- Design the detailed evaluation scope and methodology (including the methods for data collection and analysis);
- Assist Rio Conventions Project Management Unit in drafting terms of reference of the Additional Consultant(s)
- Decide the division of labor within the evaluation team;
- Conduct an analysis of the outcome, outputs and partnership strategy (as per the scope of the evaluation described above);
- Draft related parts of the evaluation report; and
- Finalize the whole evaluation report.

The National Consultant will provide input in reviewing all project documentation and will provide the International Team Leader with a compilation of information prior to the evaluation mission. Specifically, the National Consultant will perform tasks with a focus on:

- Review documents;
- Prepare a list of the outputs achieved under project;
- Organize the mission programme and provide translation/interpretation when necessary;
- Participate in the design of the evaluation methodology;
- Conduct an analysis of the outcome, outputs and partnership strategy (as per the scope of the evaluation described above);
- Draft related parts of the evaluation report;
- Assist International Team Leader in finalizing the evaluation report through incorporating suggestions received on draft related to his/her assigned sections.

The evaluation will be undertaken in-line with GEF principles⁵:

- Independence
- Impartiality
- Transparency

⁵ See p.16 of the GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy

- Disclosure
- Ethical
- Partnership
- Competencies and Capacities
- Credibility
- Utility

VII. Implementation Arrangements

VII.1. Management arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation lies with UNDP Bulgaria. UNDP Bulgaria will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. UNDP Bulgaria and Rio Conventions Project Management Unit will be responsible for liaising with the evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

VII.2. Timeframe, resources, logistical support and deadlines

The evaluation will be completed in the period from 12 July to 10 September 2010. The report shall be submitted for approval to the UNDP Bulgaria.

Prior to approval of the final report, first and second draft versions shall be circulated for comments to government counterparts, project team, UNDP Bulgaria and UNDP/GEF Bratislava. If any discrepancies have emerged between impressions and findings of the evaluation team and the aforementioned parties, these should be explained in an annex attached to the final report.

The activity and timeframe are broken down as follows:

Activity	Timeframe and responsible party
Desk review	3 days by the Team Leader and National Consultant⁶
Briefings for evaluators	1/2 day by the Rio Conventions Project Management Unit/ UNDP
Field visits, interviews, questionnaires, de-briefings	4 days by the Team Leader and National Consultant
Preparation of first draft report	4 days by the Team Leader and National Consultant
Review and preparation of comments to first draft report with preliminary findings from project stakeholders through circulation of the draft report for comments, meetings and other types of feedback mechanisms	10 days Rio Conventions Project Management Unit, UNDP Bulgaria and UNDP/GEF Bratislava
Incorporation of comments from project stakeholders and submission of second draft report	2 days by the Team Leader and National Consultant
Review and preparation of comments to second draft report	10 days Rio Conventions Project Management Unit, UNDP Bulgaria, Government Counterparts and UNDP/GEF Bratislava
Finalization of the evaluation report (incorporating comments received on second draft)	2 days by the Team Leader and National Consultant

Working Days:

Team Leader – 15 working days

National Consultant – 15 working days

The proposed dates for the in-country field mission to Bulgaria are from 14th to 21st July 2010. The assignment is to commence no later than 12th July, 2010.

All interested applicants should submit: a recent CV; a brief outline of the evaluation approach and methodology; period of availability, a proposed budget for the assignment implementation to: evaluation@rioconventions.org. **Application deadline: 27 June 2010**

⁶ The work days marked in Bold are indicative and demonstrate how the total number of days for completion of the assignment and determining the final consultants' fees were calculated.

Annex 3

Capacity Development Monitoring Scorecard

Project/Programme Cycle Phase: End of Project (Final Evaluation) (reported as per 30 August, 2010)

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
CR 1: Capacities for engagement						
Indicator 1 – Degree of legitimacy/mandate of lead environmental organizations	Institutional responsibilities for environmental management (EM) are not clearly defined	0		The project team members and participants recognized the authority of the lead organizations and they were included as Advisors and participants in training. However, the focal point leads for the Rio Conventions, and the processes	The improved capacity of the lead Environmental Organizations, as well as the new GE sensitive indicators and guidelines will be applied in practice, tested and, if necessary,	Project Outcomes 1 and 3
	Institutional responsibilities for environmental	1				

⁷ **Project Outcome 1:** The methodologies, skills, knowledge, and information management system for mainstreaming global environmental considerations into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of regional development and spatial planning policies are in place.

Project Outcome 2: Institutional changes that support mainstreaming of global environmental into regional development and spatial planning are in place.

Project Outcome 3: Regional development plans and municipal-level spatial development plans are revised to integrate global environmental objectives in a pilot region through application of capacities developed in Outcomes 1 and 2.

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
<p>Note: The project understands and defines the term “lead environmental organizations” as all governmental institutions in Bulgaria responsible for Environmental Management (EM) with which the project has contacts or direct influence: MoEW, MRDPW and Executive Environmental Agency. For the purposes of the project, EM here is defined as the process of integration of global environmental issues (GEI) into regional and spatial planning</p>	management are identified			developed by them, were not the drivers for how the Rio Conventions, and the GEIs arising from them should be mainstreamed in development planning. Significant number of experts from the lead environmental organizations (defined as MRDPW and MOEW) have been trained to mainstream GEIs into the Regional development planning (through 10-day training courses and 1-day introductory courses).	improved through the forthcoming update of the strategic planning documents at Regional, District and Municipal levels, as well as during the planning process for the next programming period (2014-2020).	
	Authority and legitimacy of all lead organizations responsible for environmental management are partially recognized by stakeholders	2	2			
	Authority and legitimacy of all lead organizations responsible for environmental management recognized by stakeholders	3		Besides that the Project has developed technical and GIS "passports" for the 7 GE sensitive indicators, GE sensitive guidelines and other tools which improve the authority and legitimacy of the lead organizations responsible for environmental management. The official adoption of these by Ministerial ordinance improves the recognition of the GE mainstreaming into the Regional development planning by other stakeholders (District administrations,		

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
				Municipalities etc.)		
Indicator 2 – Existence of operational co-management mechanisms (OCM) <i>Note: The project understands and defines OCM as shared responsibility between MoEW, MRDPW and other key stakeholders in the management of the Rio Conventions Project in order to provide for legitimacy of project results and achievements</i>	No co-management mechanisms are in place	0		OCM in the management of the Rio Convention Project is achieved through the appointment of a Steering Committee comprised of equal number of members from MoEW and MRDPW and formation of project Advisory Board comprised of stakeholders from a broader circle of institutions. Additionally, the project communicates intermediate project results and ensures feedback from various key stakeholders through distribution of its quarterly electronic newsletter and through the website. Although the initial plan for establishment Inter-ministerial Expert Task Force (IETF) was not achieved formally, the operational coordination with the two ministries was improved during the project implementation through the establishment of an expert working group on indicators	After the project ends the further integration of GEI into the regional development planning depends largely on the formal and operational cooperation between MRDPW and MoEW, as well as some other key state institutions.	Project Outcome 2:
	Some co-management mechanisms are in place and operational	1				
	Some co-management mechanisms are formally established through agreements, MOUs, etc.	2				
	Comprehensive co-management mechanisms are formally established and are operational/functional	3	3			

