

TERMINAL EVALUATION (TE) OF THE INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-
BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND
MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT

GEF PROJECT ID 4559/PIMS 4816

EVALUATION TIME FRAME: AUGUST – DECEMBER 2022

REGION AND COUNTRY INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT: AFRICA,
ERITREA

GEF FOCAL AREA OBJECTIVE: GEF BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIC
OBJECTIVE ONE (IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEMS)

EXECUTING PARTNER:

MINISTRY OF LAND, WATER AND ENVIRONMENT OF GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE OF
ERITREA (GOSE)

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER: FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

RESPONSIBLE PARTNERS: MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND OF
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DISCLAIMER

This document represents the analysis of the author (Maria Onestini) and does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the UNDP nor other UN agencies, governments nor any individual or other institutions involved in this project.

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III. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AED	Agricultural Extension Department
AF	Adaptation Fund
CITES	Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species
CLMP	Community and Landscape Management Project
COMAT	Coastal Marine Technology
DOE	Department of Environment
DOL	Department of Land
ECMIB	Eritrean Coastal, Marine Island Biodiversity
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FWA	Forestry and Wildlife Authority
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoSE	Government of the State of Eritrea
HAC	Hamelmallo Agricultural College
ICAM	Integrated Coastal Area Management
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoLWE	Ministry of Land, Water and Environment
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PERA	Proclamation for the Establishment of Regional Administration
SIP	Strategic Investment Program
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WRD	Water Resources Department

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The goal of the *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project*¹ in Eritrea was to ensure the integrity of Eritrea's diverse ecosystems to secure the viability of the nation's globally significant biodiversity. The project objective was to create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system. This objective was planned to be achieved through three expected outcomes:

- *Outcome 1: Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system*
- *Outcome 2: Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system*
- *Outcome 3: Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas.*

The Project is mainly located within Northern Red Sea and Southern Red Sea zobas with its buffer zones interfacing with Maekel and Anseba regions. The duration of the intervention was planned to be of 84 months. It had a planned total budget of US\$ 16,328,000 allotted as follows: GEF Trust Fund (US\$ 5.878 million), UNDP Regular Resources (US\$ 3 million), Government of the State of Eritrea (in cash US\$ 4.05million and in-kind US\$ 3.4million). The project is aligned with UNDP Country Programming Document (CPD) for the State of Eritrea 2013-2016 anchored on the GOSE-UN Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF) of 2013/2016 on environmental sustainability aligned with the national development priorities in terms of National capacity development; Sustainable livelihoods; and Environmental sustainability

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Although conceptually proper, project design was too ambitious and it did fully not consider the capacity of the country to implement, nor the in – country capacity of absorption of processes and outputs. And, although design had a general strategic outlook, some of the tools (such as indicators) were not specific or robust enough to capture several aspects of change/results.

The Project faced crucial numbers of management challenges. Mainly the lack of a project management unit, the lack of dedicated staff, and the lack of proactive decision – making structures (such as boards, committees, etc.). The resistance by government to include adequate expertise (from national and international consultants for instance) and to work with key stakeholders has greatly hindered the implementation processes and the technical results that were achieved.

Monitoring and evaluation processes were ineffectual since they did not occur at the expected level and were not of good quality for the most part, reporting was not results oriented. Most importantly—when monitoring took place in a proper manner such as with midterm review or

¹ Also known as the Protected Area Project or the Eritrea National Protected Areas Network Project.

in some aspects of the Project Implementation Reports, the results of these exercises were not adopted to properly channel implementation and correct the course regarding different sorts of issues.

Individual successful pilots were implemented to some degree, effectively working with local stakeholders. While, also, several technical studies and plans were developed that, if they would have had uptake, they could have aided in setting up an institutional and policy framework to deal with sustainable management issues within a protected areas agenda in Eritrea.

In summary, the expected outcomes and objectives were not achieved as planned. Either totally not attained or only very partially achieved.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

After over nine years of implementation (from the Project Document signing date to this evaluation process), the *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project* in Eritrea has left a key number of conclusions. The attainment of results is not commensurate with the resources (not only funds but also time) that was inputted into this intervention. The Project was greatly delayed in its first stages of implementation and it was virtually stalled until a few months ago. Baseline studies, plans and guidelines for biodiversity management, for protected areas' institutional frameworks and policies, demarcations of PA, etc., were attained. Yet they were not taken up by Government and no discernible changes in institutional framework and in policies took place. Pilot testimonial interventions to showcase sustainable land management and water management as well as forestry practices were also developed. Yet, no upscaling of these took place.

It is noted that UNDP at several levels invested a lot of time and effort trying to negotiate with government to take several steps to improve implementation and the enabling environment for implementation, including suggesting to directly execute some of the project activities. However, none of this was possible. The value added of UNDP, most unfortunately, did not show through as it could have had, either due to governmental resistance or to lack of leverage/misinterpretation of UNDP roles in these sorts of endeavours.

Protected areas have progressed in terms of international knowledge and practice, moving from aspects which were only preservationist to concepts which very much consider the sustainable development factors that these involve and the benefits that they can provide to local populations in the search for equity. The latter are very much keen concepts that should be included in further programming considering the dire needs and issues (including sustainable land management, forestry integrated management, and marine / coastal ecosystem management) that protected areas administration can contextually provide to confront these matters in an integrated and equitable manner.

By all accounts, the greatest problem with the Project has been its lack of proper decision-making and guidance structures, and very importantly, the lack of a functional project management unit. This is not a problem exclusively with this project, nevertheless. All country-wide, CPD, and

even other individual project's assessments testify that this is a country – wide issue in Eritrea. Therefore, this is a country – wide pattern that needs to be considered fully if and when other projects are to be implemented in Eritrea in this field. It must also, aligned with this, be contemplated that these individual project issues affect the portfolio as a whole and inductive approach should be taken to better implement projects that benefit Eritrea and Eritrean society in the future.

SYNTHESIS OF THE KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- A country's capacity or lack of capacity to implement a complex project is a key factor in implementation, and in obtaining or not concrete sustainable results.
- If it is not clear to a country that several matters in implementation of projects, and that they sign on to are not optional, that they are requisites by the donor, then the country might not be engaged by UNDP.
- Gender strategies if not developed early on in an inception stage they will not guide gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process. Gender mainstreaming is not to be understood just as participation but a tool for provoking equality.
- Indicators should be conceived not only as a guide to tallying achievements, but also as a driver to promote change. Therefore, they should be clearly results-oriented and not exclusively based on activities.
- A project that integrates fully knowledge and capacity building in key sustainable development issues to a particular country is not only greatly more relevant than one that does not, it also engenders conditions for the intervention to obtain better, more equitable, and sustainable results.
- Although pilot interventions may have intrinsic value, without proper measures to upscale, replicate and otherwise implement results on a broader scale as applicable, they will remain just as testimonial activities.
- Without the proper operational and technical architecture (managerial, decision-making, technical) a project is fated for failings.
- Projects that do not impel an implementation agency's value added dissipate intrinsic worth of an intervention and risk failings as well as diminish a project's value for money principles.

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT-
TERMINAL EVALUATION

TABLE 1: EVALUATION RATINGS TABLE FOR THE PROJECT

1. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	
M&E design at entry	S
M&E Plan Implementation	HU
Overall Quality of M&E	U
2. Implementing Agencies (IAs) Implementation & Executing Agency (EA)	
Execution	
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	MU
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	HU
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	U
3. Assessment of Outcomes	
Relevance	S
Effectiveness	U
Efficiency	HU
Overall Project Outcome Rating	U
4. Sustainability	
Financial sustainability	UA
Socio-political sustainability	UA
Institutional framework and governance sustainability	UA
Environmental sustainability	UA
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	UA

Note: Accounts of these ratings are imbedded in this report's narrative in each of the pertinent sections. See Annex 2: Rating Scales for rankings definitions.

TABLE 2: RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY TABLE

Recommendations are provided for future programming since –most evidently—this project has ended, and are relevant not only for the country but also for different contexts.² The recommendations for future programming are oriented to the donor and to UNDP as GEF – implementing agency.

Rec #	TE Recommendation
1	From inception of a project there should be common understanding on GEF requirements, indicating to a country that these matters are not optional, they are prerequisites that they sign on to them as part of a partnership.
2	A country's capacity or lack of capacity to implement a complex project are key factors in implementation, and in obtaining or not concrete sustainable results. There should be efforts and deep focus on capacity building for implementation, in: robust preparation, trainings on implementation modality, institutional arrangements, financial reporting, monitoring.
3	Conceptual design of a project should be greatly attuned to a country's capacity to implement, making sure a needs assessment is accompanied by a capacity assessment to implement and manage a project.
4	It should be made clear to a project that key components such as project management units, true decision-making structures, technical advisory services and /or technical staffing are not optional for these sorts of projects.
5	A project should in an unnegotiable manner, have the proper structures and technical/administrative as well as decision-making capacity to implement and obtain outputs in the search of results that are sustainable and equitable.
6	When a country presents resistance to having a project management team due to a belief that this would create a cadre of privileged civil servants, donor and implementing agency should work with the particular country to debunk this belief.
7	Conceptual design should also incorporate what are crucial issues in sustainable development in a particular country, and what is part of true political will in obtaining results.
8	Gender mainstreaming should be a part of planning and not added in later stages. Activities and projects should not only promote women's participation but should promote gender equity and women's empowerment.
9	When a project does not advance and has very little to show after years of implementation, and/or it is stalled, workable actionable tools should be taken to channel execution to obtain results.
10	When projects do not attain expected results, but do attain some products/outputs, every effort should be made to insert these in further programming or in other projects in order not to lose these outputs,
11	When accrued analysis of country programming, portfolio, and of other individual projects indicates that there is a generic issue with implementing projects within a particular country, other modes of implementation need to be explored.
12	When the types of limitations are flagged, especially regarding engagement with governments, a broader portfolio approach should underline engagement.

² This is a summary of the full recommendations set available in Section 5 of this report.

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE TERMINAL EVALUATION

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION

The varied purposes of evaluation exercises include monitoring results, the processes that went into achieving them or not, as well as assessing effects/impacts and promoting accountability. This evaluation centres, therefore, upon valuating the outcomes, outputs, products, and processes attained by the *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project in Eritrea*.

The specific objectives of the evaluation have been to determine if and how project results were achieved, and to draw useful lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project as well as to aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP / GEF programming. Lastly, this exercise follows general objectives of these sorts of evaluations which have as an overall purpose to assemble lessons learned and best practices to aid projects' processes in the future.

EVALUATION SCOPE

This final evaluation has primarily focused on assessing the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and relevance of the project considering the accomplished outcomes, objectives, and effects. It includes the following scope:

- Assess progress towards achieving project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document.
- Assess signs of project success or failure.
- Review the project's strategy considering its sustainability risks.

The evaluation has focused upon the outcomes, outputs, products and processes achieved or with a perspective of being achieved. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to determine if and how project results were achieved, and to draw useful lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project as well as aid in overall enhancement of future programming. That is, this assessment follows general objectives of these sorts of evaluations which have as a purpose assembling lessons learned and best practices to aid projects' processes in the future. The varied purposes of evaluation exercises include monitoring results as well as effects/impacts and promote accountability.

The approach for the evaluation of the *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project* in Eritrea has been determined mainly by the Terms of Reference (ToR) for this assignment and it follows methods and approaches as stated in UNDP guidelines and manuals, relevant tools, and other relevant UNDP guidance materials, including the *Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects* (of June 2020), and other UNEG directions. The analysis entails evaluating distinct project stages and aspects including design and formulation, implementation, results, and the involvement of stakeholders in the project's processes and

activities. It has been carried out following a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with governments' counterparts, project team, UNDP, and other key stakeholders.

The time scope of the final evaluation is for the whole project as such, including its planned implementation period together with the extension period(s) granted. It is significant to point out that the findings, rankings, lessons learned and best practices respond to analysis of the project as a whole. That is, the scope of this evaluation is the project in its entirety.

METHODOLOGY

To carry out this evaluation exercise several data collection tools for analysing information from the principles of results-based evaluation (including relevance, ownership, efficiency and effectiveness, sustainability) were used. Following UNDP/GEF guidelines, the relevant areas of the project were evaluated according to performance criteria and prospects of sustainability with ratings as summarized in the table found in annexes (Annex 2: Rating Scales)

The tools chosen for the evaluation, with a mixture of primary and secondary data as well as a combination of quantitative and qualitative material, were selected to provide a spectrum of information and to validate findings. These methods allowed for in-depth exploration and yielded information that facilitated understanding of observed changes in outcomes and outputs (both intended and unintended) and the factors that contributed to the achievements or lack of accomplishments. Stakeholders were identified at onset and from inception of the evaluation process engagement was sought with different types of stakeholders. There was engagement with all of types of stakeholders therefore.³

Gender-sensitive methodologies and tools were used, as possible within this project's context. These were applied also in providing an analysis of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment as part of the Project and an assessment of overall women's participation in planning and executing this intervention.

Regarding specific methodologies to gather assessment information, the following tools and methods were used:

- *Document analysis.* In depth analysis of documentation was carried out. The analysis examined documents prepared during the planning and in the implementation phases of the Project. A list of documents consulted is found in annexes (Annex 9: List of consulted documents).
- *Key informant interviews:* Interviews were implemented through a series of open and semi-open questions raised to stakeholders directly and indirectly involved with the Project. These interviews and site visits were carried out by the national consultant (who was also the National Consultant hired by the Project to deliver Outputs 1.1-1.6). Stakeholders to interview were chosen to be the key actors involved. Annexes contains a list of national and international level stakeholders contacted (see Annex 8: List of national / international consulted stakeholders). The

³ In annexes there is a list of those stakeholders that engaged with this terminal evaluation.

team leader developed protocols for interviews and for direct observation to be applied by the national evaluator in field site visits (these are found in annexes).

An early instrument developed for this process was an evaluation matrix. This matrix guided the data collection process and, as the evaluation proceeded, the matrix was used to collect and present data obtained from various sources that relate to relevant evaluation criteria and questions. This tool was developed not only as a guide for systematizing data collection but also to make the evaluation process transparent. The matrix contains Evaluative Criteria Questions (that is, questions and sub questions related to each of the evaluation criteria enclosed in the evaluation); Indicators; Sources; and Methodology.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The approach and methods used were implemented in a manner as to promote reflection and learning through the evaluation process. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods (as indicated above, were used, such as: document analysis, interviews (applied online and through site visits), dialogues as well as direct observation.

Data collection, therefore, was carried out as planned with document harnessing (when and if these were made available) and with interviews and direct observation. Data collection of documents was somewhat deficient since a number of documents were either not made available to the evaluation, some of them were made available later in the evaluation processes than indicated in the terms of reference, and/or because simply the Project did not produce a number of documents and monitoring tools as specified in guidance documentation. The international consultant carried out interviews with UNDP staff (at the Country Office as well as at the regional level). The national consultant conducted field missions to three administrative zones: Northern Red Sea, Maekel and Anseba regions. The two sites chosen for the field visits represent ecosystem variety located in the highlands and coastal. Therefore, they include a variety of areas with key species and natural habitats, areas where land degradation demonstrates that this is a key challenge for the country's sustainable development, and a variety of marine as well as terrestrial ecosystems. When it was difficult to reach some of the sites in person, in order to increase representatively of stakeholders in this process, the local communities were consulted via phone calls with selected community members and extension workers.

The variety of data sources, primary, secondary, qualitative, quantitative, etc., which were extracted from document analysis and desk review, as well as interactions with stakeholders, supported information validity. Also, through this combination of methods, feedback between the various tools and validation between different levels and types of data was sought to triangulate the information, and thus ensuring the validity of the data that give rise to the assessment process and to this report. Quantitative analysis was carried – out by using logical framework and related indicators as benchmarks to tally project progress in implementation. Qualitative analysis was mainly applied to the information harnessed by using thematic analysis of interviews and dialogues responses. All of these analytical tools were triangulated and validated internally.

These methods give rise to this evaluation report. The data gathering period ran from early August to mid-September, given the delays that this process suffered in data gathering and field work. The evaluation is, therefore, based on documentation and document analysis as well as interviews and field site visit information within this time window. After mid-September (i.e., when data gathering ended) the report was elaborated, and a draft shared with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit had two months of time to harness and elicit comments. As indicated in relevant guidance, the team leader and report author, reviewed received comments and –when and if—proper or relevant were included in the final draft. An audit trail was generated indicating changes or responses vis-à-vis the above process.

ETHICS

Rights of stakeholders were respected throughout the whole of the evaluation process. In particular the right to anonymity of responses, and other ethical considerations were also abided by, as well as the right of stakeholders to refuse to engage in interviews or dialogues and/or their right to not answer any of the posed questions that they either have no knowledge of or do not feel comfortable answering was assured and respected. When group interview took place the participation of all was assured by building consensus or majority. While carrying out the interviews, in as much as possible, gender was considered. In all instances local language spoken in the targeted areas was used in interviews, as well as while discussing with the stakeholders. Technicalities and technical language were avoided to ensure that the conversation was clear and understandable to discussants. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations.’ A code of conduct signed by the international evaluator, upon acceptance of the assignment, is found in annexes.

LIMITATIONS TO THE EVALUATION

As it occurs in most of these sorts of assessments, there can be a series of limitations, for instance the characteristic evaluability issues such as access to inputs and constraints in terms of time and resources. An early limitation has been the delays to this evaluation process, the delays in accessing information such as documentation, and the lack of access to some documents. Furthermore, the setting up of the field mission was also further delayed and the sites to be visited were changed on occasion. There was little ownership from a number of key actors of this evaluation process which in turn posed a number of limitations. Although some actors did show commitment during the interview processes, a number of key institutional actors did not and this is evidenced by the lack of access to interviews with the international evaluator and / or lack of documents on behalf of the Project. Nonetheless, these issues notwithstanding, the evaluation engaged with a number of stakeholders, carried out interviews (online and in presence) as well as harnessed significant information. Therefore, overall, it is understood that the evaluability was not compromised greatly given the methods and efforts placed in obtaining stakeholder access, promoting participation, and obtaining inputs at different levels and of different types. Nevertheless, it is a lesson learned that this type of assessment needs to be tightly managed with proper back up from UNDP on monitoring

and evaluation versant staff to avoid delays that may hinder evaluability and usefulness of this sort of evaluation exercise.

