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Terminal Evaluation

UNDP/GEF

Advancing IWRM across the Kura River Basin through Implementation of the Transboundary Agreed Actions and National Actions

UNDP ID: 5325

GEF Project ID: 6962

GEF International Waters Focal Area

GEF Implementing Agency: UNDP

Implementing Partner: UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

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April – May 2021



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Acknowledgements

This independent Terminal Evaluation has been prepared by Dr Peter Whalley. The views expressed and comments made are his own. He would like to thank all those that have participated in the Evaluation including the stakeholders in the Kura River Basin within Azerbaijan and Georgia, and in particular, the past and present staff from the Project Management Unit who so willingly provided their time and assistance in answering the many questions and facilitating this Terminal Evaluations under COVID-19 restrictions.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CO	(UNDP) Country Offices
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
EU	European Union
EUWI+	EU Water Initiative + (second phase)
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF CEO	(GEF) Chief Executive Officer
IRH	(UNDP) Istanbul Regional Hub
ISO	International Standards Organisation
IW	International Waters
IW:LEARN	(GEF IW) Learning Exchange and Resource Network project
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTR	Mid-Term Review
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RBO	River Basin Organisation
RTA	(UNDP) Regional Technical Advisor
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound (Indicators)
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
USD	United States Dollar
WFD	(EU) Water Framework Directive

Executive Summary

Table 1– Project Information Table

Project Details		Project Milestones	
Project Title	Advancing IWRM across the Kura River Basin through Implementation of the Transboundary Agreed Actions and National Actions	PIF Approval Date:	September 2014
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5325	CEO Endorsement Date (FSP)/ Approval date (MSP):	June 2016
GEF Project ID:	6962	ProDoc Signature Date:	August 2016
UNDP Atlas Business Unit, Award ID: Project ID:	SVK10 00094969 00099024	Date Project Manager hired:	1 December 2016
Country/Countries:	Azerbaijan Georgia	Inception Workshop Date:	April 2017
Region:	RBEC	Mid-Term Review Completion Date:	September 2019
Focal Area:	International Waters	Terminal Evaluation Completion date:	May 2021
GEF Operational Programme or Strategic Priorities/Objectives:	GEF 6 IW Objective 2	Planned Operational Closure Date:	31 st May 2021
Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund		
Implementing Partner (GEF Executing Entity):	UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub		
NGOs/CBOs involvement:	IDEA - Azerbaijan State Universities in Baku and Tbilisi Environment and Development, (ED) Georgia		
Private sector involvement:	AzerSu (Azerbaijan Water Utility) Amelioration Company of Azerbaijan JSC United Water Supply Company of Georgia Georgian Water and Power Company Lachin Tannery Poultry Georgia		
Geospatial coordinates of project sites	Kura River Basin		

Brief Project description and TE ratings

The UNDP/GEF project ‘*Advancing IWRM across the Kura River Basin through Implementation of the Transboundary Agreed Actions and National Actions*’ was designed to address the priority needs in the Strategic Action Programme (SAP), developed and endorsed by ministers through a previous GEF project. Management actions presented in the SAP were designed to strengthen and harmonise co-

ordinated conjunctive transboundary ground and surface water management in the Kura River Basin. The project's objective was directed towards '*Integrated water resources management in the Kura river basin to address water-energy-food-ecosystem security nexus with integrated flow management through the implementation of agreed actions in the SAP*'.

The Project was implemented by UNDP-GEF and executed through a Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub. A Project Management Unit, responsible for the day-to-day management, was established in Baku (Azerbaijan) with a branch office in Tbilisi (Georgia). The GEF grant amounted to 5,329,452 USD with co-financing contributions providing 194,881,670 USD of support.

A Terminal Evaluation of the UNDP/GEF project has been undertaken consistent with the expectations of the GEF and UNDP. The purpose of the Terminal Evaluation is to enable the GEF Agency, the Implementing Partner government representatives in Azerbaijan and Georgia, and other stakeholders to assess the achievement of the project against the expectations of the Project Document endorsed by the GEF CEO, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of the benefits from this project, and aid UNDP's programming globally. The Terminal Evaluation has been undertaken under restrictions imposed by the global pandemic (COVID-19) and this has necessitated the need of all information collection and stakeholder interviews to be conducted 'remotely' via computer conference calls.

The project has been effectively and efficiently managed by the Project Management Unit with oversight provided by a Project Steering Committee and UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub. The key evaluation criteria are summarised as:

- **Relevance:** The project has been highly relevant in support to the IWRM ambitions in Azerbaijan and Georgia. All the project's components were designed to support the two countries harmonise policy and technical approaches for water management, to test new methods to reduce stress on water resources and strengthen the national science to policy linkages. These activities were complimented through a wide range of capacity development training actions, education tools and awareness raising events.
- **Effectiveness:** The outcomes and objective of the project have been effectively delivered through the successful achievement of the expected outputs. The project has led to the establishment of national and regional fora to guide the technical aspects of the project through the development of important practical science to policy guidance, capacity development and pilots that have initiated the endorsed SAP implementation.
- **Efficiency:** The project has efficiently delivered the vast majority of outputs as planned and successfully levered an addition >10% in co-financing above the figure presented in the GEF CEO Endorsement Document. The PMU has effectively and efficiently employed adaptive management changes where required.
- **Sustainability:** At a technical level there is a strong willingness by stakeholders to continue to utilise the tools, lessons and bodies established by the project to sustain the work of the project with respect to IWRM. However, there are still some needs to get commitments on the sustainability of some pilot actions and to generate long-term SAP financing plans to upscale actions. Although not an objective of this project, the lack of a formal bilateral agreement between Azerbaijan and Georgia on the management of the Kura River Basin that would lead to River Basin Commission does inhibit the long-term sustainability of the project's actions. However, the project has provided strong encouragement to technical co-

operation which strengthens the future transboundary management of the river when the political agreement is in-place.

The project was designed with a detailed gender mainstreaming policy to guide execution and the project has effectively recorded sex-disaggregated data for all training events undertaken. The project has also successfully engaged in specific gender awareness raising exercises.

Table 2 - Evaluation Table Rating Table

1	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	Rating ¹
	M&E design at entry	S
	M&E Plan Implementation	S
	Overall quality of M&E	S
2	Implementing Agency implementation & Implementing Partner Execution	Rating
	Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	S
	Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	S
	Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	S
3	Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
	Relevance	HS
	Effectiveness	HS
	Efficiency	S
	Overall Project Outcome Rating	HS
4	Sustainability	Rating
	Financial resources sustainability	ML
	Socio-political sustainability	L
	Institutional framework and governance sustainability	MU - ML
	Environmental sustainability	L
	Overall likelihood of sustainability	MU - ML

Summary of findings and conclusions

The UNDP/GEF Kura II project is rated as Highly Successful by this Terminal Evaluation. The vast majority of the outputs have been delivered and these are considered to have successfully led to the planned outcomes contributing to the project's objective. At the regional level, the dialogue that has been established by the GEF Kura I and II projects has been very beneficial, assisting the countries with harmonising approaches of policy and methodology, and in supporting the important fora for transboundary discussions. But *significant* future transboundary assistance should be dependent on the countries reaching the political bilateral agreement in accordance with the UNECE Water Convention and establishing a Kura River Basin Commission. However, further support to continue the dialogue and harmonisation would be welcome by some stakeholders to maintain momentum in IWRM activities in-line with the needs of the Kura River Basin SAP.

Synthesis of lessons

Project Design: Projects would benefit from a more cautious approach to their design by ensuring that all activities are within the scope of a GEF project. The linking of activities to the proposed

¹ Rating scale: HS (Highly Satisfactory), S (Satisfactory), MS (moderately Satisfactory), MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory), U (Unsatisfactory) and HU (Highly Unsatisfactory). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: Unlikely;2 Moderately Unlikely; Moderately Likely; and, Likely See Annex 8.

bilateral agreement was potentially risky to the project achieving its objective, but this project has successfully identified adaptive management changes to continue the regional dialogue at technical levels. **Lesson:** Projects should be clear on their level of competence regarding international agreements.

Project Management: A significant strength of this project has been the high-quality project management and reporting. At the inception phase the PMU initiated a very detailed internal planning exercise. This was reviewed every few weeks to ensure that progress on the many outputs could be monitored and corrective action taken when required. **Lesson:** Detailed and frequent attention to project plans fosters a successful project conclusion.

Lessons from the first phase of the GEF Kura project and the initial phases of the Kura II development indicated the need for greater clarity in the responsibilities between the different bodies involved in management and oversight. **Lesson:** Clear definition of roles and responsibilities of all the agencies avoids any subsequent confusion.

COVID has imposed significant restrictions on how projects can be implemented. The enforced use of remote meetings, training sessions, awareness raising events and workshops has been successfully demonstrated, and whilst there are multiple benefits from in-person meetings, there are considerable cost (and carbon) savings on travel and daily subsistence that can be achieved by using remote techniques. **Lesson:** The design and management of regional projects should engage more frequently through remote meetings where possible.

Table 3 – Recommendations Summary Table

No.	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time frame
	National Recommendations		
1	Establish a functional bilateral commission for the Kura River Basin Adopt and implement recommendations for specific actions identified in the Project's Exit Strategy, including: - Update national EIA regulations to include e-flow; - Identify investment sources to upscale national actions and provide maintenance and operation budget for existing pilots, groundwater monitoring, etc. - Continue with national and regional fora as interim measure until bilateral agreement signed; - Continue the exchange of water quality and quantity data between countries of the Kura River.	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Azerbaijan Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture, Georgia	Continuous
	UNDP Recommendations		
2	Develop interim support project to continue the regional SAP implementation in preparation for the establishment of an RBO. Continue capacity development, awareness, identifying sustainable financing for SAP actions, and supporting bilateral technical discussions.	UNDP GEF UNDP COs	Within next 2 years
3	Future SAP implementation projects should include activities to assist countries identify long-term sources of finance to fully implement the endorsed SAP.	UNDP GEF	Ongoing
4	Future regional projects should identify means to capitalise more on the strong capacity existing in UNDP COs to assist execution. The presence of COs is a significant comparative advantage to facilitate solving any political issues that are beyond the competences of a single project.	UNDP	Ongoing

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and objective of the evaluation

A Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the UNDP/GEF project '*Advancing IWRM across the Kura River Basin through Implementation of the Transboundary Agreed Actions and National Actions*' has been undertaken, consistent with the expectations of the GEF and UNDP.

The **purpose** of the TE is to enable the GEF Agency (UNDP), the Implementing Partner (UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub), government representatives in Azerbaijan and Georgia, and other stakeholders to assess the achievement of the project against the expectations of the Project Document endorsed by the GEF CEO, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of the benefits from this project, and aid UNDP programming globally.

In summary, the **objectives** of the terminal evaluation are to:

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project design (concept, management arrangements, stakeholder involvement in design, monitoring and evaluation, etc.);
- Assess the achievement of the project in terms of the practical outputs and outcomes expected;
- Document any lessons and good practices that could guide future GEF and UNDP projects globally and provide any specific lessons that may be of benefit to other projects in the region;
- To make any necessary recommendations that would address any short-comings or strengthen approaches within GEF and UNDP programming.

1.2 Scope and methodology

The scope of the TE is specified precisely in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for this assignment (Annex 1). Specifically, the TE was to assess:

- The project design, including: the results framework; stakeholder involvement; management arrangements; etc.;
- The project implementation including: adaptive management; partnerships; monitoring and evaluation (M&E); project finances; UNDP Implementation and Execution roles; Stakeholder involvement, etc.;
- The project results including: attainment of objectives; relevance; effectiveness; efficiency and sustainability.

The assessments of these elements of the project would be summarised in conclusions leading to lessons and recommendations for future initiatives. The TE would also provide a 'rating' of the key evaluation criteria of **relevance**, **effectiveness**, **efficiency** and **sustainability**. The TE also reviewed the progress to impact.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Relevance** – the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organisational policies, including changes over time, as well as the extent to which the project is in line with the GEF Operational Programmes or the strategic priorities under which the project was funded.
- **Effectiveness** – the extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
- **Efficiency** – the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.
- **Sustainability** – the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.

1.2.1 Evaluation design, execution, data collection and analysis

This Terminal Evaluation was undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic that required all interviews to be conducted remotely with no sites visits. The approach for this remote TE was presented and approved by the Project Management Unit (PMU)/Implementing Partner in a draft inception report.

The ToR (Annex 1) allowed 30 days for undertaking the evaluation. The TE was conducted between 5th April and 30th May 2021. The evaluation has been based on information gathered using:

- **Desk review** – including background documents (Project Documents, inception reports) and progress reports provided by the PMU or obtained from the project website.
- **Initial information gathering from project stakeholders** through short questionnaires prepared for key stakeholder groups (e.g. government partners, academia, civil society, etc.). This offered stakeholders an opportunity to have an active input to the TE due to the limited targeted interviews conducted. The questions were agreed with the PMU and translated prior to distribution to help ensure a wide participation.
- **Targeted remote interviews or follow-up emails with selected stakeholders** to obtain more in-depth information on the performance of the project and the benefits to stakeholders and their organisations of the work undertaken.

The evaluation criteria were further elaborated as questions within an evaluation matrix (based on a template provided in the ToR for this assignment and elaborated for the Inception Report - presented as Annex 4). The evaluation matrix was used to provide a guide to stakeholders involved in this TE (presented in Annex 5). Stakeholders were identified by the PMU following discussions with the TE Consultant. A list of the stakeholders interviewed (either email or Teams) by this TE is presented in Annex 2. Key documents reviewed for this TE are presented in Annex 3.

Where possible the evaluation has sought the responses from multiple sources and stakeholders before drawing conclusions to provide a degree of quality assurance.

A brief report summarising Initial Findings was submitted to the PMU on 28th April 2021 following the completion of stakeholder interviews, in preparation to presenting the draft conclusions of the TE to the final Project Steering Committee (PSC) on the 19th May 2021.

1.2.2 Ethics

This Terminal Evaluation has been undertaken by an independent consultant and has been conducted in accordance with the principles² outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group of credibility, utility, impartiality, transparency and participation.

1.2.3 Limitations to the Evaluation

As with all evaluations, time has been limited for this evaluation and the project has delivered many varied outputs that have resulted in only a brief inspection of some documents and reports by the TE. However, the TE considers that those inspected have been representative of the outputs as a whole.

The TE was undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic that required all interviews being conducted remotely and no sites visits permitted.

1.2.4 Structure of the evaluation report

This evaluation report adheres to the table of contents provided in the consultant's ToR (Annex 1).

² [www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/Guidelines/UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation 2020.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/Guidelines/UNEG_Ethical_Guidelines_for_Evaluation_2020.pdf)

2 Project description and development context

2.1 Project start and duration

The GEF Project Identification Form (PIF) was approved in September 2014 with CEO Endorsement of the Project Documents in June 2016. The four-year project held an inception meeting in April 2017 and was scheduled to end in June 2020.

2.2 Development context

The project was designed to address the priority needs in the ministerial endorsed Strategic Action Programme (SAP) developed and endorsed through a previous GEF project. Management actions presented in the SAP were designed to strengthen and harmonise co-ordinated conjunctive transboundary ground and surface water management in the Kura River Basin.

The Kura River Basin is the most significant river in the South Caucasus and the basin lies within Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. The current UNDP/GEF Kura II project is focusing on the SAP implementation within Azerbaijan and Georgia. Both countries are in the process of aligning their water legislation with the European Union's water directives through Co-operation Agreement (Azerbaijan) and Association Agreement (Georgia). In addition, the process of establishing a bilateral agreement in-line with the UNECE Transboundary Waters Convention has been under negotiations for a number of years. Azerbaijan and Georgia are seeking to update their current water management policies and practice in accord with the EU directives and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) best practices through the implementation of the endorsed SAP.

2.3 Problems that the project sought to address

The regional endorsement of the SAP (2014) through the previous GEF Kura project (*'Reducing Transboundary Degradation in the Kura-Aras Basin'*) aimed at strengthening national and regional institutions and individual capacities on IWRM, environmental awareness and education raising, and the testing of stress reduction approaches as a basis for regional replication and upscaling. These actions were also consistent with national and international priorities, including supporting SDG 6 goals. Specifically, the project was to address (as indicated by the barriers in the Project Document):

- Strengthening existing Policy and Regulatory frameworks;
- Improving capacity within national institutions;
- Increasing the harmonisation of plans and approaches for water management;
- Assisting the countries to meet commitments within the development of the bilateral agreement and needs of EU water directives;
- Updating of information on surface and groundwater resources and the potential impacts from climate change;
- Improving regional information on ecosystem based management;
- Testing new approaches for reducing water loss, water demand and pollution control.

The above focus of the project was guided by the regional concerns identified in the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) developed to formulate the SAP, including:

- Changes in hydrological flow;
- Deterioration of water quality;

- Ecosystem degradation;
- Flooding due to climate change.

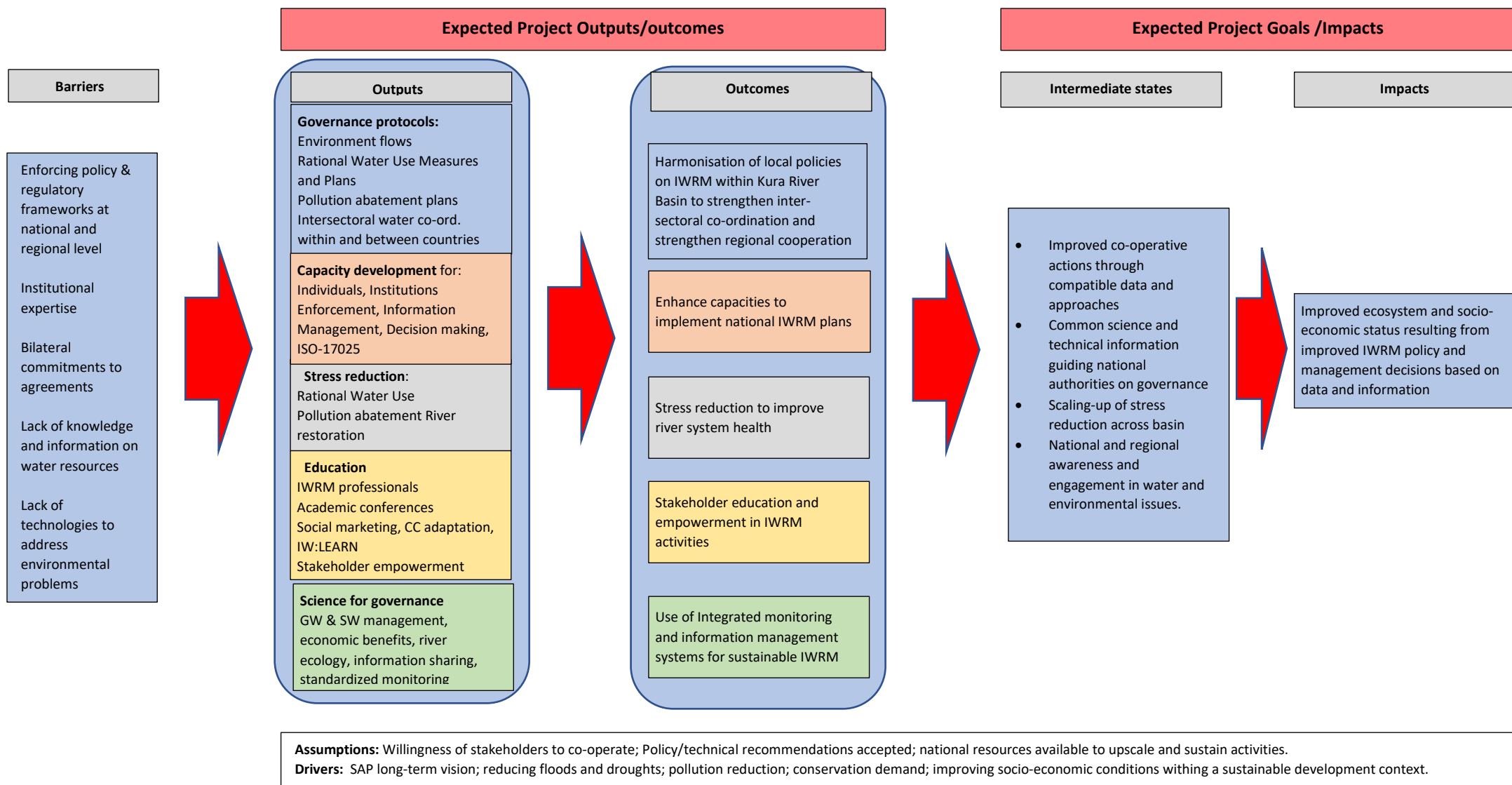
2.4 Immediate and development objectives of the project

The project's objective was directed towards '*Integrated water resources management in the Kura river basin to address water-energy-food-ecosystem security nexus with integrated flow management through the implementation of agreed actions in the SAP*'. The UNDP Project Document indicated that the project was aligned with UNDP's Strategic Plan/Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2014 -2017) Outcome 1 (*Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded*) Output 1.3 (*Solutions developed at national and sub-national levels for sustainable management of natural resources, ecosystem services, chemicals and waste*).

