United Nations Development Programme-Global Environment Facility
Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Integrated Conservation of Priority Globally Significant Migratory Bird Wetland Habitat: Demonstration at Three Project Sites

("Kazakhstan Wetlands Project")

KAZ/00/G37/A/1G/99 - PIMS 650

Project Final Evaluation Report

August 2011

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We would like to thank all those project partners who have entrusted us the challenging task of conducting an independent review of this important project and provided us with all the necessary information and insights needed for completing this report. We could carry out this evaluation in a highly collegial spirit throughout and the result can largely be perceived as a joint effort of the various project partners. We would like to thank the project staff for the professional organisation of the evaluation mission. Only with the full support of all team members it was possible to conduct the tight travel schedule with a full meeting programme. Our thanks are also due to all project executing partners for fruitful discussions and for making all information needed available to us.

Max Kasparek / Sergey Sklyarenko

Project Executing Partners

Government:	Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Coordinating Agency:	Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Implementing Agency:	Forestry Fishery and Hunting Department of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
GEF Implementing Agency:	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Evaluation Responsibility

This Final Evaluation is undertaken by the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre as the GEF Implementing Agency for this project.

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List of Abbreviations

APR	Annual Project Review
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CO	Country Office
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of OECD
FHC	Forest and Hunting Committee
GoK	Government of Kazakhstan
GEF	Global Environment Facility
MAB	Man and Biosphere Programme
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MEP	Ministry of Environmental Protection
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
NABU	Naturschutzbund Deutschland [a German NGO]
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSC	National Steering Committee
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PA	Protected Area
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PIU	Project Implementing Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RoK	Republic of Kazakhstan
SGP (GEF SGP)	Small Grants Programme of GEF
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

Description of project

The goal of the Project "Integrated Conservation of Priority Globally Significant Migratory Bird Wetland Habitat: Demonstration at Three Project Sites" (short title: "Wetlands Project") has been defined as „To protect globally significant wetland biodiversity in Kazakhstan", and the objective ("purpose") as "Government agencies, non-governmental entities, and local communities are maintaining and improving the integrity and viability of Kazakhstan's priority wetland ecosystems. " This objective was intended to be achieved through five outcomes:

Outcome 1: National wetland biodiversity conservation policy, regulatory and institutional framework approved and in place (alternative formulation used in some documents: A national integrated institutional, policy and regulatory framework for wetland biodiversity conservation and management).
Outcome 2: Well planned and effective protected area management (also used: Strengthened protected area operations).
Outcome 3: Established awareness of wetland biodiversity values among local stakeholders and process for generating lessons learned (also used: Increased stakeholder awareness and support).
Outcome 4: Enabled Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetland Biodiversity in the Productive Landscape (also used: Stakeholders empowered to sustainably utilise the productive landscape around priority sites).
Outcome 5: Sustainable financing for wetland conservation (also used: Migratory Bird Wetland Conservation Fund).

The project has thus operations at two level: at the national level to improve the enabling environment for wetland conservation and to provide a system of sustainable financing wetland operations (outcome 1 and 5), and at the local level to strengthen protected area management, enhance awareness among local stakeholders and to promote sustainable use of biodiversity in the productive landscape (outcomes 2-4).

The project is executed by the *Committee for Forestry and Hunting* working under the auspices of the *Ministry of Agriculture*. The *Ministry of Environmental Protection* acts as coordinating body and is member of Project Steering Committee. The Minister of Environmental Protection is a also chairperson of the Trustees Council of the Kazakhstan Biodiversity Conservation Fund.

After a lengthy project preparation phase, which extended over almost seven years, the project began in July 2004 and continued over 7 years. Project closure will be in August 2011.

The project costs on GEF side were estimated at the onset at US$8.8 million (including US$0.14 million for PDF-B). Co-financing was estimated that time at US$25.7 million including a contribution of US$22.7 by the Government of Kazakhstan. The Wetlands Project is thus by far the biggest operation (in terms for funding and in available time for implementing) supported by the GEF in Central Asia in the field of biodiversity.

