

Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

GEF Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Executing Entities: UNDP Kyrgyzstan, UNOPS, UNECE

GEF International Waters Focal Area; GEF Project ID: 5310

UNDP PIMS: 5167; UNDP Atlas Project ID: 00091092 ; UNDP Atlas Award ID: 00081980



(Source: Zoi Environment Network)

Terminal Evaluation Report
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Acronyms

APR	Annual Project Report
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DIM	Direct Implementation
GEF	Global Environment Facility
Ha	hectares
KM	Kilometers
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSP	Medium-size Project
MTR	Mid-term Review
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PB	Project Board
PIMS	Project Information Management System
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USA	United States of America
USD	United States dollars

I. Executive Summary

Table 1 Project Summary Data

Project Title:	<i>Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins</i>			
GEF Project ID:	GEF ID #5310		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>at completion (Million US\$)</i>
Agency Project ID:	UNDP PIMS #5283, UNDP Atlas Award ID: 00081980; UNDP Atlas Project ID: 00091092	GEF financing:	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Country:	Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan	IA/EA own:	\$300,000	\$492,000
Region:	CIS	Government:	\$1,920,000	\$1,920,000
Focal Area:	International Waters	Other:	\$3,953,970	\$4,263,970
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	IW-5:	Total co-financing:	\$6,173,970	\$6,675,970
Executing Entity:	UNDP / UNOPS	Total Project Cost:	\$7,173,970	\$7,675,970
Other Partners involved:	UNECE, Government of Finland, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	ProDoc Signature (date project began):	May 5, 2015	
		Operational Closing Date:	December 31, 2018	

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OVERVIEW

1. The “*Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins*” project is a GEF-funded project, (hereafter referred to as the “Chu-Talas Project”). The project officially commenced May 5, 2015 with the UNDP Prodoc signing; the project had received GEF CEO Approval September 22nd, 2014. The project was originally scheduled for completion May 5, 2018, but received a no-cost extension, and was completed December 31, 2018. The project is in the International Waters focal area of the GEF. The Chu-Talas Project has GEF funding of \$1.00 million USD, and planned co-financing of \$6.17 million USD, for a total project cost of \$7.17 million USD. The project is implemented under UNDP’s Direct Implementation (DIM) modality, with the UNDP Kyrgyzstan Country Office as the responsible Executing Entity. As the implementing agency, UNDP is also responsible for oversight of delivery of agreed outputs as per agreed project work plans, financial management, and for ensuring cost-effectiveness. At policy and strategic level, the Project Board served as a technical advisory committee to guide the project.

2. Chu-Talas Project Description: As stated in the Project Document, the project Chu-Talas Project’s **objective** is “*Strengthening transboundary cooperation and promoting integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas River Basins, and empowering the Water Commission of Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic*”. The project is structured in three functional components, that correspond to the planned outcomes. The three components consist of thirteen outputs:

- **Component 1:** TDA including climate scenario analyses to inform adaptive integrated management of the Chu-Talas shared water resources
 - Output 1.1: Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) of the Chu and Talas River Basins
 - Output 1.2: Scenarios of Water Futures with a focus on climate variability and transboundary issues
 - Output 1.3: Seminars for stakeholders on adaptive management

- **Component 2: Building the foundation for broadened and improved bilateral water cooperation**
 - Output 2.1: A Strategic Action Program (SAP) formulated and approved by the countries at Ministerial level (Horizon 5 years) addressing main issues of transboundary concern and containing concrete actions (legal, policy, institutional reforms, and investments).
 - Output 2.2: Establishment of Inter-ministerial committees in each recipient country, or strengthening of existing inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms
 - Output 2.3: A stakeholder involvement, gender mainstreaming and outreach communication strategy
 - Output 2.4: Revised Statutes of the Commission/Secretariat and establishment of a joint Environmental Expert Group under the Commission with clear mandate and work plan.
 - Output 2.5: Twinning and experience sharing exchange with another transboundary basin, strategy for replication of best practices in the Chu Talas basins
 - Output 2.6: Project web page (following IW LEARN standards) created on the Commission website, international waters experience notes with best practices from the project produced, use of GEF 5 IW tracking tool and participation at GEF IW conferences and other IW LEARN activities ensured. 1% of the project total budget will be used for these types of activities as required by GEF.
- **Component 3: Strengthening capacity of water resources monitoring in the Chu and Talas River Basins**
 - Output 3.1: Assessment of present situation of surface and groundwater quantity and quality monitoring in the two basins
 - Output 3.2: Training on water quantity monitoring and data exchange
 - Output 3.3: Training and capacity building for joint water quality monitoring
 - Output 3.4: Formalization of agreement on coordinated monitoring and data exchange in the two basins

3. The project strategic results framework, with expected indicators and targets, is included in the project document (pp. 31-35). The project results framework represents the primary foundational element for assessing project results (progress toward the expected outcomes and objective) and effectiveness.

4. According to GEF and UNDP evaluation policies, terminal evaluations are required for all GEF funded medium-size projects (MSPs), and the terminal evaluation was a planned activity of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan of the Chu-Talas Project. As per the evaluation Terms of Reference (TORs) the terminal evaluation reviews the actual performance and progress toward results of the project against the planned project activities and outputs, based on the standard evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability. The evaluation assesses progress toward project results based on the expected objective and outcomes, as well as any unanticipated results. The evaluation identifies relevant lessons for other similar projects in the future, and provides recommendations as necessary and appropriate. The evaluation methodology was based on a participatory mixed-methods approach, which included two main elements: a) a desk review of project documentation and other relevant documents; and b) interviews with key stakeholder conducted during the evaluation field mission to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as additional interviews conducted by phone. The evaluation is based on

evaluative evidence from the project development phase through July 31, 2018, when the terminal evaluation data collection phase was completed. The desk review was begun in April 2018, and the evaluation field mission was completed April 9th - April 17th, 2018.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS ON THE MAIN EVALUATION CRITERIA

5. With respect to **relevance**, the project is considered **relevant / highly satisfactory**, as the project clearly supports priorities for both countries, as demonstrated by the many previous years of cooperation, based on the 2000 agreement and 2006 establishment of the Chu—Talas Water Commission. Both the project design and strategy were appropriate and relevant. The project also conforms with GEF international waters focal area strategies and priorities for GEF-5.

6. Project **efficiency** is rated **satisfactory**. The project's management (execution), partnership approach and communication, stakeholder engagement, financial management, and reporting are strong points. The project was able to produce the expected results within the planned budget, and was a reasonable least-cost approach for producing the TDA and SAP. Considering that the operational time of the project was actually less than three years, the project did an admirable job of getting so much work completed. The project also had good stakeholder engagement. The MTR reported that civil society and the private sector had not been significantly involved, but the TE did not find that this has been a significant issue, or that it has been sufficiently addressed since the MTR. The project had an excellent partnership approach, with very good cooperation and coordination with key partners including UNECE, OSCE, CAREC and others. One weak point was that the external communication strategy was not executed in a timely manner, in terms of the project having an adequately functioning website early in project implementation; having a well-developed website serving key communication purposes could have improved the efficiency of some aspects of the project.

7. The project team is highly professional and has demonstrated good planning, reporting, and financial management. Project management costs were 8.8% of GEF funding, less than originally planned. The eight month no-cost extension did not negatively affect the cost-effectiveness rating, as project management costs did not significantly increase. The eight-month no cost extension meant the project's actual implementation period more closely corresponded to the originally planned project implementation period of three years, since the project manager was not in place until late-August 2015. Project management and execution is rated satisfactory. Financial management procedures are in-line with international norms, and conform to UNDP policies and procedures. Project co-financing exceeded planned co-financing, with 108.1% of co-financing reported as of the terminal evaluation, and actual non-tracked co-financing is likely to be higher. UNDP also provided excellent oversight as the implementing agency, as indicated by timely and comprehensive reporting, good MTR management response, good financial management support, and good guidance on gender mainstreaming.

8. The Chu-Talas Project has achieved the project objective and nearly achieved the two planned outcomes. The project's **effectiveness** is rated **satisfactory**. The project activities and outputs strongly contributed to progress toward the planned outcomes and objective. The project strategy of focusing on technical aspects was very effective in getting the project to the finish line, and building trust and cooperation among stakeholders.

9. Project **results / achievement of overall outcomes** is rated ***moderately satisfactory***. The project met 6 of 12 results indicator targets, and partially met or is uncertain to meet the remaining 6 targets. Key results achieved with project support include:

- TDA completed and approved
- Climate change scenarios developed and discussed
- Seminars / trainings on climate change adaptation completed
- Twinning approach with Sava river commission implemented
- Ad-hoc training program completed
- Joint water quality assessment report likely to be completed and approved

10. Other expected results that remain to be finalized include:

- SAP approval pending
- More harmonization done on water quality than water quantity
- Data exchange policy pending
- WGE established, but official amendments to CTWC not completed
- Website / communications work a bit slow

11. The GEF Evaluation Office and UNDP require a rating on project impact, which in the context of the GEF international waters focal area, relates to actual change in environmental status (e.g. improvements in water quality, improvements in aquatic ecosystems, improved ecosystem services related to water, etc.). The impact rating is not highly relevant in the context of the Chu-Talas Project, since the project was a “first stage” project that focused on the TDA/SAP, and not on field-based interventions or implementation of the SAP. Therefore, according to the intentional design and strategy of the project, the project is likely to contribute to long-term impacts, but only long after project completion. However, an impact rating is provided as required for the terminal evaluation, and within the life of the project impact is rated as negligible.

12. There are some risks to the sustainability of the project results but overall **sustainability** is considered ***moderately likely***. Much related to the sustainability of the project depends on the ultimate formal government approval and adoption of the SAP by the Government of Kazakhstan and Government of Kyrgyzstan. If the governments agree on the SAP, then it is fully expected that additional funding for implementation of the SAP will be available from the GEF and other donors. Therefore, financial sustainability is considered moderately likely. Institutional and governance sustainability is also considered moderately likely. The Chu-Talas Water Commission (CTWC) continues functioning (and will after the project) but implementation of the SAP will require a new institutional and legal form or status of the CTWC; the project supported steps in this direction, but it remains a work in progress. The CTWC Working Group on Environment was established and met regularly during the project, but it has not yet been institutionalized within the CTWC, and it is uncertain how or if it will continue to effectively function after the project. The harmonization approach between the two countries is also not yet institutionalized; there has been progress on harmonization of some methodological approaches to water monitoring, but ultimately SAP implementation is likely to require more harmonization of laws and

regulations. Socio-economic sustainability is considered moderately likely, as the project had good stakeholder engagement and country ownership within the water management sector; national ownership at the highest political levels has not yet been confirmed. Environmental sustainability is not applicable / likely, as the project results were not field-based. Environmental risks to Chu-Talas have not yet been addressed; while climate change remains a significant concern.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. The recommendations of the terminal evaluation are listed below, with the primary target audience for each recommendation following in brackets.

14. **Key Recommendation 1:** Ideally, the project stakeholders, supported by UNDP, should hold a donor coordination meeting prior to the July inter-governmental meeting between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan at which the SAP will be discussed. The purpose of such a meeting would be to concretely confirm funding opportunities for SAP implementation. If it is not feasible to organize such a meeting (since any formal meeting would need to be organized by the respective ministries of foreign affairs from each country) then UNDP should continue proactive dialogue with key potential SAP funding partners in order to be able to communicate to the government in specific terms how much funding, and from which sources, will be available to support SAP implementation if the SAP is approved. This could include a draft PIF for GEF-funding of SAP implementation. [UNDP]

15. **Key Recommendation 2:** The CTWC Secretariat should be established as a legal entity prior to SAP implementation, most likely as a legal entity in each country, to facilitate implementation of SAP activities. Effective operation would need to include at least one salaried staff person in each country. [Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan, UNDP]

16. **Key Recommendation 3:** Since the project manager has moved to a position at another organization at the initially planned completion of the project, if it is at all practically feasible, UNDP should immediately contract additional staff on a short-term contract to support the consolidation and finalization of project results. This is particularly critical with respect to support for promoting and pushing the SAP within the governments prior to the July inter-governmental meeting between the two countries. Rapidly contracting such short-term experts could be a challenge administratively, but there are experts available who have been involved with the project, who could make valuable contributions, such as the volunteer staff of the CTWC Secretariat in each country. [UNDP Kyrgyzstan Country Office]

17. **Key Recommendation 4:** If the SAP is jointly approved by the governments, UNDP and the GEF should be prepared to provide support for SAP implementation as rapidly as possible so as not to lose momentum and sustainability of current project actions. This would include, for example, drafting a PIF for GEF funding even before SAP approval. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat]

18. **Key Recommendation 5:** The SAP, as it is now, is not sufficiently detailed and specific to be directly implementable. This current document is coherent, logical, and very useful for reaching joint agreement between the countries. If the SAP is approved, during the project preparation phase for a GEF-funded SAP implementation project, additional work should be done to develop a more detailed SAP document that could be effectively implemented. This would necessarily include additional rounds of stakeholder consultation with water resource users,

private sector stakeholders, and civil society. This should also include a strengthened analysis of complementarities and synergies with other ongoing related initiatives (such as the establishment of river basin councils in Kyrgyzstan), and with national plans and strategies. [UNDP, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

19. **Key Recommendation 6:** The SAP implementation should include further work on harmonization policies and legislation for IWRM between the countries, perhaps starting with regulations related to water monitoring. [UNDP, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

20. **Key Recommendation 7:** Implementation of the SAP should include pilot activities for community-based water management, and in particular community-based monitoring, as an awareness raising tool, but also for additional data collection. Other excellent opportunities for practical activities for SAP implementation include media training, and study tours to examples of watershed-based Payments for Ecosystem Services schemes. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

21. **Key Recommendation 8:** SAP implementation will also require increasing the availability of spatial data, and the use of spatial data for mapping. This may require some attention to and investment in digitizing existing historical data. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

LESSONS

22. The below lessons have been documented through the terminal evaluation process:

- a) Political challenges can be mitigated to an extent by focusing on scientific technical issues, and getting mutually agreed data: *“We have increased the trust from implementation when we jointly took the samples, exchanged the data, it increases the trust in the labs, increases the trust in the data we receive. This is the main lesson we learned in the framework of implementation of this project. We should trust the results of the analysis.”*
- b) Forcing national stakeholders to be the ones to actually do the analysis and write the documents increases national ownership of the products and the process, which helps achieve the long-term objective.
- c) It is very helpful and beneficial if the same individuals are involved throughout an extended process such as TDA/SAP development.
- d) Ensuring the involvement of all relevant stakeholders can help smooth political approval procedures, but political approval requires ongoing coordination, communication and support throughout the process.
- e) Training sessions can have a beneficial secondary effect of building relationships and trust between participants; this is especially important in a transboundary project: *“Except in the official part of the CTWC where the format is different, those trainings make people come closer, those trainings created trust. Those trainings really helped the two sides to come closer, and that was really important.”*
- f) Well-timed and targeted international support can be critical for successfully enabling national stakeholders to move forward with their own process: *“When we just initiated and created [the SAP] group, we honestly did not understand: why did we need it? and what type*

of SAP is it? Then [the international consultant] gave us good training. We had international level consultants. We started understanding what we are doing and where are we going and what type of product we wanted to create.”

- g) Even for professional scientists, training is most effective when it is interactive and engaging: *“All of our work meetings, our trainings, they were unusual – if compared to other trainings and meetings. One thing is just to be given the material, the other thing is interactive games, we participated in the process, everyone participates, and the material is not forgotten. It is very useful, we gained huge experience, and keep learning from each other.”*
- h) Data availability and quality can be a critical issue, especially for GEF IW projects where there is not typically sufficient time to conduct original studies and research, and therefore it is necessary to rely on historical government data. While data is considered “fact”, there can be a delicate balance to using data in a way that will be acceptable for all stakeholders.
- i) It is helpful if project communication tools, such as websites, are implemented as early as possible.
- j) Sharing experiences with other similar river basins can be very valuable; there are also limitations as the specific situation and context can still vary significantly (Sava river is mainly navigation issues; Chu-Talas is irrigation).
- k) 36 months is minimum amount of time to complete TDA, SAP, and have them politically approved.
- l) The GEF and UNDP should pay close attention when dealing with the development of IW freshwater projects to ensure that are designed to realistically address surface water, or ground water or both.