2.5 Description of project's Theory of Change

The project development did not require a formal Theory of Change (ToC) to be elaborated. A reconstructed ToC has been prepared for this Terminal Evaluation, based on the project results framework. This ToC is also consistent with the final achievements of this project.

Figure 1 - Theory of Change (reconstructed at TE) for UNDP/GEF Kura II Project



2.6 Expected results

The project was designed to deliver five main outcomes through 22 outputs with approximately 100 targets associated with the outputs. The expected outcomes presented in the CEO Endorsement Document are:

- **Outcome 1:** Regional, national and local legal, policy and regulations harmonized within the Kura basin for strengthened IWRM implementation, including harmonized intersectoral coordination with environment, agriculture, energy, municipal water and industrial sectors. **Resulting in:** Establishment of effective cross-sectoral IWRM governance protocols at the local, national and transboundary levels in the Kura Basin;
- **Outcome 2:** Enhanced capacity for sectoral ministries and agencies to successfully harmonize and implement national IWRM Plans. **Resulting in:** Strengthened national capabilities to implement multi-sectoral IWRM in the Kura basin;
- **Outcome 3:** Stress reduction in critical areas, and pre-feasibility studies in support of investment opportunities to improve river system health. **Resulting in:** Tested stress reduction approaches ready for regional replication and upscaling;
- **Outcome 4:** Stakeholder Education with academic, civil society, private sector, and local communities to gain experiences to increase their involvement in national and regional IWRM applications and innovations. **Resulting in:** Targeted education and involvement projects to empower stakeholders in implementing local/national/regional actions in support of SAP implementation;
- **Outcome 5:** Azerbaijan and Georgia using integrated monitoring, and information management systems for sustainable IWRM at national and transboundary levels. **Resulting in:** Enhanced science for governance by strengthening monitoring, information management and data analysis for IWRM.

2.7 Total resources

Table 4 - Planned (CEO Endorsement) level of resources for the project

	GEF Grant	Co-Finance	Total
	USD		
Component 1	617,109	29,520,000	30,137,109
Component 2	1,239,830	50,900,000	52,139,830
Component 3	1,652,167	44,580,000	46,232,167
Component 4	751,290	13,101,670	13,852,960
Component 5	815,273	56,480,000	57,295,273
Project Management	253,783	300,000	553,783
TOTAL	5,329,452	194,881,670	200,211,122

This included a budgeted Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) costs (as presented in the Project Document) of 98,000 USD (excluding project and UNDP staff time and travel).

Table 5 - Co-financing identified in the CEO Endorsement Document indicated the following grant and in-kind contributions

Co-financing source	Cash /in-kind	Amount USD
Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (Azerbaijan Republic)	In-kind	770,000
Ministry of Environment and Natural Resource Protection (Georgia)	In-kind	770,000
World Bank – Georgia Irrigation and Land Development Project	In-kind	45,650,000
Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management Open Joint Stock Company	Grants	100,000,000
AzerSu Joint Stock Company	In-kind	44,430,000
UNDP Georgia	In-kind	3,261,670
TOTAL		194,881,670

2.8 Main stakeholders and partners

36 primary and 24 secondary stakeholders expected to be engaged in the project are identified in the Project Document in four main stakeholder groups (government bodies, international organisations/bilateral donors, civil society and private sector). A stakeholder engagement plan (detailing their expected roles and involvement during project execution) was presented in annex 7 of the UNDP/GEF Project Document. The engagement plan followed the approach adopted by the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) describing the categories under the headings of ‘competent authority, interested parties and public’ as a means of explaining their interactions.

3 Findings

3.1 Project design / formulation

The GEF International Waters portfolio has led to over 35 river, lake, groundwater and Large Marine Ecosystem shared basins developing TDAs and endorsing SAPs in the last 25+ years. The accumulated lessons and experiences from these projects have helped shape the focus of the Kura II project. Specifically, the Kura II project builds upon a previous foundational Kura project that led to the TDA and SAP.

The project design also built on national priorities summarised in the Project Document and stressed in the mid-term review including; the Strategy of Azerbaijan (2020 – 2037) with respect to water resource management and protection to better meet EU water directive requirements; the EU – Georgia Association Agreement signed in 2014 that obliges Georgia to harmonise EU directives on water, including the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Flood Directive; The endorsement by both countries of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and associated goals (SDGs); The UNECE Helsinki Convention on the Protection and use of Transboundary Watercourses leading to a bilateral River Basin Organisation (RBO); and, the 2014 ministerially endorsed SAP.

Stakeholders interviewed considered that the design of the project had been driven by the countries and had noted the experiences from previous projects on transboundary rivers. The design was considered by several stakeholders to be highly ambitious (especially with regards to the RBO) but was addressing key needs identified by the countries.

The design reflected the catalytic role of the GEF grant to stimulate co-financing to support the needs of SAP implementation. The GEF grant of 5,329,452 USD catalysed over 190 M USD of planned co-financing, recognising the significant financial resources required for SAP implementation.

The TE consider that the design fully addresses the main needs of the SAP, including: harmonisation of policies, methods, standards, etc.; institutional capacity development; pilot actions to highlight approaches for long-term upscaling; awareness and educational strengthening; and, enhancing the links between science and governance. This science – policy focus is a strong addition to ‘typical’ SAP implementation projects and is to be encouraged.

The execution arrangements were reviewed following some tension in the first project phase and a clear matrix of responsibilities detailing the roles of the key bodies (UNDP-GEF, UNDP-Istanbul Regional Hub and UNDP-Country Offices in Azerbaijan and Georgia). The project design was inline and supportive of the UNDP CO Country Programme Documents for Azerbaijan and Georgia although the role of the COs was largely limited to participation at Project Steering Committee meetings and facilitating (where needed) interaction between the Project Management Unit (PMU) and national ministries.

The Project Document provides a good source of information for the subsequent project implementation, particularly with the details on the outputs and activities. This also included a summary of the linkages to the Kura SAP, overview of the outputs, summary of the activities to deliver the outputs, indicators for monitoring the success of the outputs, involved parties, targeted beneficiaries, main deliverables and linkages to other project outputs. The number of output indicators identified in the Project Document (133) was considered by the TE consultant as excessive and likely to have placed a significant reporting burden on the PMU during execution.

As raised by the MTR the linkage between the nexus identified (water-energy-food-ecosystem) was not always explicit in the project's actions. For example, energy is clearly linked to availability to available water resources but there is little planned analysis of the trade-offs between power generation and the needs for water resources for irrigation, drinking and ecosystem requirements.

3.1.1 Analysis of Results Framework

Despite not requiring a formal ToC at the design, the Project Results Framework is clear and concise with SMART indicators/targets to enable project implementation monitoring. The Results Framework presented the five components delivering five outcomes through 22 outputs. The Results Framework had multiple indicators identified at the output level. Specific indicators and targets at the outcome level were not shown but they were subsequently reported in Project Implementation Reports (PIRs).

The MTR identified a number of indicators that were too ambitious or requiring clearer definitions and these recommendations were adopted by the PMU/Implementing Partner.

The TE consultant considered that the majority of the indicators and associated targets were SMART and well defined at the design stage although the presentation of the linkages between the indicators and specific targets was not always transparent. The TE's analysis of the expected output targets is summarised in Annex 6 showing that there was an exceptionally high level of delivery against the original design.

3.1.2 Assumptions and risks

The Results Framework presented in the CEO and Project Documents identified over 60 detailed assumptions in the formulation of the project and noted 18 potential risks to the output delivery. The Project Document presented 11 risks (six were rated 'medium', four rated 'low' and one risk was rated 'medium to low').

The TE consultant considers that these were well presented with potential mitigation steps identified. Climate risks and adaptation actions to be undertaken by the project were elaborated further with recommendations taken from the GEF IW:LEARN Guidance Manual on Climate Variability and Change

3.1.3 Lessons from other relevant projects

This project was guided by the experiences from the previous Kura project that delivered the endorsed SAP and specifically the management actions to be implemented. As found in most SAPs, the list of management actions needed to address the agreed transboundary problems identified in the TDA is extensive and the project focuses on issues that are of a higher priority to initiate the SAP implementation (e.g. policy and methodology harmonisation, capacity development, demonstration of appropriate environmental stress reduction actions in preparation for upscaling, awareness raising and education).

The Project Document includes a review of nearly 30 regionally relevant projects and initiatives that are linked to the goals of the SAP and could benefit from further linkages to the Kura II implementation.

As a GEF IW project the Kura II had an extensive base of previous GEF projects to identify guidance and lessons beyond the Kura basin. These included gender and climate change approaches integrated in IW projects including guidance for IW projects collated by the GEF IW:LEARN series of projects.

3.1.4 Planned stakeholder participation

The CEO Endorsement Document identified 17 stakeholder groups that were expected to be involved in the project implementation. Annex 9 of the Project Document presents a proposed stakeholder involvement plan adopting the key principles of the EU WFD requirement to ‘involve, consult and inform’ The Project Document also included a specific annex on Gender Mainstreaming Policy to guide the project.

The overall project design demonstrated extensive stakeholder engagement throughout all project components.

3.1.5 UNDP Comparative advantage

UNDP has successfully implemented multiple GEF International Waters projects addressing transboundary rivers leading to the development of TDA/SAPs and their subsequent implementation. UNDP was responsible, as the GEF Agency, for implanting the earlier Kura project that developed the SAP that was executed through UNOPS. A further comparative advantage offered by UNDP was the presence of Country Offices (COs) in both Azerbaijan and Georgia to assist execution where needed and to support the execution through the annual Project Steering Committees by encouraging links with national and UNDP financed initiatives elsewhere in the region.

The UNDP CPD (2016 -2020) in Azerbaijan, summarised the comparative advantage of UNDP as *‘its ability to embrace a wide range of environmental concerns and offer integrated solutions to land degradation, deforestation, biodiversity loss and vulnerability to climate change. These concerns also need to be tackled in the light of economic diversification, resilience and sustainable development’*. In Georgia the UNDP CPD (2016 – 2020) summarised its comparative advantage *‘as a trusted, impartial convener and innovator, helping to bring civil society and government together for issues-based dialogue and action, including adaptation of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals....’*

3.1.6 Linkages between the project and other interventions

As indicated above (see section 3.1.3) the Project Document identified multiple completed and on-going initiatives that could inform the Kura II project. The main interventions highlighted by the Project Document and stressed through stakeholder interviews as critical linkages included the EUWI+ (EU Water Initiative involving six countries in the region), GCF (Scaling-up Multi-Hazard Early Warning System and the Use of Climate Information in Georgia) and UNECE (specifically linked to the Water Convention and efforts to establish a bilateral agreement between Azerbaijan and Georgia) actions where there was considerable synergy with actions of this project. In general, stakeholders indicated that there were good interactions planned with other initiatives.

3.1.7 Management arrangements

The Kura II project was implemented by UNDP and executed as a UNDP Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) project through Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH). Technical oversight was provided by the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) based in Istanbul. The PMU were responsible for day-to-day management under the supervision of IRH who were responsible for all administrative and financial oversight, including all procurement. The separation of responsibilities between implementation and execution, as required by the GEF, were clearly documented in a management matrix summary of roles withing UNDP for the management of the Kura II project.

The Project Document summarised the key execution responsibilities as:

- The UNDP IRH (Implementing Partner) was responsible for:
 - Project planning, co-ordination, management, monitoring and reporting
 - Procurement of goods and services, including human resources
 - Financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets, as indicated in the Project Document and/or revised by the PMU and approved by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- The UNDP Country Offices were responsible for:
 - Assist and advise the PMU, when needed with the Procurement of goods and services at the national level (such as with identification of possible vendors for procurement of goods/services and candidates for consultancies)
 - Assist and advise the PMU in recruiting staffing of national specialists for the National Project Offices as well as national staff for the Regional PMU located in Baku.

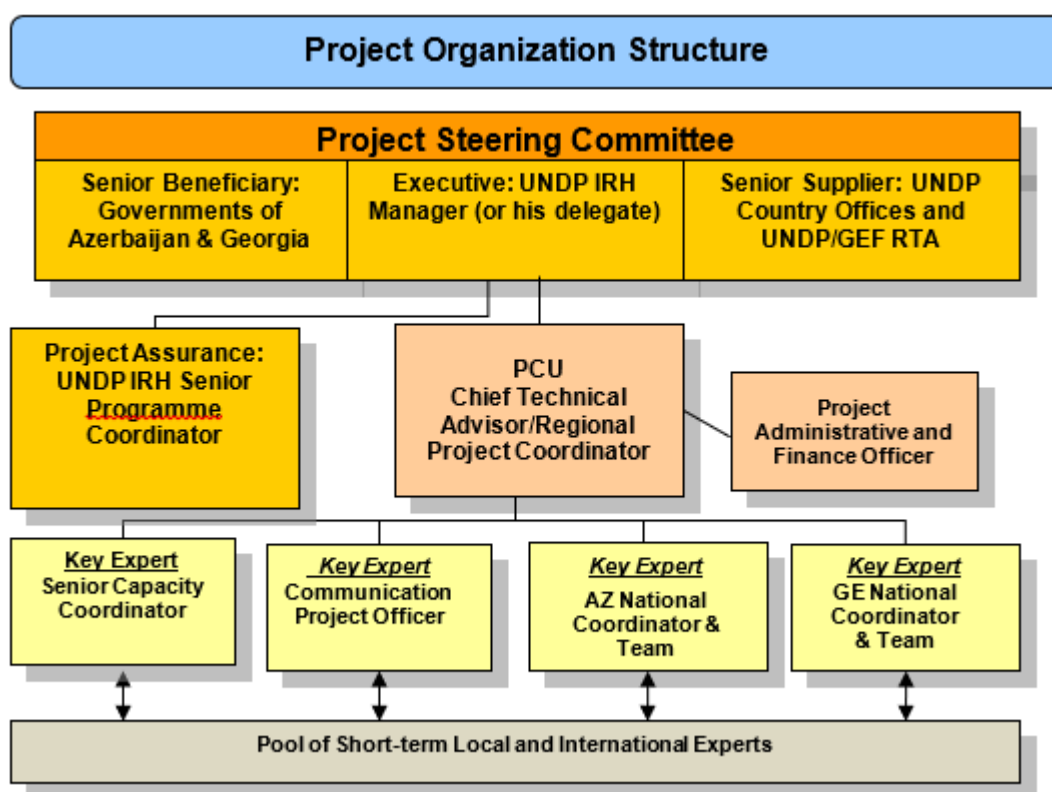
The PMU was located in Baku (in the previous GEF Kura project this had been located in Tbilisi) with two staff members located in Georgia. The Project Document provides an overview of the staffing and outline terms of reference for the key positions, including: Project Manager/Chief Technical Advisor; Senior Capacity Building Co-ordinator; Financial and Administrative Officer; Communication Officer, two National Co-ordinators.

The beneficiary ministries (The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture, Georgia) nominated a National Focal Point (NFP) to represent the respective ministries of Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The Project Document provided details of the required Project Steering Committee (members and terms of reference), consisting of National Focal Points as representatives of the government and UNDP (GEF, IRH and Country Office representatives) with the PMU acting as the secretariat to the PSC.

The design of the project foresaw the establishment of National Project Advisory Groups (PAG), chaired by the NFPs and a Regional Advisory Group. In addition, technical groups on water quantity and water quality were created to ensure consistency between the project's activities and the national needs to meet the requirements of the EU WFD. The formation of these advisory and technical groups was considered by stakeholders to be highly beneficial.

The following figure summarises the main lines of responsibilities.



Source: UNDP Project Document

Figure 2 – Project Organisation Structure

3.2 Project Implementation

3.2.1 Adaptive management

As with all projects, management is a continuous process of ‘adaptive’ actions. There are many clear cases where this project has adopted a new approach as a result of stakeholder, remarks from Project Steering Committee minutes and other management reports (e.g. PIRs). Specific examples of adaptive management included:

- **Bilateral Agreement:** The project design had anticipated that an agreement, in accord with the UNECE Water Convention, would be directly supported by the project. The last meeting convened by UNECE with respect to the Kura River Basin was held in 2017 and no progress towards an agreement had been made. Consequentially, the project was not able to provide the originally designed support due to circumstances beyond the control of the project. However, the project has continued to build regional co-operation through a letters of agreement and building upon the 1997 bilateral agreement to assist with a future expected agreement, providing capacity development and supporting a range of national and regional bodies to facilitate IWRM and harmonisation with EU WFD requirements through initiating SAP implementation.
- The UNDP Project Document included support to a River Basin Organisation (RBO). At the start of the project a RBO did not exist (see above) and at the same time the EU was

initiating the EUWI+ project to assist both countries in developing EU WFD compliant River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs). To prevent duplication of effort the PSC meeting in 2018 agreed that the project's resources planned to be directed towards institutional support of a RBO should be refocused on supporting capacity development of analytical laboratories and harmonising the quality assurance with ISO-17025 requirements.