STRUCTURE OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

This evaluation report is structured beginning with an executive summary, an introduction and an evaluation scope and methodology section. A second section contains an overall Project description within a developmental context, including an account of the problems the Project sought to address, as well as its initial objectives. Furthermore, indicators and main stakeholders involved in the projects are described, as well as what were the expected results. Essentially, this segment of the report deals with the design stage and design concept of the Project. A third core section of this report deals fundamentally with the evaluation findings, analytically observing the results framework, and linkages with other projects and interventions in the sector. Furthermore, this segment also deals with findings relating to the actual implementation of the Project, including strategic issues such as adaptive management and partnership agreements, and monitoring. This section concludes with findings on project level overall results and findings related to the criteria established for evaluations such as relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, ownership at the national level, mainstreaming and sustainability. A fourth core section of the present report entails overall conclusions as well as forward looking issues and recommendations. Lastly, an annex section includes project and evaluation support documentation.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT START AND DURATION, INCLUDING MILESTONES

The *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project*⁴ in Eritrea was planned to have a start date of October 1, 2013 and an end date of October 1, 2020.⁵ The Project is in effect ending in December 2022 (with a nine-year implementation period, therefore).

It had a planned total budget of US\$ 16,328,000 allotted as follows: GEF Trust Fund (US\$ 5.878 million), UNDP Regular Resources (US\$ 3million), Government of the State of Eritrea (in cash US\$ 4.05million and in-kind US\$ 3.4million).⁶

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT: ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIO-ECONOMIC, INSTITUTIONAL, AND POLICY FACTORS RELEVANT TO THE PROJECT OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

Eritrea is located in the Horn of Africa with a land area of approximately 124,300 square kilometres. Territorial waters encompass, approximately, 120,000 km², including nearly 360 islands of which the Dahlak Archipelago is predominant. Elevation ranges from 120 meters below sea level to over 3,000 meters above. The population of Eritrea is about 3.2 million inhabitants; urban population is mainly at the capital (Asmara) of about 700 000 persons. Ninety-five percent of the population lives in the central highlands while the remaining five percent live along the extensive coastal zone. Two-thirds of the national population lives below poverty line. Of this population, rural households are the ones most harshly affected by poverty in all its aspects, including food security issues.

Much of this Project took place in locations with Afar tribes. Most Afar residents at the proposed project sites engage in a mixture of pastoralist and fishing activities, while cultivated agriculture is very limited. Livestock is comprised of goats with limited numbers of cattle. The Afar residents do have a series of cultural characteristics related to natural resources, not allowing harvesting of living trees nor the killing of wild animals.

The country is divided into six agro - ecological zones: (i) moist highlands, (ii) arid highlands, (iii) sub-humid highlands, (iv) moist lowlands, (v) arid lowlands and (vi) semi-desert. Annual rainfall has great variation within Eritrea, with approximately half of the country receiving less than 300 mm

⁴ This project is also referred to in some documents as Eritrea National Protected Areas Network Project or PA Project Eritrea.

⁵ These are planned dates, milestones, etc., the actual milestones will be included further along this report in relevant sections.

⁶ Actual co – financing data is presented further along this report when dealing with implementation.

annually and the other half 500 mm per year. However, about ten percent of the country receives more than 600 mm and some parts of the eastern escarpment receives more than 1000 mm.

Eritrea has a significant range of ecosystems and notable number of biodiversity resources – albeit these are neither well studied nor documented--. The unique ecosystems include the East Sudanian savannah, Eritrean/Ethiopian highland forests, Eritrean/Ethiopian highland grasslands and woodlands, Eritrean/Ethiopian xeric grasslands, and shrub, Somali Acacia-Commiphora bush and thickets, and Sahelian Acacia savannah. The lack of thorough studies however has not stalled recording a number of biodiversity resources, such as with mammal, bird, reptile, and amphibian species. Some of these are unique biodiversity resources. Again, flora data is also not thoroughly assessed, but there are indications and expert suggestions that there is a wealth of flora resources, in particular considering that the country is the centre of origin and diversity for several important cereal crops, such as sorghum, wheat and barley.

Furthermore, the country has important marine habitats and a large number of marine biodiversity resources in its coastal waters. Coastal and marine habitats include mangrove, coral reef, sea grass and intertidal habitats are linked to a number of resources, such as migratory birds, turtles, fish, and breeding/feeding ground for a number of marine biodiversity resources.

Juxtaposed to the developmental factors (i.e., the high level of poverty and its influence on sustainable development issues), Eritrea is unique with regard to institutional and policy contexts. The country is a young nation, and to some degree due to this, it has a very particular institutional context and a number of policy factors to contend with. Eritrea declared its independence and gained international recognition in 1993. Hence, the country has an incomplete set of environmental laws and policies as well as slight internal capacity to deal with a number of sustainable development issues, such as integral and integrated protected area management.

The context of the country also gives a policy, administrative and institutional background relevant to this project and to the issues related to sustainable and equitable natural resource management. The Constitution of Eritrea was drawn in 1997. It gives the State responsibility for all resource management. An important policy for this context is the Land Reform Proclamation which was adopted in 1994 which indicates that all land is owned by the State with citizens having user rights. The Forestry and Wildlife Conservation and Development Proclamation, further along in time in 2006, provides the framework for the conservation and development of forests and wildlife resources. The law states that tree tenure rights belong to persons planting trees on user related lands and opens opportunities for individuals and/or communities to establish sustainable harvest woodlots. The Eritrean Water Law (2010) promotes integrated water resources management and the Fisheries Proclamations (1998) supports conservation of marine biological diversity and regulates the development and management of the marine sector.

At the time of project design, it was determined upon the intervention's planning that Eritrea did not have a protected-area system and/or any protected areas. Although the GoSE had determined through several policies the rights of different ministries to establish protected areas (Ministry of Agriculture for terrestrial PAs and the Ministry of Marine Resources for coastal and

marine areas) until the time of project design there were no protected areas designated nor operationalized.

The administrative and institutional context of the country has also delineated national responsibilities for conservation of biodiversity. For instance, the Ministry of Agriculture oversees most issues related to terrestrial biodiversity while the Ministry of Marine Resources oversees all issues related to fisheries and marine conservation. The Forestry and Wildlife Authority is technically mandated to issue licenses and otherwise oversee the use of biodiversity resources. Furthermore, it need be pointed out that the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment is one of the key regulatory bodies in environmental issues/climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, chemical pollution protection and other key environmental matters.

Divided into six regions called zobas as well as subdivided into districts (sub-zobas), non – urban governance is organized according to hydrological boundaries: Northern Red Sea, Southern Red Sea, Debub, Anseba, Central and Gash-Barka regions. National institutions have representation at each of these levels. As of 1996 there is a Proclamation for the Establishment of Regional Administrations. This proclamation establishes that core responsibilities of line ministries are policy, regulations, human resource development, research, and technical support, while all operational and implementation functions fall under the mandates of zobas/regions. Zoba administrations are key implementing agencies for all agricultural and rural development programs. They are the lead agency for agricultural, rural development, and natural resources management. The administrations oversee planning, implementation, and monitoring of government activity.

PROBLEMS THAT THE PROJECT SOUGHT TO ADDRESS: THREATS AND BARRIERS TARGETTED

Based on the environmental information and policy background indicated above, as well as other analysis, the planning documents identified three barriers that hinder the establishment of a national system of protected areas as follows, and:

- Barrier 1: Limited capacity to design and implement a regulatory framework to support establishment of a national system of conservation areas.
- Barrier 2: Limited experience and capacity to successfully establish and manage conservation areas
- Barrier 3: Limited rural community capacity to maintain ecosystem services and conserve biodiversity.

These barriers are based on a threat – analysis which give origin to what the Project sought to address. The threats identified are broad and indicated below.

Eritrea did not have at the time of project planning the institutional capacity required to design and implement the laws and policies required to support the establishment of an up to date national system of conservation areas, and –although proclamations determine that the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Marine Resources have authority for the establishment of protected

areas—these policies do not provide a framework on how these are to be established nor do they reflect modern principles and practices related to stakeholder driven and supportive processes, nor clearly established frameworks on the management, operational and financing of such areas once they would be established.

Attached to this, and related to the second identified barrier, is the low managerial and administrative capacity to establish and to manage conservation areas. There is a need to expand expertise in – country not only for the policy – related issues of protected area management but also for the technical issues related to conservation, sustainable use, and equitable natural resource management that should accompany modern styles of protected areas. This capacity gap not only hinders the possibility of establishing and managing protected areas but also hinders adequate baseline information gathering upon which to base policy decisions.

Lastly, the relation between protected areas and equitable sustainable development management benefitting communities is also weakly linked in the country. Rural and fisheries communities in Eritrea have limited capacity to maintain ecosystem services while at the same time support sustainable and equitable livelihoods (which are evidently largely dependent upon the natural resources within and without protected areas). Tools and instruments for this (such as sustainable land management practices and sustainable use of marine/coastal resources) are uncommon and co – management practices not impelled. The use of innovative tools and the support of sustainable use of natural resources through innovation is also frail. On the positive side, some stakeholders perceive that there is existing readiness from local communities to engage in sustainable management. In short, and as identified in planning documents as well as monitoring and evaluation analysis, there are a number of gaps with ample room for improvement, gaps in capacity and there at different levels a number of measures that need to be placed to fill the shortcomings.

IMMEDIATE AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The project objective was to: *create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system.* The project goal was to ensure the integrity of Eritrea’s diverse ecosystems to secure the viability of the nation’s globally significant biodiversity.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Upon planning there was no formal Theory of Change (ToC) analysis catalogued as such. Yet this is not perceived as an issue for this project. Evaluations have as of recently been required to assess a project’s theory of change but this was not a requisite neither by UNDP nor by GEF for projects to have one upon planning at the time of this project’s design. This might have hindered the perception of the Project overall in a result – based manner (which is generally what a ToC implies) as well as have explicit –not tacit-- causal paths that need to be achieved between outputs and outcomes to obtain results.

These matters notwithstanding, the Midterm Review (carried out in 2017) did include a ToC analysis⁷. That review recognised logical connections between identified problems and direct threats for conservation targets, their causes and effects, and opportunities for mitigation and solving of the problems. That is, the logical chain can be seen to some extent upon planning but this is tacit and not identified as a Theory of Change neither upon design nor upon implementation of the Project. The MTR did also generate a reconstructed logical framework based on this analysis.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The expected results were articulated as three outcomes as indicated below:

- Outcome 1: Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system
- Outcome 2: Emplacement of management capacity and experience required to operationalize national protected area system
- Outcome 3: Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas.

MAIN STAKEHOLDERS

Project planning developed a typology of stakeholders to engage with, and in many cases identified individual institutions within this typology to engage with relevant at the time of design. This is summarized as follows (in relevant sections other matters regarding actual stakeholder engagement is expanded upon) as it is indicated in planning documents (such as –mainly—the Project Document) :

Government
The Ministry of Land Water and Environment (MoLWE)
Ministry of National Development (MND)
Ministry of Finance (MoF)
Forestry and Wildlife Authority (FWA)
Ministry of Agriculture
Ministry of Marine Resources (MoMR)
Ministry of Tourism
Ministry of Information (Moi)

⁷ Mid-Term Review Report For the UNDP-supported GEF-financed project “Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation” GEF Project ID 4559/PIMS 4816. www.erc.undp.org

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT-
TERMINAL EVALUATION

Administrative Offices
International Development Organizations
UNDP
Civil Society (NGO's, etc.)
National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW)
Academic and Scientific Organizations
Hamelmallo Agricultural College (HAC)
Eritrea Institute of Technology: Department of Biology
National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI)
Marine Science Technology (COMAT)
Local and Indigenous Communities
Traditional Leaders
Local communities (villages)
Private Sector
Tourist Services

As part of this analysis, the planning documents (such as the Project Document) included a list of potential roles that the above-mentioned stakeholders could play throughout implementation. This fed into the Project Document's stakeholder involvement plan. This plan indicates that the design intended to have this project implemented within a multi-stakeholder participation framework engaging at different levels of action (national, regional, sub-regional and village levels).

4. FINDINGS

4.1 PROJECT DESIGN/FORMULATION

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS FRAMEWORK: PROJECT LOGIC AND STRATEGY, INDICATORS

As all projects of this sort, a key aspect of its design is the inception log frame/results framework which includes the Project strategy and the intervention's logic as well as baseline and target indicators, among other factors. The Project's logic and strategy at the design and formulation level was fitting. The formulation documents effectively identify key issues, threats and barriers. Therefore, in that sense the conceptual parts of project design as indicated in the planning documents was fitting.

Given the above, it is considered that the overall conceptual strategy of the Project, identifying the problem, causes as well as barriers and then strategizing on solutions based on this analysis was fairly proper at planning stage. Therefore, in terms of overall logic and strategy the design responded to an adequate rationale and it was designed as a strategic intervention. However, although in theory the Project's logic is proper and focused, the design as a whole is lacking and weak in many matters. To begin with, the planned project was overambitious in many ways. It covered four out of six zobas in the country, signalling geographic ambitiousness. Besides this, and very importantly, the design is not fully attuned to Eritrea's capacity or readiness to implement such an ambitious project.⁸ As will be also described below, a project such as this is intended to be truly a ground-breaking endeavour in the country, and the reference point conditions were not there at the time of design and implementation for this to take place in the innovative overarching and policy supported manner this was planned.

It is also assessed that cross-cutting issues were included to a degree within project strategy. For instance, gender and poverty eradication, peaceful post conflict resolutions, and other similar notions were introduced as concepts at design. Yet, some of these such as --gender equality-- were not fully fledged out at design. The participation of women in implementation is at times inserted in design. And although the Project was catalogued as a GEN2 intervention, it does not have a gender analysis nor action plan inserted in planning documents. Project design was consultative and participatory. However, here also a gender gap was identified with only six percent participation of women in the design consultation process.

A thorough needs and a capacity of implementation assessments were not included in design. Since Eritrea was (and is still) a young country at the time of initial design, inception as well as implementation, a candid needs assessment and capacity to implement assessment would have been key to establish the proper robust mechanisms for implementation.

⁸ This will be further expanded upon in further sections along different criteria, such as assumptions and risks as well as management.

The Results Framework was organized at design in three expected outcomes by project end with different numbers of expected outputs within each of these. They are as follows:

Objective and Outcomes

Project Objective: Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system

Outcome 1: Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system

Outputs:

- 1.1 Regulatory framework for protected areas management
- 1.2 National administration for protected areas management
- 1.3 National biodiversity conservation monitoring program
- 1.4 National strategy for protected area conservation and financing
- 1.5 National protected area regulatory implementation guidelines
- 1.6 National biodiversity conservation training program.

Outcome 2: Emplacement of management capacity and experience required to operationalize national protected area system

Outputs

- 2.1 Three new protected areas officially recognized and launched
- 2.2 Model training program implemented for protected area management and staff
- 2.3 Three model protected area management plans
- 2.4 Three model protected area business plans
- 2.5 Integrated and inclusive management mechanisms established

Outcome 3: Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas

Outputs

- 3.1 Farm/Fishing Field Schools established to build local SLM/SFM capacity
- 3.2 Sustainable resource management plans
- 3.3 Implementation of model ecosystem service conservation measures

The Results Framework is organised in categories defined as objective, outputs/activities and expected outcomes. However, and as also pointed out in other monitoring exercises, some of these concepts such as the objective, are not truly what they purport to be. That is, the Project Objective [*Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system*] is more, as expressed, of an expected output than an overarching objective based on a results-based viewpoint. Some of the expected outcomes (for instance, *Outcome 2. Emplacement of management*

capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system], are expressed more of an output / activity but not truly an outcome/result as expressed here.

The Project Logical/Results Framework has baseline and end of project indicators, but no mid-point indicators. There is a number of baseline indicators missing at design (for instance, when it is stated that: *“Water quality/quantity target sites and baseline standards TBD at inception”* therefore there is no baseline data and no reliable end-of-project indicator to measure whether or not there has been a result attributable to this project. It is worthy to mention, however, that although the lack of ecosystems’ information is one of the barriers to integrated natural resource management within Eritrea, there are a number of baseline indicators stated in the Framework from the design stage. When doing a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attributable, Relevant, Time-bound/Timely/Trackable/Targeted) analysis of end of project indicators, it can be said that some fulfil certain of these parameters, but not fully for all of them. For instance, several are specific (**S**) since they use a clear language and describe a future condition at the end of Project target level. Some are not, however. For instance, those dealing with future protected areas are not specific enough as to what habitats will be protected and/or sustainably used with the protected area framework. Others are not measurable (**M**) within the scope of the Project itself. Some are not deemed achievable (**A**) since they are deemed as unrealistic, for instance those that deal with anticipated national funding of protected areas (within the Objective section for instance). That is, however, some indicators were beyond the viability of being achievable and this is reflected not only in the indicator set, but also in overall analysis of the viability of the Project within its scope.

Within Outcome 3 there are also some indicators that are not outcome/result oriented either. For instance, when it is stated that indicator(s) are defined as: *“Number of project area residents who are participating members of farm/fisheries field (FFS) schools”* or *“Number of FFS participant households and women reporting increased levels of food security”* are not outcome indicators per se, they are outputs/or activities since they do not define results and are not properly stated in a manner to see or measure change attributable to the Project.

Overall, however there is a crucial problem with the indicators since a high number are not result or outcome indicators, albeit they are stated that they are. A crucial number of them are product or output indicators, since they do not reflect results. For instance, many indicators point to number of persons being trained, but they do not specify or designate what the *result* of this training is to be.

Indicators are relevant (**R**) since they are aligned as to contribute to selected priorities of the national development framework. This relevance not only is reflective of alignment of policies, it is reflected in the importance to Eritrea that targeted areas be sustainably managed and benefit individuals and communities that are vulnerable and have been deferred in their development processes. All indicators are time-bound (**T**) since they are not open-ended given that they were expected to be achieved at the end of the Project.

Key stakeholders have pointed out, and this evaluation agrees, that the sustainable development problems that Eritrea faces are not, however, confronted in an integrated wholistic manner, in particular in the last expected outcome. Although here the processes and products

presented and carried out as part of the implementation are in and of themselves worthy pilots, the dire issues (such as land degradation due to overgrazing and overuse of land, decreasing soil fertility, hydrological – related issues) need to be tackled in an integral and knowledge – based manner in order to promote environmental sustainability and not by small interventions.

ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

Design identifies several assumptions and corresponding risks that could, conceivably, have an impact upon the Project. Some of the key assumptions identified in the Project Log frame were as follows.

Assumptions

- National support for establishment of international standard protected areas to conserve globally significant biodiversity will remain steadfast.
- Human resource capacity and interest remains high in order to fill required positions.
- Key government ministries and agencies can agree to form and function of protected area administration (e.g., division of responsibilities between terrestrial and marine protected areas). This agreement provides for efficient and effective management without undue duplication of effort.
- Protected areas will be officially designated in a timely manner.
- Best possible international/national staff will be recruited for implementation and Government will support international staff with permits required to complete necessary fieldwork.

Further to the above assumptions presented in the Results Log Frame, within the text of the Project Document (being this the main planning and implementation guidance) a number of risks, other assumptions, ratings of impact and probability, as well as mitigation measures were identified. These range from the low in – country capacity and low absorptive capacity, the possibility that the protected areas would not be established by Government within the context of this Project, as well as potential institutional and administrative issues which could undermine the establishment of properly managed and sustained protected areas. Nevertheless, many of the risks were underestimated, even when knowledge of risks was present in the country due to other similar projects (projects supported by GEF, implemented by UNDP as well as other donor or UN – system projects). Furthermore, the mitigation measures for these risks presented at the Project Document were weakly articulated.