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
				development, in which employees from the two ministries and EEA comprised the highest number.		
Indicator 3 – Existence of cooperation with stakeholder groups <i>Note: The project understands and defines cooperation with stakeholder groups as involvement of a broader group of targeted stakeholders (municipalities, NGOs, local RD councils, business associations, academic organizations) in the update of RDPs and MDPs</i>	Identification of stakeholders and their participation/involvement in decision-making is poor	0		The project has produced a publication for effective public participation in regional and local environmental and RD planning.	The forthcoming updates of RDP, DDS and MDP should further improve the stakeholders participation by providing early information on the planning process and organizing early input by the various parties.	Project Outcomes 1 and 3
	Stakeholders are identified but their participation in decision-making is limited	1		The key project outputs were subject to stakeholder approval, using the Steering Committee, the Advisory Board and other coordination mechanisms. The pilot update of Plovdiv DDS was subject to a public hearing with a broad participation. In addition, the development of Methodological Guidelines for MTE of DDS involved a broad participation from all district administrations.		
	Stakeholders are identified and regular consultations mechanisms are established	2				
	Stakeholders are identified and they actively contribute to established participative decision-making processes	3	3	Although the project itself scores 3 for the inclusion of stakeholders in its decision making, and in what it recommends, it is still hard to state that the stakeholders actively contribute to established participative decision-making processes, so that		

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
				Development Planning Process itself would only score 2.		
Total score for CR1			8			
CR 2: Capacities to generate, access and use information and knowledge						
Indicator 4 – Degree of environmental awareness of stakeholders <i>Note: For the project purposes “stakeholders” here are defined as relevant decision-makers at national, regional and local level involved in RD and SP policy making and implementation</i>	Stakeholders are not aware about global environmental issues and their related possible solutions (MEAs) ⁸	0		<p>The project has significantly improved the capacity of a number of key public officials at the national, regional and municipal level in terms of GEI into RD and SP through the trainings and pilot DDS update, as well as the development of the Methodology for MTE of DDS (learning by doing). But overcoming the gaps in the capacity of the planners will require more time and follow-up, particularly at municipal level</p> <p>The development of the GE indicators, and pilot GIS are expected to improve the tracking of the environmental impacts of the planning and strategic documents. However, the</p>	<p>Formally, the public participation and awareness of the GEIs within the strategic planning process should be ensured by the public hearings, as well as related capacity-building trainings and workshops.</p> <p>MRDPW, MOEW, academic institutions and NGOs could perform also additional follow-up actions after the project in order to improve the awareness of the</p>	Project Outcomes 1 and 2
	Stakeholders are aware about global environmental issues but not about the possible solutions (MEAs)	1				
	Stakeholders are aware about global environmental issues and the possible solutions but do not know how to participate	2	2			
	Stakeholders are aware about global environmental issues and are actively	3				

⁸ Multilateral environmental agreements

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
	participating in the implementation of related solutions			<p>management response to the environmental information (implementation of related solutions) is still unclear to many stakeholders.</p> <p>To some extent the new MRDPW guidelines for how to develop and update strategic planning documents.</p> <p>Although there is definitely a greater awareness of GEIs in the target groups the awareness is patchy and does not include awareness and information on aspects that might help inform decision making – e.g. on the economic consequences of environmental change.</p>	<p>various stakeholders on the importance of GEIs as key social and economic factors.</p> <p>Such actions could be publishing studies on the economic ecosystem values, awareness raising campaigns, stakeholder participatory events (meetings, public hearings, roundtables) during the planning process, trainings, etc.</p> <p>Further development should be conducted by MRDPW to see how to bring in the extra areas (PLEASE MENTION SOME EXAMPLES OF SUCH AREAS) where information and awareness is required.</p>	

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
<p>Indicator 5 – Access and sharing of environmental information by stakeholders</p> <p><i>Note: For project purposes “environmental information needs and infrastructure for sharing them” are defined as environmental information needed for the drafting and update or RD and SP strategies</i></p>	The environmental information needs are not identified and the information management infrastructure is inadequate	0		Environmental information relevant to RD and SP in Bulgaria is gathered by many institutions in different formats. Information exchange between institutions is also not always “fluent”. A few institutions publish environmental information on their web sites free of charge or in comprehensible formats, which limits the public access to it.	The Pilot GIS, delivered by the project could be further extended with MRDPW’s own resources to fully operational system for the regional development and spatial planning needs, accessible at all administrative-territorial levels including municipalities and DAs.	Project Outcome 1 and 2
	The environmental information needs are identified but the information management infrastructure is inadequate	1				
	The environmental information is partially available and shared among stakeholders but is not covering all focal areas and/or the information management infrastructure to manage and give information access to the public is limited	2	2	Specialized GIS component was developed to the uniform information system for regional planning of MRDPW, focusing on GEI integration into strategic planning processes	The data, collected from tracking the 7 GE sensitive indicators should be analyzed by the relevant structures (MRDPW and its structures, DAs) in order to allow management responses to the environmental changes during the planning circle. The data behind the indicators also needs to be updated by MRDPW on annual basis.	
	Comprehensive environmental information is available and shared through an adequate information management	3		New set of necessary information layers for the 7 short listed indicators monitoring and evaluation was ensured by the project and training of district administration and ministerial employees how to use them for planning purposes held.	This data could also serve	

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
	infrastructure			The project has supported the collection of new environmental data through GIS layers and the newly developed GE indicators, as well as by making a publication containing contacts and information about publicly available environmental information relevant to the update of strategic planning documents in RD&SP.	for communication with the general public.	
Indicator 6 – Existence of environmental education programmes <i>Note For the project purposes “environmental education programmes” here is defined as educational programs in the cross-cutting area of regional development (RD) and environmental</i>	No environmental education programmes are in place	0		The training programmes developed by the project are significant step in this direction.	Integration of the Master programme into the curriculum of the Institute on Public Administration. (THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, IPA ONLY DOES SHORT TERM TRAININGS, PLEASE REVISE) Sofia University should promote the Master program in Bulgaria and the region of SEE and organize student exchanges with other Bulgarian and EU universities.	Project Outcome 1:
	Environmental education programmes are partially developed and partially delivered	1		The one-day introductory courses and the ten-day advanced training courses on GEI integration were organized and successfully conducted at Sofia University for a number of employees from MRDPW and MoEW and their regional structures, as well as for employees from municipalities, district administrations and member organizations of the Regional Development Councils.		
	Environmental education programmes are fully developed but partially delivered	2	2			
	Comprehensive environmental education	3				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
<i>protection (EP)</i>	programmes exist and are being delivered			The Master programme was accepted into the permanent curricular of the Sofia University.		
	Relevant research results are available for environmental policy development	3				
Indicator 7 – Extent of the linkage between environmental research/science and policy development	No linkage exist between environmental policy development and science/research strategies and programmes	0				
NOT APPLICABLE TO THE PROJECT	Research needs for environmental policy development are identified but are not translated into relevant research strategies and programmes	1				
	Relevant research strategies and programmes for environmental policy development exist but the research information is not responding fully to the policy research needs	2				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
	Relevant research results are available for environmental policy development	3				
Indicator 8 – Extent of inclusion/use of traditional knowledge in environmental decision-making	Traditional knowledge is ignored and not taken into account into relevant participative decision-making processes	0				
NOT APPLICABLE TO THE PROJECT	Traditional knowledge is identified and recognized as important but is not collected and used in relevant participative decision-making processes	1				
	Traditional knowledge is collected but is not used systematically into relevant participative decision-making processes	2				
	Traditional knowledge is collected, used and shared for effective participative decision-making processes	3				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
Total score for CR2			6			
CR 3: Capacities for strategy, policy and legislation development						
Indicator 9 – Extent of the environmental planning and strategy development process <i>Note: For the project purposes “environmental planning” here is defined as the integration of GEI into RD and SP policy development and implementation</i>	The environmental planning and strategy development process is not coordinated and does not produce adequate environmental plans and strategies	0		The amendment of RDA, which requires revision and update of the National RD Strategy, RDPs, DDS and MDPs, created favourable conditions for the project to intervene in this direction. The developed GEI sensitive indicators, Guidelines for the update of DDS with a focus on GEI integration, Pilot GIS, the Methodology and a model ToR for conducting MTE of DDS are key project outputs, all of which contribute to the production of environmentally sound development plans and strategies. MoEW has officially approved that the 7 strategic indicators were included in the monitoring and evaluation scheme, evaluating the impact from the implementation of the RDPs on the environment, besides the indicators and measures prescribed in the initial EO decision by MoEW	Forthcoming MTE and updates of the RDPs, DDSs and MDPs will include tracking the GE indicators and Environmental Assessment. The updates of strategic planning documents are responsibility of the relevant public institutions, whereas the MTEs of those documents, in practice, will be implemented after public procurement procedures by external evaluators.	Project Outcome 1, 2 and 3
	The environmental planning and strategy development process does produce adequate environmental plans and strategies but there are not implemented/used	1				
	Adequate environmental plans and strategies are produced but there are only partially implemented because of funding constraints and/or other problems	2	2			
	The environmental planning and strategy development	3				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
	<p>process is well coordinated by the lead environmental organizations and produces the required environmental plans and strategies; which are being implemented</p>			<p>experts.</p> <p>The pilot update of Plovdiv DDS has created a good practice to integrate GEIs into the planning process using these new tools.</p> <p>Besides that the relevant human capacity and knowledge in MRDPW, DAs and municipalities was improved by job descriptions review and update (only for MRDPW) and the trainings.</p> <p>In the same time, the environmental considerations in the RDPs and strategies are only partially implemented in practice due to the country context – still limited public awareness on GEIs, lack of economic and financial incentives for their integration and conflicts with some major investment objectives. Moreover, there is still a certain gap in how the environmental considerations in these strategic</p>		