CHU-TALAS PROJECT TERMINAL EVALUATION SUMMARY RATINGS TABLE

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	Rating	2. Implementation & Execution	Rating
M&E Design at Entry	MU	Quality of UNDP Implementation	S
M&E Plan Implementation	MS	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	S
Overall Quality of M&E	MS	Overall Quality of Implementation / Execution	S
3. Assessment of Outcomes	Rating	4. Sustainability	Rating
Relevance	R / HS	Financial Resources	ML
Effectiveness	S	Socio-political	ML
Efficiency	S	Institutional Framework and Governance	ML
Overall Project Outcome Rating	MS	Environmental	L
5. Impact	Rating	Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	ML
Environmental Status Improvement	N		
Environmental Stress Reduction	N		
Progress Toward Stress/Status Change	N	Overall Project Results	MS

Standard UNDP-GEF Ratings Scale

Rating Criteria	Rating Scale
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant (R) • Not-relevant (NR)

<p>Effectiveness, Efficiency, Results, GEF principles, other lower-level ratings criteria, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings in the achievement of objectives in terms of effectiveness or efficiency • Satisfactory (S): There were minor shortcomings in the achievement of objectives in terms of effectiveness or efficiency • Moderately satisfactory (MS): There were moderate shortcomings in the achievement of objectives in terms of effectiveness or efficiency • Moderately unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings in the achievement of objectives in terms of effectiveness or efficiency • Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings in the achievement of objectives in terms of effectiveness or efficiency • Highly unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe shortcomings in the achievement of objectives in terms of effectiveness or efficiency
<p>Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely (L): Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes expected to continue into the foreseeable future • Moderately Likely (ML): Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained • Moderately Unlikely (MU): Substantial risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on • Unlikely (U): Severe risk that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained
<p>Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant (S): The project contributed to impact level results (changes in ecosystem status, etc.) at the scale of global benefits (e.g. ecosystem wide, significant species populations, etc.) • Minimal (M): The project contributed to impact level results at the site-level or other sub-global benefit scale • Negligible (N): Impact level results have not (yet) been catalyzed as a result of project efforts
<p>Other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable (N/A) • Unable to assess (U/A) • Not specified (N/S)

II. Chu-Talas Project Terminal Evaluation Approach

23. The terminal evaluation is initiated by UNDP, in line with the monitoring and evaluation plan of the project. The evaluation was carried out as a collaborative and participatory exercise, and identifies key lessons and any relevant recommendations necessary to ensure the achievement and sustainability of project results.

A. Terminal Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

24. The **purpose** of the evaluation is to provide an independent external view of the progress of the project at its approximate completion, and to provide feedback and recommendations to the GEF, UNDP, and project stakeholders that can help strengthen the project and ensure its success following completion.

25. The **objective** of the terminal evaluation is to:

- Assess progress toward achievement of expected project results;
- Identify and document lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP and GEF programming globally; and
- Make recommendations regarding specific actions that should be taken to enhance the results of the project.

26. The **scope** of the evaluation is as outlined in the Terms of Reference. The evaluation compares planned outcomes of the project to actual outcomes and assesses the actual results to determine their contribution to the attainment of the project's overall objective. It also evaluates the efficiency of project management, including the delivery of outcomes and activities in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness and cost efficiency as well as features related to the process involved in achieving those outputs and the impacts of the project. The evaluation also addresses the underlying causes and issues that contributed to targets not adequately achieved.

27. The evaluation covers the following aspects of the project, integrating the GEF's Operational Principles, as appropriate:

- Project design, development (including decision-making and gender mainstreaming), risk assessment / management, and preparation
- Stakeholder ownership and drivenness
- Project timing and milestones
- Implementation and execution arrangements, including GEF Agency oversight
- Stakeholder participation and public awareness
- Communications
- Partnership approach
- Work planning, financial management/planning, co-financing
- Flexibility and adaptive management
- Progress toward results outcomes and impacts
- Gender integration and mainstreaming in implementation
- Sustainability
- Catalytic role: Replication and up-scaling

- Monitoring and evaluation (project and results levels) compliance with UNDP and GEF minimum standards, including SMART criteria for indicators
- Lessons learned
- Impact and Global Environmental Benefits

28. In addition, the UNDP requires that all evaluations assess the **mainstreaming of UNDP programming principles**, which include:

- UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)/Country Program Action Plan (CPAP) / Country Programme Document (CPD) Linkages
- Poverty-Environment Nexus / Sustainable Livelihoods
- Disaster Risk Reduction / Climate Change Mitigation / Climate Change Adaptation
- Crisis Prevention and Recovery
- Gender Equality / Mainstreaming
- Capacity Development
- Rights-based Approach

29. Evaluative evidence will be assessed against the main UNDP and GEF evaluation criteria, as identified and defined in Table 1 below:

Table 2. GEF and UNDP Main Evaluation Criteria for GEF Projects

Relevance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time. • The extent to which the project is in line with the GEF Operational Programs or strategic priorities under which the project was funded. • Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.
Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it will be achieved.
Efficiency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible; also called cost-effectiveness or efficacy.
Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. • In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short to medium-term outcomes, and longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects and other local effects.
Sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion: financial risks, socio-political risks, institutional framework and governance risks, environmental risks • Projects need to be environmentally, as well as financially and socially sustainable.

B. Principles for Design and Execution of the Evaluation

30. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the GEF M&E Policy,¹ which includes the following principles for evaluation: Credibility, Utility, Impartiality, Transparency, Disclosure, and Participation. The evaluation will also be conducted in line with United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards.² The evaluation provides evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluation follows a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, and with the UNDP project teams. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the guidance outlined in the UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results,³ and in accordance with the evaluation guidance as outlined in the GEF M&E Policy.

C. Evaluation Approach and Data Collection Methods

31. The evaluation methodology was based on a participatory mixed-methods approach, which included two main elements: a) a desk review of project documentation and other relevant documents; and b) interviews with key stakeholder conducted during the evaluation field mission to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as additional interviews conducted by phone. The evaluation is based on evaluative evidence from the project development phase through July 31, 2018, when the terminal evaluation data collection phase was completed. The desk review was begun in April 2018, and the evaluation field mission was completed April 9th - April 17th, 2018.

32. The TE evaluation matrix, describing the indicators and standards applied with respect to the evaluation criteria, is attached as Annex 3 to this report. The interview guide used to provide a framework for qualitative data collection is included as Annex 4 to this evaluation report. The standard UNDP-GEF rating tables and rating scale applied is included as Annex 5 to this report. The list of individuals interviewed is included as Annex 6 to this report.

33. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the guidance outlined in the UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results,⁴ and in accordance with the evaluation guidance as outlined in the GEF M&E Policy.

34. The collection of evaluative evidence was based on two primary data collection methodologies:

1. Desk review of relevant documentation (list of documents reviewed included as Annex 7 to this report).
2. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders

35. As such, the terminal evaluation process involved four main steps, some of which overlapped temporally:

1. Desk review of project documentation
2. Organization of field mission and completion of key stakeholder interviews

¹ See <http://www.thegef.org/gef/Evaluation%20Policy%202010>.

² See http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp?doc_cat_source_id=4.

³ See <http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook>.

⁴ See <http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook>.

3. Analysis of data, follow-up to address any data gaps, and drafting of the evaluation report, then circulation to evaluation participants for additional feedback and input
 4. Finalization of the evaluation report and follow-up with the project team and stakeholders
36. Key stakeholders targeted for interviews were intended to represent the main project stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries, and those most knowledgeable about various aspects of the project. The evaluation also sought to include a representative sample covering all different types of stakeholders, including national and local government, civil society, local communities, and the private sector.

D. Limitations to the Evaluation

37. All evaluations face limitations in terms of the time and resources available to adequately collect and analyze evaluative evidence. For the Chu-Talas Project terminal evaluation, there were no additional notable limitations. Wherever possible the evaluation has tried to draw on multiple data sources for triangulation of evaluation findings. Altogether the evaluation challenges were manageable, and the evaluation is believed to represent a fair and accurate assessment of the project.

III. Project Overview

A. Chu-Talas Project Development Context

38. This section contains a brief description of the project development context. It draws from the project document, which contains more extensive and detailed information.

39. The Chu and Talas basins, shared by Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, are located in the northern part of the Tien Shan Mountain and the eastern part of the Turan lowland. The Chu basin covers 62.5 thousand km², of which 26.6 thousand km² (42.5%) is located in Kyrgyzstan and 35.9 thousand km² (57.5%) in Kazakhstan. The Chu river is 1067 km long, of which 336 km in Kyrgyzstan. The Talas basin covers 52.7 thousand km², of which 11.43 thousand km² (21.7%) is found in Kyrgyzstan and 41.27 thousand km² in Kazakhstan. The Talas river is 661 km long of which 217 km in Kyrgyzstan. The climate within the basins is continental and depends on the altitude (2400 m - 600 m in Kyrgyzstan and 600 m - 500 m in Kazakhstan). Both basins are characterized by a broad diversity of geographic zones such as alpine and mountain-steppe (Kyrgyzstan), and mountain-steppe, desert-steppe and desert zones (Kazakhstan).

40. More than one million people populate the Zhambyl oblast of Kazakhstan within the two basins. In Kyrgyzstan close to 1.2 million people reside in three regions of the Chu basin and more than 220 thousand people live in the Talas oblast. The population density in the Chu basin is much higher compared to the Talas basin. Mining, food and feed industry and construction are dominating industries in both basins. In Zhambyl oblast chemical plants and fertilizer production contribute significantly to the local economy. Chui oblast is one of the most developed industrial regions of Kyrgyzstan, with important food production and processing, construction and other industries. After a long period of a declining economy, there has lately been a slight increase in industrial production and intensive development of the service sector.

41. Agriculture is the most important sector of the economy in the basins. Crop production from irrigated land and pastures, flood plains and hayfields is steadily increasing over the recent years and it accounts for more than two thirds of the total agricultural production.

42. The irrigated area in the Chu basin of Kyrgyzstan is about 330 thousand hectares in the Chui oblast and about 33 thousand hectares in Naryn and Issyk-Kul oblasts. In the Kyrgyz part of the Talas basin there is 115 thousand hectares of irrigated land. The total area of irrigated land of the two basins in Kazakhstan is about 231 thousand hectares in Zhambyl and 1.3 thousand hectares in the South-Kazakhstan oblast.

43. The total but marginally utilized hydropower potential is estimated to 360 MW in the Chu basin and 354 MW in the Talas basin. The exception is a cascade of small hydropower plants in the Chui Valley of Kyrgyzstan. The plain terrain of Kazakhstan provides no opportunities for the construction of hydropower facilities, and electricity is supplied mainly by the Zhambyl Thermal Electricity Power Station. The power supply of Chui and Talas oblasts in Kyrgyzstan comes from hydropower stations in the lower Naryn cascade, as well as from the Bishkek Combined Heat and Power Plant.

44. The environment in the basin is impacted by human activities - water pollution and excessive extraction, eutrophication, altered flow regimes, drainage and dumping of solid waste.

45. To a considerable extent the basins have lost their natural aquatic ecosystems, including wetlands and tugay forests. Steppe, desert and semi-desert ecosystems of the foot of the mountains and valleys, tree and shrub vegetation along the rivers are exposed to strong degradation from grazing. Cutting of trees and shrubs, collection of medicinal plants and flowers, unregulated hunting, fishing, etc., also lead to destruction of habitats. Deforestation is considered to be the most challenging process threatening the sustainability of the ecosystems.

46. There are three common types of erosion in the two basins - water, grazing and wind erosion. Degradation of the structure of the topsoil may reduce its productivity up to 40%. Starting in 1985, the area of degraded land has increased significantly and is now more than two thirds of agricultural land deemed susceptible to degradation. Agricultural soils have a low organic content of usually 1% to 3%.

47. Key causes of depletion and degradation of aquatic ecosystems in the Chu and Talas basins are:

- Intensive exploitation of natural watercourses, often associated with inappropriate use of water;
- Climate change, causing accelerated melting of glaciers and snowfields;
- Contamination of land, ponds and reservoirs;
- Reduction of forested areas and bush land;
- Unregulated mining causing degradation along rivers, siltation and water pollution;
- Discharge of untreated wastewater into surface water bodies and the environment;
- Uncontrolled disposal of municipal solid waste; and
- Unregulated storage of mining wastes.

48. The main problems associated with the negative impact of water in the Kyrgyz part of basin include water erosion on slopes, mudflows and landslides in the valleys, riverbed deformation during floods, as well as groundwater flooding of infrastructure.

49. A decrease of environmental flows can be noted in the lower reaches of the Chu and Talas rivers in Kazakhstan. This leads to degradation of wetlands, lakes and ponds as well as floodplains, meadows and hayfields. Degradation and desertification of land is common on the northern plains.

50. Average water flow in the Talas and Chu rivers is 27.5 m³/sec and 70 m³/sec, respectively. Chu and Talas basins water resources are generated from surface water, groundwater, and return water. According to studies the average annual water flow of the Chu and Talas rivers is 6.64 km³ and 1.62 km³, respectively. Water agencies of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan agree on the need to develop more precise estimates as a basis for the further planning of water allocation between the countries.

51. The quality of surface water resources in both basins is generally assessed as not fully satisfactory with periodic events of pollution over maximum allowable concentrations. Concentration of previously unusual substances - phenol, zinc, copper, fluoride, and other petroleum products is causing some concerns. Water pollution is caused by irrigated agriculture, livestock breeding and wastes, mining and processing industries as well as transport. Mining and industry wastes, in particular when containing radioactive and toxic substances, represent a serious threat.

52. The water consumption for irrigated agriculture in both basins depends primarily on the annual rainfall and the use of irrigated land. Use of water for irrigation in the Talas oblast of Kyrgyzstan declined from 0.82 to 0.61 km³/year 1990-1995, followed by a slight increase in 1996 - 2005. In the Chui oblast of Kyrgyzstan, the water supply for irrigation was reduced from 2.3 to 1.6 km³/year 1990-1995. In Zhambyl oblast of Kazakhstan, in both basins, the amount of irrigation water used declined over this period from 2.00 to 1.79 km³/year. However, it should be noted that official statistics are not completely reliable.

53. Extensive irrigation and drainage network have been established in both basins over the past 70 years. In the Zhambyl oblast irrigation facilities include 35 reservoirs, 3 large with capacity of more than 30 million m³, 11 water intakes, 34 public irrigation systems with 1330 km of inter-farm irrigation systems and 4710 km of on-farm canals. Additionally, in the lower reaches of Chu (Shu) river in the South Kazakhstan, there are eight small reservoirs with a total capacity of more than 13 million m³. In the Kyrgyz part of the Chu basin there are 3434 water intakes and distribution networks, 1,629 km of inter-farm canals and 52,306 km of on-farm irrigation systems. The Kirovskoe water reservoir in Kyrgyzstan on the Talas river has a design capacity of 550 million m³ and supplies 640 water intakes and distribution networks, 721 km of inter-farm canals and 2208 km of on-farm irrigation systems.

54. Water resources are allocated between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan as follows:

- On the Talas river the distribution follows the "Regulations on the division of flow in the Talas basin" of 31.01.1983 and Additional Protocols of 18.07.1983. According to these documents the 1.616 km³/year available at the Kirov reservoir are divided equally between the countries;
- On the Chu river following "Regulations on the division of flow in the Chu basin" of 24.02.1983 and Additional Protocols of 18.02.1985 the average volume of 6.64 km³/year are divided with 58% going to Kyrgyzstan and 42% to Kazakhstan.

55. The official position of both states is that the above conditions for water allocation are in the interests of both sides and should be applied in the foreseeable future.

56. Strategic interstate water facilities are located in Kyrgyzstan and include:

In the Chu river basin:

- Orto-Tokoy reservoir with a storage capacity of 470 million m³ and operational capacity of 275 m³/s;
- Bypass Chu Canals 40 km long and 70 m³/s capacity,
- West Big Chu Canal 147 km long and 55 m³/s capacity,
- East Big Chu Canal 97 km long and 55 m³/s capacity,
- Chumysh hydrosystem with 665 m³/s capacity

In the Talas river basin:

- Kirov reservoir with a storage capacity of 550 million m³ and operational capacity of 390 m³/s
- Kozh Canal with facilities on Talas river,
- Karataki Canal with facilities on Kurkuresuu river,
- Tomentamaga Canal with facilities on Kurkuresuu river
- Akmolda Canal on Kurkuresuu river.

57. Agreeing on the conditions for exploitation of these objects used for irrigation, as well as agreeing on a fair distribution of costs with regard to the maintenance and technical operations of the objects is the subject of bilateral interstate cooperation. In this regard, the restoration of their technical condition to an appropriate level ensuring their effective and safe functioning is one of the priority water management tasks for both states.

58. Currently, the system for monitoring the water resources and their use in the basins has significantly weakened. The number of hydro-meteorological stations has decreased significantly in the runoff formation zone in Kyrgyzstan. The dismantling of large observational stations such as "Alabel" and "Tuya -Ashu -North" has led to a significant deterioration in the quality of the stream flow predictions. There is presently practically no monitoring of the snow depth except for some measurements with permanently placed rods at meteorological stations and hydrological monitoring stations. No exploration and definition of reserves of groundwater is being undertaken and the number of wells to monitor groundwater has decreased by more than half on irrigated land.