Context and purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation was conducted in May-June 2011, i.e. two to three months prior to the closure of the project. In accordance with UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policies and procedures, the evaluation should determine to what extent the project had been successful in fulfilling its objectives and obtaining the expected results and whether it was a cost-effective way of obtaining those results. It is thus a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of the project by assessing its design, process of implementation, achievements, and any other results. This final evaluation pursues four complementary purposes:

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishment;
- To synthesize lessons that may help improve the selection, design, and implementation of future GEF activities;
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues;
- To contribute to the GEF Evaluation Office databases for aggregation, analysis, and reporting on the effectiveness of GEF operations in achieving global environmental benefits and on the quality of M&E across the GEF system.

The project was assessed along the lines laid out in the OECD DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Coherence & coordination was used in line with several international donors as an additional criterion. Project management was used as a further criterion to analyse the reasons for success and failure.

Three data collection techniques were used for information collection with target groups: (1) Documentary review (desk study review of all relevant project documentation and documents), (2) Detailed interviews and discussions with individual stakeholders, and (3) Managed group discussions ("Focus Groups"). In addition to information collection at central institutions in Astana, site visits were made to all three demonstration areas (Ural River Delta and adjacent Caspian Sea coast, Tengiz-Korgalzhyn, and Alakol-Sassykkol lake systems).

For the grading of the results, the following scores were used: Highly Satisfactory (HS = 1), Satisfactory (S = 2), Marginally Satisfactory (MS = 3), Marginally Unsatisfactory (MUS = 4), Unsatisfactory (US = 5), and Highly Unsatisfactory (HUS = 6).

Main Findings

The Wetlands Project was a successful project with many remarkable achievements and a long-term environmental impact. Its overall rating is “Satisfactory” to “Highly Satisfactory”.

Relevance: The project is rated as “Highly Satisfactory” (HS) in respect to its relevance as it, among other aspects, addresses issues of global importance for biodiversity conservation including the preservation of the habitats for globally threatened species, aims at the conservation of ecosystems and habitat types for which the GoK has a global responsibility, combines ecological with socio-economic goals, and addresses both the enhancement of the enabling environment for sustainable wetland management with concrete action on the ground. The demonstration sites selected provide a suitable starting point for replication and dissemination. The project is furthermore in line with international commitments made by the GoK and addresses issues which are important for a large proportion of Kazakhstan’s rural population and hence for the sustainable development of the country. The project’s intervention logic is generally clear and consistent.

Effectiveness: In respect to its effectiveness, the project is rated “Satisfactory” to “Highly Satisfactory” (S to HS) as it, among other aspects, achieved the targets of practically all indicators of success or even exceeded them. However, one has to say with certain constraints that the set of indicators towards achievement of the project objective is incomplete as it reflects the achievements of only a selection of the interventions. Also the problem analysis as the starting point of all interventions shows some weaknesses as it does, for example, not take into account the rural exodus in the post-Soviet era or builds on wrong assumptions as regards the level of tourism at the onset of the project.

The project achieved very good results in three outcomes (rated “Highly Satisfactory”), good results in one outcome (rated “Satisfactory”) and insufficient results (rated "Marginally Unsatisfactory”) in one outcome. It brought some 465,000 ha of wetlands and steppe area under legal protection, and introduced modern management plans as an innovative management tool in Kazakhstan. The management effectiveness (as indicated by the METT scores) increased in all three demonstration areas

as a consequence of project interventions. After elaboration of detailed guidelines for biodiversity monitoring and conducting a number of capacity building measures at the three pilot sites, a Biodiversity Monitoring Programme was approved by the Forestry and Hunting Committee and launched in 2007. The results sometimes still lag behind international standards and are rarely translated into concrete conservation activities.