- Both river restoration projects faced initial delays that necessitated revisions to budgets and workplans. In Azerbaijan the Hajigabol constructed wetlands delays necessitated the UNDP Resident Representative to assist in the discussions with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources to identify the national entity that should assume responsibility of the operation and maintenance of the constructed wetland after the project ends. In Georgia the initial location of the pilot faced issues on land allocation despite strong national and regional support due to parallel plans from the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure. The project worked closely with the National Focal Point and GEF Official Focal Point in Georgia to identify an alternative site (Krtsanisi Park) where the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture had responsibility for the land. This also is likely to assist future sustainability of the actions undertaken.
- After project launch, stakeholders requested a simpler and more frequent project reporting of progress. The PMU agreed to prepare short (bulleted) reports on a monthly basis that summarised the activities in the previous month and planned actions for the next month together with budgetary information. Stakeholders appreciated the responsiveness of the PMU in providing these informative reports.
- The project found that the original resources planned for the Azerbaijan agriculture pilot was greater than required. The remaining resources were used to develop an aquaponics training centre.
- COVID-19 has necessitated multiple adaptive management changes to project execution, from the delays to project activities, the need for remote meetings and difficulties in travelling. It has also delivered a few positive outcomes as a result of this crisis including the reduction of costs associated with meetings (and the potential for increasing sustainability of bilateral low-cost meetings in the future) and the modification of specific activities with beneficial outcomes. For example, the education online portal arose from a planned action to assist schools in Georgia during the COVID restrictions. Through the work of the project, the original Georgian language teaching material was translated for Azerbaijan and English and this material uploaded to the project website. This adaptive management response to the COVID crisis has increased the availability of the original material to teachers and students widely.

3.2.2 Active stakeholder and partnership arrangements

The project was implemented with multiple stakeholder involvement. These included formal Project Steering Committee meetings, meetings of the Regional Project Advisory Group and National Project Advisory Groups, technical working groups on EU WFD adoption. The PMU also maintained close contact with the National Focal Points and their respective ministries/Ministers.

The project also engaged with stakeholders in all project outputs with awareness raising events, meetings with local stakeholders linked with the pilot actions, academic meetings and involvement

of many hundreds of stakeholders through training workshops and other capacity development events.

Stakeholders interviewed considered that there was a high level of stakeholder interactions and engagement throughout the project implementation and that the 'voices' of stakeholders were heard by the project. Key statements from stakeholders included:

- There was good stakeholder involvement and engagement;
- The needs of stakeholders were met;
- There was good communication with different ministries in both countries, the private sector (e.g. water supply companies, farmers, etc.) universities and schools;
- Stakeholder engagement was considered effective with good co-operation with ministries, institutions engaged on surface and groundwater monitoring, scientific community engaged in groundwater and surface water studies and hydrological modelling;
- Several stakeholders interviewed identified the end of the project as the *only negative* aspect of the project.

3.2.3 Project finance & co-finance

The project has been financially managed effectively by the PMU with support and oversight from IRH. The project's annual financial reports (Combined Delivery Reports – CDRs) were signed by the Project Manager and IRH (Manager and/or Senior Project Co-ordinator). Stakeholders commented that the PMU were responsive to changes in work activities that demand budget changes.

At the start of April 2021 the project had spent 90% of GEF grant and the PMU anticipates that 98% will be spent by the close of the project (end of May 2021). Table 6 presents the component spend per year and Figure 3 illustrates the spend profile of the project per year. These are consistent with other similar projects.

The planned co-financing was 195,061,840 USD and the final reported co-financing was 214,860,137 USD, representing an increase of 10%. Details of co-financing by source are provided in Annex 7.

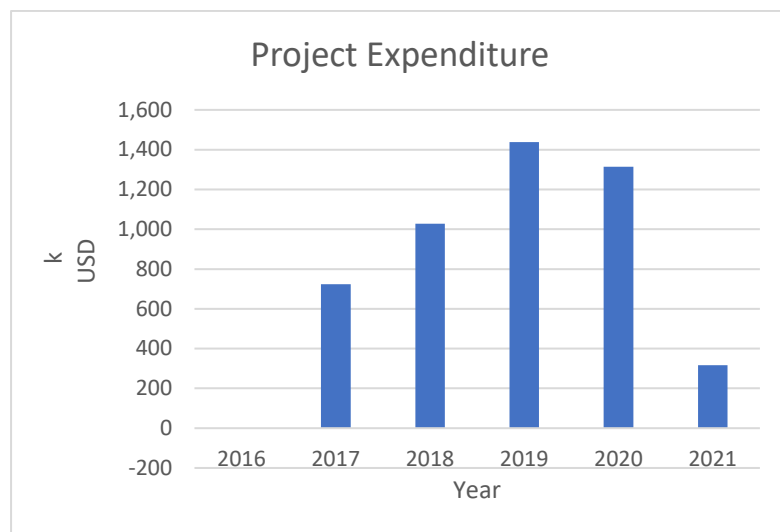
Independent Audit

The project has been independently audited in 2020 as a part of an overall review by GEF of UNDP implemented projects globally. No issues specific to the Kura II project were raised.

Table 6 - Component spend per year

Project Component	Total Budget USD	Expenditure 2016	Expenditure 2017	Expenditure 2018	Expenditure 2019	Expenditure 2020	Expenditure 2021	Total Expenditure (07.04.2021)	%age spent (07.04.21)	Committed Budget	% spend till end of proj.
1	617,109.0	-	92,304.2	125,481.0	166,753.8	107,697.9	15,324.6	507,561.5	82%	15,419.6	85%
2	1,239,830.0	-	197,764.2	269,072.9	327,909.0	272,561.6	96,404.8	1,163,712.4	94%	74,916.8	100%
3	1,652,167.0	-	142,782.3	200,939.4	457,138.0	501,829.5	153,964.8	1,456,654.0	88%	252,943.1	103%
4	751,290.0	-	91,702.2	194,947.0	212,133.5	114,682.2	11,185.3	624,650.2	83%	13,352.6	85%
5	815,273.0	-	162,822.1	200,726.2	203,916.4	268,071.3	37,370.3	872,906.4	107%	42,911.6	112%
6 (PM)	253,783.0	-9,854.5	36,105.2	37,047.3	70,405.6	48,920.0	2,024.0	184,647.5	73%	22,208.2	82%
TOTALS	5,329,452.0	-9,854.5	723,480.2	1,028,213.8	1,438,256.2	1,313,762.4	316,273.7	4,810,132.0	90%	421,751.8	98%

Figure 3 - Project Expenditure by year



3.2.4 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

M&E design at entry

The project had a detailed M&E programme from design that was consistent with UNDP and GEF expectations. The project results framework was SMART (see section 3.1.1) and, in the opinion of the TE consultant (noting adjustments recommended by the MTR), included realistic indicators, targets and means for verification, supported by adequately identified risks and assumptions. These were considered by the TE to be sufficient for monitoring and assessing the delivery of the project's progress.

The project was designed with sufficient oversight provided by the Project Steering Committee and technical guidance by the Regional and National Project Advisory Boards (see section 3.1.7). The indicative budget available for M&E was 98,000 USD (excluding project staff costs). The TE considers this realistic for the size and complexity of the project. The M&E plan included: inception meetings, PIRs, Project Steering Committee meetings, evaluation and reporting. The project did not have a budget line specifically for M&E costs and consequentially it has not been possible to verify that the figure presented in the Project Document have been spent, although it is clear that the actions planned have been carried out.

The project management was assisted by the development of a matrix of responsibilities, indicating the roles of the UNDP GEF RTA, IRH and the UNDP Country Offices expected during implementation.

M&E implementation

All management reports (PIRs, financial reports, etc.) were prepared as planned. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) convened four times (in 2020 the meeting was conducted remotely due to COVID restrictions), the first PSC was held in conjunction with the Project Inception Meeting. The PSC confirmed project deliverables, budgets, adjustments, etc. in accordance with the detailed Terms Reference presented for this body in the Project Document.

During the project inception phase, stakeholders requested the PMU to prepare brief monthly reports summarising progress and presenting the next month's workplan. These reports were found to be informative and beneficial to the overall project management and supervision.

The PMU instigated a series of 6-monthly Strategic Planning Meetings with all the project team (including staff based in Azerbaijan and Georgia) to ensure there was a clear understanding of upcoming activities. This was in addition to regular (monthly) senior project staff meetings.

During the project start-up, the PMU developed a very detailed management 'Master Plan' for the implementation of the project. This took significant effort from multiple actors and experts, but was considered to be an important tool in managing the project activities on a continuous basis.

An independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) was conducted in 2019 that made ten recommendations including clarifying several indicators/targets in the Project Results Framework. All recommendations were adopted by the PMU and the Implementing Partner (IRH) and reports indicated these have been implemented. There were no other significant changes to the Project Results Framework.

The PIRs indicated the yearly progress and highlighted changes in the risks and changes to social and environmental safeguards. For example, the impacts of COVID-19 and regional severe droughts were noted that impacted the delivery of the project.

The project developed clear final reports on the achievement and impacts of the extensive workshops and other capacity development activities summarising participants ages and functions (sex disaggregated). The project also undertook studies to assess the impacts of the stress reduction projects (Component 3) to assist with management M&E reporting. In March 2021 the Project presented an Exit Strategy to a meeting of the Regional Project Advisory Group that summarised the achievements and recommendations on each component.

Table 7 – Monitoring and Evaluation Ratings

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating³
M&E design at entry	S
M&E implementation	S
Overall Quality of M&E	S

3.2.5 UNDP implementation and Implementing Partner Execution

UNDP Implementation

UNDP has implemented many GEF International Waters projects globally that focus on SAP development or supporting countries with SAP implementation and have been responsible for the first phase of the GEF Kura project. The UNDP Regional Technical Advisor ensured that the project adhered to the GEF CEO Endorsement Document and administrative and financial oversight was provided by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (see section 3.1.7).

No specific issues were raised by stakeholders on the role of UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency.

Implementing Partner Execution

The project was implemented through the Direct Implementation Modality with UNDP IRH providing day to day supervision of the PMU through the responsibility of the IRH Senior Programme Co-ordinator and the manager of the IRH. The PMU was recruited by IRH to provide day-to-day management of the project based in Baku with a staff member located in Tbilisi (see section 3.1.7).

The UNDP Country Offices attended Project Steering Committee meetings and provided assistance when required but did not have any direct role in project execution. They also were in receipt of the monthly brief progress reports prepared by the PMU.

Several stakeholders commented that they perceived the project execution through the PMU to be effective and flexible meeting the needs of the stakeholders. Key comments noted include:

- The project was not considered to be a burden on the beneficiary organisations due to the work of the PMU who were very willing to assist and to repeat briefings to ministries to accommodate staff changes;
- All staff within the PMU were noted as being very responsive to enquiries for information or assistance and professional in carrying-out their duties;
- The PMU provided good access to international experts to assist the project where necessary (e.g. on the EU WFD).

³ Rating scale: HS (Highly Satisfactory), S (Satisfactory), MS (moderately Satisfactory), MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory), U (Unsatisfactory) and HU (Highly Unsatisfactory). See Annex 8.

Table 8 – UNDP Implementation and Implementing Partner Execution Rating

UNDP Implementation	Rating ⁴
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	S
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	S
Overall quality of Implementation/Oversight and Execution	S

3.2.6 Risk management

The Project Documents identified 11 medium or high risks. The PIRs reported any new risks that were identified including (2018) fluctuations on currency exchange rates that could impact the project's activities and COVID-19 (2020) that was impacting the PMU (and others) ability to travel internationally or to meet in-person.

The PIRs also reported any changes to the Social and Environmental standards (SES) assessments. In 2018 the PIR reported that a potential risks to SES were identified resulting from the selection of a site for a pilot (the reflooding of a lake that now had a number of people living – this site was changed to avoid any resettlement issues). In 2020 the PIR note the severed droughts that were affecting part of the region.

Although, clearly, COVID-19 was not anticipated the project did develop appropriate measures to reduce the health risks to staff and stakeholders delivering a 'Vertical fund COVID Survey' in April 2020 that summarised the likelihood of delays to the project or risks to personnel.

3.3 Project Results

3.3.1 Progress towards objective and expected outcomes

Evidence from the TE's review of project reports, management reports, steering committee minutes and comments received from stakeholders have indicated that the quality of the outputs has been very effective in meeting the needs of the region to implement IWRM approaches in the Kura River Basin. A summary of the outputs and outcomes indicating the level of achievement and TE rating is included in Annex 6.

General key results highlighted by stakeholders include:

- Most outputs have been delivered to a high quality that has supported technical co-operation between Azerbaijan and Georgia in the pursuit of IWRM;
- The project has provided knowledge and guidance at the regional level on modern approaches to IWRM, including: support with groundwater modelling and monitoring; scientific studies etc. that have enhanced national capacities.;
- The project has established technical co-operation between specialists in surface water and groundwater in Azerbaijan and Georgia. Of specific note has been the approach to environmental flow determination and harmonised methods for water quantity and quality.

⁴ Rating scale: HS (Highly Satisfactory), S (Satisfactory), MS (moderately Satisfactory), MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory), U (Unsatisfactory) and HU (Highly Unsatisfactory). See Annex 8.

- The pilot activities at Mugan Amelioration Experimental Station investigating drip irrigation for cotton and fruit trees were noted as being highly beneficial.
- The river restoration projects provided considerable information;
- The project's focus on awareness and education resources was appreciated. Including the Kura Box, brochures for students, contests for students on the rational use of water. The range of means to raise awareness (including in person and web-based e.g. Facebook, website) were welcome. The web-based tools in development were of significant use under COVID restrictions.
- Women and Water training was welcomed by participants from villages and settlements with beneficial water use reduction methods discussed.
- The expansion of work with schools planned in Georgia to include online material available in three languages, as a consequence of COVID and the need to restrict face-to-face training, proved to be very successful. This move to an online portal has broadened the uptake of this information to Azerbaijan and, through an English version, has enabled this material to be available worldwide.
- The PMU has been very effective in guiding the project and been responsive to stakeholders needs and enquiries;
- The project was recognised by stakeholders as being very ambitious with efforts to support the formation of an international River Basin Organisation linked with the efforts of UNECE and the countries. Although progress towards the bilateral agreement has stalled the project has significantly assisted the countries with technical bilateral support including capacity development, pilot activities and awareness raising to facilitate the eventual signing of the agreement.

COVID impacted the last year of project implementation by delaying actions, meetings etc. but there have been some positive results as a consequence of the move to online training etc. (see the stakeholder comments above)

During the final online Regional Working Group Meeting (March 21) involving 25 participants from the two countries, the project asked a series of questions regarding the performance of the project implementation (with full anonymity of responses). Of relevance to this this section of the TE the participants were asked if they considered '*that the project's components had achieved their objectives*' (high, medium or low). No stakeholders responded 'low' to this question. The following indicate the percentage of participants that responded 'high'.

Table 9 – Stakeholders' assessment of the achievement of outcomes and outputs

Component	Percentage responding 'high' achievement
Component 1	75%
Component 2	75%
Component 3	85%
Component 4	77%
Component 5	79%
Overall:	79%

This level of 'satisfaction' with the project's performance is in-line with the TE consultant's assessment based on the reports reviewed and the interviews conducted.

Progress towards objective and expected outcomes

All project components are well linked with outputs from several components supporting key actions, e.g. support for water efficiency is addressed in Components 1 3 and 4 with respect to the H2Otel Awards.

Progress towards Outcome 1: *‘Regional, national and local legal, policy and regulations harmonized within the Kura basin for strengthened IWRM implementation, including harmonized intersectoral coordination with environment, agriculture, energy, municipal water and industrial sectors’.*

This outcome has been delivered through component 1 directed at supporting institutional and regulatory protocols strengthening regional co-operation on water management between Azerbaijan and Georgia. Annex 6 summarises the achievements of the main six outputs from component 1.

In particular, the project has supported establishment and multiple meetings of technical bodies to facilitate national and regional IWRM in the Kura River Basin, and guidance on meeting the needs of the EU WFD. Component 1 also supported the development of a range of plans and strategies to strengthen operational IWRM including:

- The development of harmonised approaches for flow estimation;
- Water use efficiency through innovative engagement with hotels in both countries (H2Otel Awards) and drip irrigation;
- Approaches for implementing pollution reduction plans for key polluting sectors in both countries;
- Economic approaches through the tariffs for reducing water use and showcasing green technologies to encourage private and public sectors apply these.

The parallel work being undertaken through other projects (e.g. EUWI+) led to several planned activities being removed from the Kura II project as noted in the MTR (including Outputs 1.3.4). Although there was a lack of progress achieved by UNECE in facilitating the ratification of the bilateral agreement and establishment of a RBO, the Kura II project has continued to build capacity regardless to facilitate intersectoral and regional cooperation within and between Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The TE consultant considers that the design of the project to include actions in support of a yet-to-be established political agreement was ambitious, but the adaptive management actions by the PMU to support the strengthening of technical co-operation was highly beneficial.

The outputs delivered are considered by this TE to have contributed to the success of component 1 in delivering the expected outcome. The following table summarises the main achievements that the project has delivered towards Outcome 1 (the indicators were presented in the PIRs during execution).

Table 10 – Achievements of Outcome 1

Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Key achievements of project towards Outcome 1
National and local legal, policy and regulations harmonized within the Kura basin for strengthened IWRM implementation, including harmonized intersectoral coordination with environment, agriculture, energy, municipal water and industrial sectors	Implementation of sustainable government-supported coordination mechanisms between water sectors at the national and regional levels by the end of the project.	Kura II support to Project Regional and National Advisory Groups and thematic working groups strengthened co-operation on IWRM Development of agreed methods for flows estimation Guidance on EU WFD river basin management
Reports on Baseline conditions for regulations and harmonization of integrated water management practices in Azerbaijan and Georgia, with agreed plans for intersectoral coordination	National sectoral baseline reports on regulations by sector by the end of year 1. Plans agreed by the end of year 2, and tested implementation by end of project for at least 2 new plans.	Reports, plans and recommendations on water efficiency, wastewater reuse, flood hazards, pollution abatement, economics benefit of green technologies, water tariffs.
Support to institutionalized regional coordination mechanisms established between Azerbaijan and Georgia for harmonized water resources management	By end of the project the focal ministries will support the creation of agreed structures for IWRM implementation within and between Azerbaijan and Georgia	Completed study tour to Sava Commission to investigate achievements of successful RBO with 14 representatives of the Kura River Basin.

The TE rates the achievement of **Outcome 1** as **Highly Successful**.

Progress towards **Outcome 2**: *‘Enhance capacities for sectoral ministries and agencies to successfully harmonise and implement IWRM plans.’*

This outcome has been delivered through component 2 outputs directed at building capacities of individuals and institutions to enable transboundary IWRM to be implemented. This essential element for the Kura River Basin is required to ensure the delivery and long-term sustainability of the SAP actions and to meet the needs of both countries with respect to the EU WFD. The main achievements of this component that will deliver Outcome 2 are best represented in an infographic presented by the project at a workshop to present the ‘Exit Strategy’ of the Kura II project.



Figure 4 – Summary of training activities undertaken by the project

This figure shows the breadth of IWRM topics covered, the number of trainees involved and time spent in training. Participants were drawn from a range of public and private sector, including academia and NGOs. The Kura II project kept attendance data from all training events, disaggregated by sex which has been summarised in a project final report.

The outputs delivered are considered by this TE to have contributed to the success of component 2 in delivering the expected outcome. The following table summarises the main achievements that the project has delivered towards Outcome 2 (the indicators were presented in the PIRs during execution).