59. The number of water flow meters in inter-farm irrigation network has seen no improvement since the 1990s, therefore most facilities of this kind require reconstruction and modernization of equipment. Improvement of water flow meters for on-farm irrigation systems and independent water users is another acute and challenging issue. While quality control in drinking water systems is regularly monitored, systematic monitoring of surface and ground water quality in both basins remain weak. The quality of surface water is monitored through water sampling and qualitative analysis in a very limited number of sampling sites that significantly limits the establishment of objectively verifiable indicators of water pollution.

B. Problems the Chu-Talas Project Seeks to Address

60. The project document identifies two main barriers to NBSAPs becoming effective national conduits for fulfilling the goals of the CBD Strategic Plan. These are:

- *Barrier 1: Suboptimal distribution of functions and mandate, and inefficient interaction between national and regional/local organizations with regard to water management in the two basins.*
- *Barrier 2: Significant differences between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan with regard to the legal and institutional framework for water management.*
- *Barrier 3: Lack of investments to maintain and develop water management facilities in Chu-Talas river basins including for the monitoring of water resources.*

C. Chu-Talas Project Description and Strategy

61. As stated in the Project Document, the project Chu-Talas Project's **objective** is "Strengthening transboundary cooperation and promoting integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas River Basins, and empowering the Water Commission of Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic". The project is structured in three functional components, that correspond to the planned outcomes. The three components consist of thirteen outputs:

- **Component 1:** TDA including climate scenario analyses to inform adaptive integrated management of the Chu-Talas shared water resources
 - Output 1.1: Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) of the Chu and Talas River Basins
 - Output 1.2: Scenarios of Water Futures with a focus on climate variability and transboundary issues
 - Output 1.3: Seminars for stakeholders on adaptive management
- **Component 2:** Building the foundation for broadened and improved bilateral water cooperation
 - Output 2.1: A Strategic Action Program (SAP) formulated and approved by the countries at Ministerial level (Horizon 5 years) addressing main issues of transboundary concern and containing concrete actions (legal, policy, institutional reforms, and investments).
 - Output 2.2: Establishment of Inter-ministerial committees in each recipient country, or strengthening of existing inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms
 - Output 2.3: A stakeholder involvement, gender mainstreaming and outreach communication strategy
 - Output 2.4: Revised Statutes of the Commission/Secretariat and establishment of a joint Environmental Expert Group under the Commission with clear mandate and work plan.
 - Output 2.5: Twinning and experience sharing exchange with another transboundary basin, strategy for replication of best practices in the Chu Talas basins
 - Output 2.6: Project web page (following IW LEARN standards) created on the Commission website, international waters experience notes with best practices from the project produced, use of GEF 5 IW tracking tool and participation at GEF IW conferences and other IW LEARN activities ensured. 1% of the project total budget will be used for these types of activities as required by GEF.

- **Component 3: Strengthening capacity of water resources monitoring in the Chu and Talas River Basins**
 - Output 3.1 Assessment of present situation of surface and groundwater quantity and quality monitoring in the two basins
 - Output 3.2: Training on water quantity monitoring and data exchange
 - Output 3.3: Training and capacity building for joint water quality monitoring
 - Output 3.4: Formalization of agreement on coordinated monitoring and data exchange in the two basins

62. The project strategic results framework, with expected indicators and targets, is included in the project document (pp. 31-35). The project results framework represents the primary foundational element for assessing project results (progress toward the expected outcomes and objective) and effectiveness.

63. The project officially commenced May 5, 2015 with the UNDP Prodoc signing; the project had received GEF CEO Approval September 22nd, 2014. The project was originally scheduled for completion May 5, 2018, but has received a four month no-cost extension, and will be completed September 5, 2018. The project is in the international waters focal area of the GEF. The Chu-Talas Project has GEF funding of \$1.00 million USD, and planned co-financing of \$6.17 million USD, for a total project cost of \$7.17 million USD.

D. Implementation Approach and Key Stakeholders

i. Implementation Arrangements

64. The Chu-Talas project is implemented under UNDP's Direct Implementation (NIM) modality, with the UNDP Kyrgyzstan Country Office as the responsible Executing Entity. The UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office also supported project implementation. The Project Manager carried out the day-to-day administration of the project. The Project Manager was based in the UNDP Kyrgyzstan Program Office, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The Project Manager was formally working full-time on the project, and received administrative support from the UNDP Kyrgyzstan Program Office.

65. A Project Board (PB) was constituted as the executive decision-making body for the project. The PSC was to serve the standard Project Steering Committee oversight role for UNDP-GEF projects, as per the Prodoc:

"The Project Board (PB) will be responsible for making management decisions for the project, in particular when guidance is required by the Regional Project Coordinator (RPC). It will play a critical role in project monitoring and evaluations by assuring the quality of these processes and associated products, and by using evaluations for improving performance, accountability and learning. The Project Board will ensure that required resources are committed. It will also arbitrate on any conflicts within the project and negotiate solutions to any problems with external bodies. In addition, it will approve the appointment and responsibilities of the Regional Project Coordinator and any delegation of its Project Assurance responsibilities. Based on the approved Annual Work Plan (AWP), the Project Board can also consider and approve the quarterly plans and approve any essential deviations from the original plans. The project will be subject to Project Board meetings at least twice every year."

66. The membership and operational functioning of the board was also indicated in the Prodoc: *“The Project Board Members will consist of key national government and non-government agencies, and appropriate local level representatives. UNDP and UNECE will also be represented on the Project Board, which will be balanced in terms of gender. Kazakh-Kyrgyz Chu-Talas water management commission (CTWC) will be an integral part of the Project Board to oversee project implementation.”* Six formal Project Board meetings were held, since Project Board meetings were held in conjunction with the bi-annual CTWC meetings.

ii. Key Stakeholders

67. The stakeholders for the project are ultimately all of the water resource users in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Since the scope of the project was focused on the TDA/SAP, the immediate practical scope was more limited. The key stakeholders were mainly the government institutions in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that are responsible for various aspects of water monitoring and management. The Prodoc includes a full analysis of project stakeholders, which can be found beginning on p. 27 of the Prodoc.

E. Key Milestone Dates

68. Table 3 below indicates the key project milestone dates. As an MSP, the project was approved by the GEF under expedited procedures. The project was planned for a 36-month implementation period. The terminal evaluation was conducted in April-May 2018 (a few weeks after the start of the terminal evaluation the project received a no-cost extension), and the project will finish, December 31, 2018. The project will also be financially closed at the end of UNDP’s fiscal year, December 31, 2018.

69. There were only a few medium delays in the project’s life cycle. The first notable delay was that the initial CEO Approval request was submitted 16 months after the concept approval, when the targeted submission timeframe is within 12 months. Final GEF CEO Approval for implementation came 18 months after PIF approval. Therefore, in total, the project development phase took approximately six months longer than it might have, although in total this is a reasonable timeframe for development of a multi-country project. Once the project was approved, there were a few delays in implementation as well. After GEF CEO Approval, UNDP Prodoc signature did not occur until approximately 8.5 months later, when UNDP guidelines indicate that this period should normally be three months, and at most six months. The terminal evaluation did not specifically investigate the cause of this delay. After Prodoc signature, the project inception workshop was held relatively quickly, within one month. However, the project manager was not formally contracted at the time of the inception workshop, and this did not happen until three months after the inception workshop. So, in fact, the practical actual starting point of project implementation was late-August 2015, once the project manager was in place.

70. The MTR was conducted a bit later than would have been preferable, as it was done 24 months after the formal project start (21 months after practical implementation start). Since the project implementation was planned for 36 months, this left less than one year before project completion for the project to make use of the MTR recommendations. Ultimately the project received a no-cost extension that pushed the project completion time to the end of December 2018, which was approximately eight months after the planned formal completion, but only four months beyond what would have been expected based on the practical implementation start.

Table 3 Chu-Talas Project Key Milestone Dates⁵

Milestone	Expected Date [A]	Actual Date [B]	Months (Total)
1. PIF Submission	N/A	February 25, 2013	
2. PPG Approval	N/A	March 22, 2013	1 (1)
3. GEF PIF / Concept Approval	N/A	March 22, 2013	0 (1)
4. CEO Approval Request Submission	May 2014	July 11, 2014	16 (17)
5. CEO Approval Re-submission	N/S	August 29, 2014	1.5 (18.5)
6. GEF CEO Approval for Implementation	September 29, 2014	September 22, 2014	1 (19.5)
7. UNDP Project Approval Committee (PAC) Meeting	N/A	November 10, 2014	1.5 (21)
8. Implementation Start (UNDP Prodoc signature)	March 2015	April 17, 2015 (Kyrgyzstan) May 5, 2015 (Kazakhstan)	6 (27)
9. Inception Workshop	June 2015	May 29, 2015	1 (28)
10. Project Coordinator Contracted	June 2015	August 2015	3 (31)
11. Mid-term Evaluation	November 2016	May-June 2017	21 (52)
12. Terminal Evaluation	April 2018	April 2018	11 (63)
13. Project Operational Completion	May 5, 2018	December 31, 2018	8 (71)
14. Project Financial Closing	December 31, 2018	December 31, 2018	0 (71)

⁵ Sources: 1.A. Not applicable (N/A); 1.B. Project Information Form date; 2.A. N/A; 2.B. GEF Secretariat Review Sheet; 3.A. N/A; 3.B. GEF Online PIMS; 4.A. Within 12 months of concept approval for MSPs; 4.B. CEO Approval Request Re-submission; 5.A. Not specified; 5.B. CEO Approval Request Re-submission; 6.A. As per GEF business standards; 6.B. GEF Online PIMS; 7.A. N/A; 7.B. UNDP Prodoc; 8.A. Within 6 months of GEF CEO Approval, per GEF requirements; 8.B. Signed UNDP Prodoc; 9.A. Within 2 months of Prodoc signature, per UNDP requirements; 9.B. Inception report; 10.A. Within 2 months of Prodoc signature; 10.B. Inception report; 11.A. 18 months from Prodoc signature (mid-way through 36 month planned project implementation); 11.B. MTR data collection phase; 12.A. Approximately 36 months after Prodoc signature; 12.B. Field visit for terminal evaluation ; 13.A. 36 months after Prodoc signature; 13.B. Actual project operational completion. 14.A. End of fiscal year of planned last year of project implementation; 14.B. End fiscal year of actual project completion.

EVALUATION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

IV. Relevance

71. With respect to **relevance**, the project is considered **relevant / highly satisfactory**, as the project clearly supports priorities for both countries, as demonstrated by the many previous years of cooperation, based on the 2000 agreement and 2006 establishment of the Chu—Talas Water Commission. Both the project design and strategy were appropriate and relevant. The project also conforms with GEF international waters focal area strategies and priorities for GEF-5.

A. Relevance of the Chu-Talas Project Objective to GEF Strategic Objectives

72. The GEF has limited financial resources so it has identified a set of strategic priorities and objectives designed to support the GEF's catalytic role and leverage resources for maximum impact. Thus, GEF supported projects should be, amongst all, relevant to the GEF's strategic priorities and objectives. The project was approved and is being implemented under the strategic priorities for GEF-5 (July 2010 – June 2014).⁶ Under the GEF-5 International Waters strategic objectives, the project's objective is directly in line with and supportive of objectives IW-1 and IW-3 (see Table 4 below).

Table 4 GEF-5 International Waters Strategic Objectives Supported by the Chu-Talas Project

IW-1: Transboundary Basins / Aquifers: Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in trans-boundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change	Outcome 1.2: Transboundary institutions for joint ecosystem-based and adaptive management demonstrate sustainability	Indicator 1.2: Cooperation frameworks adopted and states contribute to financial sustainability	Output 1.2: Cooperation frameworks agreed with sustainable financing identified
IW-3: IW Capacity Building: Support foundational capacity building, portfolio learning, and targeted research needs for joint, ecosystem-based management of trans-boundary water systems	Outcome 3.1: Political commitment, shared vision, and institutional capacity demonstrated for joint, ecosystem-based management of waterbodies and local ICM principles	Indicators 3.1: Agreed SAPs at ministerial level with considerations for climatic variability and change; functioning national inter-ministry committees; agreed ICM plans	Output 3.1: National inter-ministry committees established; Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses & Strategic Action Programmes; local ICM plans

⁶ For the focal area strategic priorities for GEF-5, see GEF Council document GEF/R.5/31, "GEF-5 Programming Document," May 3, 2010.

B. Relevance of the Project Approach: Project Strategy and Design

73. The project strategy was straightforward, as it applied the standard GEF International Waters focal area approach. The project sought to complete the TDA and SAP as the main foundational documents for further work in the Chu-Talas Basin.

V. Project Management and Cost-effectiveness (Efficiency)

74. Project **efficiency** is rated **satisfactory**. The project's management (execution), partnership approach and communication, stakeholder engagement, financial management, and reporting are strong points. The project was able to produce the expected results within the planned budget, and was a reasonable least-cost approach for producing the TDA and SAP. Considering that the operational time of the project was actually less than three years, the project did an admirable job of getting so much work completed. The project also had good stakeholder engagement. The MTR reported that civil society and the private sector had not been significantly involved, but the TE did not find that this has been a significant issue, or that it has been sufficiently addressed since the MTR. One weak point was that the external communication strategy was not executed in a timely manner, in terms of the project having an adequately functioning website early in project implementation; having a well-developed website serving key communication purposes could have improved the efficiency of some aspects of the project.

75. The project team is highly professional and has demonstrated good planning, reporting, and financial management. Project management costs are expected to be approximately 9.8% of GEF funding, in-line with expectations. The four month no-cost extension is not expected to negatively affect the cost-effectiveness rating, as long as project management costs don't significantly increase unexpectedly, as no-cost extensions of less than six months are normal for most UNDP-GEF projects. The four-month no cost extension means the project's actual implementation period will more closely correspond to the originally planned project implementation period of three years, since the project manager was not in place until late-August 2015. Project management and execution is rated satisfactory. Financial management procedures are in-line with international norms, and conform to UNDP policies and procedures. Project co-financing exceeded planned co-financing, with 108.1% of co-financing reported as of the terminal evaluation, and actual non-tracked co-financing is likely to be higher. UNDP also provided excellent oversight as the implementing agency, as indicated by timely and comprehensive reporting, good MTR management response, good financial management support, and good guidance on gender mainstreaming.

A. Implementation, Including UNDP Oversight

76. UNDP is the GEF Agency responsible for the project, and carries general backstopping and oversight responsibilities. UNDP has fully and adequately supported the project during implementation, with no significant issues. The most significant issue is that the project manager left to take a new position at the originally planned end of the project, although the project received a four-month no-cost extension to complete some activities that are critical to achievement of the project objective. Therefore, it would have been better if UNDP had managed to find a way to retain the Project Manager through the end of the extended project. Implementation by UNDP is considered **satisfactory**.

B. Execution (Project Management)

77. This was a direct implementation project (DIM), meaning that UNDP was also responsible for project management. The UNDP Kyrgyzstan Country Office has an internal program office for project execution (project execution can also be considered “project management”). Project execution is considered **satisfactory**. The Chu-Talas Project is characterized by professional and efficient project management, good work planning, timely reporting, transparent communication, and excellent engagement of partners.

C. Partnership Approach and Stakeholder Participation

78. The project had an excellent partnership approach, with very good cooperation and coordination with key partners including UNECE, OSCE, CAREC and others.

D. Risk Assessment and Monitoring

79. The Chu-Talas Prodoc includes the risk analysis (Annex 1, p. 48 of the UNDP Prodoc). The risk analysis highlighted eight risks, which were rated in the range of moderate to low. Risks were monitored during project implementation quarterly through UNDP’s Atlas risk log, and annually through the PIR; no critical risks were identified during the project’s implementation.

E. Flexibility and Adaptive Management

80. Flexibility is one of the GEF’s ten operational principles, and all projects must be implemented in a flexible manner to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, and to ensure results-based, rather than output-based approach. Thus, during project implementation adaptive management must be employed to adjust to changing circumstances.

81. On the whole the project was implemented in an adaptive manner, following a results-based approach. Budget revisions were made throughout the implementation period, in accordance with UNDP and GEF procedures, requirements and guidelines.

F. Financial Planning by Component and Delivery

82. The breakdown of project GEF financing is indicated in Table 5 below. Additional details on project finances are included in tables in Annex 9. The total GEF-allocation was \$1,000,000. Of this, \$300,000 (30.0% of the total) was planned for Component 1, Component 2 was budgeted at \$200,000 (20.0%), and Component 3 was budgeted at \$400,000 (40.0%). Project management was budgeted at \$100,000, or 10.0% of the total. Actual project expenditure by activity tracked relatively closely to the planned amounts, with expenditure for Components 1 and 2 being slightly more than planned, and expenditure for Component 3 and Project Management being slightly less than planned. Actual total project management expenses were 8.8% of total budget.