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
				planning documents reflect on the public funding (e.g. through OPRD)		
Indicator 10 – Existence of an adequate environmental policy and regulatory frameworks <i>Note: For the project purposes this indicator is understood as the existence of adequate policies and legislature that stimulate the enforcement of the Rio Conventions at the regional and local level.</i>	The environmental policy and regulatory frameworks are insufficient; they do not provide an enabling environment	0		Adequate environmental legislature framework exists to stimulate the application of the application of the Rio Conventions at the regional and local level. The Rio Conventions Project has contributed to the development of adequate skills and tools in implementing authorities within MRDPW, regional structures and municipalities.	The model for cross-cutting GEI integration in planning processes, applied and successfully tested in Plovdiv DA is to be multiplied in the other 27 Districts. The updates of National SD Strategy, RDPs and DDSs are well in progress. The updates of the municipal development plans is upcoming process, where the GEI mainstreaming through the project-developed guidelines and tools should also take place.	Project Outcomes 1 and 2
	Some relevant environmental policies and laws exist but few are implemented and enforced	1				
	Adequate environmental policy and legislation frameworks exist but there are problems in implementing and enforcing them	2	2	The project has provided national, regional and local authorities with tools and models for cross-cutting GEI integration in planning processes. However, at all planning levels (national, regional and local) there are still some gaps in the capacity for practical implementation and application of environmental policy and regulatory frameworks.		
	Adequate policy and legislation frameworks are implemented and provide an adequate enabling environment; a compliance and enforcement mechanism is established	3				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
	and functions					
<p>Indicator 11 – Adequacy of the environmental information available for decision-making</p> <p><i>Note For the project purposes “environmental information” here is defined as is understood as environmental information related to RD and SP.</i></p>	The availability of environmental information for decision-making is lacking	0		The main project contribution is through the selected and developed in details 7 GE sensitive indicators to be used in the planning process and the GIS tool for their practical use.	MRDPW will further develop and institutionalize the internet-based GIS database that will support planning processes at the local and regional level, including planning for the Rio Conventions integration and implementation.	Project Outcomes 1 and 2
	Some environmental information exists but it is not sufficient to support environmental decision-making processes	1		In addition, the Project has directly contributed with ensuring data and GIS layers that support planning processes at the local and regional level		
	Relevant environmental information is made available to environmental decision-makers but the process to update this information is not functioning properly	2	2	A database with most relevant sources of environmental information for decision-making and planning purposes based on GEI integration was developed, published on a CD and currently distributed to interested stakeholders. It is also accessible from project web site.		
	Political and administrative decision-makers obtain and use updated environmental information to make environmental decisions	3		The level and extent of the use of environmental information by the decision-makers needs further improvement beyond the project scope and duration. The elaboration of development scenarios based on		

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
				<p>the detailed environmental data is not well present in the planning process so far.</p> <p>It is still too early in the process to know whether the development plans that have mainstreamed the environmental issues, and planning, will be implemented – or constrained by decisions taken or a lack of resources. However, the mainstreaming of environmental issues into the development plans, rather than leaving them as stand-alone “Environmental Plans” should improve their chances of implementation.</p>		
Total score for CR3			6			
CR 4: Capacities for management and implementation						
Indicator 12 – Existence and mobilization of	The environmental organizations don't have	0		Financial resources to enact environmental policies (and the 3 Rio	The forthcoming mid-term assessments (2010) and	Project Outcomes

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
resources <i>Note: for the purposes of the project this indicator shall explore how the Rio Conventions objectives and their implementation at the regional level is actually happening and financed, as well as how financial resources and technical assistance under the OPs are used.</i>	adequate resources for their programmes and projects and the requirements have not been assessed			Conventions in particular) are generally available under the different OPs. However, the focus of projects submitted by municipalities for OPRD funding is still on infrastructure development. On the other hand, OPRD also does not have many indicators to monitor how funded projects affect the environment. The project has contributed via the training of relevant staff in building the necessary skills and knowledge how to apply and integrate those policies in Regional development and Spatial planning.	final assessments (2013-2014) of the Operational programmes (particularly OPRD) should include a clear set of criteria to evaluate the environmental performance of the funded projects. This should be embedded into the ToRs for the evaluations (developed by MRDPW for OPRD)	1 and 2
	The resource requirements are known but are not being addressed	1				
	The funding sources for these resource requirements are partially identified and the resource requirements are partially addressed	2	2			
	Adequate resources are mobilized and available for the functioning of the lead environmental organizations	3				
Indicator 13 – Availability of required technical skills and technology transfer	The necessary required skills and technology are not available and the needs are not identified	0		The level of skills related to GIS use, Environmental Assessments application, etc. in RD and SP have been increased in MRDPW and its regional structures during the project duration. However, there is no follow-up	Further improvement the skills and the level of GIS use by the experts involved in the RD and SP, particularly at local (municipal) level.	Project Outcomes 1 and 3
	The required skills and technologies needs are identified as well as their	1				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
<p>Note: the project interprets “technological skills” as the capacity to use and apply in everyday work relevant RD and SP technologies like GIS and skills for use of relevant planning and monitoring tools by staff.</p>	sources			operational and accessible by the different planning levels regarding the national system of GIS and other related technologies used for planning purposes.		
	The required skills and technologies are obtained but their access depend on foreign sources	2	2			
	The required skills and technologies are available and there is a national-based mechanism for updating the required skills and for upgrading the technologies	3		The Pilot GIS developed by the project is significant contribution but it needs further development by MRDPW and extending the access to wider circle of decision makers.		
Total score for CR4			4			
CR 5: Capacities to monitor and evaluate						
<p>Indicator 14 – Adequacy of the project/programme monitoring process</p> <p>Note: For the project purposes “monitoring</p>	Irregular project monitoring is being done without an adequate monitoring framework detailing what and how to monitor the particular project or programme	0		<p>The project developed indicators for GEI integration were approved by MRDPW and are use in the forthcoming update of RDPs, DDS and MDPs in 2010 ensuing from the recent changes in the national legislature (i.e. changes in the RDA).</p> <p>After the introduction of the 7 GE</p>	<p>After the pilot introduction of the GE indicators in the update of the Plovdiv DDS, this model will be replicated in the other 27 DAs, as well as in the local (municipal) and regional planning levels.</p>	<p>Project Outcomes 1 and 3</p>
	An adequate resourced monitoring framework is in	1				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
<i>process” has been defined as whether monitoring of RD and SP programs and plans succeeds to capture impact on the global environment</i>	place but project monitoring is irregularly conducted			indicators there is (significantly) improved ability of the responsible institutions to perform monitoring of environmental impacts of plans, programs and projects. Although the Indicators record the level of many actions they are not yet able to fully and effectively capture data on the impact of RD and SP programmes on the global environment.	The environmental assessment of the updated planning documents is also upcoming.	
	Regular participative monitoring of results in being conducted but this information is only partially used by the project/programme implementation team	2	2			
	Monitoring information is produced timely and accurately and is used by the implementation team to learn and possibly to change the course of action	3		At the present moment this information is only partially used for possible improvement of the environmental performance (and limiting the negative environmental impacts) by the plans and strategies. At the moment the monitoring of the OPRD implementation includes only 1 indicator about the environmental impacts.	The MTE of OPRD will be implemented later in year 2010 and is expected to pay some attention to the environmental aspects of the funded projects. However, this process is outside the scope of Rio Conventions Project.	