Many of the risks and assumptions defined at the time of design/planning were visible during implementation, as will be seen further ahead in the section that does deal with execution. Some of the risks did evolve at the level expected and even regrettably even decidedly beyond that. Of course, one additional risk to the Project has been the COVID-19 pandemic. Undeniably, neither the Project nor the partners could have foreseen this risk, but it must be pointed out that it did also have an effect upon implementation.

*LESSONS FROM OTHER RELEVANT PROJECTS (SAME FOCAL AREA) INCORPORATED
INTO PROJECT DESIGN*

Several lessons from other relevant projects or actions were identified at design, either specifically or generally. Mainly two other projects in the same focal area were mentioned upon design. These were:

- The UNDP - implemented GEF – supported project named “Conservation Management of Eritrea’s Coastal, Marine and Island Biodiversity” project (ECMIB). Seemingly, the *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project* was perceived as a continuation of the ECMIB project and even as an opportunity to attain what was not achieved within the previous UNDP/GEF intervention. The project being evaluated here benefited from the drafted National Coastal Policy and the Integrated Coastal Area Management proclamation that originated out of the ECMIB intervention. These drafts --in turn--were indicated to be the basis for expected results within Outcomes 1 and 2 in the context of the protected area project.
- Another project’s lessons learned that were considered for the design of the PA intervention was the also the UNDP – implemented GEF – financed intervention and with other donors such as NORAD, called “SIP SLM Pilot Project.” This intervention was not only intended to provide inputs and lessons learned for the Protected Area project being evaluated here, it also had pilot areas overlapping.

Nonetheless, although technical lessons were incorporated to a degree, it is noteworthy to point out that implementation issues within Eritrea for these types of projects were not fully acknowledged upon planning and mechanisms to bypass implementation problems were not articulated within project design. As will be seen below, the Protected Areas Project faced a weighty number of implementation issues and – as it has been repeatedly pointed out by key stakeholders-- these were not exclusive matters just within this project but general issues with international cooperation endeavours within the country. These matters have been soundly documented and captured within the UNDP portfolio assessments, within country – wide and portfolio reviews, as well as in individual project evaluations. Yet, they were not fully acknowledged as a lesson within design/planning and therefore no instruments were applied to avoid these issues.

PLANNED STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AT DESIGN⁹

A comprehensive stakeholder analysis was drawn up at the design stage. Furthermore, potential interests and probable roles of different stakeholders in the implementation of the Project were also determined. The following stakeholders and typologies are indicated in design documents:

- *Ministry of Land Water and Environment*
- *Ministry of National Development*
- *Ministry of Finance*
- *Forestry and Wildlife Authority*
- *Ministry of Agriculture*
- *Ministry of Marine Resources*
- *Ministry of Tourism*
- *Ministry of Information*
- *Local Communities*
- *Private sector*
- *Administrative Offices*
- *UNDP*
- *National Union of Eritrean Women*
- *Hamelmal Agricultural College (HAC)*
- *Eritrea Institute of Technology*
- *National Agricultural Research Systems*
- *Marine Science Technology (COMAT)*
- *Traditional Leaders*
- *Villages*
- *Tourist Services*

The planned stakeholder participation was ample and for different sorts of actors. The roles were also multi layered, fitting to interventions such as this one that aim to engage from different levels of government as well as different actors. The different roles that these stakeholders could have had were established.

LINKAGES BETWEEN PROJECT AND OTHER INTERVENTIONS WITHIN THE SECTOR

Design specified that the initiative would build upon from other relevant projects (current and previous) in the same focal area, as well as with other related interventions in the country. As indicated in the section on lessons from other relevant projects (same focal area) incorporated into project design, there was an intention upon design to learn from these other interventions in the same focal area as other related projects and it was also indicated that linkages/synergies would be sought. These were the UNDP - implemented GEF – supported project named “Conservation

⁹ Source: Project Document.

Management of Eritrea’s Coastal, Marine and Island Biodiversity” project (ECMIB) and (the also UNDP – implemented GEF – financed intervention and with other donors such as NORAD) SIP SLM Pilot Project.”

A related project (although not exactly within the same focal area) was the Adaptation Fund Project called *Climate Change Adaptation Programme in water and agriculture in Anseba Region*. Intended target regions did not overlap with the Protected Area project being evaluated in this report. Yet, since climate change and climate change adaptation are key issues in Eritrea and lessons on implementation would have been incorporated in project design as well as –eventually—upon implementation.

4.2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT (CHANGES TO THE PROJECT DESIGN AND PROJECT OUTPUTS DURING IMPLEMENTATION¹⁰)

Adaptive management is defined as the project’s ability to adapt to changes to design (objective, outcomes, or outputs) during implementation resulting from: (a) original objectives that were not sufficiently articulated; (b) exogenous conditions that changed, due to which change was needed; (c) the project’s restructuring because the original expectations were overambitious; or (d) the project’s restructuring because of a lack of progress.

The Project did not have any adaptive management as defined in evaluation guidance. That is design and outputs were not reformed to signal adaptation to findings upon implementation nor due to exogenous condition changes.

Furthermore, the main assessment and monitoring exercise that this project went through was its mid – term review of 2017, and –due to this—a number of recommendations were made in the MTR to engender adaptive management. Some of these included changes suggested for the log frame, for instance by recommending that there should be a review and update of indicators. Other recommendations dealt with implementation per se, such as the suggestion of the creation of a project management unit and strengthen project implementation arrangements, begin delivery of outputs/outcomes which had not begun by the time of the review, and other suggested adjustments to implement the Project. Although the UNDP Country Office cannot ascertain whether any of these adjustments were indeed made, all evidence points out that they have not been executed.

ACTUAL STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

The general actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements did not follow what was planned at project design nor at inception. Although, as seen in the section above dealing

with planned stakeholder participation, there were stakeholder analysis and a participation plan included in development documents, this process did not evolve as expected.

Participation was not coordinated nor harmonised between and among the different partners at the different levels. Furthermore, one of the main issues with this has been that the involved stakeholder participation at the different institutional levels shifted several times during the life span of this project. First this occurred when designated Implemented Partner (IP) changed throughout implementation from different government administrative areas. This not only hindered or obstructed actual stakeholder participation but it further hindered flowing implementation processes.

As indicated above, in the section called *Planned Stakeholder Participation at Design*, UNDP's role as a key stakeholder was presented within the category of International Development Organization within the stakeholder analysis section. There, very clearly, the pivotal roles and responsibilities of UNDP around several issues vis-à-vis this project were outlined. These were:

- Ensuring professional and timely implementation of the project outcomes, outputs, and activities; delivering reports and other outputs identified in the project document;
- Assisting and supporting project implementing institution and other relevant stakeholders in organizing, coordinating, and hosting project meetings at all levels; manage and take the responsibility of financial, administration to realize the envisioned targets.
- It will also establish effective network between project national stakeholders, international organisations, and the donors.

However, and as will be seen further along this report in the pertinent sections, these (potential) participation aspects were not fulfilled. This was due to national level partners did not perceive the collaboration of UNDP as a partnership, as it pertains to these sorts of projects.¹¹ As indicated to this evaluation by key partners, this not only hindered the partnership aspects but also stalled the implementation process and nullified the value added that UNDP has as a GEF agency in drawing in its expertise in the field. Furthermore, key stakeholders did not fully perceive the role of UNDP as it is supposed to be according to the agreements with the Agency. Even key stakeholders only perceived UNDP as a channeler of funds and not as an entity with responsibilities and value added as a GEF-implementing agency.

Other issues are related to inherent questions in Eritrea. For instance, the policy relationship between and among the different national institutions when dealing with protected areas in particular and in sustainable and equitable use of natural resources in general. Furthermore, the focalisation of implementation in zobas was also an issue to contend with, given the characteristic theme of central vs sub national policy and administrative arenas in the country. Lastly, the

¹¹ For this, as of course for all evaluation assessments, the sources are varied and triangulated/validated. Sources are interviews to a broad range of stakeholders (local, national as well as international) and document analysis of different sorts such as monitoring documents.

deficiencies of in – country civil society and non – governmental organisations also implied that participation from and partnership arrangements with these types of stakeholders was hindered.

There was a positive engagement with local villages and a number of other actors, particularly at the end of the implementation period. This participation was mostly leveraged through paid for work modality. The inclusion of local people in the Project benefited from the inclusion of buffer zones in execution. Several stakeholders outside of government have indicated that, since local people lost access to what are now protected areas, equity and sustainability factors are benefitted by the inclusion of local communities actual proactive participation (not only in awareness raising processes which –in this case–do not have an indicator set to truly capture effect) but through providing or instructing upon incentives that leverage and support sustainable development practices in zones that influence protected areas.

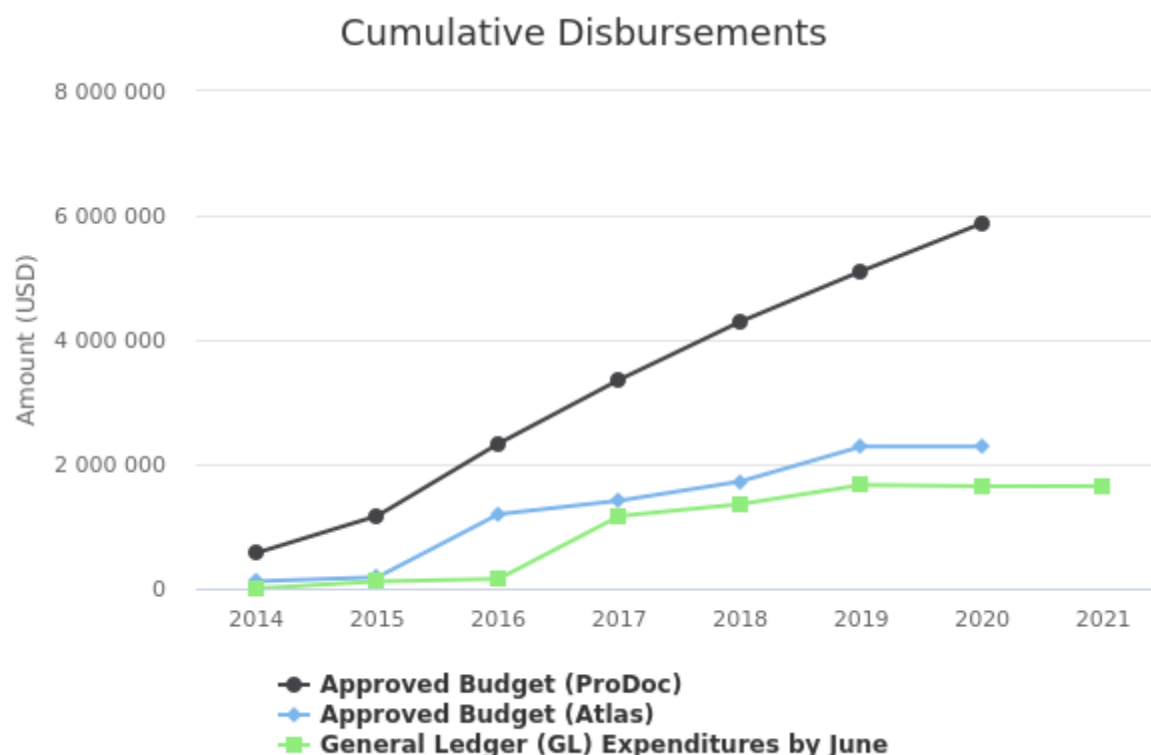
PROJECT FINANCE AND CO-FINANCE

The Project had a total planned project cost of US\$ 16,328,000 allotted as follows: GEF Trust Fund (US\$ 5.878 million), UNDP Regular Resources (US\$ 3 million), Government of the State of Eritrea (in cash US\$ 4.05 million and in-kind US\$ 3.4million).

The latest formally reported validated financial and co – financing information this terminal evaluation had access to is as follows:¹²

Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in Project Document):	28.02%
Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year:	28.02%
Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June 2021:	1,647,095
Cumulative disbursement as of 31 October 2022	$1,647,095 + 474,614.60 = 2,121,709.60$
Cumulative disbursement as of 31 October 2022 + Commitment	$2,121,709.60 + 1,320,525.59 = 3,442,235.19$

¹² Source: PIR 2021. No other official document nor tables on project finance and/or co – finance was provided to this terminal evaluation, although these were repeatedly requested on preparation and evaluation during the data gathering stages (i.e., until the end of September 2022). This is the case except for the last two rows to the chart which were added after data gathering and as a comment by the Project's RTA.



Given that, as will be seen in detail further along this evaluation report, there has been a standstill in implementation in the last few years, it is understood that this officially reported data has not substantially changed in the last months. Therefore, there has been under delivery of the allocated funds in a large percentage, with only—approximately—30 percent of the allocated GEF – funds spent in the span of this project. This is approximately what had been the expenditures at the end of 2017 (i.e., when the MTR took place) and is a further signal of project implementation stagnation.

Regarding co – financing, the UNDP Country Office verbally indicated to this terminal evaluation that there has been 4 million USD inputted as co – financing from Eritrea’s government up until the time of this evaluation. Nonetheless, no supporting documents were provided to this evaluation, neither were provided details such as confirmed sources of co-financing at TE stage of updated information (this level of reported co – financing is to a degree reported in MTR but no update has been provided to this terminal evaluation process during the data gathering period). Therefore, this figure cannot be substantiated by this assessment nor triangulated by different sources as it has to be done in these sorts of evaluations.¹³

¹³ That is, substantiation as indicated in Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects cannot be done at this time.

MONITORING & EVALUATION: DESIGN AT ENTRY (), IMPLEMENTATION (*), AND
OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF M&E (*)*

Imbedded in design there was a Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) plan. This included a series of standard activities for UNDP – implemented GEF – financed projects. The monitoring framework indicated that there would be an inception workshop/report, mid-term review, quarterly and periodic status and progress reporting, project implementation reports—PIRs--, audits, documented field site visits, a final evaluation process (i.e., the process that gives rise to this report), etc. All of these was intended to be supported by Measurement of Means of Verification of project results, and Measurement of Means of Verification for Project Progress on output and implementation. The Project was directed to have also a Project Terminal Report according to the M & E plan. The plan, therefore, is standard. The only issue that can be found with the M&E plan is that, what is normally highly satisfactory planning since these are standard procedures, the plan lacked in realism regarding its potential implementation. This is due to the fact that since (from experience from other similar projects as well as through the implementation of international cooperation endeavours) there is an acknowledgment that the monitoring and evaluation capacity in – country is quite low. The plan was not clear on this and did not include upon design the need for capacity building with clear appreciation of how and why a project needs to monitor and evaluate its processes and how to clearly report based on this knowledge. Therefore, the baseline conditions, methodology, logistics, time frames, and roles and responsibilities for the application of this plan vis-à-vis this project were not well-articulated. The M&E system did not include proper training strategies for parties responsible for M&E activities (such as implementing partners). The M&E budget in the project document was sufficient to implement with an indicative budget allocation of US\$ 285,000 (in addition to project team staff time and UNDP staff and travel expenses). Therefore, for M&E design at entry, the ranking is *Satisfactory (S)* since there were some shortcomings in the quality of M&E design.

That being said, and analysing what has been carried out vis-à-vis this plan, the implementation of the plan has been highly deficient. Even formally, the overall implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation plan was not followed (lack of latest PIR, lack of a project terminal report) and if activities were implemented such as field site visits or audits these were not properly documented and therefore this evaluation cannot tell (a) if they took place nor (b) what information they captured/monitored/reported.

The Mid Term Review is a case in point that strongly signals the difficulties in implementing this M & E plan. As indicated thoroughly in the MTR report, this review process was difficult and even stalled at some points. Similar difficulties were faced by this terminal evaluation, with weak access to information or inputs as well as delays. This (together with the documented issues faced in the MTR) signal a weak ownership process of the Monitoring and Evaluation plan intrinsic to this type of project.

Overall, the lacking quality of monitoring has affected the quality of reporting. As it permeates in the reporting documents, and as indicated by key stakeholders to this terminal evaluation, the quality of reporting was very low. Reporting was not results-based, the reports were

not based upon expected results (that is, were not based upon the expected results log frame) and focused mainly upon the limited activities that took place within the Project. Information required in the PIRs (such as evidence to be uploaded) was not included. Timely quality reporting from the IP did not take place and therefore, UNDP could not properly upscale report (i.e., to GEF for instance). Largely, and as will be fully explored in the further pertinent sections of this report, the lack of a PMU and the lack of capacity to implement were severe factors in the inadequacy of implementation of the monitoring and evaluation plan. The PIRs include candid reporting by IP when it is stated in several of them that no progress was made nor activities take place in certain periods. This is certainly positive, yet the recommendations by UNDP in the PIRs have not been followed either. The PIRs have a number of recommendations on how to channel implementation processes to achieve results (either from the UNDP-NCE Technical Adviser or from the UNDP Country Office). For instance, a road map with due dates called action plan was also included in the MTR and in the 2021 PIR. Yet there is no evidence overall that these have been followed. Therefore, although there was a certain level of information provided by the M&E system that could have been used to improve and adapt project performance, these processes did not materialise.

The ratings between the UNDP-NCE Technical Adviser sections and the Country Office sections differed greatly. For instance, in PIR 2021 while the regional assessment is that the project has overall a high number of risks and it has been as a composite highly unsatisfactory in many ways (which agrees with the MTR valuations and with this TE assessments as will be seen in pertinent sections) the Country Office makes other sorts of assessments indicating that there has been a level (moderate for instance) of satisfactory achievements in several aspects.

For this terminal evaluation, there was no access to tracking tools nor of final METT. It is unknown if this to the fact that they were never developed by the Project or that they were not shared with the author of this report. As indicated by key stakeholders, the underlying question regarding the lack of proper tools is that there was no project manager for this project and therefore 'implementation' in the normal sense was constrained and –furthermore-- for the better part of the last three years implementation did not occur.

On the whole, perhaps the highest deficit regarding the implementation of the monitoring plan is that the potential value and effectiveness of the few processes that did take place did not materialise. The monitoring/evaluation/reporting exercises do take place within these sorts of projects for a functional reason. This is done not only to give visibility to products and results that might have been achieved, but –more importantly—to provide a basis for implementation improvement based on the findings that a monitoring process may have. This did not take place in the Project. For instance, the MTR made a number of recommendations to engender adaptive management and improve implementation and –as seen above—there were a robust number of recommendations also made through the PIRs. Regrettably, adaptive management did not take place since the main recommendations were not regarded nor implemented. Furthermore, risks were not updated nor documented (neither by updating SESP assessments after implementation took place and issues arose), and therefore no strategic risk management took place.