Table 5 Project Planned vs. Actual Financing, Through December 31, 2018 (\$ USD)

	GEF amount planned	Share of total GEF amount	GEF amount actual	% of GEF amount actual	% of original planned
Component 1: TDA	\$300,000	30.0%	\$312,153	31.2%	104.1%
Component 2: SAP	\$200,000	20.0%	\$226,868	22.7%	113.4%
Component 3: Water Monitoring Capacity	\$400,000	40.0%	\$373,201	37.3%	93.3%
Monitoring and Evaluation*	\$58,000	5.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Project Coordination and Management	\$100,000	10.0%	\$87,779	8.8%	87.8%
Total		100.0%		100.0%	100%

Sources: Project Document for planned amount; project financial documents provided by UNDP for actual amounts.
 *The project document includes a detailed M&E budget. However, the total M&E budget includes activities that would be funded from the project management budget line (such as annual reporting) or other sources (such as UNDP oversight). As such, the funds for M&E activities were drawn from across project budget lines.

83. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of actual expenditures by component by year. Figure 2 below shows planned vs actual expenditure by component.

Figure 1 Chu Talas Project Actual Expenditure by Component by Year

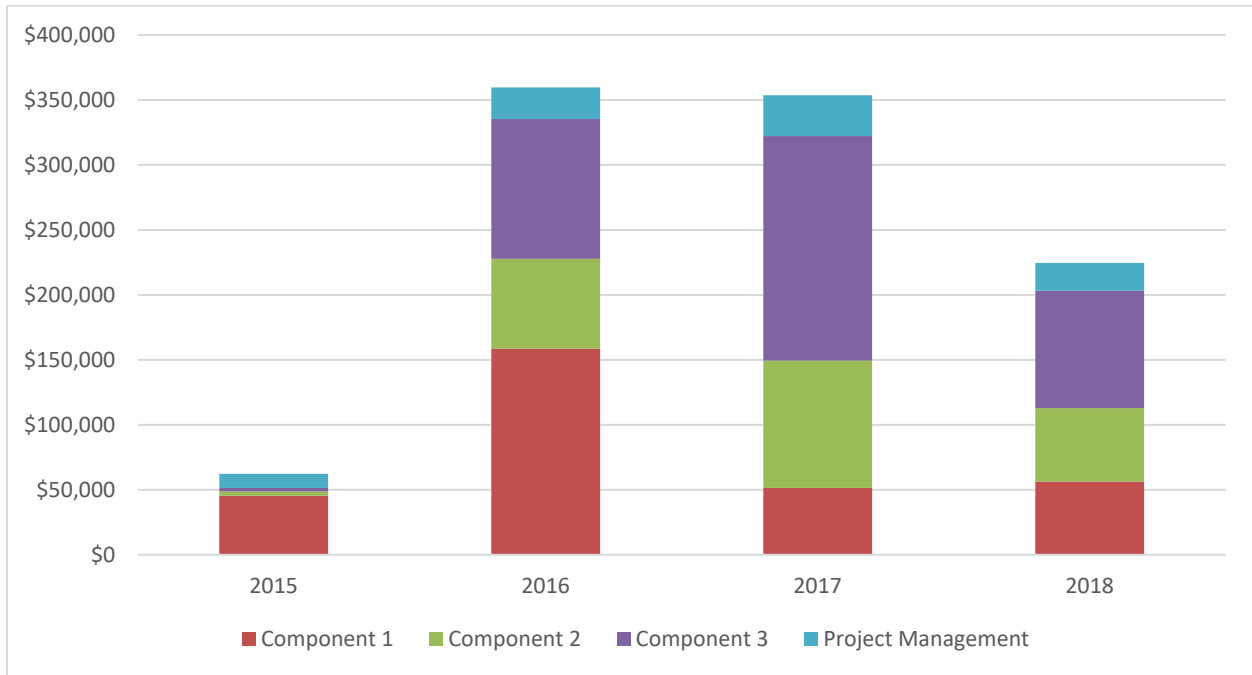
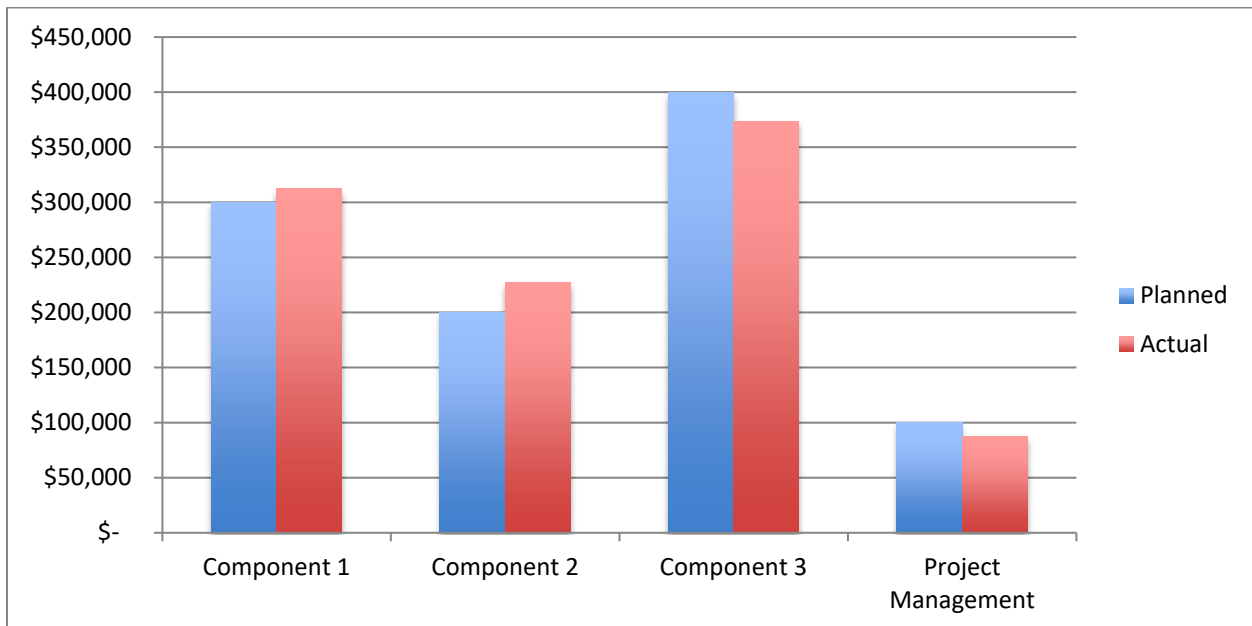


Figure 2 Chu Talas Project Planned vs Actual Expenditure by Component

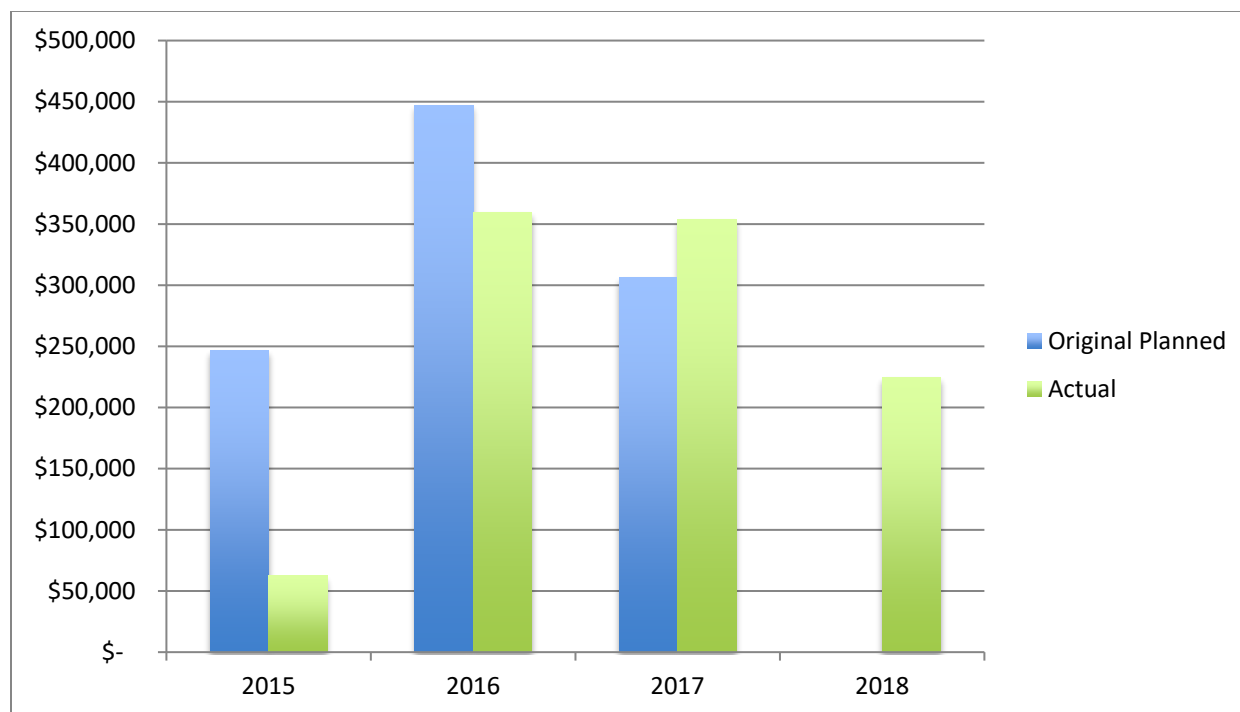


84. Project expenditure by year did not correspond to planned amounts (Table 6), as the project was extended for an additional 8 months, from May 5, 2018 to December 31, 2018. The project had budget revisions approximately every year to update the budget plan for future years based on the current year expenditures. Figure 3 shows planned vs actual expenditure by year.

Table 6 Planned vs Actual Expenditure by Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Planned	\$246,764	\$446,763	\$306,473	N/A
Actual	\$62,268	\$359,637	\$353,570	\$224,525

Figure 3. Planned vs. Actual Expenditure by Year



85. When reviewing different aspects of the project financial management and delivery it is important to keep in mind that the project was planned for 36 months, which in the project document was foreseen as three consecutive calendar years. However, since the project began official implementation in May 2015, it is in fact spanning four calendar years. Therefore, for example, in the project document there was no planned expenditure for 2018.

86. The project did not have an audit, although an audit is indicated in the project M&E plan, “According to applicable procedures”, with an indicative cost of \$3,000. Although a project-specific audit was not conducted, the project is subject to the UNDP Kyrgyzstan Country Office overall organizational financial audit procedures.

G. Planned and Actual Co-financing

87. The expected project co-financing was \$6,173,970, from seven total partners, including both of the respective governments, and international development partners – the Swiss

Development Corporation, and the Government of Finland. This is an expected co-financing ratio of 6.2: 1. Table 6 below shows planned and actual co-financing. According to data provided by the project team, the project had received a total of approximately \$6.68 million USD in co-financing as of April 30, 2018. This is 108.1% of the expected co-financing. The breakdown of co-financing is not tracked by project outcome because it is not managed by the project, and much of the co-financing has gone to support all aspects of the project.

Table 7 Planned and Actual Co-financing Received, as of December 31, 2018 (USD)

Sources of Co-finance	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Planned	Actual	Explanation	% of Expected Amount
GEF Agency	UNDP	Cash – parallel	\$300,000	\$492,000	UNDP Programme and Operations support from the existing Cluster's structure. Energy Efficient pre-school facility was constructed by UNDP with the co-financing from the state budget in Kemin district with a septic tank. First Aid Points in Chui province got new technologies for treatment of medical waste with the support of a UNDP-GEF project.	160
National Government	Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration of the Kyrgyz Republic	In-kind	\$750,000	\$750,000	The state budget of the Department of water resources for maintenance and running Orto-Tokoy and Kirov Water Reservoirs and the other water allocation facilities for 2015-2018	100
National Government	Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic The State Agency of Environment Protection and Forestry	In-kind	\$420,000	\$420,000	The state budget of Kyrgyzhydromet for water quality and hydrological monitoring in Chu and Talas River basins. The state budget of the Territorial Bishkek-Chu and Talas	100

Sources of Co-finance	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Planned	Actual	Explanation	% of Expected Amount
					Provincial Departments of SAEPF	
National Government	Ministry of Environment and Water resources of Republic of Kazakhstan	In-kind	\$750,000	\$750,000	Funding of Kazakh Government of the share to the joint maintenance of four water allocation facilities in Chu and Talas River Basins	100
Other multi-lateral agency	Swiss Development Corporation (SDC)	Cash	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000	Funding of the project on monitoring of the water allocation in Chu and Talas River Basins	100
Other multi-lateral agency	UNECE	Cash and in-kind	\$440,000	\$440,000	Salaries of one P5, one P3 and G4 staff	100
Other multi-lateral agency	Government of Finland	In-kind	\$1,313,970	1,313,970	Programme for Finland's Water Sector Support to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (FinWaterWEI II), including "Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu Talas basin, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and activities on Improved surface water quality and monitoring through a number of projects - www.syke.-/FinWaterWEI/en ,	100
Total			\$6,173,970	\$6,675,970		108.1%

Sources: Planned from Project Document. Actual total co-financing received as per data from UNDP/Project Team.

88. It appears that some sources of likely co-financing have not been fully accounted, and therefore it is likely that the actual co-financing received is greater than indicated. For example, there is no co-financing indicated in relation to the in-kind contributions made by the volunteer staff of the CTWC Secretariat.

H. Monitoring and Evaluation

89. The Chu-Talas project **M&E design** generally meets UNDP and GEF minimum standards, but had shortcomings related to the design of the Strategic Results Framework, and is considered **moderately unsatisfactory**. **M&E implementation** is considered **satisfactory**, and therefore **overall M&E** is considered **moderately satisfactory**.

i. M&E Design

90. The Chu-Talas project M&E plan is outlined in the project document, including a budgeted M&E plan in table format (on pp. 10-11 of the GEF CEO Approval Request). The M&E plan describes each of the planned M&E activities, including roles, responsibilities, and timeframe. The identified M&E activities include inception workshop and report, annual progress reporting (APR/PIR), the independent terminal evaluations, project terminal report, and audit. The M&E plan includes a specific brief section on “Learning and Knowledge Sharing”; in addition, it was expected lessons would be captured in the various M&E activities and reports, since, for example, they are automatically included in the annual PIR, and Terminal Evaluation. The M&E plan is summarized in a table showing responsible parties, budget, and timeframe for each of the M&E activities, with the total expected budget of \$58,000. This is adequate for a project of this size and scope, representing approximately 5.8% of the GEF allocation. However the plan does not indicate if the M&E costs are to be fully covered by GEF resources, or would be also partially funded by project partners such as SDC or other partners. The project’s budget does not have a specific M&E budget line; the resources for M&E activities is to be drawn from various project components, such as project management. The budget notes from the project document Total Budget and Workplan (section IV, p. 37 of the project document) indicate that the costs of international consultants for the terminal evaluation will be covered under Component 1 of the project. The project M&E plan is appropriately designed and well-articulated, and conforms to GEF and UNDP M&E minimum standards.

91. The project results framework is a critical component of the project’s overall M&E framework. The Chu-Talas project results framework indicators and targets do not adequately meet SMART criteria.

ii. M&E Implementation

92. The project M&E activities were partially implemented as foreseen; and M&E implementation is rated moderately satisfactory. The project team provided reports at required reporting intervals (i.e. quarterly progress reports, annual PIR), and UNDP oversight was adequate. Six formal Project Board meetings were held, since the CTWC served as the Project Board, and met bi-annually. The project did not have a financial audit (as discussed at the end of Section V.F above on financial management), although an audit was planned in the M&E plan.

93. Although mid-term reviews (MTRs) are not required for GEF medium-sized projects, this project did include one, which is considered good practice. The MTR was conducted in May-June 2017. This is slightly late in the project implementation schedule, and did not allow for a significant amount of time for follow-up and completion of actions in response to the MTR recommendations. The MTR recommendations are indicated in Table 8 below, with a summary of the project’s responsiveness to these recommendations. The project adequately implemented

five of the 13 MTR recommendations, partially implemented two, and did not implement six. The project did provide a Management Response to the MTR, indicating that some of the recommendations had been completed, although evidence seems to reflect otherwise, as discussed in the table below.