In the buffer zone around the demonstration sites, the project shown good practice for generating alternative income for local population and created models for sustainable development through working with local communities. The project was able to establish a *Biodiversity Conservation Fund* but was not able capitalize it mainly due to external reasons beyond the responsibility of the project.

Efficiency: The project is rated "Highly Satisfactory" (HS) in regard to its efficiency, as it, among other aspects, conducted most project activities in a timely manner and achieved most project outcomes in line with the time and resource planning of the annual work plans. It usually selected the most cost-effective way in order to achieve the intended objective. The project is much in line with the original financial planning. A part of the financial resources allocated to the *Biodiversity Conservation Fund* is temporarily parked with *Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture* (FFSA) and is used there for a micro credit line related to biodiversity conservation around protected areas. In this way, best use of the money is made until the *Biodiversity Conservation Fund* becomes operational.

Impact: The project is rated with regard to its impact as "Highly Satisfactory" (HS), as it, among other aspects, helped create an enabling environment for sustainable wetland conservation and management including amended laws and regulations in favour of wetland conservation and enhanced capacities of management structures. This was a necessary precondition for many activities in the demonstration areas to end up successfully. The project also successfully created awareness for the importance wetlands for biodiversity conservation and development so that this subject now ranks much higher among decision-makes than at the onset of the project. While the project engaged people living around the demonstration areas in sustainable livelihood activities, it could only pilot these principles but could not scale them up. However, these principles and models are ready for replication in other areas. A strict separation between conservation and use areas, with exclusion dominating over participation, is still prevailing in line with government policy.

Sustainability: The project is rated "Satisfactory" (S) in respect to its sustainability as it, among other aspects, is built on a high project ownership by all project partners from the government and other institutions. The project strengthened institutional structures and personal skills both on local level in the three demonstration areas as well as on central government level, and mainstreamed wetland conservation issues into other sectors such as agriculture, fishery and tourism. It made local people, particularly school children, aware of the value of wetlands and the need for protecting them, what forms a basis for long-term impact of the project. On government level, the project assisted in preparing international commitments and long-term obligations for wetland conservation.

Sustainability is further achieved through a high level of stakeholder participation on local level (in the demonstration areas) and on government level. The project was able to create local organisations which generate jobs and income for the local population, what is likely to exist beyond the end of the project. On the other hand, the project also supported local NGOs and CBOs which are "grant-based", i.e. organisations which may cease to exist once external support comes to an end.

The project created a Biodiversity Conservation Fund, but was not able to fully capitalize it. This puts financial sustainability of the project at risk.

Coherence and Coordination. The project was rated as "Satisfactory" to "Highly Satisfactory" (S to HS) in respect to Coherence and Coordination as it, among other aspects, could establish long-term partnerships with funding agencies and grant supplying organisations for the development of the regions around Protected Areas ("productive landscape"), in particular a strategic partnership with the *Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture* (FFSA) towards establishing a micro-credit line for environmentally sound investments in the development zone of Protected Areas. A certain weakness is that the project did not fully seize opportunities to facilitate long-term partnerships with similar wetland

areas in the region (e.g. with other wetland projects implemented by UNDP-GEF and other organisations) for the purpose of knowledge transfer and exchange of experience, i.e. for creating synergies.

Project Management: The project is rated "Satisfactory" to "Highly Satisfactory" (S to HS) as regards overall management as it, among other aspects, shows a high ownership by the project executing partners, in particular the *Forestry and Hunting Committee* of the *RoK Ministry of Agriculture* and the *RoK Ministry of Environment*, and is steered by a dedicated and engaged Project Steering Committee consisting of representatives from several government institutions, local administrations and the non-governmental sector. The management team (PIU) consists of a highly dedicated and professional management team, which received a large number of awards and prizes, and could rely on high personal continuity throughout the project's lifespan. The project applied a diligent financial management which enabled precise spending of all available funds till the end of the project. Introducing and promoting the concept of biosphere reserves under the MAB programme had not been foreseen by the project - but doing this at a relatively late stage of the project is probably little helpful in the light of the fact that this needs serious adaptations in national conservation approaches.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