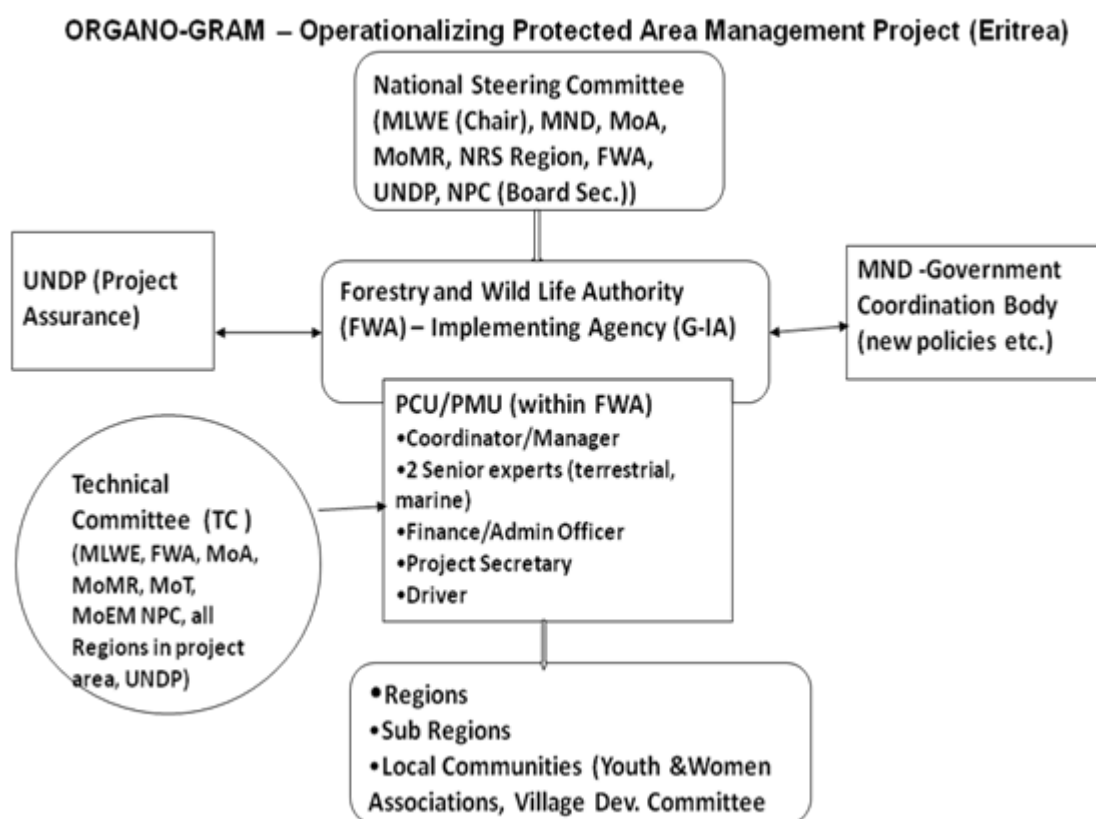
Therefore, the achievement of the monitoring plan at implementation is considered to have been *Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)* since there were severe shortcomings as stated above regarding timing of instruments and the quality of M&E implementation. A composite ranking that considers monitoring and evaluation design at entry together (S) with the M&E plan's implementation for the overall quality of M&E is *Unsatisfactory (U)*.

UNDP IMPLEMENTATION / OVERSIGHT () AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNER
EXECUTION (*), OVERALL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION/EXECUTION (*), COORDINATION,
AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES*

By all accounts and all analyses carried out previously to this terminal evaluation and – evidently—within this TE, implementation/oversight/execution as well as coordination and operational issues have been the major problems that this project has faced. They have had, as will be seen in the different subsections below, an indelible impact upon project implementation.

The Project Document set up implementation, coordination, and operational structures as well as proposed management arrangements. Design, management/implementation/execution as well as oversight for this Project was set in a fairly standard format for a nationally implemented (NEX) project that is funded by GEF and implemented by UNDP. The planned institutional arrangements were multi – layered and it involved a number of different agencies, institutions, and partners. This is graphed in the figure below as indicated in the Project Document and as signed on by the Government of the State of Eritrea.

FIGURE 1: MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AS PLANNED ¹⁴



The setup followed standard operations at the country level, therefore, for NEX implementation. Planning documents did also establish clearly the roles of each key stakeholder and determined clear project implementation arrangements (and again, the Government of the State of Eritrea did sign on to this).

In the first place, the role of the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment as GEF focal point for the country was indicated as an institutional actor that would “help oversee implementation”¹⁵. The governmental project executing agency at the time of design was established to be the Forestry and Wildlife Authority while it was stated that the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Marine Resources and the Forest and Wildlife Authority were indicated to be the main implementing partners responsible for the achievement of project outcomes and outputs.

Even though the project was to be executed in a NEX modality, UNDP’s standards, and regulation for UNDP cooperation in Eritrea were to be followed. Although the NEX modality was used, UNDP had –as stated upon planning–key roles. Firstly, UNDP was accountable for efficient

¹⁴ Source: Project Document.

¹⁵ Source: Project Document.

and effective use of project resources and the achievement of the project goals, objectives, and outcomes according to the approved work plan. Moreover, UNDP had a number of other key roles to fulfil as the GEF implementing agency for this project. This included, *inter alia*, providing technical support and carry out due diligence in several areas since UNDP is and was responsible for budget revisions, donor reporting, advance of funds, and monitoring of the project and the Country Office is and was responsible for overall managing of GEF funds. Besides the above, other roles for UNDP were stated such as implementing payments, facilitate communications, and other services support.

Management, oversight and coordination processes and structures were also clearly established including a Project Board to carry out collegiate strategic decision – making amongst the different partners that would make up this collegiate body (MLWE—national GEF focal point--, MND, F&WLA, MOA, MOMR, NRS Region, NPC and UNDP). A steering committee and a technical advisory group were also supposed to be enabled.

Very significantly, the planning processes (as seen in the Project Document for instance) stated that the Project was to have a Project Management Unit (PMU). This PMU was to be responsible for directing, supervising, and coordinating the project implementation. That is, for running the Project under the guidance of the Project Board. This PMU was supposed to be composed of project manager as well as an administrative assistant and an accountant. It was supposed to have administrative and professional / technical staffing and personnel. The aim of having a PMU was not only, as it is always done in these projects, to have dedicated staff that oversees and promotes implementation, but also to generate a cadre of personnel within the country that has the skills and capacity to promote integrated and sustainable management of natural resources based on the knowledge and expertise obtained through a project.

Regrettably, almost none of the above processes and structures neither evolved as planned nor were they implemented as agreed. The IP ostensibly switched from time to time, hindering continuity. The Project Board (when or if it met) did not fully apprehend its decision-making role. The potential role for the Project Board in guiding the Project was not fulfilled, not only the potential role to guide implementation but neither did it robustly provide substantive contributions and oversight nor did it act as a catalyst for uptake and replication of achievements and lessons learned arising out of the –potential—achievements. Technical and steering structures were very weak, and met seldomly.

Although there were some (weak) attempts to establish a PMU, this did not materialise at all as planned and as it should properly have been established by a project of this size. Project's implementation in Eritrea is integrated into existing line ministries' institutional structures. Therefore, all the duties in implementation that a PMU were left to government employees which would do so in addition to their duties and –due to their lower political level—were not enabled with proper decision-making capacities to properly implement as agreed in documents signed by the Eritrean Government. Therefore, no dedicated staff that could promote implementation was present full time. Technical advice was not harnessed, particularly international technical advisory consultancies, and therefore there was a substantial lack also of technical capacity engendering for the achievement of results and for capacity – building at the national level. All of these matters were

flagged repeatedly by UNDP (for example, in PIRs) and by independent external monitoring (such as in the MTR). Accordingly, the PIRs and the MTR contained a number of meticulous recommendations and propositions as to how to correct these matters. Although the Government of the State of Eritrea was willing to exchange views and indicated that they contemplated the recommendations, they did not act accordingly and no corrective actions on these issues were put into place.

The role of UNDP was also weakened, first by the lack of full-bodied decision-making and guidance structures and also by the lack of a properly established Project Management Unit. UNDP implementation and oversight was weakened and the Country Office did not achieve the multiple roles it was assigned. For instance, it was not able to implement technical support. Although UNDP's key role is oversight and technical support, this has not materialized for several reasons as seen throughout this evaluation. The UNDP Country Office at times has indicated that its support was basically to channel funds to government. Not conducting the value added that the Agency has in providing and harnessing technical support from varied sources. Furthermore, the role of UNDP within the Project Board was not proactive due to resistance to this key aspect that the Agency is supposed to play in line with its accountability vis-a-vis the Project. As pointed out in the portfolio assessments that the UNDP Country Office went through recently¹⁶, UNDP was in a unique position to impel South – South and triangular cooperation within this project for the development of a comprehensive Protected Areas Framework. As indicated in this document, UNDP could have harnessed expertise and capacity building endeavours from international experts with significant experience in other parts of this matter through UNDP's and through GEF's global network to support the country and to engender national and local capacity. However, this was resisted.

Based on the above, it is deemed that UNDP implementation/oversight has been *Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)*, since it faced a number of challenges in implementation, execution and operational issues as indicated in the above narrative, was somewhat below expectations and had significant shortcomings. The implementing partner's execution has been *Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)* at the global level. An amalgamated review of the global quality of implementation and execution as well as oversight is *Unsatisfactory (U)* given that it met expectations yet it had some shortcomings.¹⁷

These sorts of evaluations are not only supposed to enumerate matters (positive and negative) that impacted upon a project implementation, but also to analyse the reasons for these. The issues and challenges faced within this project have largely been matters due to the resistance to employ structures, guidance, and implementation arrangements as it is done with these sorts of projects and as agreed by the Government of the State of Eritrea. There has been a resistance to establishing the PMU exclusively for the project, ostensibly so that a cadre would not be formed of what government perceived as "privileged" staff within the State. The role of UNDP (beyond transfer of funds, that is the inherit roles of UNDP in these sorts of projects such as technical support,

¹⁶ Terminal Evaluation of UNDP Eritrea Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2021.

¹⁷ See Annex 3 Rating Scales for the definitions of all the rankings.

harnessing international technical support and overall oversight) was also weakened since Government did not accept the Agency as a partner within the decision – making structures (such as the Board). As stakeholders have indicated, this is further compounded by the “sub-optimal functioning of the PSC.” Furthermore, Government was not fully cognizant that GEF requirements are a pre-requisite for implementation and fund/technical transfers and are not an optional matter.

As it has been repeatedly pointed out to this terminal evaluation, these issues are not the exclusive case of the Protected Area Project in Eritrea. This is a pattern that has been soundly documented and captured within the UNDP portfolio, in country – wide assessments as well as in project evaluations.

RISK MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

The Project had a series of risks identified as seen earlier in this report in the section on risks and assumptions (above). There was some screening carried out at design, but there is no full evidence of social and environmental screening nor full-fledged strategy design/implemented so that project programming would maximize social and environmental opportunities and benefits as well as to ensure that adverse social and environmental risks and impacts would be avoided, minimized, mitigated and / or managed. There is also no evidence that there has been reviewing and updating of risks identified nor of SESP (evidently since this screening was not carried out an update was not implemented). This draws attention, however, since although no screening took place, evidently risks prevailed throughout implementation and these were not acknowledged. The project had no Grievance Redress Mechanism established to collect and analyse local communities’ concerns about the project implementation.

4.3 PROJECT RESULTS AND IMPACTS

PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVE AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES ()*

UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are expected to achieve anticipated outcomes by project closing. Following guidance, this TE report assesses the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements, if or when they were made. This monitoring is done following the metrics and the analysis is basically whether indicator targets were met or not. It is a breakdown for each of the expected outcomes as reported at the time of this evaluation. Therefore, the following charts represent the progress towards objective and expected outcomes as monitored and validated¹⁸. The TE report must assess the extent to which expected outcomes were achieved and also the extent to which outcome achievement was dependent on delivery of project outputs, and other factors that affected outcome achievement, e.g., project design, project’s linkages with other activities, extent and materialization of co-financing, stakeholder involvement, etc. The first assessment is whether the indicators have been attained, but also –again following guidance for this

¹⁸ Source: 2021 PIR, which is the latest PIR produced before this evaluation.

type of evaluation—there is an assessment on whether the reported results are associated and due to the Project.

Following each individual chart (for the objective and for the expected outcomes) this TE report assessment on progress towards expected results is found. Lastly, at the end of this particular section there is a narrative with other information and an analysis on concrete progress towards the objective and towards the expected outcomes that the Project may have obtained in a general level, some of it dealing with some non expected or non planned achievements that beyond the indicator metrics being marked as achieved or not. The TE report assesses the extent to which the key expected outcomes/outputs/objectives were actually delivered, and also identifies and assesses in the narrative the factors that affected delivery.

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT-
TERMINAL EVALUATION

<i>Objective: Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system</i>		
Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Cumulative progress since project start as reported by the Project
Total hectares legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories	Terrestrial: 649,100 ha Marine: 360,000 ha	A final draft of the legal framework for establishing legally designated national protected area conforming to IUCN standards has been completed and is to be presented to the government for its approval. Moreover, as the first step of establishment of regulatory framework for PA establishment and management the GoSE approved Proclamation # 179/2017 “The Eritrean Environmental Protection, Management, and Rehabilitation Framework”. This policy’s Article 27 “Protection of Natural Heritage” that provides basis for establishment of national PAs and local natural enclosures. Article 27: Protection of Natural Heritage: (1) The appropriate authority may designate by regulation any area as a national protected area for the purpose of better management of one or more natural resources and their ecosystems; (2) Zoba Administrations and councils of village communities may designate enclosures for purposes of preventing degradation of land and marine resources, preserving vegetation cover for sustainable use of the same. Development of the Protected Area Act was started in 2017 by a team of national consultants.
Total hectares of critical habitat conserved within newly established national protected areas.	Hectares of: Native highland forest: 55,000 Native mangrove: 12,000 African wild ass habitat: 80,000 Turtle nesting sites: 1300 Sea grass: 2,300	Though no part of the proposed protected area system is yet designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories, using current management practice, 91,130ha of critical habitat of the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri are under strict conservation management. Thanks to this strict management practice different flora and fauna important species have been restored and conserved.

- TE assessment for objective Indicator 1: Total hectares legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories. Clearly this has not been achieved at all. Although some steps were taken to begin to designate PAs, the end of project target of 649,100 terrestrial hectares and of 360,000 marine hectares was not achieved.
- TE assessment for objective Indicator 2: Total hectares of critical habitat conserved within newly established national protected areas. Clearly this has not been achieved at all. Although the IP alleges that there is strict management in some natural areas, this cannot be attributed to the Project’s products / outputs since the indicator and sub indicators have not been achieved. That is, if indicators are not achieved it cannot be stated that there has been improvement and positive change due to the intervention since –basically– no positive change is documented nor validated. That is, this achievement was not dependent on delivery of project outputs, Furthermore, this is not captured with specific indicators (the IP just declares that strict management but there is no data that could comparatively capture whether or to what degree this has taken place).

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT-
TERMINAL EVALUATION

Outcome 1: Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system

Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Cumulative progress since project start as reported by the Project
National government law/proclamation legalizing the application of IUCN based designations for establishment of terrestrial and marine protected areas.	Target: 1	Final PA legislative and institutional framework has been completed and has been submitted to Ministry of Land, Water, and Environment for review and approval.
Number of wildlife monitoring surveys/studies conducted and reported annually by protected area administration for key species and habitats within national protected areas.	Number of annual surveys, assessments, and reports for: Wild ass: 7 Mangrove: 8 Land use/degradation: 5 Forest cover: 7 Turtle nests: 7 Water quantity/quality: 7 Marine fisheries: 7 Coral reef: 7 Sea grass: 7	The Forestry and Wildlife Authority conducts wildlife monitoring every three months. A final national biodiversity conservation strategy has been completed and is ready to be released for use and will be an important tool for the monitoring exercise routine.
Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government as part of the protected areas administration to manage the national protected area system.	Target: 10* * Terrestrial and Marine PA's	Since, 2014, sixteen trained professionals have been employed by the government as full-time PA staff, 7 professionals deployed at HQ (FWLA) and 3 professionals in each of the PAs. During the reporting 5 staff has been hired.
Number of national protected area conservation strategies and annual reports completed and updated by the national protected area administration(s).	Strategies: 2 Annual status reports: 4	Four national protected area conservation strategies have been completed during the reporting period: 1. The national policy and institutional framework necessary to operationalize PA management system, 2. A national biodiversity conservation monitoring strategy/program, 3. A national strategy for protected area conservation and financing, 4. A national biodiversity conservation training strategy/program.
Number of Eritreans annually enrolled in national university accredited biodiversity conservation training course.	Target: 30	Since 2014, 100 students have been enrolled in the national university accredited biodiversity conservation training courses. The breakdown is: 60 students have been enrolled in Marine College and 40 in the HAC.

- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 1.1: National government law/proclamation legalizing the application of IUCN based designations for establishment of terrestrial and marine protected areas. This outcome indicator has not been achieved, although the target was just one. Even if some baseline work has been carried out, no official outcome in the form of a national policy has been adopted/approved.
- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 1.2: Number of wildlife monitoring surveys/studies conducted and reported annually by protected area administration for key species and habitats within national protected areas. The Project reports that this has been achieved for some years, but that there has been no progress for the last four years, but it does not specify the overall number of surveys conducted and it does not provide supporting documentation in the monitoring exercises. However, as seen before in the specific section on the log frame, the indicators are not truly outcome indicators since they tally outputs but not outcomes as expected in a result – based project such as this.
- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 1.3: Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government as part of the protected areas administration to manage the national protected area system. The Project reports that this has been achieved. However, as seen before in the specific section on the log frame, there is a design issue here since the indicators are not truly outcome indicators given that they tally outputs but not outcomes as expected in a result – based project such as this
- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 1.4: Number of national protected area conservation strategies and annual reports completed and updated by the national protected area administration(s). The Project reports that this has been achieved, but that there has been no progress for the last four years, but it does not specify the overall number of surveys conducted and it does not provide supporting documentation in the monitoring exercises. However, as seen before in the specific section on the log frame, there is a design issue here since the indicators are not truly outcome indicators since they tally outputs but not outcomes as expected in a result – based project such as this.
- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 1.5: Number of Eritreans annually enrolled in national university accredited biodiversity conservation training course. The Project reports that this has been achieved, but that there has been no progress for the last four years. However, as seen before in the specific section on the log frame, there is a design issue here since the indicators are not truly outcome indicators since they tally outputs but not outcomes as expected in a result – based project such as this.