Table 8 Chu Talas Project Follow-up to MTR Recommendations

	Issue	MTR Recommendation	TE Assessment of Post-MTR Follow-up
1	Project Results Framework	a. Ensure results framework clearly represents the agreed activities (for example, delete the references to groundwater issues);	Partially implemented. The results framework was not formally revised following the MTR to remove the references to groundwater, though it was understood among stakeholders and communicated to the terminal evaluator that the project was not pursuing groundwater activities. The main opportunity to formally revised the results framework would have been at the 4 th Project Board meeting in February 2018, which was the next Project Board meeting after the MTR was completed. The project results framework is also used annually in the PIR, but the project did not complete a PIR in 2018 (the next PIR cycle after the MTR) as the terminal evaluation was completed prior to the 2018 PIR deadline, and it is not necessary for a project to complete a PIR if the TE is being completed.
		b. To add more specific metrics where possible (for example, numbers of persons attending meetings, disaggregated by sex, etc.)	Not implemented. The results framework was not formally revised (see above).
2	Communications	a. Ensuring that the project website is operational (in Russian and English) as soon as possible.	Not implemented. The revised project website was not operational at the time of the terminal evaluation.
		b. Links should be made from the website to previous GEF Small Grants Projects that have undertaken related work in the region	Not implemented. The revised project website was not operational at the time of the terminal evaluation.
		c. The project should provide clear information about the SAP, SAP implementation, linkages with National Action Plans as briefings to senior ministerial representatives to facilitate the launch of the SAP	Adequately implemented, though the SAP has not yet been adopted.
		d. The project should provide more comprehensive reports on the Project Board Meetings to present a more complete picture of the steps in the discussions and decisions	Adequately implemented, the minutes from the 4 th Project Board meeting in February 2018 were sufficiently detailed.
3	Strategic Action Programme	a. The project team should clarify the national mechanisms possible for signing the SAP as soon as possible.	Adequately implemented. Attention was given to the national mechanisms for signing the SAP, although it has not yet been adopted.

	Issue	MTR Recommendation	TE Assessment of Post-MTR Follow-up
		b. The SAP development should reflect the lack of groundwater information and identify means to address this	Not implemented. The SAP does not discuss this issue.
		c. The lack of community or private sector involvement in the TDA/SAP should be rectified through plans in the SAP to better involve them in future.	Adequately implemented. The SAP includes options for private sector involvement in the future.
		d. The SAP should review the need for pilot actions to assist with implementation.	Adequately implemented. The SAP identifies various necessary pilot activities.
		e. The SAP should integrate closely with national plans and strategies for content and time-lines to ensure good country ownership	Not implemented. The SAP does not include an analysis identifying how it relates to and is supportive of national plans and strategies.
4	Exit Strategy	a. National Authorities, UNDP CO and RTA should develop a new project for submission to the GEF as a PIF before the end of the project to 'initiate the implementation of the SAP'. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Institutional strengthening for policy development; ○ Further strengthening of the CTWC/Secretariat ○ Community actions (including awareness raising aimed at schools, local private sector organisations, farmers, etc.) ○ Co-financing for PIF and longer-term for SAP implementation; 	Not implemented. The stakeholders are theoretically aware that if the SAP were approved, an implementation project could follow, but the TE supports the view of the MTR that it would be helpful to have a PIF for government review as part of a strategy to catalyze SAP approval.
		b. The project team should consider holding a final workshop involving many stakeholder groups to highlight the achievements of this project (TDA, SAP etc.) and to raise further awareness of the potential SAP Implementation follow-on project.	Partially implemented. There were end-of-project meetings conducted, though perhaps not at the scale and scope of what was recommended in the MTR.

VI. Effectiveness and Results: Progress Toward the Objective and Outcomes

94. The Chu-Talas Project has achieved the project objective and nearly achieved the two planned outcomes. The project's **effectiveness** is rated **satisfactory**. The project activities and outputs strongly contributed to progress toward the planned outcomes and objective. The project strategy of focusing on technical aspects was very effective in getting the project to the finish line, and building trust and cooperation among stakeholders.

95. Project **results / achievement of overall outcomes** is rated **moderately satisfactory**. The project met 6 of 12 results indicator targets, and partially met or is uncertain to meet the remaining 6 targets. Key results achieved with project support include:

- TDA completed and approved
- Climate change scenarios developed and discussed
- Seminars / trainings on climate change adaptation completed

- Twinning approach with Sava river commission implemented
 - Ad-hoc training program completed (going to be...)
 - Joint water quality assessment report likely to be completed and approved
96. Other expected results that remain to be finalized include:
- SAP approval pending
 - More harmonization done on water quality than water quantity
 - Data exchange policy pending
 - WGE established, but official amendments to CTWC not completed
 - Website / communications work a bit slow

97. Detailed and specific information identifying many project results not covered in this section is available in the “Self-assessment” column of Annex 10 of this report, which includes the project results framework and the project’s reporting on indicators and targets from the 2017 PIR.

98. The project objective level results indicators are summarized in Table 7 below.

Table 9 Chu-Talas Project Objective Level Indicators

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status
Science based consensus on major transboundary environmental concerns and possible solutions (TDA), leading to agreement between the two countries on a joint program of corrective actions (SAP) and on harmonized monitoring and data exchange protocols.	Currently, transboundary cooperation in the Chu-Talas basins is mainly limited to the implementation of the existing water sharing agreement and does not include consideration of ecosystem integrity and environmental sustainability in view of climatic variability and change.	SAP endorsed by countries at Ministerial level. Governments approve expanded mandate of the Water Commission and establish Environmental Expert Group.	Partially achieved. SAP technically cleared, but not yet politically approved as of project completion.
The Water Commission strengthened through improved water monitoring ability, and its mandate expanded to include environmental aspects.	Deteriorated monitoring networks hinder ability of the Commission to implement the water sharing agreement.	Water quantity and quality monitoring procedures harmonized.	Partially achieved.

A. Component 1: TDA including climate scenario analyses to inform adaptive management of the Chu-Talas shared water resources.

99. The first component of the project is focused on completion of the TDA. The total GEF funding planned for the component was \$300,000 million USD, which was 30.0% of the total GEF funding for the project; the actual expenditure as of December 31, 2018 was \$312,153 USD. The component activities were organized around three outputs:

- **Output 1.1:** Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) of the Chu and Talas River Basins
- **Output 1.2:** Scenarios of Water Futures with a focus on climate variability and transboundary issues
- **Output 1.3:** Seminars for stakeholders on adaptive management

100. Key results indicators for Component 1 are summarized in Table 8 below.

Table 10 Component 1 Indicators and Targets

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status
The TDA of the Chu and Talas Basins prepared jointly by the two countries, identifying issues of transboundary concern.	At the moment there is not common understanding over transboundary issues in Chu-Talas river basins among the stakeholders in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan	TDA completed and approved by first semester of Year 2	Achieved.
Considerations based on Water Scenarios, on climate variability and change and surface-groundwater interactions included into the TDA.	Currently there is no common understanding of possible future water resources scenarios in the basin. This hinders the decision making process on adaptation measures.	TDA document including consideration of future water scenarios and surface-groundwater interactions.	Achieved.
Program for seminars on climate change adaptation and integrated water resources management approved by the Commission and implemented.	Currently, local governments and others stakeholders in both basins are not prepared to adequately respond to the possible social, economic and environmental implications and risks associated with the transboundary nature of the water resources of the basins and with increased climate variability and change.	Seminars developed and held within first semester of Year 2 of the project implementation.	Achieved.

B. Component 2: Building the foundation for broadened and improved bilateral water cooperation

101. The second component of the project aimed for completion and adoption of the SAP. The total GEF funding for Component 2 was originally planned at \$200,000 USD, which is 20.0% of the total GEF funding for the project; actual expenditure as of December 31, 2018 was \$226,868. The component activities are organized around six key outputs:

102. **Output 2.1:** A Strategic Action Program (SAP) formulated and approved by the countries at Ministerial level (Horizon 5 years) addressing main issues of transboundary concern and containing concrete actions (legal, policy, institutional reforms, and investments).

103. **Output 2.2:** Establishment of Inter-ministerial committees in each recipient country, or strengthening of existing inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms

104. **Output 2.3:** A stakeholder involvement, gender mainstreaming and outreach communication strategy

105. **Output 2.4:** Revised Statutes of the Commission/Secretariat and establishment of a joint Environmental Expert Group under the Commission with clear mandate and work plan.

106. **Output 2.5:** Twinning and experience sharing exchange with another transboundary basin, strategy for replication of best practices in the Chu Talas basins

107. **Output 2.6:** Project web page (following IW LEARN standards) created on the Commission website, international waters experience notes with best practices from the project produced, use of GEF 5 IW tracking tool and participation at GEF IW conferences and other IW LEARN activities ensured. 1% of the project total budget will be used for these types of activities as required by GEF.

108. Key results indicators for Component 2 are summarized in Table 9 below.

Table 11 Component 2 Indicators and Targets

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status
The Strategic Action Program (SAP), with a 5 years horizon and reflecting inter-sectoral dialogue and stakeholder involvement and addressing the major issues of transboundary concern agreed upon by the two countries.	There is currently no detailed joint integrated program to address major transboundary issues in Chu-Talas river basins, and stakeholders have little participation in discussions and decision-making.	SAP endorsed at Ministerial level by the end of project	Partially achieved / achievement uncertain.
Amendment to the Commission regulations establishing a clear environmental mandate, and a joint Environmental Expert Group.	Currently, the functions and competencies of the Chu-Talas Commission are limited to joint water management (quantity) coordination in the two basins.	Amendment to the Statutes of the Commission/Secretariat adopted by governments by end of Year 1.	Partially achieved.
Twinning and experience exchanges with other transboundary basins, dissemination of project results and participation to IW LEARN activities	No ongoing or previous outreach, dissemination and awareness raising activities related to the two basins management.	Twinning with at least another river basin showing similar characteristics and problems, and communication platform (website) established during the early project phases	Achieved.

C. **Component 3. Strengthening capacity of water resources monitoring in the Chu and Talas River Basins**

109. The third component of the project addressed issues related to the water monitoring framework in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The total GEF funding for Component 3 was originally planned at \$400,000 USD, which is 40.0% of the total GEF funding for the project; actual expenditure as of December 31, 2018 was \$373,201. The component activities are organized around four key outputs:

110. **Output 3.1** Assessment of present situation of surface and groundwater quantity and quality monitoring in the two basins

111. Output 3.2: Training on water quantity monitoring and data exchange
112. Output 3.3: Training and capacity building for joint water quality monitoring
113. Output 3.4: Formalization of agreement on coordinated monitoring and data exchange in the two basins
114. Key results indicators for Component 2 are summarized in Table 10 below.

Table 12 Component 3 Indicators and Targets

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status
Report containing the assessment of present situation of surface and groundwater quantity and quality monitoring including recommendations for an harmonized system completed.	Currently latent conflict situations between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan exist in regulation of water resources distribution and allocation, and pollution in both basins due to differences in technologies and procedures for monitoring the quantity and quality of water resources.	Assessment Report completed and approved by the Commission and by national agencies of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, by the end of Year 2.	Achieved / likely to be achieved.
Reports containing (i) the assessment of capacity building needs in water resources monitoring; (ii) a program for ad hoc training of staff of the two countries; (iii) the results of the capacity building activities and events, including number of participants and results assessment	Currently, water monitoring is poor and sporadic based on limited number of observations and indicators. Staff has no capacity to use new monitoring technologies.	Reports on needs assessment and on implementation and results of training program prepared by the end of the project.	Achieved, but could use more work on capacity needs assessment to inform future work in a more comprehensive and structured way.
Formal agreement on harmonized monitoring and data exchange protocols in the two basins.	No approved rules for transboundary water quality monitoring and information exchange exist	Agreement between the two countries formalized by project completion.	Partially achieved / achievement uncertain.

D. Impacts and Global Environmental Benefits

115. The GEF Evaluation Office and UNDP require a rating on project impact, which in the context of the GEF international waters focal area, relates to actual change in environmental status (e.g. improvements in water quality, improvements in aquatic ecosystems, improved ecosystem services related to water, etc.). The impact rating is not highly relevant in the context of the Chu-Talas Project, since the project was a “first stage” project that focused on the TDA/SAP, and not on field-based interventions or implementation of the SAP. Therefore, according to the intentional design and strategy of the project, the project is likely to contribute to long-term impacts, but only long after project completion. However, an impact rating is provided as required for the terminal evaluation, and consequently, impact ratings for the project must be assessed as follows:

- *Environmental status improvement* is assessed as **negligible**;

- *Environmental stress reduction* is assessed as **negligible**; and
- *Progress toward stress/status change* is assessed as **negligible**.

VII. Key GEF Performance Parameters

116. Sustainability is one of the five main evaluation criteria, as well as being considered one of the GEF operational principles.

117. UNDP-GEF project evaluations are also required to discuss the mainstreaming of UNDP program principles. This is covered in Annex 12 of this evaluation report.

A. Sustainability

118. There are some risks to the sustainability of the project results but overall **sustainability** is considered *moderately likely*. Much related to the sustainability of the project depends on the ultimate formal government approval and adoption of the SAP by the Government of Kazakhstan and Government of Kyrgyzstan. If the governments agree on the SAP, then it is fully expected that additional funding for implementation of the SAP will be available from the GEF and other donors. Therefore, financial sustainability is considered moderately likely. Institutional and governance sustainability is also considered moderately likely. The Chu-Talas Water Commission (CTWC) continues functioning (and will after the project) but implementation of the SAP will require a new institutional and legal form or status of the CTWC; the project supported steps in this direction, but it remains a work in progress. The CTWC Working Group on Environment was established and met regularly during the project, but it has not yet been institutionalized within the CTWC, and it is uncertain how or if it will continue to effectively function after the project. The harmonization approach between the two countries is also not yet institutionalized; there has been progress on harmonization of some methodological approaches to water monitoring, but ultimately SAP implementation is likely to require more harmonization of laws and regulations. Socio-economic sustainability is considered moderately likely, as the project had good stakeholder engagement and country ownership within the water management sector; national ownership at the highest political levels has not yet been confirmed. Environmental sustainability is not applicable / likely, as the project results were not field-based. Environmental risks to Chu-Talas have not yet been addressed; while climate change remains a significant concern.

B. Catalytic Role: Replication and Up-scaling

119. The major catalytic potential for the project is if the SAP is adopted by the two participating countries, which will then catalyze implementation of the SAP.

C. Gender Equality and Mainstreaming

120. Gender equality and mainstreaming was considered during the project, even though the project was designed prior to implementation of UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, and the project design did not include a gender analysis. The project regularly consulted with the UNDP Kyrgyzstan gender mainstreaming expert, and worked to breakdown results framework indicator reporting by gender, although the results framework was not originally designed with gender disaggregated indicators. In the 2017 PIR, the project reported that 50% of members of

Working Group on Environment, 52% of members of SAP Working Group are women. There is a set of trainings to be held on the fall 2017 and careful consideration of the gender balance among participants is to be ensured.

VIII. Main Lessons Learned and Recommendations

A. Lessons from the Experience of the Chu-Talas Project

121. The terminal evaluation has identified the below notable lessons from the experience of the Chu-Talas project. These lessons should be aggregated by UNDP for application to other similar future initiatives.

- a) Political challenges can be mitigated to an extent by focusing on scientific technical issues, and getting mutually agreed data: *“We have increased the trust from implementation when we jointly took the samples, exchanged the data, it increases the trust in the labs, increases the trust in the data we receive. This is the main lesson we learned in the framework of implementation of this project. We should trust the results of the analysis.”*
- b) Forcing national stakeholders to be the ones to actually do the analysis and write the documents increases national ownership of the products and the process, which helps achieve the long-term objective.
- c) It is very helpful and beneficial if the same individuals are involved throughout an extended process such as TDA/SAP development.
- d) Ensuring the involvement of all relevant stakeholders can help smooth political approval procedures, but political approval requires ongoing coordination, communication and support throughout the process.
- e) Training sessions can have a beneficial secondary effect of building relationships and trust between participants; this is especially important in a transboundary project: *“Except in the official part of the CTWC where the format is different, those trainings make people come closer, those trainings created trust. Those trainings really helped the two sides to come closer, and that was really important.”*
- f) Well-timed and targeted international support can be critical for successfully enabling national stakeholders to move forward with their own process: *“When we just initiated and created [the SAP] group, we honestly did not understand: why did we need it? and what type of SAP is it? Then [the international consultant] gave us good training. We had international level consultants. We started understanding what we are doing and where are we going and what type of product we wanted to create.”*
- g) Even for professional scientists, training is most effective when it is interactive and engaging: *“All of our work meetings, our trainings, they were unusual – if compared to other trainings and meetings. One thing is just to be given the material, the other thing is interactive games, we participated in the process, everyone participates, and the material is not forgotten. It is very useful, we gained huge experience, and keep learning from each other.”*
- h) Data availability and quality can be a critical issue, especially for GEF IW projects where there is not typically sufficient time to conduct original studies and research, and therefore it is necessary to rely on historical government data. While data is considered “fact”, there can be a delicate balance to using data in a way that will be acceptable for all stakeholders.