Table 11 - Achievements of Outcome 2

Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Key achievements of project towards Outcome 2
Enhanced capacity for sectoral ministries and agencies to successfully harmonize and implement national IWRM Plans	Capacity building, implemented in 6 priority areas for water management professionals at all levels, and sustainable through on-line courses in national languages taught by international experts	Significant training experiences provided for wide range of junior and mid-career stakeholders involved in IWRM. Training material available in both national languages
Report containing (i) the assessment of capacity building needs in integrated water resources management; (ii) a program for training of staff in water management organizations of the two countries; (iii) the results of the capacity building activities and events, including number of participants and results assessment	Reports on needs assessment by the end of the first year. Reports on implementation and results of training program prepared annually and final results with recommendations will be prepared by the end of the project.	Capacity building for technical experts including hydrological modelling, river basin ecology, laboratory quality systems. IWRM Academy (Masters students) training provided Certificate of course participation provided

The TE rates the achievement of **Outcome 2** as **Highly Successful**.

Progress towards **Outcome 3**: *'Stress reduction in critical areas and pre-feasibility studies to identify investment opportunities for improving river system health'*.

This outcome has been delivered through component 3 outputs that aimed to test through pilot actions various stress reduction actions covering rational water use, pollution reduction planning on major polluting sources and, river restoration activities on constructed wetlands and floodplains. The pilots contributed to the national and regional understanding of approaches to be implemented through the SAP by delivering information on costs, feasibility and likely stress reduction that could be achieved through subsequent upscaling within the Kura River Basin. Key actions from the pilots include:

- Rational water use: Development of e-leading portal for schools; Hydro-Heroes app for reporting water leaks; drip irrigation at four locations, development of aquaponic training centre. These were supported by reports on the economics of the approaches tested to facilitate future uptake and replication.
- Pollution abatement plans: Two pollution hotspots undertook environmental audits leading to pollution reduction plans with prefeasibility studies conducted at both sites.
- River restoration: Constructed wetlands and restored floodplains activities to indicate the wastewater treatment potential and ecosystem/socio-economic benefits of these nature-based solutions. The MTR was concerned that these projects were delayed but they have been successfully delivered (although the long-term sustainability plans for the Hajquabul constructed wetlands have still to be confirmed by AzerSu).

Table 12 - Example of stress reduction achieved by the constructed wetland (Hajqabul) pilot

Parameter	Modelled reduction	Measured reduction
Suspended solids	> 75%	56%
BOD ₅	>70%	98%
Total Nitrogen	>20	85% (NH ₄ -N)

Source: final report on River Restoration

Table 13 - Example of reduced water demand from the use of drip irrigation versus conventional irrigation

	Previous irrigation m ³ /ha	Drip irrigation m ³ /ha
Onions	20,000	2,000
Potatoes	2,000	500

Source: Source: Use of Hydrological Model in Estimating the Impacts of Rational Water Use Demonstration Projects

The outputs delivered are considered by this TE to have contributed to the success of component 3 in delivering the expected outcome. The following table summarises the main achievements that the project has delivered towards Outcome 3 (the indicators were presented in the PIRs during execution).

Table 14 - Achievements of Outcome 3

Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Key achievements of project towards Outcome 3
Implementation of stress reduction measures in areas under high stress from human activities, focusing on building awareness of applied actions that will reduce negative and enhance positive impacts on the river system ecology and ground and surface waters of the Kura River Basin	By the conclusion of the project stress reduction measures will be applied and tested to showcase the benefit of various applied approaches to IWRM.	Delivery of tools (apps) to facilitate water leak reporting. Benefits of drip irrigation successfully demonstrated Pollution reduction plans and prefeasibility plans for two key hotspots developed; Constructed wetlands achieved pollution reduction. Floodplain restoration actions demonstrate renewable energy approaches to forest irrigation.

The TE rates the achievement of **Outcome 3** as **Highly Successful**.

Progress towards **Outcome 4: ‘Stakeholder education with academic, civil society, private sector and local communities to gain experiences to increase their involvement in national and regional IWRM applications and innovations’.**

This outcome has been delivered through component 4’s five outputs aimed at awareness raising and training of the seven stakeholder groups linked to the outcome expected of this component (private sector, women, youth, university students, farmers NGOs, hotel managers), academic conferences, social marketing campaigns to raise awareness, competitions for innovations and sharing experiences through GEF IW:LEARN.

Specific activities that have contributed to Outcome 4 include:

- Conducting training courses on water-food-energy nexus for masters students;
- Development of Kura box for schools;
- YouTube videos on key project outputs (drip irrigation, e-flow, constructed wetlands);
- H2Otel Awards for hotels adopting water conservation approaches;
- Training centre for aquaponics;
- E-learning platform for schools students (in three languages);
- Six GEF IW:LEARN experience notes to share the lessons from the Kura II to the IW portfolio of projects;
- Inputs to a Massive Online Course for GEF IW on Governance for Transboundary Freshwater Security;

The outputs delivered are considered by this TE to have contributed to the success of component 4 in delivering the expected outcome. The following table summarises the main achievements that the project has delivered towards Outcome 4 (the indicators were presented in the PIRs during execution).

Table 15 - Achievements of Outcome 4

Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Key achievements of project towards Outcome 4
Stakeholder Education with academic, civil society, private sector, and local communities to gain experiences to increase their involvement in national and regional IWRM applications and innovations. The project will work with select stakeholder groups to increase awareness and actions that they can take to improve water management by reducing losses and polluting activities	By the end of the project, 6 stakeholder groups trained about IWRM approaches and solutions with baseline and impacts measured. Two regional academic conferences will be held. Four social marketing campaigns will be conducted. A climate change adaptation recognition award program will be established, and contribution to the IW:LEARN Community will be made through at least 5 experience notes and participation in international conferences.	Kura Box educational aid Development of mobile phone app to assist with reporting of water leaks in Azerbaijan. The app included educational games on water resources linked to the Kura Box H2Otel Awards to hotels using water saving measures launched at an International Tourism Partnership co-operating with tourism bodies in Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The TE rates the achievement of **Outcome 4** as **Successful - Highly Successful**.

Outcome 5: *Azerbaijan and Georgia using integrated monitoring and information management systems for sustainable IWRM at national and transnational level.*

This outcome has been delivered through component 5's four outputs to strengthen the link between IWRM science (through strengthening monitoring, data assessment and analysis) and policy making for improved water governance in the Kura River Basin, supported by improved exchange of comparable data at national and regional level.

Specific activities delivering Outcome 5 include:

- Enhancing the assessment of groundwater and surface water within the Kura River Basin involving guidance and training on hydrogeological modelling and monitoring leading to regional report on a transboundary aquifer.
- Developing tools to assist the assessment of economic and social benefits of distributed water to assist with pricing of water and reform of water tariffs in Azerbaijan.
- Improving river ecological assessments inline with the EU WFD linked to a monitoring programme employing the ecological flows methodology (Component 1).
- Regional protocols for exchanging environmental data consistent with the EU WFD.
- Assessment of laboratories and training of analysts with regards to upgrading their quality management systems in-line with ISO 17025 accreditation requirements.

The outputs delivered are considered by this TE to have contributed to the success of component 5 in delivering the expected outcome. The following table summarises the main achievements that the project has delivered towards Outcome 5 (the indicators were presented in the PIRs during execution).

Table 16 - Achievements of Outcome 5

Description of Indicator	End of project target level	Key achievements of project towards Outcome 5
Azerbaijan and Georgia using integrated monitoring, and information management systems for sustainable IWRM at national and transboundary levels	National sectoral baseline data will be collected at the sectoral level regarding the five areas of: hydrology, ecology, water resource economics, water quality, and information exchange by the end of year one. Regional measures will be developed to assess an address the gaps, and training on modernized approaches to information management to support decision making will be implemented by the end of the project for each area.	Hydrological monitoring and modelling Provision of groundwater monitoring equipment (3 in each country) with the support of experts from IGRAC ⁵

⁵ International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre

The TE rates the achievement of **Outcome 5** as **Highly Successful**.

Progress towards Project Objective: *‘Integrated water resources management in the Kura river basin to address water-energy-food-ecosystem security nexus with integrated flow management through the implementation of agreed actions in the SAP’*

Based on the above assessment of the progress towards the project’s expected outcomes and delivered outputs the TE considers that the UNDP/GEF Kura II project as assisted stakeholders in meeting the desired project objective through:

- Working groups have been established to strengthen international methodology harmonisation and dialogue in advance of the anticipated bilateral agreement. The technical discussions engendered by the project on IWRM between Azerbaijan and Georgia was noted by stakeholders as lacking prior to this project. The technical advances include the use of modern IWRM tools including environmental flow assessments with agreed approaches, groundwater monitoring and modelling, development of WFD quality, quantity and ecological assessment approaches;
- The project has devoted significant resources to capacity development through a range of training events, awareness raising programmes and practical demonstrations of new approaches to reduce the stress on the environment in the Kura River Basin. These activities have been aimed at a wide range of stakeholders ‘from community to cabinet’ to enable policy makers and practitioners from academia, private sector, and civil society to implement the long-term IWRM actions endorsed in the 2014 SAP.

The TE rates the achievement of the **Project Objective** as **Highly Successful**.

3.3.2 Relevance

Relevance to National Priorities

The project is highly relevant to a range of stakeholders (ministry, water supply agencies, academia, farmers, private sector, civil society, etc.) to the priorities expressed by both countries with respect to IWRM. These include:

- The Kura River Basin SAP signed by Azerbaijan and Georgia in May 2014
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development endorsed by Azerbaijan and Georgia;
- The long-term intention of both countries to adopt the UNECE’s Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Water Course and International Lakes with respect to the Kura River Basin.
- Strategy for the Republic of Azerbaijan (2020-2037) (to better meet EU and other international standards);
- The EU – Georgia Association Agreement (2014);
- The Georgian Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection Road Map on Climate and Environment.
- Relevant to the State Committee on Family, Women and Children in Azerbaijan on implementing gender equality policies;

- The project was of relevance to water supply operators in both countries with respect to water demand, efficiency and losses;
- Future needs of the region will be driven by additional climate change adaptation and management actions to address the increasing water scarcity affecting both countries.

Alignment with UNDP and GEF strategic priorities

The Project was aligned with UNDP's Country Programme Documents for Azerbaijan and Georgia (see section 3.1.5) with respect to environment and climate change (outcome 4). The Project also contributed to addressing GEF priorities on environmental management (through improved information for decision makers), environmental reporting to conventions, gender roles in environmental management and wide engagement with civil society with innovative approaches. The Kura II project is consistent with the objectives of the GEF 6 International Waters focal area strategy (programme 3 and programme 4 on conjunctive management and nexus respectively).

Stakeholder engagement

The project involved multiple stakeholders through capacity development, awareness raising, academia, participation in pilot activities etc., in addition to supporting ministerial staff with the requirements of IWRM.

The Project Document had developed strategies for wide stakeholder engagement (see section 2.8) and for improving roles and opportunities for women (see section 3.3.8) by mainstreaming gender considerations. The project prepared a summary report on training activities that provided information on capacity development of stakeholders that had been undertaken.

Stakeholders frequently mentioned in interviews good engagement with the project on many activities and the provision of beneficial information through the website, Facebook and other awareness raising events.

Relevance to other initiatives

The project's actions are relevant to multiple national reporting obligations to multilateral environmental agreements, SDG 6, the implementation of the endorsed SAP etc. The project worked closely with the EUWI+ project, aimed at assisting countries harmonise approaches with the EU WFD, and supported the GCF project (Scaling-up Multi-Hazard Early Warning System and the Use of Climate Information in Georgia).

The TE rates the **Relevance** as **Highly Successful**.

3.3.3 Effectiveness

Extent of contribution to outcome/output

The Kura II project has been effectively implemented under the direction of the PMU based in Baku supported by staff in Tbilisi in partnership with national authorities in Azerbaijan and Georgia. As shown above (section 3.3.1) the project has delivered the vast majority of the expected outputs and been highly successful in achieving the agreed outcomes (see Annex 6). This has been the result of a well-defined project that met the needs of the countries and the effective and efficient project management that was frequently cited by stakeholders as being of 'high quality'.

The detailed planning and frequent internal meetings of the PMU, coupled with effective management of consultants delivering the activities, the strengthening of science to policy actions to

better understand the Kura River Basin, informative and effective workshops and meetings, innovative pilots demonstrating stress reduction and awareness raising and education, have all been offered by stakeholders as contributing to the success of this project.

The project managed an effective project website in accordance with GEF IW:LEARN guidance (although stakeholders noted there were some delays in uploading material), Facebook pages and YouTube features.

Stakeholders commented on specifically effective contributions as:

- The many face to face (and remote) meetings held between water specialists in Azerbaijan and Georgia, including graduate students in Baku and Tbilisi State Universities on IWRM, implementing groundwater monitoring stations in the transboundary basin to exchange information on groundwater levels and the harmonised environmental flows methodologies;
- High quality meetings, workshops and reports prepared by the project under the management of the PMU;
- Excellent collaboration between project and stakeholders in the Kura River Basin with a highly-responsive PMU;
- Very effective use of Advisory Groups with good communication of conclusions.

Extent to contribution to National, UNDP, GEF Priorities

The project has been very effective at strengthen regional technical co-operation on IWRM in the Kura River Basin. Whilst the ambition of supporting a planned bilateral agreement and resulting commission has not been achieved (due to the absence of political support beyond the project's control), the project has created national and regional groups to guide the introduction of IWRM activities that have enable bilateral dialogue to be initiated. The project has been designed to be closely aligned to the priorities of Azerbaijan and Georgia on water management, supporting the harmonisation of national approaches to environmental flow, ecological assessment, EU WFD requirements. The project has delivered effective pilots on stress reduction that highlight potential means to address problems currently affecting the region through the use of water saving approaches and constructed wetlands.

The project has been effective in supporting GEF's priorities of enhancing conjunctive management through the support of groundwater monitoring and modelling coupled with the extensive support on surface water management in the Kura River Basin. In addition, the GEF's priority on the food-water-ecosystem nexus has been addressed through improving the use of limited water resources through application of drip irrigation, improving leak reporting and water tariffing, and the important work on establishing ecological flows and assisting with ecological assessments in the region.

The project has contributed to UNDP's Country Programme Development in both countries (see section 3.1.5 for a summary of the main aspects of the CPD) and contributed good lessons and experiences to further strengthen UNDP's regional and global support of GEF's International Waters TDA/SAP projects.

Extent to contribution to gender equality and empowerment

The Project Document presented a Gender Mainstreaming approach that was effectively followed by the Kura II project. Sex disaggregated data was collected from meetings and workshops and summarised in a final project report on training activities. The PMU adopted a positive approach to

encouraging the involvement of women at all levels (as reported in the 2020 PIR – see section 3.3.8). The project was very effective at encouraging women's groups (e.g. State Committee on Family, Women and Children in Azerbaijan) in training sessions resulting in the participants requesting that the training was extended and assisting the State Committee with implementing gender equality policies. The project provided (through output 4.1) women with basic advice on conserving water in domestic situations.

Areas where the Project could have been more effective.

The TE consultant only identified a few areas that this project could have been enhanced that were raised by stakeholders.

- Some stakeholders thought that the speed that meetings and workshop results were uploaded to the web was too slow and frequently these were not available in national languages. Although the stakeholders acknowledged that this had improved towards the end of the project.
- As noted earlier, the project design was considered very ambitious in linking some outputs to the political bilateral agreement supported by the UNECE Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourse. Stakeholders acknowledged and appreciated the considerable support provided by the project at supporting technical dialogue on IWRM between the two countries that will eventually lead to the effective management of transboundary water resources.

The TE rates the **Effectiveness** as **Highly Successful**.

3.3.4 Efficiency

Project Management and timeliness

The TE consultant assessed the delivery of the outputs achieved by the project (see Annex 6) showing that the majority of planned outputs have been delivered on-time or will be completed by the end of the project (May 2021).

The project's original end date (August 2020) was initially extended to accommodate a change in government and merging of ministries in Georgia, and the appointment of a new Minister in Azerbaijan coupled with reassignment of departments within the ministry. A second extension to 31st May 2021 to address delays as a result of COVID 19 was requested in September 2020. The request identified the following activities that remained to be finalise:

- The implementation and establish monitoring protocols for the river restoration activities in Krtsanisi Park Georgia;
- The monitoring and assessment of river restoration for constructed wetland in Hajigabol Azerbaijan;
- Completion of the ground water online monitoring systems installation and trainings in both countries;
- Handover of Municipal water use demonstration project from Gori, Georgia converted into an online learning program for Azerbaijan and Georgia schools pending approval from Ministries of Education in both countries;
- Training for and handover of Aquaponics system in Azerbaijan;
- Implementation and conduct impacts assessment of social marketing campaigns;

- Analysis of data collection for Shared Water Quality Indicators

Stakeholders considered that the PMU had implemented the project efficiently and had responded to COVID restrictions in an effective manner. As mentioned above, stakeholder considered that the PMU was very responsive to requests and effective in the organisation of workshops and other meetings.

The original CTA/Project Manager left the project to take up a new post in UNDP in October 2020 and there was a three month delay in the formal appointment of the current CTA/Project Manager (the former Senior Capacity Building Co-ordinator) although there was no disruption to the execution of the project thanks to the dedication of the current CTA.

The key milestones from PIF submission to project completion are presented in Table 9.

Table 17 – Key project milestones and dates

Project milestone	Date
PIF submission to GEF Secretariat for review	August 2014
PIF Approved	September 2014
GEF CEO Endorsement	June 2016
Project Start	August 2016
Project Inception Meeting/ 1 st PSC	April 2017
2 nd PSC	May 2018
3 rd PSC	July 2019
4 th PSC (virtual meeting under COVID-19 restrictions)	June 2020
5 th PSC (Virtual)	May 2021
Mid Term Review	September 2019*
Planned completion	August 2020
Revised completion	May 2021

* As noted in the request for extension of the project to 24th September 2020

Resource allocation

The project has efficiently utilised the GEF grant in delivering the project's outputs and achieving the outcomes expected to strengthen IWRM capabilities and awareness in the Kura River Basin. The annual expenditure per component and at the project level is presented above (see section 3.2.3

The TE rates the **Efficiency** as **Successful**.

3.3.5 Overall outcome

The achievements of the main outputs and outcomes have been summarised above in section 3.3.1 together with the relevance (section 3.3.2), effectiveness (section 3.3.3) and efficiency (section 3.3.4) of the Project's delivery.

Table 18 - Assessment of Outcomes Rating

Assessment of Outcomes	Rating ⁶
Relevance	HS
Effectiveness	HS
Efficiency	S
Overall Project Outcome Rating	HS

3.3.6 Sustainability

During the final online Regional Working Group Meeting (March 21) involving 25 participants from the two countries, the project asked a series of questions regarding the performance of the project implementation (with full anonymity of responses). Of relevance to this section of the TE the participants were asked if they if there was '*stakeholder commitment to continue the project's activities after the end*' of the project. (high, medium or low). No stakeholders responded 'low' to this question. The following indicate the percentage of participants that responded 'high'.