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT-
TERMINAL EVALUATION

Outcome 2: Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system		
Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Cumulative progress since project start
METT scores for at least three marine/terrestrial protected areas increase by 25%	METT Scores: Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 80 Buri: 82 Bera'sole Bay: 71	The Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area has been demarcated, zoned, and protected by FWA rangers and village scouts. The METT score for the area increased from 29 to 44. No significant METT score was registered for other two proposed PAs. Significant GoE funding was mainly provided to the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area (97%), but not the other proposed PAs.
Number of protected area management and business plans operational, assessed and updated by each protected area administration.	Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 3 Buri: 3 Bera'sole Bay: 3	A final national strategy for protected area conservation and financing is completed and submitted to MoLWE.
Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government to manage individual protected areas.	Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 10 Buri: 15 Bera'sole Bay: 5	9 professionals employed, 3 for each PA
Individual protected areas receive annual financial support adequate to implement PA management plan priorities and conserve globally significant species.	Total annual government PA budget: Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: US\$ 250,000 Buri: US\$ 300,000 Bera'sole Bay: US\$ 100,000	US\$ 331,335 been distributed to three PAs (Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri, Buri: and Bera'sole Bay) since 2014 up till the current reporting period.

- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 2.1: METT scores for at least three marine/terrestrial protected areas increase by 25%. Partial achievement, METT score increased for one of the three areas, although even for that one area (Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri) the METT score is approximately half of expected target (i.e., actual METT is 44 while target was 80).¹⁹
- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 2.2: Number of protected area management and business plans operational, assessed and updated by each protected area administration. Target not achieved since PA management and business plan have not been adopted and are not operational. Project reports strategy has been completed and therefore submitted for approval.
- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 2.2: Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government to manage individual protected areas. Target underachieved. Roughly 45 percent of the expected end of project target has been achieved.
- TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 2.2: Individual protected areas receive annual financial support adequate to implement PA management plan priorities and conserve globally significant species. Target underachieved; 45 percent of the expected target has been achieved.

¹⁹ This information is based on reporting by Project since the terminal evaluation did not receive final METT, nor is it known whether it was completed.

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT-
TERMINAL EVALUATION

<i>Outcome 3: Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas</i>		
Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Cumulative progress since project start as reported by the Project
Number of project area residents who are participating members of farm/fisheries field (FFS) schools.	Men: 750 Women: 750	At least 300 families (48% women) in villages located in the buffer zone of Semenawi and Debubawi Durfo switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and LE regime of the PAs.
Number of FFS participant households and women reporting increased levels of food security.	FFS households: 500 FFS Women: 500	Circa 10,500 ha is currently under sustainable community based NRM and SLM practices in the project areas. They were demarcated around 8 villages in Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri for sustainable SLM, SFM and livestock grazing. Additional territory of the PA core zone can be used for beekeeping and NTFP collection by local communities. Due to the measures in villages located in PA buffer zone, 150 ha of agricultural land were made available for SLM. 300 families in villages living in the buffer zone switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and law enforcement regime of the PAs. 150 ha of hill terraces were made and planted with 300,000 tree seedlings (<i>Terminalia brownii</i> , <i>Acacia laeta</i> , and <i>Eucalyptus rudis</i>) by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri area (Asmara and Ghinda sub-zoba) in 2014-2018 (GoSE co-funding). However, no sustainable NRM activities were implemented in other project areas.
Number of farm and fishing field school participants adopting ecosystem conservation practices as detailed in the community ecosystem services conservation plans.	Target: 1,000	150 farmers are participants adopting ecosystem conservation practices as detailed in the community ecosystem services conservation plans.
Total hectares of native forest cover within the Green Belt.	Target: 55,000 ha	The cumulative progress since project start is 45,824 hectares.
Surface water quality/quantity of main upland streams improved to meet needs of natural ecosystem function more closely.	Water quality/quantity target sites and standards TBD at inception.	As part of soil and water conservation to improve surface water quality/quantity of upland streams within the Semenawi Kieh Bahri 96 check dams with a capacity of 55,108.00 m3 have been constructed in 96 sites selected for biophysical conservation measures. 11,293 farmers of which 4,517.20 men and 6,775.80 (60%) women participated through the cash for work scheme.
Total number of grazing species found within project's coastal areas.	Numbers of: African wild ass: ~ 250 Dorcas Gazelle: TBD Soemmaring Gazelle: TBD	The total number of grazing species found within project's coastal areas remains stable. African wild ass is assessed as stable: ~ 200 Dorcas Gazelle: 1,500-2000 (group size observed increased from 3-7 in 2014 to 7-17 in 2017). Soemmaring Gazelle: 7,000-8,000 (group size observed increased from 15-30 in 2014 to 40-80 in 2017)

- *TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 3.1:* Number of project area residents who are participating members of farm/fisheries field (FFS) schools. Target underachieved, only 20 percent of expected indicator has been attained. There is here a design issue with the indicator, however, since it defines a process/output (i.e., level of participation in schooling) but not an outcome/result. This is one of the few indicators disaggregated by gender, yet –again—it only defines gender disaggregated data (i.e., participation of females) but the indicator nor the expected outcome defines an analysis of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- *TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 3.2:* Number of FFS participant households and women reporting increased levels of food security. Target reported as achieved, yet achievements are defined as participation mainly but not results. This is one of the few indicators disaggregated by gender, yet –again—it only defines gender disaggregated data (i.e., participation of females) but the indicator nor the expected outcome defines an analysis of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment. There is here a design issue with the indicator, however, since it defines a process/output (i.e., level of participation in schooling) but not an outcome/result. The Project does not capture increased levels of food security since the indicator set for this outcome is not defined as a results indicator.
- *TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 3.3:* Number of farm and fishing field school participants adopting ecosystem conservation practices as detailed in the community ecosystem services conservation plans. Vis-à-vis participation, indicator underachieved (15 percent of expected indicator reported as achieved). However, here again there is a design issue with the indicator that has not been solved by the Project since the number of participants in adopting ecosystem conservations practices is reported but not how this redounds in practices, what the results/outcomes are, and / or what the impact of this would be.
- *TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 3.4:* Total hectares of native forest cover within the Green Belt. Target reported as achieved.
- *TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 3.5:* Surface water quality/quantity of main upland streams improved to meet needs of natural ecosystem function more closely. Target reported as achieved.
- *TE assessment for Outcome Indicator 3.6:* Total number of grazing species found within project's coastal areas. Target reported as achieved.

Overall assessment of progress towards objective and expected outcomes by the TE report analysing the indicator set as a measure of achievement: As seen above, either at the output or at the outcome levels, there has been little progress towards achieving target objectives as defined by the indicator set (or no progress for some sub outcomes and objective). The whys and wherefores of these matters are multivariate. The Project was greatly delayed at mid-point (end of 2017) and has been practically held up since 2018. As the monitoring exercises indicate, repeatedly the project has virtually been stalled since 2018 and little progress in some outputs and some no progress in some outcomes was captured after that point beyond some pilot interventions in the field that took place in the last few months. This not only hindered attainment of the Project's intended outputs,

outcomes, and objectives, it also had a strong impact on the Country Office's portfolio as indicated in the *Terminal Evaluation of UNDP Eritrea Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2021*. It is of interest to note that several steps of a conceptual or preparatory nature to create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system (i.e., the proclaimed focus of this project). A number of outputs were produced in order to strengthen or create this sort of policy framework. Policy proposals, legislative drafts, institutional framework proposals, national protected area conservation strategies --in policy/institutional framework, biodiversity conservation monitoring strategy/program, financing PA s, training--. An area has been demarcated (Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri) and activities by the Forest and Wildlife Authority (FWA) with village scouts have been underway for protection. Yet it is the step from output to outcome/results that is missing. None of these policies have been formally adopted or up taken, signalling a lack of political will and / or weak ownership regarding what the Project was supposed to achieve. It is also of interest that there has been a degree of generation of capacity required to support national system of protected areas (in sustainable land management and in sustainable forest management mainly). Terrestrial zones have been incorporated better than marine areas in the overall unfolding of the Project. It is also of note that, albeit not fully achieved, pilot endeavours that work with communities and villages have had a higher degree of implementation, and --it might be assumed-- a greater degree of effectiveness (mainly those is expected Outcome 3). The outputs here have been carried out in a concrete manner and again, although these were not the main foci of the Project and at times stakeholders have indicated (and this TE agrees) that the conceptual link with protected areas was a times missing, the implementation of these pilot experiences in land restoration or water issues --for example-- point to the type of interventions that could possibly be implemented or strengthened in the future in order to avoid issues such as the ones faced by this project.

Overall assessment of progress captured by the TE report analysing unexpected or unplanned results. There are a number of unexpected or unplanned results that have been qualitatively reported to this evaluation. They are unplanned because they are not part of the log frame (and therefore do not have an indicator set to capture their achievement or relevance) but qualitative or anecdotal statements signal that some of the types of results might have occurred. For instance, interviews with key stakeholders have pointed out that --in their perception-- awareness was raised within local communities on PA systems. Furthermore, some stakeholders perceive that there is a greater awareness regarding PA systems even within technical and policy -- related staff in different levels of government.

Regarding outputs and progress toward outcomes, therefore, there has been a dearth regarding which key expected outputs were actually delivered that have led to outcomes following the examination of indicator metrics. There are a number of unexpected results, albeit presented as anecdotal information to this TE since they do not have an indicator set to properly capture effect, but they can be explored in the future as positive aspects to include in further programming of GEF-funded UNDP-implemented projects if these do take place in Eritrea in the future. In the following sections (especially those dealing with effectiveness and efficiency) this analysis is honed further along evaluation criteria.

RELEVANCE ()*

Relevance is the extent to which a project's objectives are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. That is, relevance is analysed as to how does the intervention relate to the main objectives of the GEF Focal area, UNDP programmatic approaches, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional, and national level.

At the national level, the Project was consistent with national policies from the national constitution, to specific policies, to international agreements the country is a party to. For example, it was consistent with Eritrea's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of the year 2000 as it relates to biodiversity sustainable use and conservation). This project is fully congruent with the NBSAP given that this strategy current at the time of planning and design identified the creation and management of terrestrial and marine protected areas as one of the Eritrea's ten biodiversity strategic elements and called for immediate action for clarification of the legal responsibilities and procedures for gazettment of protected areas and formalize the process for establishing protected areas system appropriate for the current and future Eritrean conditions. Which, in essence, are the substance of the Project. It also supported the Draft Eritrean Environmental Proclamation and the National Environmental Management Plan. The National Environmental Management Plan identified three as priority areas for protection (Buri-Irrori, Semienawi and Debubawi Bahri and Bay of Bera'soli). The Project was also aligned with a special executive order of the MoLWE issued on banning of illegal logging, opening of new farms on steep slopes and valleys; prohibition of hunting of wildlife in the permanent enclosure, commercial farming, institutionalising of forest guards for the protected zones. Furthermore, in other thematic areas such as climate change, the Project was aligned to national policies such as the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA).

The Project supported the potential attainment of policy goals in integrated social development due to its alignment with policies current at the time of design, such as the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper through which government's commitment to poverty reduction and sustainable natural resources management is described.

There is alignment with multilateral environmental agreements the country is party to, such as the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species, Framework Convention on Climate Change, Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat desertification, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Convention on Migratory Species, as well as the Kyoto Protocol of the Climate Change Convention.

Relevance, therefore, relates to explicit and implicit national objectives to achieve sustainable management of the environment and natural resources with equity through sustainable development endeavours as can potentially be supported by protected areas management and actions. That is, besides policy consistency, there is another sort of relevance with which the Project was aligned. First of all, Eritrea did not have (and still does not) the necessary capacity and policy instruments to adequately manage protected areas in the country. Second, there is also a deficiency in the interlinkages of national – local policies in general, and this is manifested very clearly in the

relation between national arenas and local (for example at the zoba level) as it relates to natural resource management, including protected areas regulatory framework, policy, and management. And last, although very importantly, the country has dire issues in sustainable development (such as land management, erosion, forest management, marine resources, climate change adaptation, etc.) which the Project attempted to address conceptually within a modern agenda regarding protected areas. Although some stakeholders indicate, and document analysis indicates, that protected areas *per se* are not highly relevant issues in the overall sustainable development problems the country faces, the management of natural resources in a sustainable and equitable manner is an important and relevant issue within Eritrea. Therefore, a project that could have used PAs as tools for overall sustainable development (with a very strong link to social development) could have been highly relevant if executed compellingly.

Relevance in these sorts of assessments is also analysed in relation to IA's and GEF's strategic priorities. This is exemplified by alignment of the Project with the following spheres. The project was aligned with GEF Biodiversity Strategic Objective One: *Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems* and Outcome 1.1: *Improved management effectiveness of existing and new protected areas*. The Project was thoroughly aligned with UNDP and UN-system programmatic plans relevant at the time of design and implementation such as the UN Common Country Programme Action Plan for 2012-2016 (CPAP), CCA, and UNDAF and the UNDP Country Programme document. It was congruent with the considerations set by these documents through the Project's attempt to focus on increasing sectorial capacity for sustainable resources management, with the participation of primary resource users; the promotion of sustainable management of natural resources and renewable energy. Purposely, by leveraging UNDP support to the Government of the State of Eritrea effort's to (a) promote and use renewable and other energy sources; (b) ensure sustainable management of Eritrea's coastal, marine and island biodiversity; and (c) implement selected elements of the National Action Programme on Desertification.

Therefore, relevance is assessed on a six-point scale as *Satisfactory (S)* since it had no shortcomings regarding the significance of this intervention.

EFFECTIVENESS ()*

The effectiveness of a project is defined as the degree to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved. The valorisation of effectiveness is used as an aggregate for judgment of the merit or worth of an activity, (i.e., the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives proficiently, in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact).

In general terms, regrettably, the *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project* ends with very little effectiveness. After eight years of implementation, it cannot be said that the intervention's objective was effectively achieved, and project monitoring and indicator metrics as well as the processes that lead to this terminal evaluation are indicative of that. The explicit objective of the Project was: *to create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize*

the national protected area system. Given that no policy or robust institutional conditions were created, therefore the effectiveness was not strong at all.

The Project's actual outcomes/outputs were not commensurate with what was planned. The Project had its fewest achievements in the policy and institutional strengthening it was expected to have. And, therefore, this is the area where the least effectiveness is detected. Preparatory materials for policy and institutional strengthening and demarcation of some protected areas are the only concrete results at the end of this project in this sphere. Given this, Global Environmental Benefits are not expected to have been effectively achieved.

There have been a number of attainments in specific pilots and work with communities / villages. The indicator set is not sufficiently robust to capture effect, just outputs, but several of these were attained such as: afforestation, mangrove and other vegetation planting, construction of water dams and ponds, procurement of tools for improved biodiversity management, seedling production and nurseries rehabilitation, and so on, are some examples of attainments that did take place in effect as part of this intervention. Furthermore, there has been some capacity building activities and hiring of PA managerial/vigilance staff. Although the indicator set for these activities does not capture results per se, the true degree of impact of these activities is unknown, yet there is a general understanding by key actors that they are not major compared to what was expected and planned. However, it must be pointed out that in this sphere there have been a number of processes that the Project did indeed implement.

As indicated in the different assessments (CPD, portfolio, etc.) the weak effectiveness of the Protected Areas Project in Eritrea has had a weakening impact upon the whole operations of UNDP at the country – wide level. Although this is not exclusively the liability of this intervention, since a number of projects in the environmental UNDP portfolio experienced the same delays and the same sorts of challenges, this project contributed to lowering the effectiveness of country programming.

As seen in the different sections before this part of the TE report, the constraining factors are varied, such as socio-economic, political / institutional risks, lack of capacity to implement projects as this, weak capacity building on behalf of the implementing agency and donor to implement. Very importantly, however, is the country's lack of assimilation of the requirements to implement these sort of projects as planned and as the country signs on and commits to. Although there might be a degree of conceptual congruency between the Government and the Implementing Agency (UNDP in this case) as well as with the donor (GEF), the country does not correspond to the operational requirements (dedicated staffed PMU, joint decision – making structures with partners) nor to the harnessing of technical support to enhance capacity (support that could have come from external technical advisors, international specialised expertise, etc.).

The effectiveness of this project can be rated as *Unsatisfactory (U)* since it was substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings.

EFFICIENCY ()*

Efficiency is defined as the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible. Efficiency is a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results. This relates also as to the funding flow, time consumed to amend inefficient practices, as well as the extent to which a project extension could have been avoided. Although a different concept and matter which terminal evaluations are guided to assess separately, efficiency is closely related to effectiveness and therefore very much a large number of contributing and hindering factors are shared between the two criteria.

Several internal and external factors have greatly hindered efficiency of execution. There were enormous delays up to implementation mid-point and a virtual standstill after that. There was a lack of dedicated staff and lack of project management structure as outlined in the project document to operationalise implementation and provide technical expertise, and insufficient capacity to implement and effectively manage a project as this. Furthermore, there was resistance to structural joint proactive decision – making processes, and the resistance to harnessing technical and advisory expertise for the implementation of this Project have been several of the factors that have hindered efficient (and effective) execution. The monitoring and evaluation system was not used to ensure effective and efficient project management and no adaptive management to impel efficiency took place.

Changes in the IP occurred several times in the life time of this project. There were a number of internal mandates within the Government of the State of Eritrea that channelled these changes to a degree. This also affected efficiency since new and changing IP s in the course of implementation had to be driven or inducted to implement, monitor, execute, etc., which was time consuming and greatly delaying the processes that eventually took place under the umbrella of this project. This was a major challenge impending implementation, as indicated by monitoring documents as well as validated by key stakeholders consulted for this terminal evaluation.

At a composite level, although there have been attainments, these were achieved facing vast efficiency challenges. After eight years of implementation, the Project did not complete a great number of the planned activities and outputs and it did not meet expected outcomes in terms of achievement of global environmental and development objectives according to schedule, nor as cost-effectively as initially planned. Therefore, the overall ranking of efficiency is *Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)* since this criterion had severe shortcomings.

OVERALL OUTCOME ()*

Given the satisfactory degree of relevance and the unsatisfactory degree of effectiveness, the highly unsatisfactory degree of efficiency, the overall project outcome is ranked as *Unsatisfactory (U)*.

SUSTAINABILITY: FINANCIAL (), SOCIO-ECONOMIC (*), INSTITUTIONAL
FRAMEWORK AND GOVERNANCE (*), ENVIRONMENTAL (*), OVERALL LIKELIHOOD OF
SUSTAINABILITY (*)*

Sustainability of an intervention and its results are examined to determine the likelihood of whether benefits would continue to be accrued after the completion of a project. Sustainability is examined from various perspectives: financial, social, environmental, and institutional. Sustainability is built on the analysis of these four factors. Since as seen in the different sections of this terminal evaluation report) there has been very little advance at the results level, this assessment cannot exhaustively scrutinise sustainability (particularly in ratings) since the likelihood of sustainability (i.e., of accruing benefits of results after the impending completion of this Project) is a futile and highly theoretical exercise since no robust results materialised. That is, the sustainability analysis of what was not achieved cannot be made (therefore the ranking is *Unable to Assess –UA--*: the available information does not allow an assessment). However, an analysis is still made as to the factors that can aid or risk sustainability in the near future of whatever was achieved.