- i) It is helpful if project communication tools, such as websites, are implemented as early as possible.
- j) Sharing experiences with other similar river basins can be very valuable; there are also limitations as the specific situation and context can still vary significantly (Sava river is mainly navigation issues; Chu-Talas is irrigation).
- k) 36 months is minimum amount of time to complete TDA, SAP, and have them politically approved.
- l) The GEF and UNDP should pay close attention when dealing with the development of IW freshwater projects to ensure that are designed to realistically address surface water, or ground water or both.

B. Recommendations for Consolidating Results and Supporting Sustainability of the Chu-Talas Project

122. The recommendations of the terminal evaluation are listed below, with the primary target audience for each recommendation following in brackets.

123. **Key Recommendation 1:** Ideally, the project stakeholders, supported by UNDP, should hold a donor coordination meeting prior to the July inter-governmental meeting between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan at which the SAP will be discussed. The purpose of such a meeting would be to concretely confirm funding opportunities for SAP implementation. If it is not feasible to organize such a meeting (since any formal meeting would need to be organized by the respective ministries of foreign affairs from each country) then UNDP should continue proactive dialogue with key potential SAP funding partners in order to be able to communicate to the government in specific terms how much funding, and from which sources, will be available to support SAP implementation if the SAP is approved. This could include a draft PIF for GEF-funding of SAP implementation. [UNDP]

124. **Key Recommendation 2:** The CTWC Secretariat should be established as a legal entity prior to SAP implementation, most likely as a legal entity in each country, to facilitate implementation of SAP activities. Effective operation would need to include at least one salaried staff person in each country. [Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan, UNDP]

125. **Key Recommendation 3:** Since the project manager has moved to a position at another organization at the initially planned completion of the project, if it is at all practically feasible, UNDP should immediately contract additional staff on a short-term contract to support the consolidation and finalization of project results. This is particularly critical with respect to support for promoting and pushing the SAP within the governments prior to the July inter-governmental meeting between the two countries. Rapidly contracting such short-term experts could be a challenge administratively, but there are experts available who have been involved with the project, who could make valuable contributions, such as the volunteer staff of the CTWC Secretariat in each country. [UNDP Kyrgyzstan Country Office]

126. **Key Recommendation 4:** If the SAP is jointly approved by the governments, UNDP and the GEF should be prepared to provide support for SAP implementation as rapidly as possible so as not to lose momentum and sustainability of current project actions. This would include, for example, drafting a PIF for GEF funding even before SAP approval. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat]

127. **Key Recommendation 5:** The SAP, as it is now, is not sufficiently detailed and specific to be directly implementable. This current document is coherent, logical, and very useful for reaching joint agreement between the countries. If the SAP is approved, during the project preparation phase for a GEF-funded SAP implementation project, additional work should be done to develop a more detailed SAP document that could be effectively implemented. This would necessarily include additional rounds of stakeholder consultation with water resource users, private sector stakeholders, and civil society. This should also include a strengthened analysis of complementarities and synergies with other ongoing related initiatives (such as the establishment of river basin councils in Kyrgyzstan), and with national plans and strategies. [UNDP, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

128. **Key Recommendation 6:** The SAP implementation should include further work on harmonization policies and legislation for IWRM between the countries, perhaps starting with regulations related to water monitoring. [UNDP, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

129. **Key Recommendation 7:** Implementation of the SAP should include pilot activities for community-based water management, and in particular community-based monitoring, as an awareness raising tool, but also for additional data collection. Other excellent opportunities for practical activities for SAP implementation include media training, and study tours to examples of watershed-based Payments for Ecosystem Services schemes. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

130. **Key Recommendation 8:** SAP implementation will also require increasing the availability of spatial data, and the use of spatial data for mapping. This may require some attention to and investment in digitizing existing historical data. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Kyrgyzstan]

IX. Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Annex 2: GEF Operational Principles

Annex 3: Chu-Talas Project Terminal Evaluation Matrix

Annex 4: Interview Guide

Annex 5: Rating Scales

Annex 6: Key Informants Targeted and Interviewed

Annex 7: Documents Reviewed

Annex 8: Chu-Talas Project Results Framework Assessed Level of Indicator Target Achievement

Annex 9. Project Financial Tables

A. Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Note: Standardized annexes to the TORs not included here for space considerations.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR TERMINAL EVALUATION

Project Title: “Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in Chu and Talas River Basins”

Functional Title: International Consultant for Terminal Evaluation

Duration: Estimated 22 working days during April-May 2018, including field mission to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and Astana, Taraz, Kazakhstan

Terms of Payment: Lump sum payable upon satisfactory completion and approval by UNDP of all deliverables, including the Evaluation Report

Duty station: Home based with 8 calendar days mission to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and Astana and Taraz, Kazakhstan

1

INTRODUCTION

Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the “Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in Chu and Talas River Basins” project.

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas River Basin

GEF Project ID:

00081980

at endorsement (Million US\$)

at completion (Million US\$)

UNDP Project ID:

00091092

GEF financing:

\$1,000,000

\$1,000,000

Countries:

Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan

IA/EA own:

\$300,000

\$300,000

Region:

Central Asia

Governments of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan :

\$1,920,000

\$1,920,000

Focal Area:

International Waters

Other:

\$3,579,397

\$3,579,397

FA Objectives, (OP/SP):

Total co-financing:

and Kyrgyzstan over water allocation.

\$6,239,397.04

\$6,239,397.04

Executing Agency:

UNDP

Total Project Cost:

\$7,239,397.04

\$7,239,397.04

Other Partners involved:

ProDoc Signature (date project began):

05.05.2015

UNECE

(Operational) Closing Date:

Proposed: 05.05.2018

Actual:

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The project was designed to:

The GEF Medium Size Project (MSP) “Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas River Basins” enables integrated water resources management in the transboundary Chu-Talas basins, including support to the Transboundary Water Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic. It is under implementation of UNDP Kyrgyzstan in a partnership with UNDP Kazakhstan, UNDP IRH and UNECE.

The project responds to the threats posed by increasing water consumption to meet growing social, industrial and agricultural needs, compounded by climatic variability and change. Pressure on scarce water resources and aquatic ecosystems has been growing in recent years across the basins generating risks of conflicts between Kazakhstan

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The project strengthens coordination and expand the role of transboundary institutions in balancing water uses and improving water quality and conservation of aquatic ecosystems, and strengthen monitoring capacity and technologies. It contributes towards the joint management of the water resources of the Chu and Talas river basins. The project builds on the on-going cooperation of the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan under the Agreement on Use of Interstate Water Management Facilities signed in 2000.

The project includes the following components:

- ✓ **Component 1:** Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) including climate scenario analyses to inform adaptive management of the Chu-Talas shared water resources;
- ✓ **Component 2:** Building the foundation for broadened and improved bilateral water cooperation and development of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP);
- ✓ **Component 3:** Strengthening capacity of water resources monitoring in the Chu and Talas River Basins.

The GEF Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis/Strategic Action Programme Manual¹¹ guides development of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and the Strategic Action Programme (TDA&SAP), those are foreseen to be developed within the project (**Components 1 and 2**).

Employed International TDA Consultant, first, held training on TDA/SAP methodology for the group of nominated officers from the leading Governmental Institutions in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and then led the work on the review of available data and information, then in cooperation with employed national experts from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and under the supervision of the Regional Project Coordinator (RPC) have developed the preliminary draft TDA.

The preliminary draft TDA had been considered at the Extended Meeting of the Secretariat of Chu-Talas Water Commission (CTWC) on July 14-15 2016. The draft TDA was recommended for presenting to the next 22nd Session of CTWC in November 2016 and the Commission at said meeting accepted it.

Decision to develop the SAP was also adopted by CTWC at its 22nd Session on November 30, 2017. For this purpose, CTWC has authorized its Secretariat to form the special Working Group on adaptation to climate change and long-term development programmes (WG SAP) from representatives of respective Ministries and Agencies of two countries.

The SAP document was developed by WG SAP and the process was led by the International Consultant on SAP (IC SAP). Several meetings at the national and bilateral levels were held for development of SAP. Two national consultants were also employed to facilitate national meetings on SAP and contribute to development of SAP document under the guidance of the IC SAP.

Within **Components 1 and 2** the project supports holding of meetings of CTWC, its Secretariat and Working Groups related to SAP development as well as ensures completion of the development of CTWC web-site in accordance with GEF IW: LEARN Guidelines.

The **Component 3** of the project is targeted on capacity building on water quality and quantity monitoring and programming of water quality improvement in two basins. Within this component one direct contract with Kazhydromet and one Letter of Agreement with Kyrgyzhydromet were agreed and implemented for assessment of water quality in Chu and talas River Basins. Capacity Building Programme with participation of experts from Sava River Basin, containing trainings and awareness raising seminars was implemented under this component as well.

¹¹ GEF Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis/Strategic Action Programme Manual

The following results were ensured by completion of the project:

- TDA, reflecting key transboundary issues and climate change scenarios and impact, was developed and approved by CTWC;
- 9 CTWC Sessions, considering and approving project related products were supported;
- Two International Conferences and two national seminars, focusing on raising awareness on River Basins' issues, including on climate change scenarios and impacts were held under the support of the project. The set of materials on the base of the TDA, experience of the International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC) and situation analysis in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Central Asia were produced;
- The Working Group on adaptation to climate change and long-term development programmes was established with the aim to develop the SAP for Chu and Talas River Basins;
- WG SAP developed the SAP document, which is to be presented to 24th Session of CTWC on February 2018;
- Analysis of needs for amendments and changes to the Agreement and Charter on CTWC was produced, resulting in the decision to incorporate Secretariats of CTWC as of legal entities in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and with reflection of needs for amending the Agreement in SAP document;
- Review of the best adaptable practices from Sava River Basin;
- Working Group on Environment (WGE) under the Secretariat of CTWC was established under the recommendation of the project and 5 meetings of the WGE were supported by project;
- Capacity Building Need Assessment was developed and used in designing and development of the Capacity Building Programme;
- The Study Tour to Sava River Basin for 14 representatives of CTWC and Key Stakeholder Institutions from Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan was organised on May 2016;
- CTWC web-site has been developed at <http://chui.at.kg/ru/>. It includes the separate project web-page (pending);
- TDA report with the thematic Annex on Climate Change, Brochure on SAP are to be published by April 2018
- Joint Water Quality Assessment based on agreed collection of samples were produced jointly by Kazhydromet and Kyrgyzhydromet;
- Comparative Report of the Systems of Water Quality Monitoring was produced jointly by Kazhydromet and Kyrgyzhydromet;
- Guidelines for Joint Water Quality Assessment in Chu and Talas River Basins, and Hydrometeorological Indicators was produced;
- Joint Report of Kazhydromet and Kyrgyzhydromet on Selected Hydrometeorological Indicators was produced
- The set of training materials for seven regional trainings based on the experience of ISRBC and situation analysis in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Central Asia had been produced;
- Seven regional trainings for CTWC and key stakeholders were held with involvement of trainers with experience in Sava River Basin and local consultants, presenting situational analysis for Chu and Talas River Basin (not completed yet);
- The Concept of Capacity Building of Water Resources Monitoring and Data Exchange Systems in Chu and Talas River Basins was developed by International Consultants from Sava River Basin (pending);
- The draft Programme (policy) on data and information exchange of CTWC, including procedures of data and information exchange on CTWC web-site was developed and proposed to the consideration of 25th Session of CTWC (pending).

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the [UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects](#).

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

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EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An overall approach and method for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects have been developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR (see Annex C). The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Regional Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum:

Key stakeholders:

- UNDP Senior Management
- The Chu-Talas Water Commission (CTWC) Co-Chairs from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and the Secretariat
- The State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic – GEF

Operational Focal Point;

- Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan - GEF Operational Focal Point
- Kazhydromet
- Kyrgyzhydromet
- Chu-Talas Basin Authorities in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan
- UNDP “Sustainable Development” Dimension and its projects
- UNDP Kazakhstan project coordinator
- NGOs
- UNECE Regional Adviser on Environment
- GEF RC in UNDP IRH

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in Annex B of this Terms of Reference.

EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework (see Annex A), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in Annex D.

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	rating	2. IA& EA Execution	rating
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	

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3. Assessment of Outcomes	rating	4. Sustainability	rating
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

PROJECT FINANCE / COFINANCE

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator(s) will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
• In-kind support								
• Other								
Totals								

MAINSTREAMING

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with

other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.²

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report ([Annex F](#)) must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations** and **lessons**. Conclusions should build on findings and be based in evidence. Recommendations should be prioritized, specific, relevant, and targeted, with suggested implementers of the recommendations. Lessons should have wider applicability to other initiatives across the region, the area of intervention, and for the future.

² A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROTI Handbook 2009](#)

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IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in Kyrgyzstan. The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be 22 days according to the following indicative plan:

Activity	Timing (indicative)	Completion Date (indicative)
Preparation (desk review)	4 days (April, 2018)	April 5, 2018
Evaluation Mission (in-country field visits, interviews and presentation of preliminary findings)	8 days (April, 2018)	April 16, 2018
Draft Evaluation Report	6 days (April, 2018)	April 27, 2018
Final Report	4 days (May, 2018)	May 4, 2018

EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	No later than 1 week before the evaluation mission. (by April 5, 2018)	Evaluator submits to UNDP CO and Project
Presentation	Initial Findings	Last day of the field mission (Monday, April 16, 2018)	Project Team, UNDP CO and key stakeholders, members of Project Board
Draft Final Report	Draft evaluation report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within two weeks time after the field mission (by April 27, 2018)	Project team, CO, reviewed by RTA, GEF OFP
Final Report*	Final report addressing and integrating feedback and comments	Within a week time after receiving comments on the draft (by May 5, 2018)	Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP ERC.

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report. See [Annex G](#) for an evaluation clearance form and an audit trail template.

TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation team will be composed of *1 international consultant*. *The consultant shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects*. The international Consultant has responsibility over submission of a final report. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities. The project will provide an interpreter to accompany the international consultant during the mission to Kyrgyzstan.

The International Consultant must present the following qualifications:

- A Master's degree in natural science. Academic Degree in related science is an asset;
- Minimum 7 years of professional experience in the fields of International Waters;
- Proven track record of evaluation of projects focusing on International Waters, confirmed with at least two

project evaluations;

- At least one project evaluation with GEF M&E policies and procedures;
- Experience in working in Central Asian or CIS countries will be an asset;
- Fluency in English. Knowledge of Russian is an asset.

EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#)

PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

The service provider will be responsible for all personal administrative and travel expenses associated with undertaking this assignment including office accommodation, printing, stationary, telephone and electronic communications, and report copies incurred in this assignment. For this reason, the contract is prepared as a lump sum contract.

The remuneration of work performed will be conducted as follows: lump sum payable in 1 installment, upon satisfactory completion and approval by UNDP of all deliverables, including the Final Evaluation Report.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Individual consultants are invited to submit applications as per Procurement Notice by March 20,2018 together with their CV for these positions. The application should contain a current and complete C.V. in English with indication of the e-mail and phone contact.

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

B. Annex 2: GEF Operational Principles

<http://www.gefweb.org/public/opstrat/ch1.htm>

TEN OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GEF'S WORK PROGRAM

1. For purposes of the financial mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the GEF will **function under the guidance of, and be accountable to, the Conference of the Parties (COPs)**. For purposes of financing activities in the focal area of ozone layer depletion, GEF operational policies will be consistent with those of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendments.
2. The GEF will provide new, and additional, grant and concessional funding to meet the agreed **incremental costs** of measures to achieve agreed global environmental benefits.
3. The GEF will ensure the **cost-effectiveness** of its activities to maximize global environmental benefits.
4. The GEF will fund projects that are **country-driven** and based on national priorities designed to support sustainable development, as identified within the context of national programs.
5. The GEF will maintain sufficient **flexibility** to respond to changing circumstances, including evolving guidance of the Conference of the Parties and experience gained from monitoring and evaluation activities.
6. GEF projects will provide for **full disclosure** of all non-confidential information.
7. GEF projects will provide for consultation with, and **participation** as appropriate of, the beneficiaries and affected groups of people.
8. GEF projects will conform to the **eligibility** requirements set forth in paragraph 9 of the GEF Instrument.
9. In seeking to maximize global environmental benefits, the GEF will emphasize its **catalytic role** and leverage additional financing from other sources.
10. The GEF will ensure that its programs and projects are **monitored and evaluated** on a regular basis.