1. Make Sustainable Use an Integral Part of Protected Areas Management

The strict separation of man and wildlife in Kazakhstan's protected area system does not represent the state-of-the-art. More open approaches which strongly promote the participation of local resource users in decision-making are necessary to integrate sustainable use principles into protected areas planning and management and to lay the foundation for enlarging the protected areas system. Establishing biosphere reserves is an option that should therefore be further pursued. However, it needs to be taken into account that biosphere reserves are strongly based on sustainable use and that the PA management structures need to be adapted accordingly for example in respect to the provision of technical expertise (e.g. in rangeland management, sustainable agriculture, fishery management, sustainable hunting) and financial resources. Without such a paradigma change, Kazakhstan's protected areas, or at least the three demonstration sites, are not yet ready to seek for international recognition under UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme.

2. Ensure Replication and Upscaling of Project Results

The Wetlands Project has achieved a lot in making government policies more "wetlands-friendly" and prepared the ground for better conserving Kazakhstan's wetlands. Through the three demonstration areas, the project provided "good practice" and models that show how to manage wetlands in a sustainable way. There is, however, a certain risk that the GoK will not fully replicate and upscale the project results in the absence of financial and technical support by the project. UNDP is in a prominent situation to keep things alive and to follow-up for example in a policy dialogue. It is recommended to do this not only on an *ad-hoc* basis, but in a systematic way with necessary expertise and resources. The open questions regarding the Biodiversity Conservation Fund may be taken as a chance to stay in dialogue with relevant decision-makers in the GoK and to assist the government in scaling up project results.

3. Develop a Project Exit Strategy for the Biodiversity Conservation Fund

To make the endowment component of the Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF) fully operational, three conditions are required. The BCF should (1) be financially sustainable, (2) target biodiversity conservation at the local level, and (3) the GEF contribution should be co-financed in a 1 to 3 ratio. At the moment, it seems that for reasons that are clearly beyond project responsibility, the 1:3 co-funding rate for the endowment component of BCF is no longer a realistic goal and an exit strategy needs to be developed if this goal will not be achieved within a certain time. Possible solutions may consider to change the principle or amount of matching funds, or to shift the available GEF funds to biodiversity-friendly credit lines already successfully tested under the project.

4. Adapt Kazakhstan's Wetlands to Climate Change

Climate change will doubtlessly affect Kazakhstan's wetland and steppe ecosystems as they are particularly sensitive even to slight changes in the amount of precipitation and are therefore highly vulnerable to climate change. Climate change may lead to drastic changes of Kazakhstan's wetland ecosystems with serious consequence for global biodiversity and local livelihood. Climate Change was so far not on the Project's agenda but needs to get integrated into national planning. The Government of Kazakhstan may wish to draw on external assistance for developing concepts for adapting wetlands to climate change.

1. Introduction

The final Evaluation Report is divided into four sections. The first two section provides general background of the Project "Integrated Conservation of Priority Globally Significant Migratory Bird Wetland Habitat: Demonstration at Three Project Sites" ("Wetlands Project"), the purpose of evaluation, the project implementation setup, partners/stakeholders and evaluation methodology. The next section dwells on findings from the reports and from interactions with stakeholders. In the fourth section, conclusions from the observations and findings are discussed in the context of project objectives. These also pertain to sustainability and replicability of project and lessons learnt. The section also provides generic recommendations for promoting natural resource management in the region.

Purpose of the Evaluation

In accordance with UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policies and procedures, all regular and medium-size projects supported by GEF should undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation. The Final Evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and achievement of global and national environmental goals.