Financial sustainability: Financial risks to sustainability relate to the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the assistance ends. The main risk, therefore, would entail lack of appropriate funding for continued implementation of results, effects, etc. At the project level, the risk of sustainability from a financial perspective can be directly correlated to the inherent processes carried out by the Government of the State of Eritrea, the zobas and sub – national administration levels. That is, government reports co – financing for several activities within the Project’s framework. Furthermore, financial sustainability would need to be planned if policies are ultimately approved deriving from project products since they need a plan with multiple sources (not only government direct financing which for Eritrea as a developing country with a series of other priorities besides protected areas) if these are to be implemented. The second area that received financing from the Project are the pilot experiences in which engaged with communities were mobilised through cash for work schemes. The financial sustainability of these arrangements is tied to several factors such as to whether incentives for continuing the processes that villagers engaged with are there for these to continue after financing is finished (for instance, improvements in access to resources, value added, visible health benefits, etc.).

Socio-economic sustainability. A number of local stakeholders (particularly communities in buffer zones to the current and / or potential PA s) are likely to have or achieve an appropriate level of ownership of results, and – when this occurred– there is a commitment and interest in ensuring that the benefits of the project are maintained in relation to socio-economic aspects. This is consolidated when there is demonstration that the activities supported generate lasting benefits and incentives for the communities and where there was ownership of the processes and products the Project leveraged.

Institutional framework and governance. Sustainability as related to institutional frameworks and of governance was one of the explicit aspects that the Project should have showcased, yet it is also one of the weakest aspects. Again, although some processes did take place such as capacity building, protected area demarcation, and baseline studies and processes ostensibly

with the aim to derive in policy and strengthen institutional framework for protected areas governance, no concrete attainment of specific results have been made. That is, no policy has been approved as a result of the Project and –to a great degree tied to this-- no institutional framework for governance of protected areas has been made. Without the approval of normative nor of institutional instruments and guidelines, the sustainability of whatever process have been achieved is doubtful.

Environmental sustainability: Environmental risks to sustainability were identified even from design, basically through externalities outside of the horizon of this project. For instance, climate change impacts are still very much risks that the process and eventual further results in Eritrea faces. The country also faces other challenges and deeply alarming issues that do have direct impacts upon sustainable and equitable development, such as land degradation due to overgrazing and overuse of land, decreasing soil fertility, hydrological – related issues that need to be tackled in an integral and knowledge – based manner in order to promote environmental sustainability.

COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

Country ownership is a crucial factor in obtaining achievements and in engendering sustainability of any project. In the case of the *Integrated Semenawi And Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Protected Area System For Conservation Of Biodiversity And Mitigation Of Land Degradation Project* in Eritrea there is an array of processes, outcomes, and different developments within the Project that signal different levels of ownership.

On the positive side, anecdotal information, and qualitative information expressed through points of view articulated through personal interviews with stakeholders point to a sense of ownership regarding the intervention at zoba administration level and community levels. Government reports a moderate level of co – financing which in turn can symbolise a level of ownership.

However, the lack of agreement by the Government of the State of Eritrea regarding implementation as planned and the lack of uptake of products, neither for the creation and implementation of policies nor for the strengthening of the institutional framework, signal a degree of lack of ownership of the project as a whole and of the issues regarding protected areas the intervention was supposed to confront.

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Gender equality matters were acknowledged in design documents to some degree. Design acknowledges some of the differential needs that women have vis-à-vis natural resources as well as their developmental challenges in Eritrea. For instance, it is indicated in planning documents that women and women-headed households are some of the poorest of Eritrea's rural poor and that female-headed households have fewer household assets including livestock and access to natural resources. The participation of women in implementation is at times inserted in design (in some sex – disaggregated indicators particularly in expected Outcome 3). And although the Project was

catalogued as a GEN2 intervention, it does not have a gender analysis nor action plan inserted in planning documents. There was also a gender gap upon design since it was identified with only six percent participation of women in the design consultation process.

There were in implementation some positive inclusion of women in different processes such as in capacity building. Women were else direct beneficiaries of some processes and products, such as when dealing with seedlings or when receiving materials (such as energy efficient stoves).

Yet, the Project, as it is indicated in monitoring exercises, did not specifically focus on contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources; did not work on improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance; and did not target socio-economic benefits and services for women.

OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Given that GEF -- financed projects are key elements in UNDP country programming, project objectives and outcomes should align with UN country programme strategies as well as to GEF-required global environmental benefits. The Protected Area Project in Eritrea converged environment-related and other development programming, as well as its alignment with CPD and other such programming relevant to UNDP (as seen in the section on relevance above). This was evident as far as cross cutting and mainstreaming issues are concerned and it conformed to agreed priorities in the UNDP country programme documents. Although in some cases this was not an explicit focus of the Project dealt either implicitly, explicitly, or broadly with several specific cross-cutting issues besides gender.

Poverty Alleviation/Development. Some positive effects were sought which are aligned with poverty alleviation and sustainable development cross – cutting issues. For instance, promotion of sustainable agricultural and forestry practices as well as for providing opportunities for livelihood improvement. The inclusion of local people in the Project benefited from the inclusion of buffer zones in execution. Several stakeholders outside of government have indicated that, since local people lost access to what are now protected areas, equity and sustainability factors are benefitted by the inclusion of local communities actual proactive participation (not only in awareness raising processes which –in this case—do not have an indicator set to truly capture effect) but through providing or instructing upon incentives that leverage and support sustainable development practices in zones that influence protected areas.

Human rights. Although at times this has not been highlighted, neither by the Project nor by key stakeholders outside, information and documents point to a very important cross-cutting aspect of the Protected Areas Project has been an implicit human rights approach by working in post conflict resolution. Eritrea endured many years of armed conflict, during which there was a cumulative impact upon natural resources which, evidently, in turn affected access to natural resources for livelihoods by local population. The affected zones were largely degraded due to the protracted wars, causing a number of adverse impacts upon the communities in this area associated not only to the conflict per se but also to the environmental damage that this has caused. Reversing the

damage in a more sustainable manner has been an implicit yet valuable matter that can enhance cross – cutting issues such as trust-building and conflict resolution processes.

Additional expected key cross cutting issues related to mainstreaming other UNDP priorities (such as improved governance, capacity development, South – South cooperation, knowledge management) however did not materialise to the expected/planned levels.

GEF ADDITIONALITY

GEF-funded interventions are supposed to act as a catalyst for incremental benefits of GEF support. Specifically, if analysing via a scenario without GEF support, it is understood that Eritrea has not accrued great benefits from this intervention. Following definitions in GEF guidelines²⁰, the Project can only be said to fall under one of the six areas of GEF additionality as follows:

- *Financial Additionality*. GEF involvement has resulted in greater funding flows than would otherwise not have been the case from public or private sector sources.

The other processes defined as GEF additionalities (i.e., *Specific Environmental Additionality*, *Socio-Economic Additionality*, *Institutional / Governance Additionality*, *Legal/Regulatory Additionality*) either did not take place nearly at expected levels or they did not occur at all as a direct result of this project.

CATALYTIC ROLE / REPLICATION EFFECT

The potential catalytic role and replication effect of the Project was alluded to some degree in the planning documents. This was either as replication and catalytic effect of products or as expectations of replication in a broader sense. For instance, the Project Document states: “the project will set in place the national institutional framework, policies, and capacity required to support protected area management and replication”.

Therefore, there was a strong potential for replication and for catalytic effects if outcomes would have been fully achieved. Effects such *Innovation / production of public good*, *Demonstration and Upscaling* could have taken place, either as part of the Project or afterwards as sustainability and upscaling factors. Since outcomes and objectives were not achieved (either not achieved at all or not achieved at expected/planned levels) therefore, the potential catalytic role and the replication effect of the Project’s outcomes as well as its outputs remains theoretical.

PROGRESS TO IMPACT

There has been little progress towards potential long – term impacts strictly attributable to the Protected Area Project. Furthermore, for environmental stress reduction and environmental

²⁰ As stated in ‘An Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF’s Additionality’, <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/evaluative-approach-assessing-gef-s-additionality>

status change, the Project did not tally potential impact at the intervention's end following GEF's Core Indicators set (i.e., GEB) nor did it use the adequate and prescribed tracking tools to do so. Therefore, although it is doubtful concrete measurable impact as defined by GEF did occur as a result of this intervention since the indicator set monitoring points out that no perdurable impacts were met vis-à-vis the indicator set.

However, a qualitative analysis can be made of what effect the Project has had or did not have. An analysis of contributions to changes in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks, including observed changes in capacities (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information (laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc.) did not materialise, even with a qualitative analysis, let alone with a quantitative analysis as seen in the *Progress Towards Objective and Expected Outcomes* section before this report. However, there would have been a degree of potential impact if the achievements in these areas would have been made.

Although contributions to changes in socio-economic status (income, health, well-being, etc.) were shared as anecdotal inputs to this evaluation as a result of the pilot interventions (particularly those in Outcome 3), here again the indicator set does not fully capture the extent of (positive) changes in socio – economic status. The indicators set only captures the number of persons taking part in the Project yet it does not define how or to what extent they benefitted. Therefore, the indicators in this area deal with participation in the Project but not with progress to impact. The indications that beneficiaries and grantees indicate that in some cases productivity, health, etc, have been in some processes, signalling a potential progress to impact in this issue but they that cannot be captured fully with the metrics at hand and the Project did not generate other metrics to truly capture this sort of impact.

5. MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS

MAIN FINDINGS

- Although conceptually proper, the design of the Project was too ambitious and it did not fully consider the capacity of the country to implement, nor the in – country capacity of absorption of processes and outputs.
- Although design had a general strategic outlook, some of the tools (such as indicators) were not specific or robust enough to capture several aspects of change/results.
- The Project faced crucial numbers of management challenges. Mainly the lack of a project management unit, the lack of dedicated staff, and the lack of proactive decision – making structures (such as boards, committees, etc.).
- The resistance by government to include adequate expertise (from national and international consultants for instance) and to work with key stakeholders has greatly hindered the implementation processes and the technical results that were achieved. More impelling holistic results dealing with the dire sustainable development issues could have attained.
- Monitoring and evaluation processes were ineffectual since they did not occur at the expected level and were not of good quality for the most part, reporting was not results oriented. Most importantly—when monitoring took place in a proper manner such as with midterm review or in some aspects of the Project Implementation Reports, the results of these exercises were not adopted to properly channel implementation and correct the course regarding different sorts of issues.
- Individual successful pilots were implemented to some degree, effectively working with local stakeholders. While, also, several technical studies and plans were developed that, if they would have had uptake, they could have aided in setting up an institutional and policy framework to deal with sustainable management issues within a protected areas agenda in Eritrea.
- Much more attention was paid to terrestrial ecosystems than to marine ones, although the Project was designed to attend to both.
- The expected outcomes and objectives were not achieved as planned. Either totally not attained or only very partially achieved.

CONCLUSIONS

The *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation Project* in Eritrea after nearly slightly more than nine years of implementation. However, the attainment of results is not commensurate with the resources (not only funds but also time) that was inputted into this intervention.

The Project was greatly delayed in its first stages of implementation and it was virtually stalled until a few months ago. Baseline studies, plans and guidelines for biodiversity management, for protected areas' institutional frameworks and policies, demarcations of PA, etc., were attained. Yet they were not taken up by Government and no discernible changes in institutional framework and in policies took place. Pilot testimonial interventions to showcase sustainable land management and water management as well as forestry practices were also developed. Yet, no upscaling of these took place. Although also with difficulties, there are number of endeavours either in the pipeline or ready to be executed that, if this indeed takes place, could conceivably uptake the outputs and lessons from this project to sustain or even to further what has been attained thus far in Eritrea as part of this UNDP-implemented GEF-financed project.²¹

It is recommended specifically in the following sections, and broadly as a conclusion, that UNDP should take a more proactive role than what it has had so far as evidenced by this project. UNDP is a partner in implementation, not only a funnel for funds, and also overall responsible for these types of projects. It is noted that UNDP at several levels invested a lot of time and effort trying to negotiate with government to take several steps to improve implementation and the enabling environment for implementation, including suggesting to directly execute some of the project activities. However, none of this was possible. And, as a conclusion/lesson learned/and recommendation, it should be clear that these sorts of processes are not optional and that a government must engage with the terms it has signed upon initiating an intervention.

The value added of UNDP, most unfortunately, did not show through as it could have had, either due to governmental resistance or to lack of leverage/misinterpretation of UNDP roles in these sorts of endeavours.

Protected areas have progressed in terms of international knowledge and practice, moving from aspects which were only preservationist to concepts which very much consider the sustainable development factors that these involve and the benefits that they can provide to local populations

²¹ UNDP-supported projects (GEF 6, GEFTF and GEF LDCF): <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/9266> - Restoring Degraded Forest Landscapes and Promoting Community-based, Sustainable and Integrated Natural Resource Management in the Rora Habab Plateau, Nakfa Sub-zoba, Northern Red Sea Region of Eritrea; <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/6923> - Mainstreaming Climate Risk Considerations in Food Security and IWRM in Tsilima Plains and Upper Catchment Area. FAO project (GEF 7, GEFTF): <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/10789> - Building Community Based Integrated and Climate Resilient Natural Resources Management and Enhancing Sustainable Livelihood in the South-Eastern Escarpments and Adjacent Coastal Areas of Eritrea

in the search for equity. The latter are very much keen concepts that should be included in further programming considering the dire needs and issues (including sustainable land management, forestry integrated management, and marine / coastal ecosystem management) that protected areas administration can contextually provide to confront these matters in an integrated and equitable manner.

By all accounts, the greatest problem with the Project has been its lack of proper decision-making and guidance structures, and very importantly, the lack of a functional project management unit. This is not a problem exclusively with this project, nevertheless. All country-wide, CPD, and even other individual project's assessments testify that this is a country – wide issue in Eritrea. Therefore, this is a country – wide pattern that needs to be considered fully if and when other projects are to be implemented in Eritrea in this field. It must also, aligned with this, be contemplated that these individual project issues affect the portfolio as a whole and inductive approach should be taken to better implement projects that benefit Eritrea and Eritrean society in the future.

In line with this, several projects of this type were either stopped or never initiated due to this implementation and execution issues. It is unfortunate that, even when this was known, steps could not be taken to bypass these issues and impel implementation of a project that –if properly implemented and properly managed—could have had a good impact in confronting the many sustainable development issues the country faces and has been facing.

If new projects in the sustainable development field do take place in the near future, it would be highly desirable to use the baseline information and products this project has achieved to pivot further the field in Eritrea and to make sure that whatever was achieved (even at the product level) is not lost.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations here are provided for future programming since –most evidently–this project has ended. Although certainly these recommendations are based on findings for the Protected Area Project in Eritrea, they may also be applicable to other projects to other countries and in other circumstances. It should be emphasized that these recommendations are for future programming not for the Project evaluated since this intervention has evidently ended and for future programming in a broad sense (not only in Eritrea if other similar GEF funded projects are approved, but also in other contexts). The recommendations are based on the experience accrued on this project, and they are either recommend future actions to take and decisions to make in order to channel corrections or to reinforce in the future the lessons learned in executing this intervention. It is understood that UNDP attempted to implement a number of these recommendations throughout the life time of this project, yet this was not possible in this intervention. However, this does not nullify the validity of these recommendations for future projects if these are approved or other national contexts.

The recommendations for future programming are oriented to the donor and to UNDP as GEF – implementing agency.

- 1 From inception of a project there should be common understanding on GEF requirements, indicating to a country that these matters are not optional, they are prerequisites that they sign on to them as part of a partnership. In future project design a strong capacity building as well as monitoring and evaluating elements should be imbedded. Furthermore, obligatory terms for extensive inception phase of a project should be imbedded at design and executed as soon as a project starts, with comprehensive training for all the individuals named by government as ‘project staff’, for training on UNDP GEF Project Cycle Management, and plans for technical capacity building on thematic aspects of the project.
- 2 A country’s capacity or lack of capacity to implement a complex project is a key factor in implementation, and in obtaining or not concrete sustainable results. Therefore, even before planning, there should be efforts and deep focus on capacity building for implementation. These should include, inter alia, robust preparation in the form of trainings on implementation modality, institutional arrangement requirements, financial reporting, monitoring. National implementing agencies should be made available a toolkit with very specific information on the instruments that implementing this sort of project entails such as, reporting and monitoring templates/guidance, capacity on reporting on results and not on products/activities, financial reporting information, and specific information on how a project is to be implemented, the needs and requisites at inception stages. Donor and implementation agency should work with that country at project design and inception phases on these issues. Capacity to implement should be fostered in all aspects,
- 3 Conceptual design of a project should be greatly attuned to a country’s capacity to implement, making sure a needs assessment is accompanied by a capacity

assessment to implement and manage a project. These assessments should accompany whatever capacity building in implementation is put into place.

- 4 It should be made clear to a project that key components such as project management units, true decision-making structures such as boards and steering committees, and technical advisory services and /or technical staffing are not optional for these sorts of projects. That they are requisites and that they will not be implemented without them. Furthermore, it should be made clear all around that the role of UNDP as a GEF-implementing agency is much more than a channel of funds, that UNDP is the overall responsible party vis-à-vis the donor, that they are partners in these types of endeavours and therefore key actors in decision-making. Although of course all activities and decision-making take place within a project between the country and UNDP, the role of the agency and its value added should not be diminished.
- 5 A project should, therefore, and in an unnegotiable manner, have the proper structures and technical/administrative as well as decision-making capacity to implement and obtain outputs in the search of results that are sustainable and equitable. This should be a requirement and funding as well as other UNDP value added should be contingent upon a government complying with the signed agreements and overall management and decision – making accords signed by both parties.
- 6 When a country presents resistance to having a project management team due to a belief that this would create a cadre of privileged civil servants, the donor and implementing agency should work with the particular country to debunk this belief. As is done with donors and implementing agencies in different contexts, UNDP can work with the country to set up rules for hiring or seconding staff, such as project pay scales that are commensurate with national pay scales, guidance on contracting, decision-making, etc. When these sorts of resistance are identified, then UNDP should contemplate not engaging and indicate to governments that they should approach other GEF-agencies with different rules for support if they so wish.
- 7 Conceptual design should also incorporate what are crucial issues in sustainable development in a particular country, and what is part of true political will in obtaining results. For instance, crucial challenges and problem context in sustainable development should be incorporated fully and not only as minor pilots. These issues should be incorporated in knowledge – based large scale solutions, as a manner to confront complex and challenging issues in an integrated and large-scale manner.
- 8 Gender mainstreaming should be a part of planning and not added in later stages. Activities and projects should not only promote women's participation but should promote gender equity and women's empowerment. This could be highlighted and work in the future to help close gender gaps in access to and control of resources, which would improve women's participation and decision-making in natural resource governance, and be geared towards socio-economic benefits and services for women,

at all levels not only at the household level, considering that women are economic and social agents for change. It should be made clear to all parties involved that women's participation is not gender mainstreaming, and –that although participation is a positive expectation—this in and of itself is not mainstreaming nor is it enough of an approach to promote gender equity.