C. Annex 3: Chu-Talas Project Terminal Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
Evaluation Criteria: Relevance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project’s objective support implementation of the relevant bi-lateral or multi-lateral water body conventions? Did the project support other relevant MEAs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages between project objective and elements of the water body conventions, key convention articles and programs of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTWC website Project documents CTWC staff UNDP staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Stakeholder interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project objective fit GEF strategic priorities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between project objective and GEF strategic priorities (including alignment of relevant focal area indicators) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEF strategic priority documents for period when project was approved Current GEF strategic priority documents GEF staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Stakeholder interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project’s objective fit within and supportive of national water management development needs and priorities for participating countries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between project objective and national needs, priorities and strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National policy documents Country stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review National level interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the project linked with and in-line with UNDP priorities and strategies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between project objective and design with UNDP strategic documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP strategic priority documents Agency staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Agency staff interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were relevant stakeholders sufficiently involved in project development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of involvement of local and national stakeholders in project origination and development (number of meetings held, project development processes incorporating stakeholder input, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project staff Local and national stakeholders Project documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project’s design correspond to the needs and priorities of countries that are eligible for GEF support? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between project objective and stated priorities of local stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National stakeholders Document review of local development strategies, environmental policies, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder interviews Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
Evaluation Criteria: Efficiency			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project cost-effective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and adequacy of financial management procedures (in line with UNDP, and national policies, legislation, and procedures) Financial delivery rate vs. expected rate Management costs as a percentage of total costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are expenditures in line with international standards and norms? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of project inputs and outputs relative to norms and standards for donor projects at the global level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project implementation approach efficient for delivering the planned project results? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequacy of implementation structure and mechanisms for coordination and communication Planned and actual level of human resources available Extent and quality of engagement with relevant partners / partnerships Quality and adequacy of project monitoring mechanisms (oversight bodies' input, quality and timeliness of reporting, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project stakeholders Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff Interviews with stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project implementation delayed? If so, has that affected cost-effectiveness? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project milestones in time Planned results affected by delays Required project adaptive management measures related to delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of cash and in-kind co-financing relative to expected level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is the project leveraging additional resources? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of resources leveraged relative to project budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with project staff
Evaluation Criteria: Effectiveness			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the project objectives likely to be met? To what extent are they likely to be met? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of progress toward project indicator targets relative to expected level at current point of implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the key factors contributing to project success or underachievement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of documentation of and preparation for project risks, assumptions and impact drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the key risks and barriers that remain to achieve the project objective and generate Global Environmental Benefits? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence, assessment of, and preparation for expected risks, assumptions and impact drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the key assumptions and impact drivers relevant to the achievement of Global Environmental Benefits likely to be met? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions undertaken to address key assumptions and target impact drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders Desk review
Evaluation Criteria: Results			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the planned outputs been produced? Have they contributed to the project outcomes and objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of project implementation progress relative to expected level at current stage of implementation Existence of logical linkages between project outputs and outcomes/impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the anticipated outcomes likely to be achieved? Are the outcomes likely to contribute to the achievement of the project objective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of logical linkages between project outcomes and impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are impact level results likely to be achieved? Are the likely to be at the scale sufficient to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental indicators Level of progress through the project's Theory of Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
considered Global Environmental Benefits?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review
Evaluation Criteria: Sustainability			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are project results likely to be dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the GEF assistance ends? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial requirements for maintenance of project benefits, as necessary • Level of expected financial resources available to support maintenance of project benefits, as necessary • Potential for additional financial resources to support maintenance of project benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with stakeholders • Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do relevant stakeholders have or are likely to achieve an adequate level of “ownership” of results, to have the interest in ensuring that project benefits are maintained? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of initiative and engagement of relevant stakeholders in project activities and results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with stakeholders • Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do relevant stakeholders have the necessary technical capacity to ensure that project benefits are maintained? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of technical capacity of relevant stakeholders relative to level required to sustain project benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with stakeholders • Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are the project results dependent on socio-political factors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of socio-political risks to project benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with stakeholders • Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are the project results dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of institutional and governance risks to project benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with stakeholders • Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project impacts and Global Environmental Benefits? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of environmental risks to project benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with stakeholders • Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
<i>Cross-cutting and UNDP Mainstreaming Issues</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project take incorporate gender mainstreaming or equality, as relevant? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of appropriate engagement and attention to gender-relevant aspects of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders Desk review

D. Annex 4: Interview Guide

Terminal Evaluation Draft Interview Guide

Overview: The questions under each topic area are intended to assist in focusing discussion to ensure consistent topic coverage and to structure data collection, and are not intended as verbatim questions to be posed to interviewees. When using the interview guide, the interviewer should be sure to target questions at a level appropriate to the interviewee. The interview guide is one of multiple tools for gathering evaluative evidence, to complement evidence collected through document reviews and other data collection methods; in other words, the interview guide does not cover all evaluative questions relevant to the evaluation.

Key

Bold = GEF Evaluation Criteria

Italic = GEF Operational Principles

I. PLANNING / PRE-IMPLEMENTATION

A. **Relevance**

- i. Did the project's objectives fit within the priorities of the local government and local communities?
- ii. Did the project's objectives fit within national priorities?
- iii. Did the project's objectives fit GEF strategic priorities?
- iv. Did the project's objectives support implementation of the relevant multi-lateral environmental agreement?

B. *Incremental cost*

- i. Did the project create environmental benefits that would not have otherwise taken place?
- ii. Does the project area represent an example of a globally significant environmental resource?

C. *Country-drivenness / Participation*

- i. How did the project concept originate?
- ii. How did the project stakeholders contribute to the project development?
- iii. Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project?
- iv. Do the local communities support the objectives of the project?
- v. Are the project objectives in conflict with any national level policies?

D. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan / Design (*M&E*)

- i. Were monitoring and reporting roles clearly defined?
- ii. Was there either an environmental or socio-economic baseline of data collected before the project began?

II. MANAGEMENT / OVERSIGHT

A. Project management

- i. What were the implementation arrangements?
- ii. Was the management effective?
- iii. Were workplans prepared as required to achieve the anticipated outputs on the required timeframes?
- iv. Did the project develop and leverage the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- v. Were there any particular challenges with the management process?
- vi. If there was a steering or oversight body, did it meet as planned and provide the anticipated input and support to project management?
- vii. Were risks adequately assessed during implementation?
- viii. Did assumptions made during project design hold true?
- ix. Were assessed risks adequately dealt with?
- x. Was the level of communication and support from the implementing agency adequate and appropriate?

B. Flexibility

- i. Did the project have to undertake any adaptive management measures based on feedback received from the M&E process?
- ii. Were there other ways in which the project demonstrated flexibility?
- iii. Were there any challenges faced in this area?

C. Efficiency (*cost-effectiveness*)

- i. Was the project cost-effective?
- ii. Were expenditures in line with international standards and norms?
- iii. Was the project implementation delayed?
- iv. If so, did that affect cost-effectiveness?
- v. What was the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation?
- vi. To what extent did the project leverage additional resources?

D. Financial Management

- i. Was the project financing (from the GEF and other partners) at the level foreseen in the project document?
- ii. Were there any problems with disbursements between implementing and executing agencies?
- iii. Were financial audits conducted with the regularity and rigor required by the implementing agency?
- iv. Was financial reporting regularly completed at the required standards and level of detail?
- v. Did the project face any particular financial challenges such as unforeseen tax liabilities, management costs, or currency devaluation?

E. Co-financing (*catalytic role*)

- i. Was the in-kind co-financing received at the level anticipated in the project document?

- ii. Was the cash co-financing received at the level anticipated in the project document?
 - iii. Did the project receive any additional unanticipated cash support after approval?
 - iv. Did the project receive any additional unanticipated in-kind support after approval?
- F. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
- i. Project implementation M&E
 - a. Was the M&E plan adequate and implemented sufficiently to allow the project to recognize and address challenges?
 - b. Were any unplanned M&E measures undertaken to meet unforeseen shortcomings?
 - c. Was there a mid-term evaluation?
 - d. How were project reporting and monitoring tools used to support adaptive management?
 - ii. Environmental and socio-economic monitoring
 - a. Did the project implement a monitoring system, or leverage a system already in place, for environmental monitoring?
 - b. What are the environmental or socio-economic monitoring mechanisms?
 - c. Have any community-based monitoring mechanisms been used?
 - d. Is there a long-term M&E component to track environmental changes?
 - e. If so, what provisions have been made to ensure this is carried out?
- E. Full disclosure
- i. Did the project meet this requirement?
 - ii. Did the project face any challenges in this area?
- III. ACTIVITIES / IMPLEMENTATION
- A. Effectiveness
- i. How have the stated project objectives been met?
 - ii. To what extent have the project objectives been met?
 - iii. What were the key factors that contributed to project success or underachievement?
 - iv. Can positive key factors be replicated in other situations, and could negative key factors have been anticipated?
- B. Stakeholder involvement and public awareness (*participation*)
- i. What were the achievements in this area?
 - ii. What were the challenges in this area?
 - iii. How did stakeholder involvement and public awareness contribute to the achievement of project objectives?
- IV. RESULTS
- A. Outputs

- i. Did the project achieve the planned outputs?
 - ii. Did the outputs contribute to the project outcomes and objectives?
 - B. Outcomes
 - i. Were the anticipated outcomes achieved?
 - ii. Were the outcomes relevant to the planned project impacts?
 - C. Impacts
 - i. Was there a logical flow of inputs and activities to outputs, from outputs to outcomes, and then to impacts?
 - ii. Did the project achieve its anticipated/planned impacts?
 - iii. Why or why not?
 - iv. If impacts were achieved, were they at a scale sufficient to be considered Global Environmental Benefits?
 - v. If impacts or Global Environmental Benefits have not yet been achieved, are the conditions (enabling environment) in place so that they are likely to eventually be achieved?
 - D. Replication strategy, and documented replication or scaling-up (*catalytic role*)
 - i. Did the project have a replication plan?
 - ii. Was the replication plan “passive” or “active”?
 - iii. Is there evidence that replication or scaling-up occurred within the country?
 - iv. Did replication or scaling-up occur in other countries?
- V. LESSONS LEARNED
 - A. What were the key lessons learned in each project stage?
 - B. In retrospect, would the project participants have done anything differently?
- VI. SUSTAINABILITY
 - A. Financial
 - i. To what extent are the project results dependent on continued financial support?
 - ii. What is the likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the GEF assistance ends?
 - iii. Was the project successful in identifying and leveraging co-financing?
 - iv. What are the key financial risks to sustainability?
 - B. Socio-Political
 - i. To what extent are the project results dependent on socio-political factors?
 - ii. What is the likelihood that the level of stakeholder ownership will allow for the project results to be sustained?
 - iii. Is there sufficient public/stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?
 - iv. What are the key socio-political risks to sustainability?
 - C. Institutions and Governance
 - i. To what extent are the project results dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance?

- ii. What is the likelihood that institutional and technical achievements, legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes will allow for the project results to be sustained?
 - iii. Are the required systems for accountability and transparency and the required technical know-how in place?
 - iv. What are the key institutional and governance risks to sustainability?
- D. Ecological
- i. Are there any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project impacts and Global Environmental Benefits?

E. Annex 5: Rating Scales

Progress towards results: use the following rating scale	
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
Satisfactory (S)	Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.
Moderately Satisfactory (S)	Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Project is expected to achieve its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.
Adaptive management AND Management Arrangements: use the following rating scale	
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The project has no shortcomings and can be presented as “good practice”.
Satisfactory (S)	The project has minor shortcomings.
Moderately Satisfactory (S)	The project has moderate shortcomings.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	The project has significant shortcomings.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The project has major shortcomings.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The project has severe shortcomings.
Sustainability: use the following rating scale	
Likely (L)	There are no or negligible risks that affect this dimension of sustainability/linkages
Moderately Likely (ML)	There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability/linkages
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability/linkages
Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability
Impact	
Significant (S)	By project completion project directly contributed to scientifically documented large scale impacts.
Minimal (M)	By project completion project directly contributed to anecdotal and/or relatively small site-specific impacts.
Negligible (N)	By project completion project no direct contribution of project to impacts.

F. Annex 6: Key Informants Targeted and Interviewed

The following people were interviewed as key stakeholder for the evaluation.

Day and timing	Meeting, activity	Place and Venue
April 10, 2018		
10:00-10:45	Courtesy meeting with UNDP Kazakhstan Senior Management Participants: Mr. Zhumabaev Yerlan, Project Coordinator, UNDP Kazakhstan Mr. Ibrohimov Firuz, CTA Mr. Kauazov Azamat, Expert	UNDP Kazakhstan
11:30-12:30	Meeting with Mr. Nisanbaev Erlan, Co-Chair of CTWC, Vice Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan Participants: Mr. Kovalj Igorj, Director of the Department of Transboundary Rivers Mr. Zhienbaev Muslim, Head of Transboundary Rivers Section Ms. Kurmankulova Nazym 3 rd Secretary of the Asia Cooperation Department of MFA	Ministry of Agriculture in the House of Ministries – Gate 1
16:00-17:30	Meeting with the representative of GEF OFP in the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Deputy Director General of the Kazhydromet Ms. Danara Alimbaeva Participants: Ms. Shakirova Torgyn, Head of Environmental Monitoring Department Ms. Sakabaeva Alena, Chief Expert, Environmental Monitoring Unit, Environmental Monitoring and Information Department Mr. Ermekbaev Erzhan, Head, Strategic Planning Department Mr. Bazarbaev Sapar, Head of the Hydrological Monitoring Department Ms. Ortbaeva Ainur, Lead Engineer, Environmental Information Unit, Ms. Jandildina Akbayan, Head of the Department of Methodological Support of Environmental Monitoring Sadyvakasova Aliya Ministry of Energy Management of State Ecological Control	Kazhydromet
April 11, 2018		
10:10-11:40	Flight from Astana to Taraz	

14:00-15:00	Meeting with Agybai Daurenbekov, Head of the Shu-Talas Inspection on regulation of water resources use and protection CWR MA Participants: Ms. Akbozova Inidira, Head of CTWC Secretariat Ms. Zarubayeva Galiya, Deputy Director of the Zhambyl Branch of the RSE Kazvodhoz CWR Ministry of Agriculture	Office of Chu-Talas Basin Inspection
15:30-17:00	Meeting with Mr. Alimzhanov Anuar, Head of Kazhydromet Branch in Dzhambul Province and NGO Participants: Mr. Sabitov Rauf. Chair of the Aksuu-Jabagly –Manas Club Ms. Efimova Elena. Aksuu-Jabagly –Manas Club, Ms. Akbozova Inidira, Head of CTWC Secretariat	Kazhydromet Office, Taraz
April 12, 2018		
Morning 8:00-12:00	Travel from Taraz to Bishkek	
14:00-15:30	Meeting with Project Team Participants: Mr. Kylychev Kumar, UNDP PMU SD Dimension Chief Mr. Makeev Talaipek, Project Coordinator	UNDP PMU Office, Bishkek
16:00-17:00	Security briefing with UNDSS	UNDP CO, Bishkek
Friday, April 13, 2018		
9:30 – 10:00	Briefing with Senior Management of UNDP CO Participants: Ms. Nikulita Aliona, UNDP DRR Mr. Kasybekov Erkinbek, UNDP ARR Mr, Ibragimov Daniar, UNDP Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Team Leader Ms. Nurzhanova Sherbet, UNDP Programme Associate	UNDP CO, Bishkek
11:00-12:00	Meeting with Mr. Itibaev Zarylbek, Director of KyrgyzHydromet [actually will be instead Dep director] Sagynov Kanatbek Cholponbaevich Deputy Director of Kyrgyz Hydromet Participants: Ms. Tyulyundieva Sabira, Head, International Cooperation Department Ms. Nishanbayeva Ludmila, Head of the Department on Monitoring of Environmental Pollutions Ms. Zhunusheva Gulnara, Head of Hydrology Section	Kyrgyzhydro met Office in Bishkek
14:00-15:00	Meeting with Mr. Rustamov Abdykalyk, GEF OFP, Director of the State Agency on Environment and Forestry (SAEPF) Participants:	SAEPF Office in Bishkek

	<p>Ms. Salykmambetova Baglan, Head of International Department Mr. Kydyrgychev Ayazbek, Head, Chui-Bishkek Territorial Department, Ms. Raimkulova Asel, Chief Specialist, State Environmental Expertise and Nature Management Department</p>	
16:00-17:00	<p>Meeting with Mr. Koilubaev Bakir, Co-Chair of CTWC from Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Director General of Department of Water Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture Akylbek Sulymanov, Head of Water Division Section (3rd person in dept) Participants: Ms. Satymkulova Gulmira, Head of CTWC Secretariat (counterpart to Indira) Ms. Toktonalieva Ainura, Chief Specialist, Department for Water Resources, Water Management and Transboundary Water-sharing (member of all working groups) Mr. Devjatkulov Ruslan, Head of Chu Province Water Department [may not be there?] Ms. Nargiz Osmonova, Head of Information and Analytical Section</p>	DWR Office, Bishkek
Saturday, April 14 th		
10:00-12:00	<p>Talaibek Alexander Belakurov, from UNECE</p>	
Monday, April 16, 201		
9:30-10:30	<p>Debriefing meeting with UNDP Senior Management, followed by a presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations Participants: Ms. Nikulita Aliona, UNDP DRR Mr. Ibragimov Daniar, Ms. Nurzhanova Sherbet Ms. Arstanbekova Aidai, M&E</p>	UNDP CO, Bishkek
11:00-11:30	<p>Meeting with UNDP Gender Team – Umutai Dauletova</p>	UNDP PMU Office, Bishkek
11:30-12:30	<p>Meeting with Project Team: Participants: Mr. Kylychev Kumar, Dimension Chief Mr. Talaibek Makeev</p>	UNDP PMU Office, Bishkek

G. Annex 7: Documents Reviewed

General documentation

- UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP);
- UNDP Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results;
- UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects;
- GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy;
- GEF Guidelines for conducting Terminal Evaluations.