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
Indicator 15 – Adequacy of the project/programme monitoring and evaluation process <i>Note: For the project purposes “monitoring and evaluation process” has been defined as whether evaluation of RD and SP programs and plans succeeds to capture impact on the global environment</i>	None or ineffective evaluations are being conducted without an adequate evaluation plan; including the necessary resources	0		The project has delivered the GE sensitive indicators in appropriate time to be integrated into midterm and final evaluation of the implementation of RDPs, DDS and MDPs which are scheduled in 2010 and 2013, respectively.	Finalizing the midterm and final evaluations of the RDPs, DDS and MDPs using the GE indicators.	Project Outcomes 1 and 3
	An adequate evaluation plan is in place but evaluation activities are irregularly conducted	1		At the present moment the process is not advanced enough to assess whether the use of the indicators is effective and useful.	Analysis of the effectiveness and usefulness of the indicators is recommended and adjustment of the monitoring and evaluation if necessary.	
	Evaluations are being conducted as per an adequate evaluation plan but the evaluation results are only partially used by the project/programme implementation team	2	2			
	Effective evaluations are conducted timely and accurately and are used by the implementation team and the Agencies and GEF Staff to correct the course of action if needed and to learn for further planning	3				

Capacity Result / Indicator	Staged Indicators	Rating	Score	Comments	Next Steps	Contribution to which Outcome ⁷
	activities					
Total score for CR5			4			
Combined total score for CR1-CR5			28			

Annex 4 – Documents reviewed

July 14th to July 21st, 2010

Team Leader: Martin Hollands

Assistant Consultant: Ventsislav Vassilev

1. Project document of the Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria's Regional Development Process (Rio Conventions Project)
2. Inception report of the project
3. 1st GEF Project Implementation Review (PIR) (Period: 1 July 2006 - 30 June 2007)
4. 2nd GEF Project Implementation Review (PIR) (Period: 1 July 2007 - 30 June 2008)
5. 3rd GEF Project Implementation Review (PIR) (Period: 1 July 2008 - 30 June 2009)
6. 4th GEF Project Implementation Review (PIR) (Period: 1 July 2009 - 30 June 2010)
7. Quarterly project review reports
8. Report from the Mid-Term Evaluation of the project
9. Exit strategy of the project
10. Project Audit Report – 2008
11. Original and revised Project Logical Framework Matrix (Revisions approved by project SC and GEF RTA: Nov, 2007)
12. Capacity Development Monitoring Scorecard Tables for the periods 2006 and 2008
13. Final Assignment Document "Indicators for monitoring global environmental issues integration in the process of regional development in Bulgaria – General description"
14. Technical Passports of 7 Strategic Indicators for Integration of the Environment Global Targets in Regional Planning
15. Final Assignment Document "Identification of Bulgarian Training and Academic Institutions and Their Programs in the Crosscutting Area of Environmental Protection and Regional Development"
16. Final Assignment Document "Research and Identification of Existing On-line Training and other Source Materials on EIA, SEA, Sustainability Appraisal and Natura 2000 assessments"
17. Final Assignment Document "Review of relevant job descriptions and evaluation procedures of employees at the Ministry of regional development and public works"
18. Final list of Directorates and positions at MRDPW to be reviewed
19. Final Assignment Document "Survey on the nationally accessible data sources relevant to the implementation of the Rio Conventions and preparation of information dataset and a guidebook text"
20. Final Assignment Document "Methodology for Measuring MRDPW Financial Contribution Throughout the Implementation of the Rio Conventions Project"

21. Final Assignment Document “Analysis of Domestic GIS Applications and the Identification of Domestic Best Practices”
22. Final Assignment Document “Recommendations for Institutionalization of the process of integration of global environmental objectives in the work of the ministry of regional development and public works”
23. Proposed Criteria for Selection of a District Administration for a Pilot Update of District Development Strategy under the Rio Conventions Project
24. Integration of the environmental issues into the regional development planning and spatial planning in Bulgaria (Core training manual)
25. Annexes to the Core training manual
26. Integration of the environmental issues into the regional development planning and spatial planning in Bulgaria (Short Introductory Course materials)
27. Nationally Accessible Data Sources Relevant to the Implementation of the Rio Conventions in Bulgaria – Database and Explanatory note
28. Publication “Stimulating Public Participation for Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Strategies and Plans for Regional Development and Spatial Planning in Bulgaria”
29. Publication “Partnership and Networking”
30. Publication “Geographical Information Systems: an Effective Informational Tool for Regional Development”
31. Management Response to the MTE
32. Minutes from Advisory Board Meetings
33. Minutes from 1st Demo meeting on Development and pilot-testing of a prototype GIS for Integration of Global Environmental Objectives into Regional Development and Spatial Planning in Bulgaria
34. Methodological Guidelines for the update of the strategies and plans for regional development in Bulgaria – 2009
35. Methodology for Conducting of Midterm Evaluation of District Development Strategies
36. Model Terms of Reference for Conducting of Midterm Evaluation of District Development Strategies
37. Cost-Benefit Study for the Implementation of EU Environmental Legislation in Bulgaria
38. Review of the first opened schemes under Operational Programme Regional Development 2007-2013