- 9 When a project does not advance and has very little to show after years of implementation, and/or it is stalled, workable actionable tools should be taken to channel execution to obtain results. Leveraging funding to whatever results have been truly obtained is a possible manner to advance and create incentives and leverage in-country for furthering results. For this UNDP should take a more active and proactive role in monitoring, ground truthing, and engaging in overall oversight.
- 10 When projects do not attain expected results, but do attain some products/outputs, every effort should be made to insert these in further programming or in other projects in order not to lose these outputs, the potential capacity that was built, and to strengthen other further projects with already accrued knowledge and products attained.
- 11 When accrued analysis of country programming, portfolio, and of other individual projects indicates that there is a generic issue with implementing projects within a particular country, other modes of implementation need to be explored. When the capacity to implement is simply not there, UNDP should strongly contemplate executing projects in direct implementation modality²² with a close partnership relationship with the country, in particular partnership with relevant line ministries and relevant agencies. This would allow the mobilisation of services, engender capacity at the national level, and further impel the attainment of results when the in – country circumstances are weak for implementation.
- 12 When the types of limitations are flagged, especially regarding engagement with governments, a broader portfolio approach should underline engagement.

²² It is noted that the government of Eritrea does not allow for this type of modality to be used. Indeed, some stakeholders have indicated that this approach would have been taken had it been possible. However, it should be noted that these recommendations are for future programming in general for UNDP-implemented GEF-funded projects, and not strictly circumscribed to Eritrea.

LESSONS LEARNED

There are a number of lessons learned that can be taken from the experiences derived from this project, particularly from the challenges it faced. As UNDP indicates, a lot of lessons have been learnt from this Project's failings, including lessons on UNDP's engagement with government.

Some of the most salient general lessons learnt based on these challenges are as follows:

- A country's capacity or lack of capacity to implement a complex project is a key factor in implementation, and in obtaining or not concrete sustainable results.
- If it is not clear to a country that several matters in implementation of projects, and that they sign on to are not optional, that they are requisites by the donor, then the country might not be engaged by UNDP. As a lesson, in these cases UNDP's role and value added will not be forthcoming and should guide a government to other GEF-agencies with other rules of engagement.
- Gender strategies if not developed early on in an inception stage they will not guide gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process. Gender mainstreaming is not to be understood just as participation but a tool for provoking equality.
- Indicators should be conceived not only as a guide to tallying achievements, but also as a driver to promote change. Therefore, they should be clearly results-oriented and not exclusively based on activities. Indicators, therefore, should be a valued metric not only for ecological factors but also for developmental factors that provide incentives for sustainable equitable practices.
- A project that integrates fully knowledge and capacity building in key sustainable development issues to a particular country is not only greatly more relevant than one that does not, it also engenders conditions for the intervention to obtain better, more equitable, and sustainable results.
- Although pilot interventions may have intrinsic value, without proper measures to upscale, replicate and otherwise implement results on a broader scale as applicable, they will remain just as testimonial activities.
- Without the proper operational and technical architecture (managerial, decision-making, technical) a project is fated for failings.
- Projects that do not impel an implementation agency's value added dissipate intrinsic value of an intervention and risk failings as well as diminish a project's value for money principles.

6. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR) for UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects

Location	Asmara with fieldwork to the project sites for the national consultant and home based for the international consultant (<i>Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area</i>) Further, this will likely include teleconference engagement with the international counterparts/consultants, UNDP CO Programme Officers and UNDP-GEF RTA.
Job Title	Consultancy service to conduct Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the full-sized UNDP supported, GEF financed project
Experts Required	National in Monitoring and Evaluation in Landscape Restoration, Climate change and Water Resources Management to conduct Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the full-sized UNDP supported, GEF financed project
PRODOCs to be reviewed:	<i>PIMS 4816: Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation</i>
Type of Contract	IC (Individual Contract)
Language Required	English
Expected Start Date	10 August 2022
Expected Duration of Assignment	30 Working Days out of which max 10 days will be for fieldwork trips to the project sites The total working days is spread over 3 months (08 August – 15 November 2022).
Supervisors:	Adam Habteab, ISDU/UNDP Programme Specialist adam.habteab@undp.org ; Alternate: Meala Ghebremedhin Mehari, UNDP Programme Analyst meala.ghebremedhin.mehari@undp.org Louis Kuukpen, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative (DRR/P/O) louis.kuukpen@undp.org

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the TE of the *full-sized* project titled *Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation (PIMS 4816)* implemented through the *Ministry of Land, Water and Environment as Executing partner*. The project started on the 27th January 2014 and is in its 8th year of implementation. The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document [Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#).

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Eritrea is part of both the Eastern African Highlands and Horn of Africa global biodiversity hotspots.

The nation benefits from a highly diverse range of globally unique and significant terrestrial ecosystems. These include: East Sudanian savannah, Eritrean/Ethiopian highland forests, Eritrean/Ethiopian highland grasslands and woodlands, Eritrean/Ethiopian xeric grasslands and shrub, Somali Acacia-Commiphora bush and thickets, and Sahelian Acacia savannah.

Biodiversity conservation received limited support in the initial years after independence of the country, as the government focused on addressing pressing human development issues. The government has however, recently refocused its development program with a view to improving environmental management, but the country has no national framework for the management of Protected Areas. The project seeks to address this gap on the operationalization of a National Protected Area system. It will do so by establishing the necessary institutional framework and capacity for management, as well as gazetting and operationalizing management in the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area cluster, which will provide the initial heart of the PA system.

The project addresses the three primary barriers restricting Eritrea from establishing an effective conservation system to safeguard globally significant biodiversity. By removing the existing capacity barrier, the GEF investment will help ensure the existence of the skills and knowledge required to establish, manage and expand conservation areas into the future. Rural communities will be empowered with the tools required to maintain and enhance their quality of life, improving the maintenance of ecosystem services while addressing identified biodiversity threats. The GEF alternative will allow for conservation to be based upon a spectrum of land and marine use designations, designed to give policy makers the tools required to conserve large, ecologically viable areas.

This project's goal is to ensure the integrity of Eritrea's diverse ecosystems in order to secure the viability of the nation's biodiversity and its objective is to create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system. The project objective will be achieved through three outcomes:

- (1) Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system;
- (2) Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system;
- (3) (3) Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to restore/maintain ecosystem services required to support achievement of protected area conservation objectives.

The project targeted areas are Northern Red Sea and Southern Red Sea zobas and the duration of the project is 84 months with a total budget of US\$ 16,328,000 distributed as follows: GEF Trust Fund (US\$ 5.878million), UNDP Regular Resources (US\$ 3million), Government of the State of Eritrea (in cash US\$

4.05million and in-kind US\$ 3.4million). The project is aligned with UNDP Country Programming Document (CPD) for the State of Eritrea 2013-2016 anchored on the GOSE-UN Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF) of 2013/2016 on environmental sustainability aligned with the national development priorities in terms of National capacity development; Sustainable livelihoods; and Environmental sustainability.

The Ministry of Land, Water and Environment is the GEF focal point of the GoSE and is providing support to the implementation of the project. The executing agency is the Forestry and Wildlife Authority. The Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Marine Resources and Forest and Wildlife Authority are the main implementing partners responsible for the achievement of the project outcomes and outputs. UNDP is the GEF implementing agency for this project. The UNDP CO in Eritrea provides support in implementation by maintaining the budget and expenditures, recruitment of project personnel, experts and carrying out procurement. UNDP CO also monitors the project's implementation and achievement as well as ensures proper use of UNDP/GEF funds.

The project is designed with very special consideration given to ensuring that benefits are equitably distributed across gender lines. Approximately thirty percent of households in Eritrea are headed by women. Most women in the rural areas are engaged in low-paying manual labour. Female-headed households have fewer household assets including livestock.

3. TE PURPOSE

The TE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments. The TE report comes at a critical juncture aligned with the project closure and the Country Office evaluation plan. The TE will evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, performance and success of the project including the sustainability of results and its exit strategy. The TE will also document and analyse lessons learned and best practices for future programming. The TE will also include the review of relevant information and documentations prepared during the initial phase of preparation including PIF, UNDP initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, reports, Annual reviews (PIRs), budget, national documents and any other materials the evaluator may consider useful. The TA will also provide an assessment of the methodology and recommendations in a report.

4. TE APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The TE team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e., PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP) the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The TE team will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

The TE team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office(s), the Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful TE. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to *Ministry of*

Land, Water and Environment, Wildlife and Forestry Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Marine Resources and the Zoba Administrations, key experts and project beneficiaries. Additionally, the TE team is expected to conduct field missions to *(Northern Red Sea and Southern Red Sea zobas (regions), including the following project sites Buri, Irrori, Hawakil.*

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the TE team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The TE team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the TE team.

The final report must describe the full TE approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE TE

The TE will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). The TE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the [Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects](#).

The Findings section of the TE report will cover the topics listed below. A full outline of the TE report's content is provided in ToR Annex C.

The asterisk “(*)” indicates criteria for which a rating is required.

Findings

I. PROJECT DESIGN/FORMULATION

- National priorities and country driven ness
- Theory of Change
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
- Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
- Assumptions and Risks
- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project design
- Planned stakeholder participation
- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Management arrangements

II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
- Project Finance and Co-finance
- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E

(*)

- Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

III. PROJECT RESULTS

- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
- Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
- Sustainability: financial (*) , socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- GEF Additionality
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- The TE team will include a summary of the main findings of the TE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
- The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.
- The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions. When possible, the TE team should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation.
- It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women.

The TE report will include an Evaluation Ratings Table, as shown below:

ToR Table 2: Evaluation Ratings Table for

***Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for
Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation (PIMS 4816)***

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating ²³
M&E design at entry	
M&E Plan Implementation	
Overall Quality of M&E	
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Overall Project Outcome Rating	
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	
Socio-political/economic	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	

6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the TE will be approximately *30 working days* over a time period of *3 months* starting on *(29 July 2022)*. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

²³ Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU),

2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA
SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT-
TERMINAL EVALUATION

Timeframe	Activity
(22 July 2022)	Application closes
(30 July 2022)	Selection of TE team
(10 Aug – 12 Aug 2022)	Preparation period for TE team (handover of documentation)
(15- 19 Aug 2022) 03 days	Document review and preparation of TE Inception Report

(22-23 Aug 2022) 02 days	Finalization and Validation of TE Inception Report; latest start of TE mission
(25 Aug – 05 Sep 2022) 10 days	TE mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits, etc.
(09 Sep 2022)	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings; earliest end of TE mission
(12 Sep - 21 Sep 2022) 08 days	Preparation of draft TE report
(22 – 26 Sep 2022)	Circulation of draft TE report for comments
(28 Oct 2022)	Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report
(31 Oct 2022)	Preparation and Issuance of Management Response
(03 Nov 2022)	Concluding Stakeholder Workshop (optional)
(10 Nov 2022)	Expected date of full TE completion

Options for site visits should be provided in the TE Inception Report.

7. TE DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	TE Inception Report	TE team clarifies objectives, methodology and timing of the TE	No later than 2 weeks before the TE mission: <i>(by 23 Aug 2022)</i>	TE team submits Inception Report to Commissioning Unit and project management
2	Presentation	Initial Findings	End of TE field mission: <i>(by 09 Sep 2022)</i>	TE team presents to Commissioning Unit and project management
3	Draft TE Report	Full draft report <i>(using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C)</i> with annexes	Within 3 weeks of end of TE mission: <i>21 Sep 2022)</i>	TE team submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP
5	Final TE Report* + Audit Trail	Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE <i>(See report template in ToR Annex H)</i>	Within 1 week of receiving comments on draft report: <i>(by 28 October 2022)</i>	TE team submits both documents to the Commissioning Unit

*All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO's quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.²⁴

8. TE ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing the TE resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's TE is the UNDP Country Office in Eritrea.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the TE team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the TE team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

9. TE TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent evaluators will conduct the TE – one team leader (international consultant) and one national consultant from Eritrea. The team leader will be responsible for the overall design and writing of the TE Report. The team expert will lead the consultative meetings and the collection of data and documentation and work with the project team.

The evaluator(s) cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the project document), must not have conducted this project's Mid-Term Review and should not have a conflict of interest with the project's related activities.

The team leader will be expected to coordinate the execution of the assignment and will be responsible for submission of deliverables as well as liaison with UNDP Eritrea Country Office and the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment.

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

Required Skills and Experience

Team Leader (International Consultant):

EDUCATION

- Master's degree in Environmental or natural resources management, park/protected area management, wildlife conservation/management, or other closely related field (20%)

²⁴ Access at: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml>

EXPERIENCE

- Relevant experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies for at least 10 years, out of this at least 5 years with GEF or GEF-evaluation; (15%)
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios; (10%)

-
- Demonstrated understanding and a working experience of at least 7 years on issues related to biodiversity conservation and in particular Protected Areas Management Systems; (20%) Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis; (10%)
 - Competence in adaptive management, as applied to biodiversity conservation and land degradation focal areas; (10%)
 - Experience working in the Horn of Africa and in particular Eritrea will be an added advantage; (5%)
 - Project evaluation/review experience within United Nations system will be considered an asset. (5%)

LANGUAGE

- Excellent command of English and communication skills (5%)

National Consultant

EDUCATION

- Master's degree in biodiversity conservation, ecology, environmental or natural resource management, park/protected area management, wildlife conservation/management, or other closely related field. (20%)

EXPERIENCE

- Relevant experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies for at least 5 years; (10%)
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios; (10%)
- Demonstrated understanding and a working experience of at least 5 years on issues related to biodiversity conservation or environment/natural resource management; (20%)
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis; (10%)
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to biodiversity conservation and land degradation focal areas; (10%)

- Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations will be an added advantage; (5%)
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset; (5%)

Language

- Excellent command of English and communication skills (5%)

10. EVALUATOR ETHICS

The TE team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The evaluator must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

11. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- 10% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 50% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft TE report to the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%²⁵:

²⁵ The Commissioning Unit is obligated to issue payments to the TE team as soon as the terms under the ToR are fulfilled. If there is an ongoing discussion regarding the quality and completeness of the final deliverables that cannot be resolved between the Commissioning Unit and the TE team, the Regional M&E Advisor and Vertical Fund Directorate will be consulted. If needed, the Commissioning Unit's senior management, Procurement Services Unit and Legal Support Office will be notified as well so that a decision can be made about whether or not to withhold payment of any amounts that may be due to the evaluator(s), suspend or terminate the contract and/or remove the individual contractor from any applicable rosters. See the UNDP Individual Contract Policy for further details:

https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Individual%20Contract_Individual%20Contract%20Policy.docx&action=default

- The final TE report includes all requirements outlined in the TE TOR and is in accordance with the TE guidance.
- The final TE report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other TE reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

12. APPLICATION PROCESS²⁶

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

- a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#)²⁷ provided by UNDP;
- b) **CV** and a **Personal History Form** ([P11 form](#)²⁸);
- c) . If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Costs related to transportation for fieldwork, printing of reports and workshops shall be organized and covered by UNDP/MLWE.

- d) The recruitment process will be made through desk review of shortlisting candidates from the UNDP Country Office National consultant roster using their recorded CVs in the depository. The evaluation will be made based on technical scoring.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal: Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 100%. The applicant receiving the Highest Score that has also accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

Evaluation method and Award of Contract for the International Consultant

²⁶ Engagement of evaluators should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP
<https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPRoot.aspx>

²⁷

<https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

²⁸ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

A qualified international Consultant shall be selected based on the GPN Roster as described below:

- i) Candidates will be shortlisted from the GPN Roster by requesting their CVs to the platform
- ii) Candidates will be technically evaluated based on the GPN roster given criteria and ranked
- iii) Only candidates that have achieved a minimum of 62 points of 100 points of the technical criteria will be deemed technically qualified
- iv) No financial proposals No financial proposals are expected from the potential candidates as remuneration/professional fees are already stated in the candidates' profile on the GPN roster.
- v) Payments are based upon output, i.e., upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR.
- vi) The shortlisted consultants may be asked for a presentation over skype/telephone prior to the final selection.
- vii) The contract will be awarded to the successful candidate following completion of all evaluation including negotiation (only in exceptional cases), if necessary.
- viii) The candidate with the Highest Score and who has passed UNDP's General Terms and Conditions https://procurement-notice.undp.org/view_file.cfm?doc_id=201192 will be awarded the contract.
- ix) The successful candidate should sign a contract with the UNDP to undertake the assignment. x) The contract and its terms and conditions are non-negotiable.

Evaluation Method and Award of Contract for the National Consultant

A qualified national consultant shall be selected based on UNDP Selection procedure as described below:

- i) Applicants will be shortlisted from the UNDP CO National Roster depository through desk review.
- ii) Only those applications which are responsive and compliant (including with all required attachments) will be evaluated.
- iii) Shortlisted candidates will be evaluated according to the technical scoring method – where the qualifications (max 100 points) will be weighed at 100%
- iv) Only candidates that have achieved a minimum of 62 points of 100 points of the technical criteria will be deemed technically qualified.
- v) No financial proposals are expected from the potential candidates as remuneration/professional fee shall be based on UNDP's National professionals' daily fee (max. being US\$250) depending on the seniority, experience, education qualification.
- vi) Payments are based upon output, i.e., upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR.

- vii) The shortlisted consultants may be asked for a presentation over skype/telephone prior to the final selection.
- viii) The contract will be awarded to the successful candidate following completion of all evaluation including negotiation (only in exceptional cases), if necessary.
- ix) The candidate with the Highest Score and who has passed UNDP's General Terms and Conditions https://procurement-notice.undp.org/view_file.cfm?doc_id=201192 will be awarded the contract.
- x) The successful candidate should sign a contract with the UNDP to undertake the assignment.
- xi) The contract and its terms and conditions are non-negotiable.