Table 19 – Summary of the stakeholders' commitment to continue to use project outputs

Component	Percentage responding 'high' likelihood to sustain activities
Component 1	75%
Component 2	67%
Component 3	77%
Component 4	62%
Component 5	73%
Overall:	73 %

Financial Sustainability

Both Azerbaijan and Georgia are committed to strengthen IWRM within the region and recognise the need for future investments to continue to support the activities implemented by the project. In Georgia the commitment to support the pilot activities has been made (although it is unclear if this commitment includes upscaling and replication). In Azerbaijan, at the technical level there is acknowledgement of the benefits of the pilot on, for example, constructed wetlands but formal agreement financial support on sustaining this has yet to be provided to the project by AzurSu.

The Project's Exit Strategy (presented to the Regional Project Advisory Group in March 2021) identified future necessary actions to support and promote key activities undertaken by the project. Some of these actions require a relatively small level of resources (e.g. promoting the use of aquaponics systems to farmers, of promoting the Hydro-Heroes app, continuing with the technical transboundary remote meetings) but other actions to support the operation and maintenance of nature-based solutions will require more substantial financing.

In addition, the future financing for supporting the upscaling/replication of these activities and addressing the pollution reduction plans, additional hydrological monitoring stations, improvements

⁶ Rating scale: HS (Highly Satisfactory), S (Satisfactory), MS (moderately Satisfactory), MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory), U (Unsatisfactory) and HU (Highly Unsatisfactory). See Annex 8.

on water quality analysis, training, equipment etc. that will be required to fulfil the SAP goals will require substantial and, as yet, unidentified resources.

The TE rated the **Financial Sustainability** as **Moderately Likely**

Socio-political Sustainability

The project has invested considerable resources in supporting capacity development, education and awareness raising with a wide range of stakeholders in the Kura River Basin. In particular the project has assisted recent graduates through the IWRM Academy and supported training for early career staff within ministries, water supply companies and other stakeholders. These benefits are recognised by stakeholders as a good means to sustain the future technical implementation of IWRM in the basin and to enable a greater pool of trained specialists to be available in the longer-term.

Political endorsement of the objectives contained in the SAP with respect to IWRM in the Kura River Basin was received in 2014, but additional progress will be needed to finalise a bilateral agreement on the Kura to support the formation of a River Basin Organisation to sustain the long-term management of the basin. But the technical work done to-date and the support that the Kura project (phases I and II) have provided to regional dialogue will support the RBO when created.

The TE rated the **Socio-Political Sustainability** as **Likely**

Institutional and Governance Sustainability

At the national level, stakeholders have indicated that the actions promoted by the Kura II project will be sustained (subject to confirmed finances) and that the institutions responsible for national water management will continue to utilise the outputs. This is clear with the support that national priorities place on protecting scarce water resources and IWRM in general which is reflected by the interest in Azerbaijan in harmonising with EU WFD requirements and in Georgia with the obligations towards the EU WFD that is within the Association Agreement.

At the regional level, the delays in confirming the bilateral agreement that would lead to the establishment of a River Basin Organisation, are critical to the *regional* level institutional and governance sustainability of the Kura II activities. However, the project has supported the technical dialogue that will benefit the future establishment of the political agreement. Stakeholders have indicated that the regional dialogue and co-operation that has been undertaken by the Kura projects (first and second phases) are likely to continue, especially with the lessons and experiences from COVID required remote meetings. This continued sharing of information and experiences will benefit the national ambitions towards the EU WFD as well as future transboundary water management and governance.

The project's results will also continue to benefit future national and donor supported actions in the region, e.g. through the EUWI+ and the GCF project being implemented in Georgia.

The TE rated the **Institutional and Governance Sustainability** as **Moderately Unlikely – Moderately Likely**

Environmental Sustainability

The project is focused on environmental improvement and the actions undertaken are supportive of the reconstructed Theory of Change expected impacts to improved environmental management of

the Kura River Basin, subject to available resources and political will to fulfil the expected goals of the endorsed SAP.

The TE rated the **Environmental Sustainability** as **Likely**

Overall sustainability

Table 20 - Sustainability Ratings

Sustainability	Rating ⁷
Financial Resources	ML
Socio-political	L
Institutional framework and governance	MU-ML
Environmental	L
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	MU-ML

3.3.7 Country Ownership

Stakeholders interviewed considered that the design of the project developed and driven by ministry representatives from Azerbaijan and Georgia to meet their national and regional objectives (summarised in section 3.1). Both countries are in the process of adopting principles within the EU WFD (Azerbaijan will harmonise approaches on IWRM and Georgia is committed to an Association Agreement with the EU), and support the eventual long-term goal of establishing a river basin organisation for the Kura, potentially with options of enlarging the remit to the whole river basin through the inclusion of Turkey and Armenia.

At a technical level, stakeholders have indicated that there is significant willingness to continue the transboundary co-operation established by the project to ensure that when the political decision is taken to establish a bilateral agreement the parties are further advanced with respect to IWRM approaches.

The project also achieved a high level of stakeholder engagement that further reinforced country ownership in the view of the TE consultant.

3.3.8 Gender

The Project Document presented a Gender Mainstreaming Policy. All project activities were reported to have been conducted to meet this policy. The project reported (PIR 2020) the Gender Marker as '1' (*Activities that will contribute to gender equality, but not significantly*).

The project has co-operated with Women, Family and Children Committee in Azerbaijan to address water related problems with women and how to empower them. The project undertook 'Water and Women' workshops in Azerbaijan in two cities in the Kura River Basin. Stakeholders reported being very satisfied with this innovative training with participants requesting that the training session be extended. A similar set of exercises were planned in Georgia but had to be completed remotely due to COVID restrictions.

The project has also organized Gender Mainstreaming Training in both countries. The 2020 PIR reported that the project encouraged women to participate at all levels, including National and

⁷ Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: Unlikely; 2 Moderately Unlikely; Moderately Likely; and, Likely. See Annex 8

Regional Project Advisory Groups, and national and international experts, and junior experts with 8 of 10 Junior Experts working with the project in Azerbaijan and Georgia are women. Sex disaggregated data is collected systematically for all trainings conducted by the project and a summary presented in a final report on the training activities.

As a result of project activities, the number of women engaged and trained in water resources management issues has doubled in both countries. Project trainings and activities have increased the awareness about the women's role in this sector.

3.3.9 Cross-cutting issues

The Project contributes to the UNDP Country Programme Development Documents in Azerbaijan and Georgia (see section 3.1.5) and supports the UNDP global activities on IWRM through the development and implementation of Strategic Action Programmes.

The project supports Azerbaijan and Georgia meeting the SDG goal 6 on Water and Sanitation through reducing water demand in irrigation (pilot activities on drip irrigation) and losses in distribution (including the Hydro-Heroes app and assisting with water network analyses). The pilots on constructed wetlands will assist with the SDG 6 goals associated with treated wastewater.

The project also encouraged good transboundary technical co-ordination and co-operation in preparation for the planned bilateral agreement under the UNECE Helsinki Convention.

3.3.10 GEF Additionality

The Project contributed to addressing GEF 6 priorities on environmental management (through improved information for decision makers), environmental reporting to conventions, gender roles in environmental management and wide engagement with civil society with innovative approaches. The GEF grant of 5.3 M USD catalysed planned (at CEO endorsement) co-financing of 195 M USD with the project achieving a final co-financing of 214 M USD (10% above planned).

3.3.11 Catalytic role /Replication

The Kura II project has built on the experiences of over 35 TDA/SAP actions conducted by GEF project over the last 25 years with the project contributing new and updated lessons for future GEF TDA/SAP projects. Specific experiences from the Kura II project that have been shared or could benefit other IW projects include:

- Exchange of information with the UNDP/OSCE/GEF Dniester project developing TDA/SAP outputs;
- The needs of the Kura II project for experts to be recruited led to the UNDP International Fresh Water Vetted Expert Roster that benefited both the UNDP/GEF Kura and other UNDP IW freshwater projects;
- COVID required that meetings of the Regional and National Advisory Groups and the technical working groups had to be via remote discussions. Stakeholders confirmed that these meetings worked effectively and offered a cost-effective option of continuing the technical co-operation between Azerbaijan and Georgia post-project;
- The approaches demonstrated in the pilots (e.g. use of constructed wetlands and drip irrigation, aquaponics training centre, etc.) together with the use of tools to assist IWRM (e-

flows, Hydro-Heroes leak reporting app, groundwater monitoring and modelling etc.) were mentioned by stakeholders as providing beneficial information to encourage future use;

- The IWRM Academy has provided a skilled resource of national experts to continue to apply (and upscale) techniques developed by the project;
- The H20tel Awards Programme with hotels was seen as of interest for further exploitation after COVID.

3.3.12 Progress to impact

The project has effectively and efficiently delivered the project outputs contributing to the five project outcomes. Through the Reconstructed Theory of Change (see section 2.5) the TE had suggested the likely impacts that could be achieved in the long-term (*Improved ecosystem and socio-economic status resulting from improved IWRM policy and management decisions based on data and information*). The TE assessment considers that the following intermediate steps identified in the reconstructed Theory of Change have been achieved or are in progress as:

- Improved co-operative actions through compatible data and approaches
- Common science and technical information guiding national authorities on governance
- National and regional awareness and engagement in water and environmental issues.

The Theory of change intermediate state on the pathway to impact -‘*Scaling-up of stress reduction across basin*’ has not been addressed by the two countries yet.

4 Main Findings, Conclusion, Recommendations and Lessons

4.1 Main findings

Relevance

The UNDP/GEF Kura II project has been highly relevant in support to the IWRM ambitions (including relevance to EU WFD requirements) in Azerbaijan and Georgia. All the project's components were designed to support the two countries harmonise policy and technical approaches for water management, to test new methods to reduce stress on water resources (reduce demand and pollution) and strengthen the national science to policy linkages. These activities were complimented through a wide range of capacity development training actions, education tools and awareness raising events.

Effectiveness

The project has been highly effectively implemented to promote IWRM through:

- National and Regional Advisory Bodies to guide the project implementation;
- Regional harmonisation through agreements on methods and standards used in water management (for example the approaches to establish acceptable environmental flows in the Kura River Basin);
- Extensive capacity development and education to a wide range of stakeholders involved in IWRM activities and responding effectively to the global COVID-19 pandemic by utilising remote approaches to continue the work;
- Promoting science to policy on, for example, groundwater monitoring and modelling, ecological status assessments, EU WFD methodologies for quantity and quality, tariffs for water use, analytical quality control, etc.
- Successfully implementing a range of pilot demonstration actions using nature-based solution; reducing water use through drip irrigation, water leak reporting app and engaging hotels with awards on lowering water consumption; and, developing pollution reduction plans for two polluting industries in the basin. These actions provided beneficial information (e.g. on stress reduction achieved) and will guide the required upscaling of these actions for further SAP implementation. There is still a need to identify financing for upscaling/replications of these successful pilots.

Efficiency

The project has efficiently delivered the vast majority of outputs as planned and successfully levered an addition >10% in co-financing above the figure presented in the GEF CEO Endorsement Document. The PMU has effectively and efficiently employed adaptive management changes where required. Stakeholders noted that project management through the PMU was effective and efficient in utilising resources and organising events developing a strong partnership with national organisations.

Sustainability

At a technical level there is a strong willingness by stakeholders to continue to utilise the tools, lessons and bodies established by the project to sustain the work of the project with respect to IWRM. However, there are still some needs to get commitments on the sustainability of some pilot

actions (e.g. the operation and maintenance resources for the constructed wetlands from AzerSu in Azerbaijan). The countries or the project have not yet prepared a clear vision for obtaining financial support for the future upscaling/replication of actions required in the SAP.

The lack of a formal bilateral agreement between Azerbaijan and Georgia on the management of the Kura River Basin that would lead to River Basin Commission (or similar), as planned under the UNECE Water Convention, **has inhibited** the long-term sustainability of the project's actions. It should be noted that the creation of such a body was **not** a focus of this project, although there were actions planned that were expected to be undertaken in support of an RBO. However, the project has provided strong encouragement to technical co-operation (through both phases of the Kura projects) which strengthens the future transboundary management of the river when the political agreement is in-place.

Cross-cutting issues and gender

The project contributed to the countries' ability to respond to other regional and global requirements including supporting activities related to SDG 6.

The project had developed a Gender Mainstreaming strategy during the project preparation and this has guided execution. The project has been proactive at encouraging the participation and involvement of women and girls in IWRM related activities through dedicated workshops (Women and Water) and presenting the gender strategy at national events. The project recorded sex-disaggregated data or participants at meetings.

4.2 Conclusions

The project is rated as **Highly Successful** by this Terminal Evaluation. The vast majority of the outputs have been delivered and these are considered to have successfully led to the planned outcomes.

There will be an inevitable ongoing need for further national support related to IWRM in both countries, including further capacity development, the procurement of laboratory and field-based equipment for water quality and quality assessments, biological assessments as required by the EU WFD, etc.

At the regional level, the dialogue that has been established by the GEF Kura I and II projects has been very beneficial, assisting the countries with harmonising approaches of policy and methodology, and in supporting the important fora for transboundary discussions. But *significant* future transboundary (regional) assistance should be dependent on the countries reaching the political bilateral agreement in accordance with the UNECE Water Convention and establishing a Kura River Basin Commission. However, further support to continue the dialogue and harmonisation would be welcome by some stakeholders to maintain momentum in IWRM activities in-line with the needs of the Kura River Basin SAP.

4.3 Recommendations

Table 21 - Recommendations

No.	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time frame
	National Recommendations		
1	Establish a functional bilateral commission to provide regional oversight of IWRM activities (in accordance with UNECE Water Convention) Adopt and implement recommendations for specific actions identified in the Project's Exit Strategy, including: • Update national EIA regulations to include e-flow; • Identify investment sources to upscale national actions and provide maintenance and operation budget for existing pilots, groundwater monitoring etc.; • Further strengthen inspection and enforcement on environmental regulations; • Continue with national and regional fora as interim measure until bilateral agreement signed; • Continue the exchange of water quality and quantity data between countries of the Kura River.	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Azerbaijan Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture, Georgia	Continuous
	UNDP Recommendations		
2	Develop interim support project to continue the regional SAP implementation in preparation for the establishment of an RBO. Continue capacity development, awareness, identifying sustainable financing for SAP actions, and supporting bilateral technical discussions and exchange of information.	UNDP GEF UNDP COs	Within next 2 years
3	Future SAP implementation projects should include activities to assist countries identify long-term sources of finance to fully implement the endorsed SAP.	UNDP GEF	Ongoing
4	Future regional projects should identify means to capitalise more on the strong capacity existing in UNDP COs to assist execution. The presence of COs is a significant comparative advantage to facilitate solving any political issues that are beyond the competences of a single project.	UNDP	Ongoing

4.4 Lessons

The following lessons are considered relevant to future UNDP and GEF IW projects in the region and more widely:

Project Design:

Projects would benefit from a more cautious approach to their design by ensuring that all activities are within the scope of a GEF project. The linking of activities to the proposed bilateral agreement was potentially risky to the project achieving its objective but this project has employed adaptive

management changes to continue the regional dialogue at technical levels. It is clear that the GEF ambition is to strengthen transboundary institutions but there were significant risks from the inclusion of this element in the overall design. **Lesson:** Projects should be clear on their level of competence regarding international agreement.

Project Management

A significant strength of this project has been the high-quality project management and reporting. At the inception phase the PMU initiated a very detailed internal planning exercise leading to the creation of the project 'Master Plan'. This was reviewed by the PMU every few weeks to ensure that progress on the many outputs could be monitored and corrective action taken when required.

Lesson: Detailed and frequent attention to project plans fosters a successful project conclusion.

At the start of the project stakeholders requested the PMU to prepare brief monthly reports (in a bullet format) summarising progress and presenting the next month's workplan. These reports were found to be informative and beneficial to the overall project management and supervision by UNDP (IRH and COs) and national ministries. **Lesson:** Brief and clear monthly reports are necessary to keep all interested stakeholders informed on progress, problem and future plans to supplement more formal reports prepared at quarterly or annual intervals.

Lessons from the first phase of the GEF Kura project and the initial phases of the Kura II development indicated the need for greater clarity in the responsibilities between the different bodies involved in management and oversight. **Lesson:** Clear definition of roles and responsibilities of all the agencies avoids any subsequent confusion.

COVID has imposed significant restrictions on how projects can be implemented. The enforced use of remote meetings, training sessions, awareness raising events and workshops has been successfully demonstrated, and whilst there are multiple benefits from in-person meetings there are considerable cost (and carbon) savings on travel and daily subsistence that can be achieved by using remote techniques. **Lesson:** The design and management of regional projects should engage more frequently through remote meetings where possible.

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (ToR) For the Terminal Evaluation Consultant

(International Recruitment, IC Contract)

Location:	Home-based with no travel envisioned
Application Deadline:	
Type of Contract:	Individual Contract
Assignment Type	International Consultant
Languages Required:	English required;
Starting Date: (date when the selected candidate is expected to start)	1 st April 2021
Duration of the Assignment:	Estimated 1 st April – 21 st May 2021 (Approximately 30 working days)

BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the TE of the full-sized project titled Kura II: Advancing IWRM across the Kura river basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans (PIMS # 5325) implemented through the United Nations Development Program, Istanbul Regional Hub (UNDP-IRH). The project started on the 23rd August 2016 and is in its last year of implementation.

The Terminal Evaluation process must follow the guidance outlined in the document ‘Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects’ (http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/GEF/TE_GuidanceforUNDP-supportedGEF-financedProjects.pdf)

2. Project Description

UNDP GEF Kura Project “Advancing Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) across the Kura river basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans” is implementing the Strategic Action Program (SAP) for the Kura River Basin in partnership with the Governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan. The project is funded by The Global Environment Facility (GEF) (www.thegef.org)

The SAP is framed around four agreed Ecosystem Quality Objectives (EQO) which are:

- To achieve sustainable utilization of water resources to ensure access to water and preserve ecosystem services;
- To achieve water quality such that it would ensure access to clean water for present and future generations and sustain ecosystem functions in the Kura river basin;
- To achieve and maintain ecosystem status whereby they provide essential environmental and socio-economic services in a sustainable manner in the Kura River Basin; and,

- To achieve mitigation of adverse impacts of flooding and climate change on infrastructures, riparian ecosystems and communities.

The GEF will support priority activities towards these objectives. The GEF funded SAP implementation Project has the objective “to integrate water resources management in the Kura river basin to address water-energy-food-ecosystem security nexus through the implementation of agreed actions in the SAP”.

There are five project components to support the countries to achieve this objective. These are:

- Project Component 1: Establishment of effective cross sectoral IWRM governance protocols at the local, national and transboundary levels in the Kura Basin;
- Project Component 2: Strengthening national capacities to implement multi-sectoral IWRM in the Kura basin;
- Project Component 3: Stress reduction in critical areas and pre-feasibility studies to identify investment opportunities for improving river system health;
- Project Component 4: Targeted education and involvement projects to empower stakeholders in implementing local / national / regional actions in support of SAP implementation;
- Project Component 5: Enhancing science for governance by strengthening monitoring, information management and data analysis systems for IWRM.

3. TE Purpose

The **purpose** of the TE is to provide an impartial evaluation of the project in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, overall performance, management and achievements.

The Terminal Evaluation consultant will develop a technical report on the assessment of the achievement of the UNDP-GEF Kura II project results against what was expected to be achieved, and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from the project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The Terminal Evaluation report should promote accountability and transparency, and assess the extent of project accomplishments.