Annex 5 - List of interviewed people

Final Evaluation “Rio Conventions Project” Bulgaria

Evaluation mission July 14th to July 21st, 2010

Team Leader: Martin Hollands

Assistant Consultant: Ventsislav Vassilev

No	Name	Position
1.	Mrs. Natalia Dimitrova	Project Manager
2.	Mrs. Irina Zaharieva	National Project Director, MRDPW
3.	Mr. Hristo Stoev	Chief Expert, Environmental Policy Directorate, MoEW
4.	Mrs. Ganya Hristova	Head of Department, MoEW and SC member
5.	Mr. Stelian Dimitrov	Team Leader of the team engaged in the update of Plovdiv District Dev-t Strategy
6.	Mrs. Emiliana Zhivkova	Program Analyst, UNDP and SC member
7.	Mrs. Maria Zlatareva	Officer-in-Charge, UNDP
8.	Mr. Pavel Gospodinov	Consultant, monitored the development of the prototype GIS at MRDPW
10.	Mrs. Maria Novakova	Consultant, developed the GIS “passports” for 5 out of 7 indicators
11.	Mr. Teodor Todorov	Consultant, developed the technical passports for the 7 strategic indicators
12.	Mr. Ljubomir Filipov	Consultant, GAP consult, the developer of the prototype GIS at MRDPW
13.	Mr. Dragan Peshinski	Chief expert, MRDPW
14.	Mrs. Margarita Atanasova	Chief expert, MRDPW
15.	Mr. Petko Kovachev	Director, Foundation Green Policy Institute
16.	Mr. Dragomir Konstantinov	Expert, Foundation Green Policy Institute
17.	Mr. Stamen Tassev	Executive Director, Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum

18.	Mrs. Amelia Genova	Chief expert, Plovdiv District Administration
19.	Mr. Krasimir Trifonov	Chief expert, Plovdiv District Administration
20.	Mrs. Tesdzhan Durmush	Chief expert, Plovdiv District Administration
21.	Mr. Pencho Malinov	Chief expert, Plovdiv District Administration
22.	Mrs. Daniela Simova	Consultant, in charge of updates of the project web site and newsletter
23.	Mrs. Petya Radovanova	Chief Expert, OPRD, MRDPW
24.	Mrs. Veleslava Abadjieva	National Coordinator, GEF small grants program
25.	Mr. Belin Mollov	Advisor, MRDPW

The names are sorted in chronological order of the interviews

Annex 6 to the Final Evaluation Report – List of Reviewers

Final Evaluation “Rio Conventions Project” Bulgaria

July 5th to September 16th, 2010

No	Name	Position
1.	Mrs. Natalia Dimitrova	Project Manager, Rio Conventions Project, Bulgaria
2.	Mrs. Irina Zaharieva	National Project Director, MRDPW, Bulgaria
3.	Mrs. Ganya Hristova	Head of Department, MoEW, Bulgaria
4.	Mr. Hristo Stoev	Chief Expert, Environmental Policies Directorate, MoEW, Bulgaria
5.	Mrs. Emiliana Zhivkova	Program Analyst, UNDP and SC member, Bulgaria
6.	Mrs. Maria Zlatareva	Officer-in-Charge, UNDP, Bulgaria
7.	Mr. Ajiniyaz Reimov	UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre, Bratislava, Slovak Republic
8.	Mr. Kevin Hill	UNDP/GEF Headquarters, NY, USA

Annex 7 - Itinerary of activities of the Final Evaluation Mission

Final Evaluation "Rio Conventions Project" Bulgaria

July 14th to July 21st, 2010

Team Leader: Martin Hollands

Assistant Consultant: Ventsislav Vassilev

Date and Time	Subject	Location
Wednesday, July 14th		
10:00 - 12:00	Arrival of the International Consultant in Sofia	
13:00	Meeting with Mrs. Natalia Dimitrova, PM	MRDPW, project meeting room
14:00		
14:00	Meeting with Mrs. Irina Zaharieva, NPD	MRDPW, project meeting room
15:00		
15:30	Meeting with Mr. Hristo Stoev, Chief Expert, Environmental Policy Directorate, MoEW, participant in the 10-day training course at SU	MoEW, #67 Willem Gladstone Str
16:30		Ext. 6345
16:30	Meeting with Mrs. Ganya Hristova, Head of Department, MoEW and SC member	MoEW, #67 Willem Gladstone Str
17:30		Ext. 6245
Thursday, July 15th		
09:00	Meeting with Prof. Stelian Dimitrov, Team Leader of the team engaged in the update of Plovdiv District Dev-t Strategy and instructor in the 10-day training course for employees from MRDPW and MoEW	MRDPW, project meeting room
10:00		
10:00	Meeting with Emiliana Zhivkova, SC member and Program Analyst, UNDP and Maria Zlatareva, Officer-in-Charge, UNDP	MRDPW, project meeting room
11:00		
11:00		
12:00	Lunch break	
13:00		

Date and Time	Subject	Location
14:00	Meeting with Pavel Gospodinov, consultant, monitored the development of the prototype GIS at MRDPW	MRDPW, project meeting room
15:00		
15:00	Meeting with Mrs. Maria Novakova, consultant, developed the GIS "passports" for 5 out of 7 indicators and the technical assignment for the prototype GIS	MRDPW, project meeting room
16:00		
16:00	Meeting with Mr. Teodor Todorov, consultant, developed the technical passports for the 7 strategic indicators adopted by MRDPW in May, 2009	MRDPW, project meeting room
17:00		
Friday, July 16th		
09:00	Meeting with Mr. Ljubomir Filipov, consultant, GAP consult, the developer of the prototype GIS at MRDPW	MRDPW, project meeting room
10:00		
10:00	Meeting with Mr. Dragan Peshinski, chief expert, MRDPW, participant in a 10-day training course at SU and at 1-day GIS training on the prototype GIS	MRDPW, project meeting room
11:00		
11:00	Meeting with Mrs. Margarita Atanasova, chief expert, MRDPW, participant in a 10-day training course at SU and 1-day GIS training on the prototype GIS. Coordinator: Interreg IVC <i>Regions for Sustainable Change</i> project	MRDPW, project meeting room
12:00		
12:00	Lunch Break	
13:00		
14:00	Meeting with Mr. Petko Kovachev, Director, and Dragomir Konstantinov, expert, Foundation Green Policy Institute, coordinated the development of a brochure and delivery of training on the topic: <i>Stimulating Public Participation for Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Strategies and Plans for Regional Development and Spatial Planning in Bulgaria</i>	MRDPW, project meeting room
15:00		
16:00	Meeting with Mr. Stamen Tassev, Executive Director, Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum	BBLF office, 42 Slavyanska Str., Sofia
17:00		
Saturday, July 17th		

Date and Time	Subject	Location
Sunday, July 18th		
Monday, July 19th		
09:00	Visit to Plovdiv district administration:	Plovdiv DA, #1 Nikola Mushanov Sq., Plovdiv
10:00	9:00 – 10:00 Meeting with Mrs. Amelia Genova and Mr. Krasimir Trifonov, chief experts, Plovdiv District Administration (DA),	
11:00	facilitating the pilot update of the District Development Strategy	
12:00	10:00-11:00 Meeting with Mrs. Tesdzhan Durmush and Mr. Pencho Malinov, chief experts, Plovdiv DA, participants in the 10-day training	
13:00	at Sofia University	
14:00		
15:00		
16:00	Meeting with Mrs. Daniela Simova, consultant, involved in the update of the project web site and newsletter with relevant news regarding	MRDPW, project meeting room
17:00	Rio Conventions	
Tuesday, July 20th		
9:00	Consultants team: preparation of preliminary findings	
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		
13:00		
14:00		
15:00	Meeting with 16:00 Mrs. Petya Radovanova, Chief Expert, OPRD, MRDPW	
16:00		MRDPW, project meeting room