Project documentation

- GEF Project Information Form (PIF) and Log Frame Analysis
- List and contact details for project staff, key project stakeholders, including Project Boards, and other partners to be consulted;
- Project sites, highlighting suggested visits;
- Project document;
- Annual Work Plans;
- Annual Project Reports;
- Project Implementation Review;
- GEF Operational Quarterly Reports;
- Midterm Review Report (MTR);
- Management response to MTE;
- Annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs);
- Project budget and financial data;
- Inception report;
- Project Board Meeting minutes;
- Knowledge and legislation related products.

H. Annex 8: Chu-Talas Project Results Framework Assessed Level of Indicator Target Achievement

Results Framework Assessment Key

Green = Achievement Likely / Achieved / Exceeded	Yellow = Partially Achieved / Achievement Uncertain	Red = Achievement Unlikely	Gray = Not applicable
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	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target level at end of project	Level at 30 June 2016	Cumulative progress since project start	TE Assessment
Objective: Strengthening transboundary cooperation and promoting integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas River Basins, and empowering the Water Commission of Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic	Science based consensus on major transboundary environmental concerns and possible solutions (TDA), leading to agreement between the two countries on a joint program of corrective actions (SAP) and on harmonized monitoring and data exchange protocols.	Currently, transboundary cooperation in the Chu-Talas basins is mainly limited to the implementation of the existing water sharing agreement and does not include consideration of ecosystem integrity and environmental sustainability in view of climatic variability and change.	SAP endorsed by countries at Ministerial level. Governments approve expanded mandate of the Water Commission and establish Environmental Expert Group.		TDA was approved by Chu-Talas Water Commission at its 22nd Session on November 29, 2016. The Working Group mandated to develop SAP was established and the process of SAP development was established since April 2017. The Working Group on Environment (WGE) continues its work and its 3rd and 4th meetings took place in the reporting period. WGE is in the course of finalising the water quality assessment in Chu and Talas River Basins	Partially achieved. SAP has been technically cleared, but not yet politically approved as of the completion of project activities.
	The Water Commission strengthened through improved water monitoring ability, and its mandate expanded to include	Deteriorated monitoring networks hinder ability of the Commission to implement the water sharing agreement.	Water quantity and quality monitoring procedures harmonized.		The WGE within water quality assessment considers harmonization of water quality monitoring and separately abilities to set up basin level data exchange of hydrometeorological data (air temperature, precipitation, water flow, snow cover, flow module) and	Partially achieved.

	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target level at end of project	Level at 30 June 2016	Cumulative progress since project start	TE Assessment
	environmental aspects.				water quality data exchange. the set of	
Outcome 1: TDA including climate scenario analyses to inform adaptive integrated management of the Chu-Talas shared water resources.	The TDA of the Chu and Talas Basins prepared jointly by the two countries, identifying issues of transboundary concern.	At the moment there is not common understanding over transboundary issues in Chu-Talas river basins among the stakeholders in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan	TDA completed and approved by first semester of Year 2	TDA draft is developed and its approval is pending. The meeting of the Chu-Talas Water Commission's Secretariat to consider TDA Draft is to be held on July 14-15, 2016.	TDA was submitted for approval at 1st semester of Year 2 of the project and was approved at 22nd Session of Chu-Talas Water Commission in November 2016	Achieved.
	Considerations based on Water Scenarios, on climate variability and change and surface-groundwater interactions included into the TDA.	Currently there is no common understanding of possible future water resources scenarios in the basin. This hinders the decision making process on adaptation measures.	TDA document including consideration of future water scenarios and surface-groundwater interactions.		UNECE provided experts to develop climate change chapter of TDA with scenario for surface water resources for two basins	Achieved.
	Program for seminars on climate change adaptation and integrated water resources management approved by the	Currently, local governments and others stakeholders in both basins are not prepared to adequately	Seminars developed and held within first semester of Year 2 of the project implementation.	forthcoming TDA approval is to be followed up by these trainings, those to be	2 national seminars on adaptation to climate change and 1 regional training on adaptation to climate change were included to the Capacity Building Programme, which is started in June 2017 and will last in December 2017	Achieved.

	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target level at end of project	Level at 30 June 2016	Cumulative progress since project start	TE Assessment
	Commission and implemented.	respond to the possible social, economic and environmental implications and risks associated with the transboundary nature of the water resources of the basins and with increased climate variability and change.		held within second semester of the year 2		
Outcome 2: Building the foundation for broadened and improved bilateral water cooperation	The Strategic Action Program (SAP), with a 5 years horizon and reflecting inter-sectoral dialogue and stakeholder involvement and addressing the major issues of transboundary concern agreed upon by the two countries.	There is currently no detailed joint integrated program to address major transboundary issues in Chu-Talas river basins, and stakeholders have little participation in discussions and decision-making.	SAP endorsed at Ministerial level by the end of project		SAP Working Group were established in March 2017 and 2 national and 2 regional meetings were held to develop SAP. It is expected that the work on development will be finished in September 2017 and draft SAP will be presented to 24th Session of Chu-Talas Water Commission in November 2017. After that SAP will be sent to two Governments for approval and signing at one of the meetings of the Kyrgyz-Kazakh Inter-Governmental Council.	Partially achieved / achievement uncertain.
	Amendment to the Commission regulations establishing a clear environmental	Currently, the functions and competencies of the Chu-Talas Commission are	Amendment to the Statutes of the Commission/Secretariat adopted by governments by end of Year 1.	Amendments are not proposed yet.	Review and analysis of needs for updating Commission's Regulations toward environmental mandate was made in the reporting period. The Joint Working Group on Environment	Partially achieved.

	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target level at end of project	Level at 30 June 2016	Cumulative progress since project start	TE Assessment
	mandate, and a joint Environmental Expert Group.	limited to joint water management (quantity) coordination in the two basins.			(WGE) was established under Secretariat of CTWC by orders from Commission Co-Chairs. Two meetings of WGE were held in the reporting period and WGE is in charge of the development of the joint water quality and hydrometeorological state in Chu and Talas River Basins. Completion of two assessment reports are pending and will be reviewed and adopted at 5th meeting of WGE in August 2017.	
	Twinning and experience exchanges with other transboundary basins, dissemination of project results and participation to IW LEARN activities	No ongoing or previous outreach, dissemination and awareness raising activities related to the two basins management.	Twinning with at least another river basin showing similar characteristics and problems, and communication platform (website) established during the early project phases	Twinning with International Sava River Basin Commission is under the process of establishment. Darf MOU is proposed and considered by two Commissions.	The web-site of CTWC was redesigned, developed as of IW:LEARN requirements and approved by CTWC, the interactive web-page on TDA and project web-page are under development and will be issued by November 2017. Twinning with Sava River Basin is established and the ISRBC is involved to training programme for CTWC via REC CEE.	Achieved.
Outcome 3: Strengthening capacity of water resources monitoring in the Chu and Talas River Basins.	Report containing the assessment of present situation of surface and groundwater quantity and quality monitoring including recommendations for an harmonized system completed.	Currently latent conflict situations between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan exist in regulation of water resources distribution and allocation, and	Assessment Report completed and approved by the Commission and by national agencies of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, by the end of Year 2.		The water Quality Assessment Report is under finalization and as of decision of 4th Meeting of the WGE it is to be a Joint Basin Water Quality and Hydrometeorological Assessment, which will be reviewed at the meeting of the WGE on August 23, 2017 and then will provided to the Commission meeting in November 2017 for approval	Achieved / likely to be achieved.

Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target level at end of project	Level at 30 June 2016	Cumulative progress since project start	TE Assessment
		pollution in both basins due to differences in technologies and procedures for monitoring the quantity and quality of water resources.			
Reports containing (i) the assessment of capacity building needs in water resources monitoring; (ii) a program for ad hoc training of staff of the two countries; (iii) the results of the capacity building activities and events, including number of participants and results assessment	Currently, water monitoring is poor and sporadic based on limited number of observations and indicators. Staff has no capacity to use new monitoring technologies.	Reports on needs assessment and on implementation and results of training program prepared by the end of the project.		The training programme with involvement of Sava Commission expertise and good practices of 7 regional trainings, 2 national and 1 regional seminars is started on June 2017 and will be completed by the end of the project	Achieved, but could use more work on capacity needs assessment to inform future work in a more comprehensive and structured way.
Formal agreement on harmonized monitoring and data exchange protocols in the two basins.	No approved rules for transboundary water quality monitoring and information exchange exist	Agreement between the two countries formalized by project completion.		Data exchange Policy is to be prototyped from the Sava Information and Data Exchange Policy and proposed for approval of the Commission. Above Joint Water Quality and Hydrometeorological Assessments are to be the base for the Policy.	Partially achieved / achievement uncertain.

I. Annex 9. Project Financial Tables

ORIGINAL BUDGET (Prodoc ATLAS)	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	\$ 96,755	\$ 96,755	\$ 106,490		\$ 300,000
Component 2	\$ 61,755	\$ 71,754	\$ 66,491		\$ 200,000
Component 3	\$ 55,754	\$ 242,754	\$ 101,492		\$ 400,000
Project Management	\$ 32,500	\$ 35,500	\$ 32,000		\$ 100,000
Total	\$ 246,764	\$ 446,763	\$ 306,473	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000
ACTUAL EXPENDITURE	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	\$ 45,498	\$ 158,757	\$ 51,533	\$ 56,365	\$ 312,153
Component 2	\$ 3,277	\$ 69,050	\$ 97,963	\$ 56,578	\$ 226,868
Component 3	\$ 2,639	\$ 107,537	\$ 172,754	\$ 90,271	\$ 373,201
Project Management	\$ 10,855	\$ 24,293	\$ 31,320	\$ 21,311	\$ 87,779
Total	\$ 62,268	\$ 359,637	\$ 353,570	\$ 224,525	\$ 1,000,000
Actual Delivery vs Original PRODOC Budget	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	47.02%	164.08%	48.39%	n/a	104.05%
Component 2	5.31%	96.23%	147.33%	n/a	113.43%
Component 3	4.73%	44.30%	170.21%	n/a	93.30%
Project Management	33.40%	68.43%	97.88%	n/a	87.78%
Total	25.23%	80.50%	115.37%	n/a	100.00%
Revision 1 - December 17, 2015 (EXCEL)	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	\$ 45,058	\$ 154,590	\$ 100,352		\$ 300,000
Component 2	\$ 3,004	\$ 107,500	\$ 89,496		\$ 200,000

Component 3	\$ 2,086	\$ 292,209	\$ 105,705		\$ 400,000
Project Management	\$ 9,349	\$ 22,651	\$ 68,000		\$ 100,000
Total	\$ 59,497	\$ 576,950	\$ 363,553	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000
Actual Delivery vs Revision 1	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	100.98%	102.70%	51.35%	#DIV/0!	104.05%
Component 2	109.07%	64.23%	109.46%	#DIV/0!	113.43%
Component 3	126.49%	36.80%	163.43%	#DIV/0!	93.30%
Project Management	116.11%	107.25%	46.06%	#DIV/0!	87.78%
Total	104.66%	62.33%	97.25%	#DIV/0!	100.00%
Revision 2 - 2016 final (EXCEL - January 2017)	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	\$ 45,498	\$ 159,288	\$ 78,705	\$ 17,504	\$ 300,995
Component 2	\$ 3,277	\$ 72,539	\$ 105,300	\$ 18,892	\$ 200,008
Component 3	\$ 2,639	\$ 163,797	\$ 191,000	\$ 40,612	\$ 398,048
Project Management	\$ 10,855	\$ 24,000	\$ 51,320	\$ 14,775	\$ 100,950
Total	\$ 62,268	\$ 419,624	\$ 426,325	\$ 91,783	\$ 1,000,000
ACTUAL DELIVERY VS REVISION 2 (2016)	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Component 1	100.00%	99.67%	65.48%	322.01%	
Component 2	100.00%	95.19%	93.03%	299.48%	
Component 3	100.00%	65.65%	90.45%	222.28%	
Project Management	100.00%	101.22%	61.03%	144.23%	
Total	100.00%	85.70%	82.93%	244.63%	

Revision 3 - 2017 (December 2017 "approved" 2017 and 2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	\$ 45,498	\$ 158,757	\$ 85,270	\$ 21,501	\$ 311,026
Component 2	\$ 3,277	\$ 69,050	\$ 111,900	\$ 24,910	\$ 209,137
Component 3	\$ 2,639	\$ 107,537	\$ 243,000	\$ 39,345	\$ 392,520
Project Management	\$ 10,855	\$ 24,293	\$ 51,320	\$ 20,020	\$ 106,488
Total	\$ 62,268	\$ 359,637	\$ 491,490	\$ 105,776	\$ 1,019,171
ACTUAL DELIVERY VS Revision 3 (2017)	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Component 1	100.00%	100.00%	60.44%	262.15%	
Component 2	100.00%	100.00%	87.55%	227.13%	
Component 3	100.00%	100.00%	71.09%	229.44%	
Project Management	100.00%	100.00%	61.03%	106.45%	
Total	100.00%	100.00%	71.94%	212.26%	
Revision 4 - 2017 (December 2017 "proposed" 2017 and 2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	\$ 45,498	\$ 158,757	\$ 51,500	\$ 43,100	\$ 298,855
Component 2	\$ 3,277	\$ 69,050	\$ 97,900	\$ 32,157	\$ 202,384
Component 3	\$ 2,639	\$ 107,537	\$ 172,643	\$ 117,800	\$ 400,618
Project Management	\$ 10,855	\$ 24,293	\$ 31,300	\$ 31,695	\$ 98,143
Total	\$ 62,268	\$ 359,637	\$ 353,343	\$ 224,752	\$ 1,000,000
ACTUAL DELIVERY VS Revision 4 (2017)	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Component 1	100.00%	100.00%	100.06%	130.78%	
Component 2	100.00%	100.00%	100.06%	175.94%	
Component 3	100.00%	100.00%	100.06%	76.63%	
Project Management	100.00%	100.00%	100.06%	67.24%	

Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.06%	99.90%	
Revision 5 - 2018 for extension period (May 5, 2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Component 1	\$ 45,498	\$ 158,757	\$ 51,533	\$ 43,100	\$ 298,888
Component 2	\$ 3,277	\$ 69,050	\$ 97,963	\$ 32,157	\$ 202,447
Component 3	\$ 2,639	\$ 107,537	\$ 172,754	\$ 117,800	\$ 400,729
Project Management	\$ 10,855	\$ 24,293	\$ 31,320	\$ 31,695	\$ 98,164
Total	\$ 62,268	\$ 359,637	\$ 353,570	\$ 224,752	\$ 1,000,227
ACTUAL DELIVERY VS Revision 5 (2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Component 1	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	130.78%	
Component 2	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	175.94%	
Component 3	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	76.63%	
Project Management	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	67.24%	
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	99.90%	
Annual Total Financial Delivery Rate	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
vs Original	25.23%	80.50%	115.37%	N/A	100.00%
vs Annual Revised	104.66%	85.70%	71.94%	99.90%	100.00%
Expenditure - ACTUAL VS REVISED VS ORIGINAL PLANNED	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Original Planned	\$ 246,764	\$ 446,763	\$ 306,473	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000
Annual Delivery Rate	25.2%	80.5%	115.4%	N/A	\$ 2
Actual	\$ 62,268	\$ 359,637	\$ 353,570	\$ 224,525	\$ 1,000,000

Cumulative Annual Total Financial Delivery	2015	2016	2017	2018
vs Original	\$ 246,764	\$ 693,527	\$ 1,000,000	
vs Annual Revised	\$ 62,268	\$ 421,905	\$ 775,475	\$ 1,000,000

Actual vs Planned, by Component	Planned	Actual	% of Total	% of Planned
Component 1	\$ 300,000	\$ 312,153	31.2%	104.1%
Component 2	\$ 200,000	\$ 226,868	22.7%	113.4%
Component 3	\$ 400,000	\$ 373,201	37.3%	93.3%
Project Management	\$ 100,000	\$ 87,779	8.8%	87.8%
Total	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000		