The Terminal Evaluations for GEF-financed projects have the following complementary purposes:

- To promote accountability and transparency;
- To synthesize lessons that can help to improve the selection, design and implementation of future UNDP-supported GEF-financed initiatives; and to improve the sustainability of benefits and aid in overall enhancement of UNDP programming;
- To assess and document project results, and the contribution of these results towards achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits;
- To gauge the extent of project convergence with other priorities within the UNDP country programme, including poverty alleviation; strengthening resilience to the impacts of climate change, reducing disaster risk and vulnerability, as well as cross-cutting issues such gender equality, and empowering women.

The Project Team, GEF RTA, and the two GEF NFPs, and other key stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the draft report and, if needed, provide additional information

relevant to the TE team's assessment of results. The main output results of the terminal evaluation process will be presented in the UNDP-GEF Kura II final Steering Committee meeting in Middle April 2021.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4. TE Approach & Methodology

The TE must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. Evaluation should employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and instruments. The TE methodology should include:

- Document review of all relevant documentation including the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project Steering committee meetings minutes, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The TE Consultant will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins
- Development of evaluation questions around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and designed for different stakeholders to be interviewed.
- Organize series of interviews with key relevant stakeholders who have project responsibilities and beneficiaries, this list includes:
 - The UNDP-IRH management
 - The GEF Regional Technical Advisor
 - The two project's National Focal points (the Azerbaijani NFP and the Georgian NFP)
 - The UNDP Country Office in Azerbaijan and in Georgia
 - The UNDP-GEF Project CTA/RC and the project team
 - The members of the project National Advisory Groups
 - key experts and consultants contributing in the project implementation
 - Representatives of relevant NGOs involved in the project implementation
- All interviews should be conducted online due to Covid-19 restrictions. All interviews should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.
- Validation of key tangible outputs and interventions through analysis of the available documents and report produced for these outputs. These documents should include technical reports, brochures, and pictures or videos that were taken by the project team from the field sites during the different phases of implementation.
- The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.
- Other methods such as outcome mapping, online group discussions, etc.
- Data review and analysis of monitoring and other data sources and methods.
- Ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use; the TE process should ensure triangulation of the various data sources.

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

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework, 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 rating scales are provided in the TOR Annex F). The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary.

Evaluation Ratings Table

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating ⁸
M&E design at entry	
M&E Plan Implementation	
Overall Quality of M&E	
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Overall Project Outcome Rating	
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	
Socio-political/economic	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	

The Evaluation will also 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 will receive assistance from the PCU to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table (example template is in the TOR Annex F), which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

5. Detailed Scope of the TE

⁸ Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

Consultant will first conduct a document review of project documents (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, Project Document, ESSP, Project Inception Report, PIRs, Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools, Project Steering Committee meeting minutes, Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team, project operational guidelines, manuals and systems, etc.) provided by the Project Team and Commissioning Unit. Then they will participate in an TE inception workshop to clarify their understanding of the objectives and methods of the TE, producing the TE inception report thereafter. The TE Consultant will then organize a series of interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The TE will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see TOR Annex A). The TE will assess the project results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects (http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/GEF/TE_GuidanceforUNDP-supportedGEF-financedProjects.pdf).

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

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

Findings

- i. Project Design/Formulation
 - National priorities and country driven
 - Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
 - Gender equality and women's empowerment
 - Social and Environmental Safeguards
 - Assumptions and Risks
 - Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
 - Planned stakeholder participation
 - Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
 - Management arrangements
- ii. Project Implementation
 - Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
 - Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
 - Project Finance and Co-finance
 - Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
 - Implementing Agency (UNDP-IRH) (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
 - Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards
- iii. Project Results
 - Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
 - Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
 - Sustainability: financial (*) , socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)

- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- GEF Additionality
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact

iv. Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

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

The TE report will include an Evaluation Ratings Table, as shown in the ToR Annex F.

6. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The TE Consultant shall prepare and submit:

1. TE Inception Report: TE Consultant clarifies objectives and methods of the TE no later than *1 week* after signing the contract. TE Consultant submits the Inception Report to the Commissioning Unit and project management. Approximate due date: *7th April 2021*
2. Presentation: TE Consultant presents initial findings to project management and the Commissioning Unit at the end of the TE interviews. Approximate due date: *20th April 2021*
3. Draft TE Report: TE Consultant submits full draft report with annexes *within 2 weeks* of the end of the TE interview. Approximate due date: *5th May 2021*
4. Final TE Report and Audit Trail: TE Consultant submits revised report, with Audit Trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report, to the Commissioning Unit *within one week* of receiving UNDP comments on draft. Approximate due date: *15th May 2021*. The final TE report must be in English.

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

7. TE Arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing the TE resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's TE is the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with Consultant to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits if any.

8. Duration of the Work

The total duration of the TE will be approximately *30 working days* over a time period of *9 weeks* starting *1st April 2021*. The approximate TE timeframe is as follows:

- *15 Feb. 2021*: Application closes
- *31 May 2021*: Selection of TE Consultant
- *1 April 2021*: Prep the TE Consultant (handover of project documents)
- *7th April 2021*: 5 days: Document review and preparing TE Inception Report
- *10th March 2021*: 2 days: Finalization and Validation of TE Inception Report- latest start of TE interviews
- *20th March 2021*: 10 days : TE Disk review: stakeholder meetings, and interviews
- *21st April 2021*: Presentation of initial findings
- *30th April 2021*: 10 days: Preparation of draft TE report
- *1st of May 2021*: Circulation of draft TE report for comments
- *10th May 2021*: 3 days: Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report
- *15^h May 2021*: Preparation & Issue of Management Response
- *21st May 2021*: Concluding Project SC meeting to present the TE findings
- *21st May 2021*: Expected date of full TE completion

The expected date start date of contract is *1st April 2021*.

9. Required skills and experience

Competencies:

Corporate competencies:

- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Treats all people fairly without favouritism;
- Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

Functional competencies:

- Excellent communication skills

- Demonstrable analytical skills

Qualifications of the Successful Applicants

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall qualities in the following areas:

Education:

- A Master's degree in water resources management, applied water resources evaluation or other closely related field.

Experience:

- Recent experience (within 5 years) with result-based management evaluation methodologies required
- At least 3 years' experience applying SMART targets and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios required
- At least 3 years' experience in adaptive management, as applied to GEF International Waters transboundary freshwater systems required
- At least 5 years' experience working with the GEF evaluations required
- Work experience in transboundary fresh ater management for at least 5 years required

Language skills:

- English is the working language of the UNDP-GEF Kura II Project and it is required

Assets:

- Experience working in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Caucasus in fresh water management is an asset, in evaluation of project implementation preferred
- Experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis and demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and *GEF International Waters* is an asset
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset
- The ability to communicate in Russian is an asset.

10. Evaluator Ethics

The TE Consultant will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

The evaluator cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the project document), must not have conducted

this project's Mid-Term Review and should not have a conflict of interest with the project's related activities.

11. Payment Schedule

- 20% payment on 10th of April 2021: upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 20% payment on 21st of April 2021: upon presenting the initial findings to project management and the Commissioning Unit at the end of the TE interviews.
- 30% payment on 1st of May 2021: upon satisfactory delivery of the draft TE report to the Commissioning Unit
- 30% payment on 15th of May 2021: upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 30%

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

12. Application Process

Financial Proposal:

- Financial proposals must be “all inclusive” and expressed in a lump-sum for the total duration of the contract. The term “all inclusive” implies all cost (professional fees and any other expenses that may be required to finalize the TE process);

Procedure for applying for this consultancy

Qualified candidates are requested to apply online via this website. The application should contain:

- a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#) provided by UNDP;
- b) **Personal History Form** ([P11 form](#));
- c) **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc.), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](#). If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted online.

Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer

Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the Technical Proposal includes educational background, experience on similar assignments and other ToR requirements will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation – max. 35 points:

- Criteria A: Master's degree in water resources management, applied water resources evaluation or other closely related field, Max Points: 5,
- Criteria B: Recent experience (within 5 years) with result-based management evaluation methodologies required, Max Points: 5,
- Criteria C: At least 3 years' Experience applying SMART targets and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios required, Max Points: 5,
- Criteria D: At least 3 years' experience in adaptive management, as applied to GEF International Waters transboundary freshwater systems required, Max Points: 5,
- Criteria E: At least 5 years' experience working with the GEF evaluations required, Max Points: 10,
- Criteria F: At least 5 years work experience in transboundary freshwater management required, Max Points 5.

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation – max 15 Point

13. Annexes to the TE ToR

(not included in the TE report)

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

Annex 2 – Stakeholders Engaged in Terminal Evaluation

Name	Organisation/Function
GEF National Focal Points	
1. Mrs. Nino Tkhlava	Head of the Environment and Climate Change Department Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
UNDP	
2. Mr. Gerd Trogemann	Manager of the IRH Regional Hub UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub
3. Mr Abusabeeb Elsadig	UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub
4. Mr. Vladimir Mamaev	Regional Technical Advisor UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub
5. Mr. Chingiz Mammadov	Environment Portfolio Team Leader UNDP CO Azerbaijan
6. Mrs. Nino Antadze	Environment Portfolio Team Leader UNDP CO Georgia
7. Ekaterina Paniklova	Regional Programme Co-ordination UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub
Governmental representatives - Azerbaijan	
8. Ms. Farida Alakbarova	Division of Environmental Policy, The project National Focal Point Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
9. Ms. Matanat Avazova	Deputy Head of the National Environmental Monitoring Department Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
10. Mr. Mohamed Asadov	Head of Department of the Science, Design, Construction and International Relations Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Economy JSC
11. Mr. Farda Imanov	Deputy Director “Azersu” JSC, “Sukanal” Scientific Research and Design Institute
12. Mr. Shamil Huseynov	Sector of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment Representative of Milli Mejlis (Parliament)
Governmental representatives - Georgia	
13. Ms Mariam Makarova	Environment and Climate Change Department, Head of Water Division, the Project National Focal Point Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture
14. Ms. Marina Arabidze	Environment Pollution Monitoring Department National Environment Agency
15. Mr. Merab Gaprindashvili	Head of Geology Department National Environment Agency
16. Mr. Giorgi Kordzakhia	Department of Hydrometeorology National Environment Agency
17. Mr. Gizo Chelidze	Department of Amelioration Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture
18. Baadur Ukleba	Senior Hydrogeologist Georgian Amelioration JSC.
19. Mrs. Teona Tigishvili	Expert in Geography, National Curriculum and Resource Evaluation Division Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport
NGOs, Private Sector, Academic and other related projects - Azerbaijan	

Name	Organisation/Function
20. Mr. Surkhay Shukurov	Executive Director, International Dialogue for Environmental Action (IDEA) International Dialogue for Environmental Action (IDEA)
21. Mr. Anar Nuriyev	Department of Hydrometeorology, Faculty of Geography Baku State University (BSU)
22. Ms. Aytekin Hajiyevea	Advisor, the Division of Woman Problems and Gender Issues State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs
NGOs, Private Sector, Academic and other related projects - Georgia	
23. Mr. Kakha Bakhtadze	NGO partner Environment and Development NGO
24. Mr. Davit Kereselidze	Department of Hydrometeorology, Faculty of Geography Tbilisi State University (TSU)
25. Mrs. Ketil Chomakhidze	Technical Expert United Water Supply Company of Georgia
26. Mrs. Nino Sulchanishvili	Environmental Management Division Georgian Water and Power Company
Project Management Unit	
27. Mr Ahmed Abou Elseoud	Current (December 2020 – to-date) UNDP/GEF Kura II Project Manager /Chief Technical Advisor
28. Ms Mary Matthews	Previous (2016 – September 2020) UNDP/GEF Kura II Project Manager /Chief Technical Advisor

Annex 3 – Documents Reviewed

1. GEF PIF
2. GEF CEO Endorsement Document
3. UNDP Project Document and annexes (including results framework, stakeholder engagement plan, Gender Mainstreaming policy, etc.)
4. Project Inception Report
5. Mid-term Review
6. Implementing Partner's responses to MTR recommendations
7. Annual Project Reports (PIRs)
8. UNDP's Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs)
9. UNDP Azerbaijan and Georgia Country Programme Development
10. Project outputs /reports including assessment of stress reduction activities, training summaries, etc.
11. Project Steering Committee (PSC)
12. Regional Project Advisory Group minutes
13. Project Extension request
14. Project Exit Strategy (ppt presented to Regional Advisory Group Meeting, March 2021)

Annex 4 – Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria/Questions	Detailed question	Indicator	Source	Methodology
Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of national authorities and the GEF IW Focal Area?				
Is the project relevant to the IW Areas	How does the project support the IW Focal Areas?	Existence of clear relationship between the project objective and GEF IW strategy	- ProDoc - GEF IW strategy	- Doc analysis - Interviews with PMU/UNDP
Is the project relevant to Georgia/Azerbaijan's environment and sustainability objectives?	- How does the project support the environment and sustainable development objectives in Georgia/Azerbaijan? - Is the project 'country driven'? - What is the level of stakeholder ownership in implementation?	- Degree to which project supports national environmental objectives - Degree of coherence between project and national priorities etc. - Appreciation from national stakeholders to project design and implementation - Level of government involvement in the design of project	- ProDoc - National Policies, priorities and strategies - Project partners	- Document analyses - Interviews with UNDP - Interviews with project partners and national stakeholders
Is the project addressing the needs of target beneficiaries?	- How does the project support the needs of relevant stakeholders? - Has the implementation of the project been inclusive of all relevant stakeholders? - Were beneficiaries and stakeholders adequately involved in project design and implementation?	- Strength of the link between expected results from the project and the needs of relevant stakeholders - Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of stakeholders in project design and implementation	- Project partners and stakeholders - ProDoc - Needs assessment studies	- Document analyses - Interviews with partners & stakeholders
Is the project internally coherent in design?	Are there logical linkages between expected results of the project logframe and the project design (in terms of project components, choice of partners, structure, delivery mechanism, scope, budget, use of resources etc)?	- Level of coherence between project expected results and project design internal logic - Level of coherence between project design and project implementation approach	- ProDoc - Project stakeholders	- Document analyses - Interviews with partners & stakeholders

Evaluation Criteria/Questions	Detailed question	Indicator	Source	Methodology
	Is the length of the project sufficient to achieve project outcomes?			
How is the project relevant to other donor-supported activity?	- Does the GEF funding support activities and objectives not addressed by other donors? - How do GEF-funds help to fill gaps (or give additional stimulus) that are necessary but are not covered by other donors? - Is there coordination and complementarity between donors?	Degree to which program was coherent and complementary to other donor programming nationally and regionally	- Donor representatives and documents - ProDoc - UNDP	- Document analyses - Interviews with partners & stakeholders
What lessons and experiences can be drawn regarding relevance for other GEF, UNDP and other donor projects?	Has the experience of the project provided relevant lessons for other future projects?		- Data collected from MTE - Information from PMU, National representatives and UNDP RTA	Data analyses
Effectiveness: To what extent have/will the expected outcomes and objectives been achieved?				
Has the project been effective in moving towards achieving the expected outcomes and objectives?	- Have the outputs been delivered as planned? - Has the project been effective in achieving outcomes?	Indicators from results framework	- ProDoc - Results framework - PMU, National representatives and UNDP RTA - Stakeholders - PIRs	- Document analyses - Interviews with project UNDP/PMU - Interviews with partners & stakeholders
How is risk and risk mitigation managed?	- How have risks, assumptions and impact drivers managed? - What was the quality of risk mitigation strategies developed (e.g. for impact from COVID 19)? Were these sufficient? - Are there clear strategies for risk mitigation related with	- Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning and design - Quality of existing information systems in place to identify emerging risks and other issues - Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed	- ProDoc - PMU, National representatives and UNDP RTA - Stakeholders - PIRs	- Document analyses - Interviews with project UNDP/PMU - Interviews with partners & stakeholders

Evaluation Criteria/Questions	Detailed question	Indicator	Source	Methodology
	long-term sustainability of the project			
What lessons can be drawn regarding effectiveness for other GEF, UNDP and other donor projects?	- What lessons have been learned from the project regarding achievement of outcomes? - What changes could have been made (if any) to the design of the project in order to improve the achievement of the project's expected results? - What lessons resulting from COVID-19 restrictions with the need to hold remote (virtual) meetings and workshops, have been found?		Data collected through TE	- Data analysis - Interviews with project UNDP/PMU
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently in-line with international standards?				
Was project support provided in an efficient way?	- Was adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use? - Did the project logical framework and work plans and any changes made to them use as management tools during implementation? - Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information? - Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including	- Availability and quality of financial and progress reports - Timeliness and adequacy of reporting provided - Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures - Planned vs. actual funds leveraged - Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations - Quality of results-based management reporting (progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation) - Occurrence of change in project design/ implementation approach	- ProDoc - UNDP RTA - National representatives - PMU	- Document analyses - Interviews with partners

Evaluation Criteria/Questions	Detailed question	Indicator	Source	Methodology
	adaptive management changes? - Was project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual) - Did the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happen as planned? - Were financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently? - Was procurement carried out in a manner making efficient use of project resources? - How was results-based management used during project implementation?	(i.e. restructuring) when needed to improve project efficiency Cost associated with delivery mechanism and management structure compare to alternatives		
How efficient are partnership arrangements for the project?	- To what extent partnerships/linkages between institutions/organizations were encouraged and supported? - Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? Which ones can be considered sustainable? - What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? - Which methods were successful or not and why?	- Specific activities conducted to support the development of cooperative arrangements between partners, - Examples of supported partnerships - Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained - Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilised	- ProDoc - Project partners and stakeholders	- Document analysis - Interviews
What lessons can be drawn regarding efficiency for other GEF, UNDP and other donor projects?	What lessons can be learnt from the project regarding efficiency?		Data collected throughout evaluation	Data analysis

Evaluation Criteria/Questions	Detailed question	Indicator	Source	Methodology
	- How could the project have more efficiently carried out implementation (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements etc...)? - What changes could have been made (if any) to the project in order to improve its efficiency? - What lessons resulting from COVID-19 restrictions with the need to hold remote (virtual) meetings and workshops, have been found?			
Gender equality and women's empowerment: How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?				
How have gender issues been integrated into project execution?	- Was a gender plan/strategy available for the project? - What information has been collected with regards to gender? - Has the project pro-actively promoted the involvement of women in the project?	- Presence of gender indicators in logframe - Gender strategy available	- ProDoc/logframe - PSC minutes - Reports - PIRs	- UNDP - Stakeholder interviews
Financial Management				
Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?	- Are financial and progress reports adequate? - Are there discrepancies between planned and utilized financial expenditures?	- Reports from UNDP indicate delivery of financial statements - Audits completed and comments responded to	- UNDP - National Execution Agency - Project Manager - PIRs - PSC minutes	- Document analysis - Discussions with UNDP and stakeholders
Did the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happen as planned?	- Planned vs. actual funds leveraged	Comparison of co-finance expected and delivered	- PIRs - Project Manager - PSC minutes	- Document analysis - Discussions with UNDP and stakeholders

Evaluation Criteria/Questions	Detailed question	Indicator	Source	Methodology
Monitoring and Reporting				
Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?	- Were progress reports adequate and timely?	Reports delivered on-time	- PSC - UNDP RTA - National Execution Agency - GEF Secretariat	- Document analysis - Interviews
Sustainability – To what extent have the countries, with the project’s support, achieved benefits for an extended period of time after completion.				
How will the project results and outcomes be sustained after project completion?	- Do national plans exist to sustain management plans	Existence of plans	- Reports - PSC minutes	- Document analysis - Interviews with stakeholders
How will the project assist in delivering socio-political sustainability?	Do Reports indicating uptake of approaches?	Reports indicating uptake of approaches	- Reports and other outputs - PSC minutes - Stakeholders - PIRs	- Document analysis - Discussions with UNDP and stakeholders
How has the project assisted in delivering /strengthening sustainable institutional frameworks?	Is there evidence of sustainable links between partner institutions?	Evidence of sustainable links between partner institutions	- Reports and other outputs - PSC minutes - Stakeholders - PIRs	- Document analysis - Discussions with UNDP and stakeholders
How has the project facilitated financial sustainability?	Is there evidence of financial sustainability for supporting management plans in partner organisations?	Evidence of financial sustainability for supporting management plans in partner organisations	- Reports and other outputs - PSC minutes - Stakeholders - PIRs	- Document analysis - Discussions with UNDP and stakeholders
What lessons can be drawn regarding sustainability for other GEF, UNDP and other donor projects?	- Are lessons and experiences released document in project reports?	Documented lessons	- Reports and other outputs - PSC minutes - Stakeholders - PIRs	- Document analysis - Discussions with UNDP and stakeholders

Annex 5 – Interview Guide

GEF OFP Questions

(Please respond to the questions that are most relevant to you and your work with the project. Only short responses are needed, for example bullets.)