Date and Time	Subject	Location
17:00		
Wednesday, July 21st		
9:00	Meeting with Mrs. Veeslava Abadjieva, National Coordinator, GEF small grants program, involved in the project conception phase and NCSA (2002-2005)	SGP office, #4 Racho Dimchev Str., Sofia
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		
13:00		
14:00	Debriefing for UNDP	MRDPW, project meeting room
15:00		
16:00		
17:00		
Friday, July 21st		
9:00	Participation of the National consultant in the Stakeholder meeting for the presentation of the Update of DDS of Plovdiv District	Plovdiv District Administration, Plovdiv
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		

Annex 8 to the Evaluation Report - Management Response

Evaluation Title: Midterm Project Evaluation

“Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria’s Regional Development Process (Rio Conventions Project)”

MTE Completion Date: 10 December, 2008

Management Response document last updated: July, 2010-09-15

Key issues and Recommendations	Management Response*				Tracking**	
	Response	Key Actions	Time Frame	Responsible Units	Status***	Comments
1.1 It is needed to institutionalize the developed training and to ensure its long term sustainability. In collaboration with Sofia University, the course needs to be promoted within government ministries.	The project agrees that the developed training needs to be further institutionalized in collaboration with Sofia University. As a result of the big interest indicated by public experts from MRDPW, district administrations and municipalities towards the sixty-academic-hour professional training course during the initial offers of the course in 2008, in December 2008, Sofia University finalized the development of a Master Program entitled “Planning and Management of Territorial Systems”, whereby one of the 4 available concentrations is on <i>Integrated Environmental Management</i> . The concentration shall use as core teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translate the Outline of the new Master Program in English to allow input for a wider range of stakeholders. - Obtain feedback from UNDP, MRDPW and MoEW regarding the proposed contents - Obtain, if necessary, letters of support to aide the approval of 	Jan-May, 2009	PMU / UNDP MRDPW / MoEW	Completed	

	and information resources the materials developed in collaboration by CEU and SU in 2008.	the new Master Program by the Academic Board of SU.				
1.2 The revision of job descriptions at MRDPW is more of an internal matter to the ministry. As long as Senior Management at the ministry “owns” this revision, they should approve them and implement them when the revisions are finalized. No particular problem to institutionalize these revisions is anticipated	Although the job descriptions review is seen more as an "internal matter" to MRDPW by the MTE team, PMU considers that it is important that UNDP submit the developed recommendations and indicators through an official letter to the Ministry in order to ensure their long-term institutionalization.	- Official proposal MRDPW to update relevant job descriptions as per the project developed Recommendations.	Jan-April, 2009	PMU / UNDP	Completed	34 Job descriptions updated by 2010 at “Strategic Regional Development Planning and Administrative-Territorial Organization”

<p>1.3. Institutionalization of achievements under the activity to identify a set of indicators is critical for its long-term sustainability and its long-term impact. Following the identification of the first set of indicators due before the end of 2008, the project should focus on who (custodian organisation), when, where and how these indicators will be sustained in the long-term.</p>	<p>the project plans the following steps to be undertaken:: i) organizing a 2nd working meeting of the indicators work group; ii) convening an extraordinary meeting of the project SC to discuss and approve the final version of the indicators proposed by the experts group; iii) official introduction of the indicators to MRDPW with a proposal to be included in the Methodological Guidelines (MG) for DAs and municipalities prepared by the Ministry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold 2nd expert meetign on indicators on 30 Jan, 2009 - Convene an extraordinary SC meeting for approving the final short list of indicators - Official proposal to MRDPW to adopt the indicators. 	<p>Jan-April, 2009</p>	<p>PMU/ UNDP SC MRDPW</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The 2nd expert meeting on the indicators was held as scheduled. The final short list of indicators was sent to the SC member via email for final comments and there were no objections. Subsequently the indicators were officially approved on a SC meeting. MRDPW officially adopted the indicators as part of their Methodological Guidelines on 20 May, 2009.</p>
<p>1.4 The soon-coming demonstration (Outcome 33) should emphasize institutionalization and long-term sustainability from the outset of this activity (i.e. the testing of the project proposed and MRDPW approved set of indicators through municipal and regional development plans).</p>	<p>Once approved by MRDPW and included in the MG, the "short" list of indicators shall be integrated in the Ministry developed and project support GIS system and shall be used by municipalities and DAs for monitoring of Rio Conventions implementation at the local and regional level. Furthermore, the ToRs that shall be developed for the update of municipal development plans under project Outcome 3 shall contain an explicit requirement to use those indicators for monitoring and evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include explicit requirement in the GIS assignment to be funded under the project to provide for proper information layers that will allow the monitoring of the approved indicators - Include explicit requirement in the 	<p>June-Dec, 2009</p>	<p>PMU/UNDP MRDPW</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Proper information layers were supplied and the prototype GIS was developed to include 5 out of the 7 indicators.</p> <p>The Methodological Guidelines of MRDPW for update of RDPs, DDS, MDPs contains an explicit requirement to apply the approved indicators for</p>

	purposes.	ToR for the update of MDPs to apply the approved indicators for monitoring and evaluation purposes.				monitoring and evaluation purposes
1.5. As part of emphasizing the LT sustainability, the project should also position itself to influence the related Operational Programmes such as OPRD and OPE. It should seek that these operational programmes lay out the conditions necessary to integrate the global environmental obligations into development plans and projects.	During the pending midterm evaluations of the OPs in 2009, PMU shall propose to MRDPW and MoEW that are in charge of respectively, OPRD and OPE, to include the project proposed indicators in the Guidelines to Applicants soliciting funding for projects under the two OPs so that they are used for monitoring and evaluation of the funded projects.	- Official proposal to OPRD and OPE to include the project proposed indicators in Guidelines to Applicants during their midterm review.	April - June, 2009	PMU/UNDP MRDPW/MoEW	Completed	The official proposal was sent to OPRD once in 2009 and once in 2010 (with the change of new government), together with technical passports of the 7 indicators