The evaluation shall determine to what extent the project had been successful in fulfilling its objectives and obtaining the expected results and whether it was a cost-effective way of obtaining those results. The purpose of this final evaluation is thus to give an account of the level of achievement of the project objectives. The evaluation aims at meeting this basic concern among the key actors involved in the project and to assess the relevance of the action. The final evaluation shall thus provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of a completed project by assessing its project design, process of implementation, achievements vis-à-vis project objectives endorsed by the GEF including any agreed changes in the objectives during project implementation, and any other results.

This final evaluation pursues – in accordance with the GEF guidelines for conducting terminal evaluations – four complementary purposes:

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishment;
- To synthesize lessons that may help improve the selection, design, and implementation of future GEF activities;
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues;
- To contribute to the GEF Evaluation Office databases for aggregation, analysis, and reporting on the effectiveness of GEF operations in achieving global environmental benefits and on the quality of M&E across the GEF system.

The Final Evaluation also identifies and documents lessons learned and makes recommendations that project partners and stakeholders might use to improve the design and implementation of other similar projects and programmes. In line with these purposes, the evaluation report addresses three main target groups:

- The Government of Kazakhstan and in particular the project executing and implementing agencies to get an independent view of the outcomes of the project and to allow a comparison of project performance with internationally recognised standards;
- The GEF Implementing Agency, UNDP, to assess project achievements and to make possible a comparison of project performance with other similar projects especially those ones implemented in the region, and to provide a tool for country planning;
- The GEF Secretariat to assess how the project contributed to GEF's overall performance and to the indicators of achievement.

Other groups such as the local stakeholders who have been directly involved in project implementation may also benefit from the evaluation exercise and from this report, although this was not a primary purpose.

Key Issues Addressed

The project was assessed along the following lines, as laid out in the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance:

- **Relevance** – the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time.
- **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.
- **Impact** (sometimes also called "results") - the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.
- **Sustainability** - Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable.

While the DAC Criteria provide an excellent basis to show the achievements and non-achievements of a project, they are less suitable as analytical tool (Why was a project successful? What were the critical aspects? What are the success factors?). Project steering plays an outstanding role in this context, but is insufficiently reflected in the DAC Criteria. We therefore added an additional criterion:

- **Project management** – the management factors (in a wide sense) that influence the performance of the project (institutional arrangements, personnel structure, steering at micro and macro level, guidance by implementing agency and partner institutions).

The DAC Criteria are furthermore incomplete regarding the cooperation of the project with the projects and programmes of the government and other donors. In line with regulations set up by some donors, an additional criterion on coherence and coordination was therefore added:

- **Coherence and coordination** – the kind of complementary (resp. degree of complementary) with the projects and programmes of other bilateral and multilateral donors.

Methodology of the Evaluation

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the "GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy"[i]. It was based on a crosscutting qualitative descriptive and analytical approach. Three data collection techniques were used for information collection with target groups:

- Documentary review: Desk study review of all relevant project documentation and documents on the related environment;
- Detailed interviews and discussions with individual stakeholders; and
- Managed group discussions ("Focus Groups").

The interviews and discussions included consultations with the main stakeholders on national level and on the level of pilot sites (representatives from governmental and non-governmental organisations) and interviews with stakeholders directly responsible for project implementation (PSC, PIU, UNDP, etc.); site visits were made to Ural River Delta and adjacent Caspian Sea coast, Tengiz-Korgalzhyn, and Alakol-Sassykkol lake systems.

While the entire project implementation period starting from 2004 (i.e. approximately 7 years) was taken into account, special focus was put on the period 2007-2011, i.e. the period after a mid-term review (MTE) has been conducted. This was done in the assumption that the main issues for the 2004-2007 period have been captured in the MTE and do not need further detailed assessment.

Interviews in Astana and field visits were carried out between 17th and 26th May, 2011. A detailed itinerary and a list of persons interviewed are given in Annex 3-4.

A critical issue in reporting was that the evaluation has been carried out along the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, but the structure of report as requested by the TORs does not follow these lines. We therefore follow the reporting structure as laid down in the TORs, but use the OECD/DAC criteria for an overall assessment of the project (conclusion).