1. Were there any issues (positive or negative) in the development of the project concept or CEO Endorsement document dealing with the GEF Secretary or national stakeholders?
2. Were there any issues (positive or negative) that you experienced with UNDP in the development and execution of this project?
3. In your opinion, was the PMU effective and efficient in dealing with problems as they arose in project execution? Were Project Inception, Project Steering Committee and Project Advisory Group meetings effective at guiding the project execution?
4. Do you have any comments on the interactions between the PMU, UNDP (Country Offices and Istanbul Regional Hub) and other national stakeholders?
5. Do you have any views on the likelihood of the sustainability of project actions? Do you think further support is needed from international donors to ensure the sustainability?
6. Are there any lessons from the project execution that could be of benefit to other GEF, UNDP or other donor initiatives nationally, regionally or globally (e.g. on project development, crisis management, innovation, relationship with main beneficiary, etc.)?

Please add any other issues that you think are relevant to this evaluation.

UNDP questions

(Please respond to the questions that are most relevant to you and your work with the project. Only short responses are needed, for example bullets.)

1. Were there any issues (positive or negative) in the development of the project concept or CEO Endorsement document dealing with the GEFSec or national stakeholders?
2. In your opinion, was the PMU effective and efficient in dealing with problems as they arose in project execution? Were Project Inception, Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group meetings effective at guiding the project execution?
3. Do you have any comments on the interactions between the PMU, UNDP (Country Offices and Istanbul Regional Hub) and other national stakeholders?
4. Do you have any views on the likelihood of the sustainability of project actions? Do you think further support is needed from international donors to ensure the sustainability?
5. Are there any lessons from the project execution that could be of benefit to other GEF or UNDP initiatives nationally, regionally or globally (e.g. on project development, crisis management, innovation, relationship with main beneficiary, etc.)?

Please add any other issues that you think are relevant to this evaluation.

Ministry and government organisations Questions

(Please respond to the questions that are most relevant to you and your work with the project. Only short responses are needed, for example bullets.)

1. What was your involvement with the project?
2. What is your perception of the interaction of the project with stakeholders (government officials, academia, private sector, civil society)? Do you think their needs were met?

3. How has the project interacted with other water management actions in the Kura River Basin?
 4. In your view, what have been the main achievements and lessons (positive and negative) of the project? Can you give some examples?
 5. How has the project assisted with transboundary river basin management? Please give some examples if possible
 6. Do you think that the project has been effective in delivering the outputs you expected from this GEF actions? What has been the most and least effective from your perspective?
 7. If you attended project meetings, were these effectively organised and managed? If not, what was wrong/could have been improved?
 8. Could you comment on relevance, timeliness and quality of the (i) workshops, (ii) training, (iii) reports, and (iv) communications delivered by the project.
 9. Did you reviewed reports on the progress of the project? Were these provided on-time?
 10. How will the actions undertaken by the project be supported in the longer-term?
- Please add any other issues that you think are relevant to this evaluation.

Academia, Private Sector CSOs and NGOs Questions

(Please respond to the questions that are most relevant to you and your work with the project. Only short responses are needed, for example bullets.)

1. What was your involvement with the project?
2. How has the work of the project been relevant to your organisation's activities?
3. What is your perception of the interaction of the project with stakeholders (government officials, academia, private sector, civil society)? Do you think their needs were met?
4. In your view, what have been the main achievements and lessons (positive and negative) of the project? Can you give some examples?
5. Do you think that the project has been effective in delivering the outputs you expected from this GEF actions? What has been the most and least effective from your perspective?
6. If you attended project meetings, were these effectively organised and managed? If not, what was wrong/could have been improved?
7. Have the voices of stakeholders been effectively heard by the project?
8. Did the project effectively communicate what it was doing and its achievements?
9. From your perspective, has the project been effectively and efficiently managed? If not, what issues did you observe?
10. Did partnerships/linkages to institutions and ministries deliver good collaboration? What was good/less good in the collaboration?

Please add any other issues that you think are relevant to this evaluation.

Annex 6 – Achievement of Outcomes and Outputs

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
Component 1: Establishment of effective cross sectoral IWRM governance protocols at the local, national and transboundary levels in the Kura Basin				
Outcome 1: Regional, national and local legal, policy and regulations harmonized within the Kura basin for strengthened IWRM implementation, including harmonized intersectoral coordination with environment, agriculture, energy, municipal water and industrial sectors				HS
Output 1.1 Updated regulations for environmental flow calculation methodology	1.1.1 Plan for increased monitoring and enforcement of environmental flows regulations by month 12 in selected sub-basin based on existing information	Yes,	- Agreed in the two countries on a common methodology for estimating the river Environmental flow regime, and selected one pilot sub basin in each country to implement this methodology - Trained a national team in each country to implement this methodology - Developed 2-year monitoring plan for collecting field data for environmental flow in the pilot sub basins - Conduct 12 field campaigns for data collection for the environmental flow calculations - Developed two final reports on the results of implementation this methodology in the two countries - Developed a road map for each country in order to expand the use of this methodology on other river basins. - Presented the results of the environmental flow study and the	HS
	1.1.2 Plan for updated environmental flow methodology, including monitoring approach and evaluation criteria accepted by appropriate ministries for trial in sub basin by month 12 based on existing information	Yes		
	1.1.3 Proposed updated methodology adopted in at least 1 sub basin in each country for at least 1 full year started by month 18 to test updated approach	Yes		
	1.1.4 trial methodology in sub basin to conclude by month 36 for review (Linked to Output 3.3)	Yes		
	1.1.5 Ministries will accept the proposed methodology for environmental flow calculations within 4 years, process started by end of project	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
			proposed road map to the concerned stakeholders in each country	
Output 1.2 Improved protocols water flow management regulatory strategies	1.2.1 Develop plans to address gaps in regulatory protocols to encourage efficient water use based on assessments in 5.1, 5.2 and update review of laws, regulations and enforcement mechanisms	Yes	- Two national plans to enhance the water use efficiency for agricultural and municipal consumption, including gap filling plan in the current policies and regulations. - Assessment of the current regulation for reuse of treated wastewater in each country - Developed map for the historical flood events in the past 20 years along the Kura river in the two countries - Two guidelines for enhancing the current flood risk management in both countries to be in line with the EU Floods directive.	HS
	1.2.2 Within 12 months national level reports developed on waste water reuse regulation and potential	Yes		
	1.2.3 National level recommendations on updated protocols presented within 42 months of project start up based on output 5.1 and recommendations based on lessons learned	Yes		
	1.2.4 Preparation of flood hazards and risks maps of the Kura Basin by using existing information	Yes		
Output 1.3 Institutional support for River Basin Management Organization and local authorities	1.3.1 Based on appropriate international best practices, provide methodology of implementing EUWFD at national levels with institutional support to RBMOs	Yes	- Developed two national reports on the baseline and work plans for national level EU WFD Working Groups, needed to align the institutional reforms to enable both countries to approximate the EU Water Framework Directive - Developed the Terms of Reference for a Strategic Working Group on RBM and the EUWFD in Azerbaijan and Georgia - Developed national capacity building plan for both Azerbaijan and Georgia in River Basin Management	S
	1.3.2 Based on appropriate international best practices review and recommend improvements to institutions to support RBMO/local authorities and intersectoral exchange/ coordination within 18 months	Yes		
	1.3.3 Develop EU WFD implementation guidance materials including information exchange mechanisms as per Output 5.4 within 36 months	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	1.3.4 Within 42 months strengthen functional and technical capacity of current RBMO at least 2 sub practical recommendations	NO	This activity was included in the EUWI+ project that was started implementation at same time with the Kura II project.	
Output 1.4 Pollution abatement plans developed with key stakeholders	1.4.1 Within 9 months all of point sources identified and included in the cadaster with pollution map for point sources	Yes	- Two national reports on the main point sources of pollution along the Kura river basin and developed geographical map for these sources of pollution - Developed Guidelines for developing the pollution abatement plans for the major polluting sectors in each country - Conducted 3-block training course on environmental permitting and environmental enforcement to the environmental inspection and permitting departments in each country - Conducted 3-block training course on Cleaner production and pollution abatement plans to the environmental inspection department in each country and representatives from the polluting industries. - Developed prefeasibility studies for the PAPs for one main source in each country	HS
	1.4.2 Conduct pollution source assessment, and determine causes and based on this develop water quality surveillance strategy and provide technical assistance on how to make Environmental Compliance Action Plan monitoring network in the Kura River (identification of sampling points) within 18 months	Yes		
	1.4.3 Within 30 months of completion of cadasters for water quality, develop country specific plans for pollution abatement based on BAT and BEP for priority areas	Yes		
	1.4.4 National reports identifying the costs of water quality degradation to national GDP by 24 months and promote financial mechanisms	Yes		
	1.4.5 By 38 months a common report on pollution abatement financing mechanisms for large scale interventions	Partially		
Output 1.5 Support to intersectoral water policy coordination and harmonization at the national and transboundary levels	1.5.1 Meetings and workshops for intersectoral water team/NWPD members and associates to highlight what each sector is doing, provide trainings/workshops on specific approaches towards harmonization of approaches to water management held 2	Yes	- Established two National Project Advisory Groups (NPAG), one in each country. - Established a Regional Project Advisory Group (RPAG).	HS

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	times per year in each country and 2 regional meetings per year		- The project Hosted 7 meetings for the NAPG in each country and 4 meetings for the RPAG to discuss the water management issues and exchange knowledge and information on the national and regional levels. - The project organized an international study tour to the Sava River Basin commission in April 2019 with representatives of 7 participants from each country. - Internal and regional tours organized to visit the water lab, the drip irrigation sites, the CW in Hajqabul, and the Qabala Groundwater intake.	
	1.5.2 Study tours at local, national and regional levels, with 1 tour per year per country	Yes		
	1.5.3 International study tour to observe intersectoral projects within 24 months	Yes		
Output 1.6 Public Private Partnership to foster sustainable national and regional integrated water resources management through use of green technologies	1.6.1 Based on recommendations of PSC and NWPDP recruit core members of the PPP to receive priority support towards green business development within 6 months of project start up, and meetings held 2 times per year with the National Water Policy Dialog/Interministerial committee meetings	Partially	- Report on economic benefits of green technology for water use and translated into national languages for the two countries. - Initiated the Kura River H2Otel Awards program for the hotels that undertaking innovative measures to reduce water use and water pollution. - Developed prefeasibility studies on the cleaner production mechanism in the tanneries and poultry sectors - Developed report on the economic impacts of using drip irrigation in the agriculture sector in Azerbaijan and Georgia	HS
	1.6.2 Within 12 months complete Report on Economic benefits of green technology for water use in national languages	Yes		
	1.6.3 Within 12 months develop metrics for green-businesses to determine baseline and improvements for improved water management	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	1.6.4 Within 18 months develop Sector specific catalog of green technologies for sustainable water use and income generation, with source database on line updated bi-monthly	Yes		
	1.6.5 Working with PPP develop “Green Business Award Program” to be awarded annually starting in year 2, based on sectors and improvements	Yes		
Component 2: Strengthening national capacities to implement multi-sectoral IWRM in the Kura basin				
OUTCOME 2: Enhanced capacity for sectoral ministries and agencies to successfully harmonize and implement national IWRM Plans				HS
Output 2.1 Capacity building training programs for IWRM professionals for different target groups	2.1.1 Gap analysis of sectoral capacity needs for water managers within 9 months of start-up	Yes	- Developed Gap analysis of sectoral capacity needs for water managers in both Azerbaijan and Georgia - Established IWRM Academy training centre in each country - Conduct 20 topic specific training Courses in different aspects of water resources management for the young professionals in the two countries. Total number of trainees who attended these courses from the two countries was 370 trainees (206 from AZ, and 164 from Georgia) - developed the online platform for all the UNDP-GEF Kura II project training materials in 3 languages: Azerbaijan, Georgian, and English	HS
	2.1.2 Establish interministerial water training center within 9 months	Yes		
	2.1.3 Development of interlinked on-the-job trainings for IWRM Professionals within 12 months of project start-up	Yes		
	2.1.4 Conduct at least 6 topic specific on-the-job training curriculum for 24 months, from months 12-36, with quarterly face to face meetings and updates	Yes		
	2.1.5 Develop online trainings based on curriculum of developed trainings. Database created in first 6 months of trainings and updated quarterly	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	2.1.6 Document trainings and training materials available on line for certification of subsequent generations of water managers beginning after 30 month	Yes		
Output 2.2 Enhanced capacity for institutions to implement river basin management plans	2.2.1 Needs assessment for selected localized river management organizations within 9 months	Yes	- Developed needs assessment report on capacity building for river basin management planning - Developed guidance material for capacity building steps on implementing the RBM principals including institutional set up, legal framework, and information exchange - Conducted training on National Governance to Implement River Basin Management and the EU Water Framework Directive for both Azerbaijan and Georgia	HS
	2.2.2 Capacity building plans for trial in targeted areas based on best practices initiated within 12 months, with updates every 4 months, to include identification on reference conditions and biomonitoring in line with the EU WFD	Yes		
	2.2.3 Application of trial capacity building for targeted area based with regular trainings on site 3 times per year with RBMP/POMs	No	There was no RBMOs established and we conducted the training on the national level. The EUWI+ project was addressing this in more details.	
	2.2.4 Strategy for expansion of capacity building efforts to additional targeted areas by 24 months	No		
	2.2.5 All training materials on line with trainings initiated by in final year	Yes		
	2.2.6 Draft and share lessons learned reports in final year	Yes	The reports are shared in the project website	
Output 2.3 Strengthen capacity for enforcement of water	2.3.1 Assessment of needs and gaps in enforcement capacity, including roles for water pollution and water allocation, laws and	Yes	- Developed a report on the assessment of needs and gaps in enforcement capacity	HS

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
resources laws and regulations	equipment, for existing and anticipated regulations. Identify enforcement priorities within 9 months 2.3.2 Develop capacity building strategy working with enforcement bodies, to address enforcement priorities by 12 months		for existing institutions in both Azerbaijan and Georgia - Developed capacity building strategy to address enforcement priorities in both countries - Conducted 6 training blocks in Environmental Assessment and Enforcement, and Pollution Abatement Plans - Developed report on the recommendations for sustaining effective enforcement mechanisms in each country.	
	2.3.3 Develop budget for enforcement needs and staged budget allocation strategy with enforcement responsibilities matrix within 18 months	Yes		
	2.3.4 Conduct targeted 24 month trainings for prioritized enforcement areas with on-the-job trainings	Yes		
	2.3.5 Develop report with recommendations for sustaining effective enforcement mechanisms	Yes		
Output 2.4 Strengthened capacity information management, data analysis for enhanced IWRM decision-making support	2.4.1 Assessment of needs and gaps in information management, data analysis for IWRM and identify decision support priorities within 9 months	Yes	- Developed a report on the assessment of needs and gaps in information management, data analysis for IWRM in each country - Develop capacity building strategy for water management information system in each country - Developed staged budget allocation strategy for capacity building in water information management systems in each country - Conducted a 3 training blocks on the use of GIS and remote sensing as a tool in water resources management for representatives from the 2 countries	HS
	2.4.2 Develop capacity building strategy working with information producing and management bodies, including indicators development, modeling, intersectoral GIS use, and analysis to address priorities by 12 months	Yes		
	2.4.3 Develop staged budget allocation strategy for information data management needs and equipment with agreed intersectoral responsibilities matrix within 18 months, including quality control for data, and models applications	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	2.4.4 Conduct targeted 24 month trainings for prioritized information management and decision support areas with on-the-job trainings	Yes	- Conducted 4 training blocks in the use of hydrological modelling in water resources management	
Component 3: Stress reduction in critical areas and pre-feasibility studies to identify investment opportunities for improving river system health				
OUTCOME 3: Stress reduction in critical areas, and pre-feasibility studies in support of investment opportunities to improve river system health				HS
Output 3.1 Showcase technologies to reduce factual water losses in different sectors	3.1.1 National assessment reports of physical water supply system for agricultural and municipal sectors with prioritized recommendations within 12 months	Yes	- Developed two national assessment reports of physical water supply system for agricultural and municipal sectors in each country. - Prepared plans to enhance the water use efficiency in both agricultural and municipal sectors for both countries - Developed E-learning portal for awareness raising on rational water use in the municipal sector for school students and teachers. - Develop the Hydro-Heroes mobile application for reporting on municipal water leak detection - Implementing drip irrigation technology for irrigating 4 plots in both countries (1 in Azerbaijan and 3 in Georgia). - Develop a training centre for the use of Aquaponics system for raising fish and irrigating plants using minimum water requirements.	HS
	3.1.2 Preparation of plans for enhanced efficiency for agricultural and municipal consumption within 18 months	Yes		
	3.1.3 Apply 4 sector-specific water use efficiency interventions and lessons learned for up scaling from each country within 39 months	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
			- Developed a report on the economic impacts of the demonstration projects for rational water use and estimated the impact of upscaling these projects on the water availability in both countries.	
Output 3.1.3 Apply 4 sector-specific water use efficiency interventions and lessons learned for up scaling from each country within 39 months	3.2.1 Identify 2 top priority water quality hotspots Working with NWP, PPP, a key stakeholders from Component 1, within 12 months	Yes	- Identified 2 top priority water quality hotspots along the Kura River basin, the Lachin Tannery Company in Azerbaijan and the Poultry Georgia company in Georgia. - Conducted an environmental audit to each of these facilities and identified the main sources of water pollution in each facility - Developed a pollution abatement plan for each facility indicating the technical measures to reduce pollution load from each facility - Developed an economic assessment for the Cost-Benefit analysis for the pollution abatement plan for each facility and quantify the net economic benefits from executing these plans - Conducted an on-line workshop to present the results of the prefeasibility study in each country participated by all concerned national stakeholders and international donors. - Conducted a study tour to 14 representatives from the two countries to one of the modern wastewater	HS
	3.2.2 Identify pollution abatement projects to maximize impacts for stress reduction in line with the pollution abatement plan development in Component 1, and in collaboration with capacity building efforts in Component 2, within 15 months	Yes		
	3.2.3 Conduct study tour for key stakeholders to learn about technologies and approaches used in similar cases in 24 months	Yes		
	3.2.4 Conduct costed and detailed prefeasibility studies with detailed evaluation criteria, stakeholder analysis, expected benefits, and alternate approaches with final recommendations for presentation to governmental and private sector at the 36 months of project with international and national experts	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
			treatment facility in Slovenia to learn about technologies and approaches used in treating sewage water	
Output 3.3 River restoration projects for improved ecosystem health using integrated flow management	3.3.1 Identify prioritized sites suitable for river restoration projects to maximize impacts for stress reduction In collaboration with capacity building efforts in Component 2, within 12 months	Yes	- Identified two sites along the Kura basin that suffer from ecological degradation. These sites are one of the Oxbow lakes - Designed and constructed a Wetland to treat the raw sewage water discharged to the lake from a sewage collector that collects raw sewage from 200 households. - Developed a report on the ecological impacts of the constructed wetland on the pollution releases to the lake. - Developed technical report for the ecological restoration of the floodplain forest in Krtsanisi Park. - Designed and constructed the restoration measures for the Krtsanisi Park Floodplain forest	HS
	3.3.2 Develop detailed river restoration plans for specific sites within 18 months, and collect baseline data and anticipated social, economic and environmental benefits in line with Components 4 and 5	Yes		
	3.3.3 Initiate river restoration activities with integrated flow management documenting progress and key lessons learned with close monitoring of costs and impacts. Within 24 months of project start up	Yes		
	3.3.4 Conclude initial river restoration project at least 6 months prior to project completion with detailed replication strategy and lessons learned	Yes		
Component 4: Targeted education and involvement projects to empower stakeholders in implementing local / national / regional actions in support of SAP implementation				
OUTCOME 4: Stakeholder Education with academic, civil society, private sector, and local communities to gain experiences to increase their involvement in national and regional IWRM applications and innovations				S - HS
Output 4.1 A team of diverse professional	4.1.1 Conduct stakeholder analysis survey to determine training needs, willingness to participate, and incentives to change water	Yes	- Stakeholder analysis survey results and assessment with recommendations for curriculum development	S