<p>2. It is recommended to promote the 60-hours training programme within the public sector, the civil society and the private sector. The project should focus on creating a demand for this course. As the recommendation above, the project needs to explore if there are some possibilities with IPAEI and individual ministries/agencies such as Health, Forestry, mining, energy, tourism, etc. It should also explore the possibility with the private sector and civil society. The idea would be to develop a demand for the course after developing the “supply” of this 60-hours course.</p>	<p>PMU agrees that the demand for the SU-CEU developed training course should be expanded to other potential target groups (e.g. CSOs, private sector and other public sector bodies) and sustained over time. First, since the start of 2009 the project already went beyond the targeted 130 public employees from MoEW and MRDPW to be trained and started offering the CEU-SU developed Introductory course to municipal and DAs experts in the 28 DA centers in Bulgaria. PMU expects that additional 400 public officials from regional and local governments will go through the short-term training. Second, PMU shall use every public event organized by the project or where a project team member is present to advertise the introductory and core course options. Third, it shall actively aide SU in advertising the developed training opportunities (short, midterm and Master course) through supporting the development of a dedicated web site on SU server: http://www.gis.gea.uni-sofia.bg/rioconventions/. Finally, PMU through the support of MRDPW and UNDP, shall officially approach IPAEI with a proposal to include the developed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize and conduct one-day training courses in at least 20 DAs. - Prepare a leaflet about the Introductory and Core course and distribute it at public evetns. - Initiate a short-term assignment to support the development of a speacially dedicated web site on SU server regarding the developed trainings. - Official proposal to IPAEI to include the SU-CEU developed and tested one-day training course in its 	<p>Jan - Dec 2009</p>	<p>PMU/ UNDP Sofia University MRDPW</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>IPA proposal developed and to be submitted in Sept 2010</p>
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	Introductory course on GEI integration in its 2010 catalogue of courses offered to public employees.	2010 Catalogue of courses for public officials.				
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<p>3. It is recommended to start the demonstration (outcome #3) as soon as possible. It will take time to select the region/municipality and any slippage in the planned timing would reduce the time at the end to learn lessons, disseminate the results and replicate any methods and models developed through the demonstration. Additionally, the findings from other UNDP/GEF projects should be integrated as much as possible in this activity, such as Rhodope project, SLM project developed “<i>Practical Guidelines for the Integration of the SLM policy at the Local Level and Within the Municipal Development Plans 2007-2013</i>” and EnEffect project elaborated “<i>Guidelines for energy efficient public buildings to be incorporated into municipal energy plans and investment programmes</i>”.</p>	<p>The project plans to convene an extraordinary SC meeting in February or March 2009, after the 2nd expert group meeting on the indicators, to obtain the official SC approval for the project proposed indicators. During that meeting, PMU shall also request from SC members to agree on the criteria, according to which, the pilot (demonstration regions) for testing the indicators in their strategic planning documents shall be selected. In addition, PMU shall propose to SC members to establish a special working group to oversee the demonstration component and to approve its members. The project shall try as much as possible to benefit from the experience of other GEF/UNDP and involve municipalities from their target regions under Outcome 3 of the project to continue and strengthen UNDP legacy in those regions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a list of contacts of potential municipalities where other projects from UNDP env. portfolio have worked (SLM, Rhodope, EnEffect). - Organize and convene extraordinary SC meeting. - Develop and vote criteria for selection of municipalities for the demonstration component of the project. - Practical demo of the project developed indicators and GIS via the pilot and development of a 	<p>Feb-April, 2009</p>	<p>PMU / SC</p>	<p>All activities completed</p>	<p>Note to the file form 10 Dec. 2009 regarding changes in the pilot signed by NPD and UNDP PA (copy provided to the FE team)</p>
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		replication plan				
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<p>4. It is recommended a stronger partnership to implement the demonstration. One of the first task should be to <i>set-up a working group</i> to oversee the implementation of the demonstration (outcome #3), including representatives of key national institutions such as MRDPW, MOEW, EEA but also key representatives from the district and municipal level such as Governors, Mayors, Planners, Environmental Officers, etc. This committee should vet the process, the TOR, the selection of any consultant to support the development of plans, strategies, etc. and also should monitor the progress made by the demonstration and act as needed to provide an enabling environment for the implementation of the demonstration.</p>	<p>PMU agrees that the demonstration component of the project should be implemented in a wider partnership of stakeholders. After the SC approves the final list of indicators that shall be officially submitted to MRDPW with a proposal to be included in the Methodological Guidelines for the update strategic planning documents, PMU shall form a working group to support the selection of pilot municipalities in accordance with SC approved criteria for selection and oversee the demonstration process. The working group shall be comprised of representatives from NGOs, DAs, municipalities, MRDPW and MoEW that are either members of the project AB or have participated in other project activities or trainings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a list of potential members in the working group and send it to SC members for approval and comments. - Hold a meeting of the WG and agree on procedures for its work. - Once the demonstration has started, send regular email updates to WG members regarding the progress of pilot activities and solicit their feedback and intervention. 	<p>March, 2009 - March, 2010</p>	<p>PMU / SC WG members</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The already established expert group on indicators used to develop the criteria for the pilot and oversee the process.</p>
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<p>5. It is recommended to coincide the demonstration/selection of one pilot region with the current need for updating regional development plans due to the new Law that entered into force in September 2008. The MRDPW is now planning the review of these 6 plans; a strong opportunity exists for the project to support one update (more if possible) in close collaboration with MRDPW, as well as the related district strategies and some municipal plans under this same regional development plan.</p>	<p>PMU shall cooperate with MRDPW to develop criteria for selection of one pilot planning region (as per Main ProDoc) where the final short list of Ministry approved indicators for GEI integration can be pilot tested and used for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The selection of both the planning region and municipalities can only begin once the short list of indicators are approved by MRDPW and included in their Methodological Guidelines and there is a functional GIS system with the necessary information layers. To this respect, PMU has already initiated a preparatory assignment which shall identify what GIS data is available at the Ministry and recommend what additional layers need to be purchased and how to be structured in order to support the Rio Conventions implementation in RD&SP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish and agree with MRDPW criteria for selection of the pilot planning region. - Support the development of ToR and updating the RDP of the selected planning region - Support the development of a specialized GIS component on GEI integration. - Provide training to public experts from the selected pilot region to apply the specialized GIS. 	<p>March, 2009 - March, 2010</p>	<p>PMU/MRDPW</p>	<p>Completed</p>	
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<p>6. It is recommended that the project supports the review and the revision of the Methodological guidelines (currently underway) for regional development planning to ensure that all project findings so far are integrated into these guidelines. It is an important milestone for mainstreaming the conventions obligations into the formulation and implementation of regional and local development plans. Following the new Law on Regional Development (LRD), these guidelines need to be revised; again this is an excellent opportunity for the project to institutionalize these obligations into the official methodological guidelines to produce these local development plans.</p>	<p>PMU agrees that it is of crucial importance to support MRDPW in the planned revision of the Methodological Guidelines for update of strategic planning documents in accordance with the new LRD. Therefore, once approved by SC and expert working group the project developed indicators shall be officially sent by UNDP to MRDPW to be included in the Guidelines. In addition, major findings and recommendations from the on-going assignment on collection of background data and information to support MRDPW in establishing a prototype GIS for GEI integration shall be proposed for inclusion in the Guidelines in order to assure that the project developed GIS component supporting Rio Conventions implementation shall be widely used for planning, monitoring and evaluation by regions, DAs and municipalities</p>	<p>- Assist MRDPW in including major findings from project assignments on indicators and prototype GIS development in the Methodological Guidelines</p> <p>- If necessary, initiate a short-term assignment for drafting the relevant sections in the Guidelines.</p>	<p>March - June 2009</p>	<p>PMU / UNDP MRDPW</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Guidelines approved in May 2009</p>
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<p>7. It is recommended to prepare an exit plan for the end of the project. An initial review of the project finances indicates that it is the limiting factor to end the project and not the time; i.e. the project may run out of money before its official ending date. Currently, despite a slower than anticipated start-up phase, the project should be able to deliver its expected results within the timeframe allocated. However, if the exit plan indicates that the budget would not be completely spent within this timeframe, it is recommended a corresponding time extension to increase the lessons learned and dissemination of project achievements after the completion of the demonstration.</p>	<p>PMU agrees that the development of an exit plan is an important tool for assuring the durability of project results after its official completion. Such a plan shall be developed, at least 6 months before the official project end (in June 2010) and widely discussed with SC and AB members, as well as other relevant stakeholders, as necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a draft exit plan - Organize a SC and AB meetings to discuss the draft exit plan with wide group of stakeholders - Finalize the exit plan by incorporating their input. 	<p>Sept - Dec, 2009</p>	<p>PMU / SC / AB</p>	<p>Completed</p>	
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<p>8. In parallel to the need for institutionalization of the achievements on the identification of indicators (see recommendation #1), it is recommended that this activity be reviewed as soon as possible and a work plan to complete the activity be drafted and circulated to PSC members. It is recommended to set-up a small working group to oversee the initiative made up of members from MRDPW, MOEW, National Statistical Institute and possibly other key Stakeholders. The emphasis for this working group should be less on expertise and more on monitoring and policy. As per of this review, it is also recommended to link this initiative with the UNECE "Environment for Europe" process, particularly the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA)[1].</p>	<p>As already indicated in point 1.3 and 5 above, PMU has already developed a strategy how to ensure the SC members involvement in the process of approval of project identified indicators and how to establish a working group to oversee the indicators application during and after the process of selecting a pilot regional development plan and a couple of municipal development plans. In addition, the members of the already established working group on indicators (from Cadastre Agency, NSI, BAS, Executive Env. Agency, etc.) shall be regularly updated regarding the process of the indicators' pilot-testing in strategic planning documents and the prototype GIS. Finally, the project shall attempt to establish contacts with Bulgaria's representative in UNECE "Environment for Europe" Process and update them on the outcome of the approval and pilot-testing of the indicators.</p>	<p>- Regularly update and solicit input from the members of the WG on indicators regarding their pilot-testing and integration in MRDPW prototype GIS</p> <p>- Establish contacts with UNECE "Environment for Europe" representatives from Bulgaria and update them on the pilot-testing of the indicators in strategic planning documents and the MRDPW prototype GIS.</p>	<p>March, 2009 - March, 2010</p>	<p>PMU / SC WG on indicators</p>	<p>Partially completed</p>	<p>It turned out that no meeting under UNECE "Environment for Europe" is planned for 2010.</p>
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<p>9. As it is planned under output 2.2, it is recommended to plan a regional workshop/conference in the latter part of the project to showcase results and provide networking opportunities for replication of these results in Bulgaria and in the region. It should be organized about 6 months before the end of the project to give the project management team sufficient time for any follow up actions that may arise from the event. Knowledge products should be prepared in advance based on the project lessons learned. In addition to national participants, invitations should be extended to representatives from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus region involved in regional development planning and environmental monitoring. One avenue to explore for the organization of such as forum, would be the possibility to partner with the UNECE "Environment for Europe" process.</p>	<p>The planning of such a workshop was also discussed during a meeting held in Bratislava on 30 Jan, 2008 between PM and RTA at UNDP, Bratislava. The RTA had recommended that the project organized a final meeting with a regional character so that relevant stakeholders and participants are invited from SEE and NIS countries where other GEF CD projects are/or will be implemented. RTA also stated that such an event might be co-organized with UNDP Bratislava. In addition, CEU and SU universities have expressed interested to be co-organizers of a thematic workshop dedicated to the developed training programme and collaborate with the project in identification of appropriate participants and speakers from the academic circles. PMU also agrees with the proposal to explore opportunities to combine the final workshop or to organize a separate side event during the next UNECE EfE Ministerial conference or other relevant EfE event, if such events are envisaged till the project end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the schedule for the next Ministerial Conference or other EfE taking place before April, 2010 - Discuss with UNDP CO and UNDP Bratislava the format, agenda and need for additional funding for such an event. - Agree on date, participants and venue. - Organize a final conference in Bulgaria and a side event during the next EfE Ministerial Conference or a combination of both. 	<p>Sept, 2009 - April, 2010</p>	<p>PMU / UNDP UNDP Bratislava SU / CEU</p>	<p>Not completed</p>	<p>Funding was not provided by UNDP RC in Bratislava to organize a regional event and next EfE Ministerial conference is scheduled for 2011.</p>
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<p>10. It is recommended to mobilize the AB with three additional meetings between now and the end of project since project SC fulfills more a role of a management committee as opposed to a role of advising, networking and disseminating results. Each meeting could focus on a particular topic such as (1) indicators; (2) training in integrating Rio Conventions obligations into policies and programmes; and (3) lessons learned from the demonstration.</p>	<p>The project agrees with this recommendations and envisages to organize at least 3 more AB meetings between the midterm and project end. The project agrees with the proposed topics 1 and 3 for key themes to be discussed during AB meetings. As already indicated in point 7 above, an additional topic for AB discussion will be the 1st draft of project exit plan in order to ensure wide stakeholder participation and discussion in this process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize 2nd AB meeting by March 2009 to discuss progress on indicators. - Organize 3rd AB meeting by Oct 2009 to discuss 1st draft of project exit plan - Organize 4th AB meeting by March 2010 to discuss results from the demo. 	<p>March, 2009 - March, 2010</p>	<p>PMU/ AB</p>	<p>Partially completed</p>	<p>Only 1 ABM was organized in 2009 and 1 more to come in Sept 2010 where the results from the Demo shall be presented and discussed.</p> <p>The Exit plan was developed in 2010 and discussed only with SC members, but it will be also discussed at the last ABM in Sept. 2010</p>
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*Unit(s) assigned to be responsible for the preparation of a management response (MR) will fill the columns under the management response section.