13. TOR ANNEXES

- ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework
- ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE team
- ToR Annex C: Content of the TE report
- ToR Annex D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template
- ToR Annex E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators
- ToR Annex F: TE Rating Scales
- ToR Annex G: TE Report Clearance Form
- ToR Annex H: TE Audit Trail

ANNEX 2: RATING SCALES

Terminal Evaluation Rating Scales	
Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance	Sustainability ratings:
<p>6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings</p> <p>5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings</p> <p>4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings</p> <p>3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings</p> <p>2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings</p> <p>1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment</p>	<p>4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability</p> <p>3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability</p> <p>2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability</p> <p>1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability</p>

ANNEX 3: EVALUATION QUESTION MATRIX (EVALUATION CRITERIA WITH KEY QUESTIONS, INDICATORS, SOURCES OF DATA,
AND METHODOLOGY)

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project relate to the GEF focal area and has it been designed to deliver global environmental benefits in line with relevant objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project includes the relevant GEF outcomes, outputs and indicators The project makes explicit links with global goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document GEF Focal Area Strategies PIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the project relevant to the needs and priorities of the country and target groups/beneficiaries? Were they consulted during design and implementation of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project design includes explicit links (indicators, outputs, outcomes) to the development and environmental needs of target groups and beneficiaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project have an explicit Theory of Change? If so, is the project's Theory of Change relevant to addressing the development challenge(s) identified Did the project's theory of change clearly articulate assumptions about why the project approach is expected to produce the desired change? Was the ToC grounded in evidence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulation of assumptions and set up of ToC? The Theory of Change clearly indicates how project interventions and projected results will contribute to the reduction of the major barriers The Theory of Change clearly identifies beneficiary groups and defines how their capabilities will be enhanced by the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document PIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent was the project in line with the national development priorities, the country programme's outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the SDGs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project design includes explicit links (indicators, outputs, outcomes) to the development and environmental policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document National development strategies, energy policies, Nationally Determined Contributions, etc. PIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project's results framework relevant to the development challenges and are results at the appropriate level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project results framework adequately measures impact The project indicators are SMART Indicator baselines are clearly defined and populated, and milestones and targets are The results framework is comprehensive and demonstrates systematic links to the theory of change The result framework is adequately ambitious vis-à-vis resources, timeliness, and feasibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document PIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Stakeholder Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project appropriately aligned with relevant UN system priorities (UNDP) including thematic objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project's results framework includes relevant thematic outcomes and indicators from the UNDP Strategic Plan, the UNDAF, UNDP CPD and other relevant corporate objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document UNDP CPD, UNDAF, SP Corporate documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the relevant stakeholders been adequately identified and have their views, needs and rights been considered during design and implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stakeholder mapping and associated engagement plan includes all relevant stakeholders and appropriate modalities for engagement. Planning and implementation have been participatory and inclusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder mapping/engagement plan and reporting Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) Stakeholder Consultation Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Stakeholder Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the interventions of the project been adequately considered in the context of other development activities being undertaken in the same or related thematic area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Partnership framework has been developed that incorporates parallel initiatives, key partners and identifies complementarities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) Stakeholder mapping/engagement plan and reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Stakeholder Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have relevant lessons learned from previous projects informed the design, implementation, risk management and monitoring of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons learned are explicitly identified and integrated into all aspects of the Project Document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document PIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project design adequately identify, assess and design appropriate mitigation actions for the potential social and environmental risks posed by its interventions? Risk management? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk and risk management identification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the project achieved its output and outcome level objectives? What changes (norms, management structures, capacity enhancement) have been made and –if so—how were these changes captured? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has met or exceeded the output and outcome indicator end-of-project targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) Monitoring Reports Beneficiary testimony Interviews Pilot Data Analysis/Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff, (current and former), stakeholders and beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent did the project contribute to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national development priorities? To what extend did project contribute to program /national priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has met or exceeded the output and outcome indicator end-of-project targets related to SDGs, UNDP strategic plan, and/or national development priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) Monitoring Reports Pilot Data Analysis/Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff, (current and former)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended country programme outputs and outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factors that have hindered or that have aided in implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Committee Meeting Minutes Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews of stakeholders

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were lessons learned captured and integrated into project planning and decision-making? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons learned have been captured periodically and/or at project end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Committee Meeting Minutes Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were there opportunities to adapt implementation processes to conditions presented during project execution? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptive management measures aligned and / or implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Committee Meeting Minutes Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were there issues with communication which affected effectiveness? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication between and among stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project planning documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review Interviews with stakeholders, particularly project staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well were risks (including those identified in the Social and Environmental Screening (SES) Checklist), assumptions and impact drivers being managed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clearly defined risk identification, categorization and mitigation strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATLAS Risk Log M&E Reports Midterm review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were relevant counterparts from government and civil society involved in project implementation, including as part of the project steering committee? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steering committee participation included representatives from key institutions in Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Committee Meeting Minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the project contributed directly to any changes in legislation or policy in line with the project's objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation has been developed or enacted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation Policy Documents Action/Implementation Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the project carefully considered the thematic issues related to human rights/gender? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project results framework has incorporated gender equality considerations, as relevant. The project prioritized the most vulnerable as key beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Mainstreaming Plan if any Project Document Stakeholder analysis and engagement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the impacts of the COVID-19 epidemic upon project implementation and effectiveness? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were delays in implementation. Modality of activities changed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation reports Project communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of documents Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project adjust dynamically to reflect changing national priorities/external evaluations during implementation to ensure it remained relevant? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project demonstrated adaptive management and changes were integrated into project planning and implementation through adjustments to annual work plans, budgets and activities Changes to AWP/Budget were made based on mid-term or other external evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Work Plans Steering Committee Meeting Reports Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) Stakeholder/beneficiary testimony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any changes to the project's planned activities were approved by the Steering Committee Any substantive changes (outcome-level changes) approved by the Steering Committee and donor, as required Any changes based on midterm review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Project Results Framework Midterm review 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent were the Project results delivered with the greatest value for money and/or in a timely manner? To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value for money analyses, requests for information, market surveys and other market intelligence were undertaken for key procurements. Procurement is done on a competitive basis, where relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement Evaluation Documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff and government stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was co-financing adequately estimated during project design (sources, type, value, relevance), tracked during implementation and what were the reasons for any differences between expected and realised co-financing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-financing was realized in keeping with original estimates Co-financing was tracked continuously throughout the project lifecycle and deviations identified and alternative sources identified Co-financiers were actively engaged throughout project implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Work Plans Steering Committee Meeting Reports Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the level of implementation support provided by UNDP adequate and in keeping with the implementation modality and any related agreements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support to the Executing Agency and project team were timely and of acceptable quality. Management inputs and processes, including budgeting and procurement, were adequate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP project support documents (emails, procurement/recruitment documents) Quarterly Reports Annual Reports (PIR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff, UNDP personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the M&E plan been well-formulated, and has it served as an effective tool to support project implementation? Financial oversight? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The M&E plan has an adequate budget and was adequately funded The logical framework was used during implementation as a management and M&E tool There was compliance with the financial and narrative reporting requirements (timeliness and quality) Monitoring and reporting have been at both the activity and results levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document M&E Plan AWPs Quarterly Narrative Reports Interview reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews with project staff and government stakeholders

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:/human rights? How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment in particular and human rights in general? Cross – cutting issues.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project analyse gender issues, gender differential matters? Did the project include gender equality matters in its design/implementation? To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach? To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in women participation? Were there any unintended effects? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence and use of a monitoring and reporting system/activities with gender differentiated data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Reports Monitoring and evaluation reports and data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project have a gender strategy? Did the project work on issues related to women's empowerment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender strategy Gender responsive strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights: To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged women and other disadvantaged and marginalised groups benefited from the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of not or disadvantaged or marginalised groups included as project beneficiaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews

• Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the intervention have a well-designed and well-planned exit strategy? How is sustainability ensured through the design of the project? How are inclusion, ownership, capacity, and empowerment included in order to generate sustainability factors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exit strategy includes explicit interventions to ensure overall sustainability of relevant activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Exit Strategy 	Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs and outcomes? To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exit strategy includes explicit interventions to ensure financial sustainability of relevant activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Exit Strategy Risk Log 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the legal frameworks, policies, and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exit strategy identifies relevant socio-political risks and includes explicit interventions to mitigate same 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Exit Strategy Risk Log 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have key stakeholders identified their interest in project benefits beyond project-end and accepted responsibility for ensuring that project benefits continue to flow? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key stakeholders are assigned specific, agreed roles and responsibilities outlined in the exit strategy MOU(s) exist for further activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Exit Strategy Risk Log MOU(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there ongoing activities that may pose an environmental threat to the sustainability of project outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exit strategy identifies relevant environmental risks and includes explicit interventions to mitigate same 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Exit Strategy Risk Log 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the negative impacts of COVID-19 hinder the sustainability of project gains? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indications of COVID-19 impacts thus far. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents/ Interviews

Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status? Effects: Has the project had any effects, in particular sustainable effects?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there verifiable improvements in ecological status/reductions in ecological stress, linked to project interventions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has contributed directly to improved ecological conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Reports/PIRs Annual Reports (PIR) Monitoring Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Interviews
<p>Has project sustainable effects? Has project contributed directly changes in norms, policies, capacity aligned with objectives? Did project achieve its intended outcome?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation Approved legislation Policy Documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action/Implementation Plans Tracking tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review of Documents Stakeholder interviews (government)

ANNEX 4: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS WITH GUIDANCE QUESTIONS

Interview Details -Fiche for each interview / Group Discussion Translated into English as Appropriate

Place:	Date:	Stakeholder Name:	Male/ Female
Type of Institution			

- This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.
- Also, to prevent mistrust of the evaluation process and to guarantee anonymity, the interviews will not be recorded nor videos made of them.
- The interviews will take place between the interviewee(s) and the stakeholders. No one from UNDP nor from the project can participate in the interviews.
- The interviews can be grouped, but they are not to be grouped by different institutions. That is, government institutions can be interviewed together, staff can be interviewed together, beneficiaries can be interviewed together. But in no way can these institutions or stakeholders be mixed in one interview.
- These review's guiding questions operationalize the review questions regarding achievements and criteria. It is mainly a guide for interviews with relevant stakeholders at different institution. That is, the questionnaire is an overarching tool with questions that would be used suitably for each stakeholder (project staff, government, local actors). Therefore, they must be chosen for each stakeholder
- The survey as presented therefore asks general guiding questions that would be tailored to each relevant stakeholder interviewed and become more specific in the application of the guidance questions themselves and as part of counter questions.

Presentation of the evaluator(s) to the interview.

- *Introduction to the evaluation for each of the stakeholder.*
- *Indicate mandated evaluation, not an audit.*
- *Evaluation of the project not of the stakeholder nor of the stakeholder's institutions.*
- *Assure and respect the rights of stakeholders, including their right not to participate if they so wish and their right to not answer any of the questions that they either have not knowledge of or do not feel comfortable answering.*
- *Assure the participation of all when a group interview takes place.*
- *Assure that gender considerations are considered when carrying – out the interviews.*
- *Use appropriate understood language for every stakeholder, avoiding technicalities or technical language when it is understood that practitioners of beneficiaries might not be versant in this sort of language, avoiding jargon.*

Guidance Questions

- 1 What have been the project's achievements (at the output, outcome, results levels)? What effects or impacts (change) have occurred due to the project?
- 2 What has the project meant for Eritrea? How has the country benefitted from this project?
- 3 Are achievements clearer or more advanced for some expected outcomes than others?
- 4 How were these results achieved?
- 5 What issues/challenges/problems that have arisen that hindered the achievement of results or made it difficult to achieve? At what stages of implementation?
- 6 Were the relevant country representatives, from government and civil society, as well as the private sector, NGOs, CBOs, Associations, etc., involved in the project preparation and execution? What has been the effective role of guidance of the project's committees, etc.?
- 7 How is the work with the communities carried out? With other stakeholders (NGOs, private sector, etc.?)
- 8 How did the partnership and management arrangements between different institutions work and when they did not?
- 9 What have been the projects weaknesses, if any?
- 10 What are the probabilities that results would be sustained over the medium/long term?
- 11 Has the project promoted gender equality and women's empowerment? If so, how?
- 12 What would be your recommendations for the future, keeping in mind sustainability?
- 13 Comments by national evaluator to be shared with international evaluator as relevant:

NOTES

ANNEX 5: OBSERVATION GUIDE

OBSERVATION DETAILS

Place: _____ Date: _____ Actors _____

OBSERVATION OF PARTICIPATION/APPROPRIATION/INTERACTION

participation: Active participation in the Project?

Yes - No

participation: There is a perceived appropriation of objectives, results, etc. of the Project?

Yes - No

participation: Is there a perceived improvement in capacities?

Yes-No

INTERACTION BETWEEN ACTORS

interaction: Is there any perceived collaboration between actors?

Yes-No

FACILITIES

facilities Were field facilities deployed, investments, practical demonstration implementation? How appropriate have they been? Sustainability?

Yes-No

ANNEX 6: NATIONAL CONSULTANT'S FIELD MISSION ITINERARY

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

See no	Zoba	Sub zoba	towns/Villages	Relevance to the PA
1	Anseba	Keren	Adi-Tekelezan	Begessa , Kuruh
3	Semenawi Keih Bahri	Gelealo	Gelealo, Bordeli	Buri Irrori Plains
4	Semenawi Keih Bahri	Ghindae	Asmara- Gahtelay route: Sey - Dichi, Nefassit (Debre Bizen Monastery), Embatkall, Ghindae Dongolo Laelay, Dongolo Tahtay, Gahtelay and Adi-Shuma)	
5			Asmara Weki Bahri route: Anagule, Vibio, Embeleko, Mehnaq, Fishey, Mrara (villages within the PA)	
6			Weki-Zager-Fil-Fil Selemuna route: Mogoe, Fil-Fil-Selemuna)	
7	Maekel	Asmara	Adi Nefas, Beleza, Durfo, Sehegrine)	
8	Semenawi Keih Bahri	Serejeka	Quazien, Adi-Zein, Zager and Weki) areas on the buffer zone of the PA	
9	Semenawi Keih Bahri	Berik	Tselot, Biet-Gergish,	
10	Semenawi Keih Bahri	Ghindae		

ANNEX 7: LIST OF NATIONAL/ INTERNATIONAL CONSULTED STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR
CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

Name	Institution
Meala Ghebremedhin Mehari	UNDP Country Office - Eritrea
Adam Habteab	UNDP Country Office - Eritrea
Phemo Karen Kgomotso	UNDP – GEF Regional Technical Advisor (RTA)

ANNEX 8: LIST OF PROJECT-RELATED STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED AND REPORTED BY THE NATIONAL EVALUATOR

INTEGRATED SEMENAWI AND DEBUBAWI BAHRI-BURI-IRRORI- HAWAKIL PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM FOR CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND MITIGATION OF LAND DEGRADATION PROJECT- TERMINAL EVALUATION

Anseba	Keren	Dawit Kebreab	MoLWE (DoE) representative
Anseba	Keren	Kesete Tesfatsion	FWA
Anseba	Keren	Gebremeskel Tewolde	MoA/MoLG, Anseba region, PA project coordinator
Maekel	Asmara	Futsum Hagos	FWA
Maekel	Asmara	Asrat Haile	MoA/MoLG, Anseba region, PA project coordinator
Maekel	Asmara	Eng. Mesfun	MoA
Maekel	Asmara	Abraham Daniel	Director of Agricultural Infrastructure Department
		Tesfai Ghebreselassie,	Minister of Land, Water, and Environment
		Kubrom Sebhata	Project Management Team
		Tedros Kubrom,	Project Management Team
Maekel	Durfo	Local Communities	Project beneficiaries and partners to deliver Output 3.3 in the Green Belt area
Maekel	Asmara	Sami Mohammed,	MoMR
Maekel	Asmara	Kubrom Andemichael	MoLWE
Maekel	Asmara	Mussie Robel	FWA
Maekel		Local Communities	5 residents of the villages of Adi-Nefas, Quazien, Azien, Zager and Weki
Maekel	Asmara	Estifanos Bein,	Ministry of Land Water and Environment
NRSZ	Massawa	Tewolde Kelati	Ministry of Marine Resources
NRSZ	Massawa	Tekele Mengistu	MoMR
NRSZ	Massawa	Adonay Huruy	MoMR
NRSZ	Massawa	Kebreab Tekle	A/head land and agriculture,
NRSZ	Massawa	Huruy Yohannes,	Head of Soil and Water Conservation ; Agriculture and Land
NRSZ	Gelealo	Ahmed Mohammed Abdulla	RFWA, Gelealo
NRSZ	Gelealo	Ahmed Seid	Bordeli/Gelealo
NRSZ	Gelealo	Mohammed Idris	Engel village
NRSZ	Gelealo	Ali Osman	Wekerton village

ANNEX 9: LIST OF CONSULTED DOCUMENTS

- 4816_Eritrea PA System PPG IP DOA_14 Aug 2012
- 4816_Eritrea PA System Signed IP_20 Aug 12
- 4816_GEFID 4559_GEF BD SO1 TT_METT_Sept 2013
- 4816_GEFID 4559_GEF BD SO1 TT_METT_Sept 2013 Final Draft
- Adaptation Programme_UNDP Eritrea AF_draft 1_Fobissie et al_13 Jan 2019
- CEO Endorsement Letter
- CEO_Endorsement_Request_FINAL
- Climate Change AF TE May 2019
- Eritrea 10-14-11 - CEO PPG Clearance Letter
- Eritrea CCA 04092016
- Eritrea CPD 2022-26 Final
- Eritrea EBD Project PPG Version 3 With Responses to GEFSEC Review Of 27th June
- Eritrean Gov. Commitment to Co Finance GEF FSP_June 2013
- Final TE Report Eritrea SLM01032017
- Project Mid Term Review Report
- PA Meb-Final 2019-07-17
- Pas Project Briefing Note with Project Maps
- PID_4816_Including All Comments_8 Aug 2012
- PIF Document Revised FINAL
- PIF Document Revised FINAL
- PIMS 4816 - Final MTR REPORT Eritrea PA Project Dec 22 17
- PIMS 4816 - Final MTR REPORT Eritrea PA Project Dec 22 17
- PIMS 4816 CEO Endorsement Request PTA Cleared 28Oct2013
- PIMS 4816 ERITREA UNDP GEF DOA 27 FEB 2014
- PIMS 4816 LOE And Cofinance Letters
- PIMS 4816_GEF ID 4559_Midterm_Metts_Eritrea_2017_Final 1
- PIMS 4816_GEF ID 4559_Midterm_Metts_Eritrea_2017_Final 1
- PIMS 4816_Inception_Workshop Report
- PPG Request Document
- PRODOC- PIMS 4816 Eritrea-- 26 FEB 2014

- PRODOC_Eritrea_SLM - FINAL- 04 May 2008
- Project Document
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2016.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2017.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2018.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2019.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2020.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2021.
- Signed PRODOC- PIMS 4816- Eritrea
- UNDP. Note to File. Change of IP. 2019.
- UNDP_Eritrea CPD 2022-26 Final
- UNDP-Strategic-Plan-2022-2025

ANNEX 10: EVALUATION CONSULTANT AGREEMENT FORM

Evaluators:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form²⁹

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of International Consultant: Maria ONESTINI

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at Buenos Aires, Argentina on August 10th 2022

Signature:



²⁹ www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct

ANNEX 11: TE REPORT CLEARANCE FORM

Terminal Evaluation Report for <i>(Project Title & UNDP PIMS ID)</i> Reviewed and Cleared By:	
Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____
Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____