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
IWRM trainers to work with stakeholders	use behaviors by stakeholder groups within 9 months of project start up		- Roster of stakeholder trainers, and internship program selection criteria for rotating interns throughout project implementation (Junior Experts have replaced “interns”) - Trainings materials for stakeholders’ participation in the demonstration projects was developed - Conducted training for the following stakeholders: NGOs. Women, Youth, School students, Hotels, and Farmers - H2Otel training and all the project training materials will be included on the online platform for project trainings	
	4.1.2 Establish a targeted recruitment of IWRM trainers for stakeholders to draw from academic institutions, NGOs, WUAs, RBMO/local authorities, journalism/media, women’s organizations, youth organizations and others, within 9 months of project start for internship program	Yes		
	4.1.3 Establish training curriculum, specific to stakeholder types, for training of trainers, and recruit national and international experts to provide trainings within 12 months of project start-up, WUA, Women’s Groups, Journalists, RBMO, Youth	Yes		
	4.1.4 Conduct at least 6 topic specific training curriculums for trainers, and support training outreach programs, with quarterly face to face meetings and updates	Yes		
	4.1.5 Development of online trainings based on curriculum of developed trainings. Database created in first 12 months and updated quarterly	Yes		
	4.1.6 Training materials on line for certification of subsequent generations beginning by 24 months with evaluation of impacts	Yes		
Output 4.2 Annual academic IWRM conferences	4.2.1 Determine themed annual academic conferences to be held each year working with national universities, and other water management organizations	Yes	- Established the Kura River Basin Academic Committee (KRBAC) between Baku State University in Azerbaijan and Tbilisi State University in Georgia.	HS

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	4.2.2 Sponsor academic IWRM conference including lecturers and IWRM MSc and other graduate students from national and regional institutions to present research related to improving water management in the Kura Basin in 2 day regional academic conference	Yes	- Co-hosted an international academic conference on water, environment, and construction with Azerbaijan State University of Architecture and Construction - Conducted a training course in Water-Food-Energy NEXUS for master students in both countries - Conducted an online regional workshop on Quantitative Assessment and Forecast of the Water Resources in the Kura River Basin in Relation to Climate Change, for PHD and MSc. Students from Tbilisi State University and Baku State University.	
	4.2.3 Sponsor joint IWRM MSC trainings for 1 week annually on selected topics in line with themed topics to be presented at annual academic conference to be presented by regional and international academic experts	Yes		
	4.2.4 Training materials available on line for certification of subsequent generations beginning in 24 months	Yes		
Output 4.3 Empowering social marketing campaigns to improve impacted stakeholders understanding of their role in water management	4.3.1 Develop strategy for staged targeted social marketing campaigns for stakeholders to include use of social media, public information materials, and metrics to gauge impacts within 15 months Based on Stakeholder Analysis survey in 4.3	Yes	- Developed the Kura box as a learning tool for School students on basic issues about water resources and the role of the society in the conservation and protection of that precious resource. - Development of 2 volumes of Water Comics with 6 illustrated stories per volume for a total of 12 stories to be distributed to schools, libraries, and general public. - Finalization of two 3-D professional videos of 30 seconds each on the importance of saving water and publishing them in the project website,	HS
	4.3.2 Design at least 4 social marketing campaigns to be implementing in at least 3 stages for gender mainstreaming, farmers and water user association members, RBMO/local authorities, and municipal water users within 18 months working with international, regional and national experts and interns,	Delivered online due to Covid Restrictions		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	4.3.3 Conduct mid-term review of impacts to determine effectiveness of campaigns and adjust accordingly, within 30 months		the focal ministries websites, and UNDP COs website. - A Twitter Account of the project told from the perspective of the River - Conducted 4 TV interviews in Azerbaijan and 2 TV interviews in Georgia on water issues and the project initiatives to support rational water use. - Published an article on the role of women in water management in Azerbaijan. - Conducted a series of workshops in the Azerbaijan book library on awareness raising for school students on water. - Videos for Project YouTube Channel on Environmental Flow methodology, water saving impacts in Azerbaijan and Georgia from drip irrigation, and ongoing video development on constructed wetland	
	4.3.4 Conduct social media educational and outreach activities to increase exposure of efforts within 30 months	Yes		
	4.3.5 Conduct end stage stakeholder analysis to gauge impacts and draft report on replication, and recommended next steps at least 4 months prior to project completion	Yes		
Output 4.4 Local competitions and regional showcasing of local stakeholder innovations for climate change adaptation related to water	4.4.1 identify and nominate select stakeholder innovations for first year awards for innovations working with NWPD members, IWRM Trainers, Interns and PPP	Yes	- Held the first round of competitions that featured local ideas of developing a mobile phone app for reporting on municipal water leak detection. - Held the second round of competition that addressed the hospitality sector through launching the H2Otel Awards for Hotels that uses innovative measures for water conservation in their hotels. - Published all the H2Otel training materials online as part of the project's	HS
	4.4.2 Conduct local and national competitions to encourage innovations from stakeholders on adaptation measures related to water management, to be held annually, as part of social marketing and public outreach campaign	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
	4.4.3 Promote replication of innovative adaptation measures at national and regional technology conferences, through social media, and through international forums, within 18 months and updated quarterly	Yes	training platform and provided both the Azerbaijan Hotel Association and the Welcome to Georgia National Tourism Awards copy of all training and awareness materials to be distributed to all hotels that are members of these two associations. - Provided financial and technical support to NGO IDEA in Azerbaijan to construct a training centre for Aquaponic system as an innovative idea to conserve water if fish and crop production	
Output 4.5 Project information and experiences shared through IW:LEARN activities supported	4.5.1 Contribution of at least 6 Experience Notes to IW:LEARN covering project activities and lessons learned with at least 2 drafted by year 2 of project	Yes	- Developed 6 experience notes on the project activities and shared with IW:LEARN - Participated in the GEF International Waters Conference IWC9 in Morocco in Nov 2018. - Twinning Activities with the UNDP-GEF Dniester River Project - Contributed to the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) hosted by GEF:IW on “Governance for Transboundary Freshwater Security”. The project developed two videos explaining the Kura II project experiences in developing the TDA and the implementation of SAP	S
	4.5.2 Participation in regional and international IW:LEARN conferences and trainings, pending availability	Yes		
	4.5.3 Project Key Stakeholders Participate in GEF International Waters Conference(s) during project implementation	Yes		
Component 5: Enhancing science for governance by strengthening monitoring, information management and data analysis systems for IWRM				

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
OUTCOME: Azerbaijan and Georgia using integrated monitoring, and information management systems for sustainable IWRM at national and transboundary levels				HS
Outcome 5.1 Improved assessment of geographic distribution of ground and surface water availability and seasonal fluctuations	5.1.1 Assessment of available ground and surface water availability in river basin within 12 months	Yes	- Developed two national reports on the assessment of available ground and surface water in the Kura river basin. - Developed two national reports on the assessment of the current hydrological and hydro-geological monitoring activities. - Developed technical report on the Kura River flow variability during the past 15 years using the hydromet stations in Azerbaijan. - Developed a Technical Guideline for Management of the Transboundary Groundwater and Surface Water Resource - Conducted 4 blocks of training on hydrogeological modelling software for participants from water related stakeholders in both Azerbaijan and Georgia - Applied the Hydrological modelling in one sub basin in each country (Shamkir Chay in AZ, and Stori River in Georgia) and developed a technical report on the main results of this model application. - Designed and currently implementing an online network for monitoring the groundwater volume and quality at 6	HS
	5.1.2 Analyse the historical hydromet station data along the river basin to estimate the seasonal variability along the river within 18 months	Yes		
	5.1.3 Conduct intersectoral trainings on hydrogeological modelling software and use of GIS and remote sensing techniques for delineation of ground water aquifer within 24 months	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
			locations in Alazani-lori transboundary aquifer. - Conducted a 2 day regional training on groundwater monitoring and management for the representatives from the two countries by IGRAC centre	
Outcome 5.2 An assessment of the economic and social benefits per unit of water used in different sectors	5.2.1 Conduct a baseline assessment of available data sources based on all key sectors within 12 months	Yes	- Conducted stakeholder surveys on water use, water quality and anticipated water needs for various uses in both Azerbaijan and Georgia - Conducted a 2-day training on integrated water nexus approaches for sector representatives from each country - Conducted 3 Blocks of training for sector representatives in the two countries on water economics - Conducted 3 Blocks of training for sector representatives on the use of economic modelling in water resources management using WEAP model - Develop report on Estimating the Costs of Water Degradation in the Kura River Basin - Developed a report on the costs of water services for public water supply and agriculture in the Kura river basin - Developed a report on the economic benefits of green technologies for water use	HS
	5.2.2 Conduct stakeholder surveys on water use, water quality and anticipated water needs across sector based users Within 15 months	Yes		
	5.2.3 Train sector representatives on integrated nexus approaches for: Water pricing, cost recovery, and pollute pays principals starting within 24 months	Yes		
	5.2.4 Develop O&M costs for water sector management including environmental, agriculture, municipal water and hydropower sectors to deliver to Ministries within 24 months	Yes		
	5.2.5 Determine market transaction prices, using inductive methods with econometric estimation of production and cost functions for agriculture and energy, and municipal water demand functions within 36 months	Yes		
	5.2.6 Construct models for deductive methodologies for mathematical programming, value-added and alternative costs modeling within 36 months	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
			- Developed a report on the Sustainable prices for water use in the Kura river basin - Developed a report to review of international experiences of water tariff reform with a proposed roadmap for water tariff reform in Azerbaijan - Developed a technical report on proposals for a new technical water tariff framework for Georgian Amelioration JSC	
Output 5.3 Staged river system ecological assessment	5.3.1 Assessment of available data, and report on information gaps and needs within 12 months	Yes	- Developed two national reports on the assessment of available ecological data on the Kura River Basin. - Developed 2-year Two-year monitoring plan for the ecological assessment in the Kura River basin - Developed database for the ecological assessment for the Environmental Flow pilot basins in each country - Developed a technical report on river basin classification structure in line with the EU WFD - Develop final report on the ecological status of the Shamkir Chay and Alijan Chay rivers in Azerbaijan, and the Aragvi basin in Georgia	HS
	5.3.2 Develop 2 year plan for assessment to be extended at the national level following the project within 18 months working with national and international universities	Yes		
	5.3.3 Create database for ecological assessment to include macro-invertebrates within 18 months	Yes		
	5.3.4 Create ecosystem classification structure within 18 months	Yes		
	5.3.5 Begin to fill data base to include species counts and seasonal flow variation within 21 months working with local authorities, universities and ministries (contracted firm)	Yes		
	5.3.6 Develop final report on Kura River Ecosystem with recommendations for sustainable research to support continued data collection by 42 months	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
Output 5.4 Protocols in place to support data and information exchange, for sound IWRM decision-making at national and transboundary levels.	5.4.1 Develop sets of agreed indicators for information exchange for water quantity, quality and all project outputs to be shared in an annual "State of the Kura River" Report	Yes	- Established two regional working groups, one for water quality and one for water quantity. - Hosted 5 meetings for each regional working group to discuss the transboundary water quantity and quality issues. - Agreed on 5 water quality parameters to be shared between the two countries in selected sites along the Kura river (3 sites in AZ and 3 sites in GE) - Developed two national reports on the harmonization of the current water quality regulations to be online with EU/WFD. - Developed technical report on the assessment of the water laboratories in the two focal ministries and the needed capacities to be eligible for ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation process. - Developed report on the roadmap & training plan Towards accreditation ISO 17025 for the Environmental Laboratories in Azerbaijan and Georgia - Developed a report on the SOPs for water quality sampling and laboratory analysis in line with ISO/IEC 17025. - Conducted 7 blocks of training on the implementation of ISO17025 standard operation procedures on the sampling	HS
	5.4.2 Review and update current regulations on water quality in line with EU/WFD within 12 months	Yes		
	5.4.3 Harmonize the laboratory analysis methodologies and standard operating procedures for sampling and analysis of water quality including quality control and quality assurance within 36 months	Yes		
	5.4.4 Develop a harmonized regional database from an agreed set of indicators to show status of water quality status in TB status within 36 months	Partially		
	5.4.5 Outline steps for ISO 17025 accreditation for both national laboratories within 24 months	Yes		
	5.4.6 Train staff on use of harmonization measurements and indicators within 36 months	Yes		
	5.4.7 Detailed final report on harmonization with assessment of work to date and recommendations for next steps by 42 months	Yes		

Outcome/Output	Targets	Achieved (y/n)	Project Achievement	TE rating
			and analysis of water quality parameters. - Developed final report summarizing the main results obtained from implementing the Capacity Building plan for harmonizing the laboratory analysis in both countries and the recommendations for the future work for ISO 17025 Implementation in Azerbaijan and Georgia	

Annex 7 – Co-financing Tables

Co-Financing (Type/Source)		UNDP financing (US \$M)		Government (US \$M)		Partner Agency (US \$M)		Total (US \$M)	
Type/Source	Name of Co-financing	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants/Private Sector	Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management Joint Stock Company					100000000	100000000	100000000	100000000
	International Dialogue for Environmental Action (IDEA) NGO in Azerbaijan						100500	0	100500
In-kind support	UNDP Georgia	3441840	3441840					3441840	3441840
	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan			770000	N.A.			770000	N.A.
	Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia			770000	1415794			770000	1415794
	World Bank Georgia-Irrigation and Land reclamation Project					45650000	26760000	45650000	26760000
	AzerSu Joint Stock Company					44430000	N.A.	44430000	N.A.
	Georgian Water and Power Company (GWP)						30827689	0	30827689
	Georgian Amelioration JSC.						52314314	0	52314314
Totals		3441840	3441840	1540000	1415794	190080000	210002503	195061840	214860137

Confirmed Sources of Co-Financing at TE Stage

Source of Co-Financing ¹	Name of Co-Financier	Type of Co-Financing ²	Investment Mobilised ³	Amount (US \$)
Civil Society Organisation	International Dialogue for Environmental Action (IDEA) NGO in Azerbaijan	Equity investment	Investment mobilised	100500
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resource Protection, Georgia–Wildlife National Agency	Public investment	Investment mobilised	372495
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resource Protection, Georgia–National Environment Agency	Public investment	Investment mobilised	1043299*
Donor Agency	World Bank - Georgia Irrigation and Land Development Project	In-kind	Investment mobilised	26760000
Private Sector	Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management Open Joint Stock Company	In-Kind	Investment mobilised	100,000,000
Private Sector	Georgian Water and Power Company (GWP)	In-kind	Investment mobilised	30827689*
Donor Agency	UNDP in Georgia	In-kind	Investment mobilised	3441840
Recipient Country Government	Georgian Amelioration JSC.	In-kind	Investment mobilised	52314314*
	Total			214860137

Note:

* The amount was given in national currency (GEL) and converted to USD using the annual average UNDP exchange rates.

Annex 8 – Terminal Evaluation Rating Scale

Monitoring & Evaluation Ratings Scale	
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation exceeded expectations
5 = Satisfactory (S)	There were minor shortcomings; quality of M&E design / implementation met expectations
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were moderate shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation more or less met expectations
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings; quality of M&E design /implementation was somewhat lower than expected
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation was substantially lower than expected
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in M&E design/implementation
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design/implementation.

Implementation/Oversight and Execution Ratings Scale	
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution exceeded expectations
5 = Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution met expectations.
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution more or less met expectations.
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was somewhat lower than expected
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was substantially lower than expected
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of implementation/execution
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation and execution

Outcome Ratings Scale - Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency	
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings
5 = Satisfactory (S)	Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings.
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings.
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements

Sustainability Ratings Scale	
Ratings	Description
4 = Likely (L)	There are little or no risks to sustainability
3 = Moderately Likely (ML)	There are moderate risks to sustainability
2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability
1 = Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks to sustainability
Unable to Assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability

Annex 9 – Signed UNEG Code of Conduct

Independence entails the ability to evaluate without undue influence or pressure by any party (including the hiring unit) and providing evaluators with free access to information on the evaluation subject. Independence provides legitimacy to and ensures an objective perspective on evaluations. An independent evaluation reduces the potential for conflicts of interest which might arise with self-reported ratings by those involved in the management of the project being evaluated. Independence is one of ten general principles for evaluations (together with internationally agreed principles, goals and targets: utility, credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism).

Evaluators/Consultants:

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

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

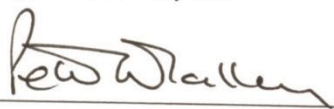
Name of Evaluator: Peter Whalley

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): N/A

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

Signed at Malmesbury, UK on 10th May 2021

Signature: _____



Annex 10 – Signed Terminal Evaluation Report Clearance Form

Terminal Evaluation Report for (*Project Title & UNDP PIMS ID*) Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____