**Unit(s) assigned to be responsible for the preparation of a MR will be updating the implementation status (IS). Assigned with an oversight function; monitors and verifies

*****Status of Implementation:** Completed, Partially Completed, Pending.

Annex 9

Post Training Follow Up Survey for Participants of the Rio Conventions Training on Mainstreaming Environmental Issues into Development Planning

1. Questionnaire

In order to help us constantly improve the quality, relevance and effectiveness of our training it is important for us to get feedback from participants.

As well as doing this at the end of each training course we think it is important to follow up a few months later to find out whether the course has changed the way tasks are carried out in the workplace.

We know that you are very busy but would appreciate you giving us 15 minutes of your time to assist with this.

Could you please answer the following questions:

	Low 1	2	Med 3	4	High 5
Do you think the training was effective in raising participants general awareness and understanding of environmental issues ?					
Are there aspects of your work that you now think about differently as a result of the training ?					
If so can you give examples ?					
Did the training provide you with specific tools or techniques that could be used in your work ?					
If so could you give examples.					

For each could you score on the right how much you have been able to use them					
1.					
2.					
3.					
Could you tell us the most important task(s) in your work that you now do differently because of the training ?	How do you do it differently ?				
Could you tell us of any specific constraints that have made it hard to apply the understanding or techniques from the course in your work ?					
Could you tell us about any specific opportunities there have been for applying the understanding, or techniques, from the course in your work ?					
Do you have any suggestions for improving the training to make it easier to apply what you learn in the work-place ?					
Do you have any suggestions for follow-up courses that would further in mainstreaming Environmental Issues in Development Planning ?					
Name (optional)					
Organization					
Training course / date					

2. Summary of the Preliminary Inquiry Results

10 - days Course:

Question:	Participant:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Average:
Do you think the training was effective in raising participants' general awareness and understanding of environmental issues?	Score: 1-Low to 5-High	5	3	5	4	5	4	2	4	5	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4.33
Are there aspects of your work that you now think about differently as a result of the training?	Score: 1-Low to 5-High	3	4	5	3	4	5	2	3	5	4	3	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4.00
Did the training provide you with specific tools or techniques that could be used in your work?	Score: 1-Low to 5-High	5	3	5	3	4	3	3	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	3	4	3	5	4.00

1 day Course:

Question:	Participant:	1	2	3	4	5	Average:
Do you think the training was effective in raising participants' general awareness and understanding of environmental issues?	Score: 1-Low to 5-High	3	3	3	4	3	3.20
Are there aspects of your work that you now think about differently as a result of the training?	Score: 1-Low to 5-High	3	2	3	4	2	2.80
Did the training provide you with specific tools or techniques that could be used in your work ?	Score: 1-Low to 5-High	2	2	3	3	4	2.80

Scale: 1 to 5, where 1 = low and 5 = high satisfaction