In addition to a descriptive assessment, several criteria were rated using the following six scales: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, Marginally Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, and Highly Unsatisfactory. This six-step scale was applied throughout the report, although some UNDP-GEF documents (including the MTE of this project) apply a four-step scale.

Table 1: Criteria used to evaluate the Project and of some of its components.

Highly Satisfactory	HS	1	Project is expected to achieve or exceed **all** its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as "good practice".
Satisfactory	S	2	Project is expected to achieve **most** of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.
Marginally Satisfactory	MS	3	Project is expected to achieve **most** of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve **some** of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits.
Marginally Unsatisfactory	MU	4	Project is expected to achieve **some** of its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only **some** of its major global environmental objectives.
Unsatisfactory	U	5	Project is expected **not** to achieve **most** of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits**.**
Highly Unsatisfactory	HU	6	The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, **any** of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.

2. The Project and its Development Context

2.1 Problems to be Addressed by the Project

The project has been designed to assist the Government of Kazakhstan to address the underlying causes and main threats to specific wetland sites for long-term biodiversity conservation. The project sought to address the following threats to Kazakhstan's wetlands, which have been identified during project preparation:

Unsustainable use of biological resources: Inadequate level of management and protection for existing wetland protected areas; "Open access" property regime; inadequate local management and control over wetland resource use (i.e. hunting, fishing, grazing & grass cutting); Lack of community awareness of protected area value (insufficient public awareness); Inadequate alternative livelihood options for local people.

Unsustainable use of water resources: Lack of integrated approach to water resource management; Inadequate water quality monitoring programme; Water resources policies that do not include wetland conservation as a key objective; Inadequate law and policy framework for pollution control; Lack of effective enforcement of existing pollution laws; Inefficient and out-dated irrigation infrastructure; Lack of awareness among policy makers, local people and other stakeholders about the importance of wetlands and dangers of polluting water.

Uncontrolled Visitation/Tourism: Absence of programme/regulations for ecotourism development in Kazakhstan; Inability of protected areas to re-invest entrance fees back into management of the protected area; Absence of basic services for visitors; Lack of specifically designed viewing platforms and trails.

2.2 Project Objective and Expected Outcomes

The project goal has been defined as „To protect globally significant wetland biodiversity in Kazakhstan", and the objective ("purpose") as "Government agencies, non-governmental entities, and local communities are maintaining and improving the integrity and viability of Kazakhstan's priority wetland ecosystems. " This objective was intended to be achieved through five outcomes (called outputs in the Project Document):

Outcome 1: National wetland biodiversity conservation policy, regulatory and institutional framework approved and in place (alternative formulation used in some documents: A national integrated institutional, policy and regulatory framework for wetland biodiversity conservation and management).
Outcome 2: Well planned and effective protected area management (also used: Strengthened protected area operations).
Outcome 3: Established awareness of wetland biodiversity values among local stakeholders and process for generating lessons learned (also used: Increased stakeholder awareness and support).
Outcome 4: Enabled Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetland Biodiversity in the Productive Landscape (also used: Stakeholders empowered to sustainably utilise the productive landscape around priority sites).
Outcome 5: Sustainable financing for wetland conservation (also used: Migratory Bird Wetland Conservation Fund).

The project thus pursues operations at two levels: at the national level to improve the enabling environment for wetland conservation and to provide a system for sustainable financing wetland operations (outcome 1 and 5), and at the local level to strengthen protected area management, enhance awareness among local stakeholders and to promote sustainable use of biodiversity in the productive landscape (outcomes 2-4).

2.3 Project Data

Project duration was 7 years. The project had experienced a lengthy preparation period (Fig. 1). While the PDF-B was approved on July 13, 1998, it took until July 2004 until project implementation could actually begin. The preparation phase was thus almost as long as the 7-years implementation phase. Such long project preparation phases were typical for most GEF operations in those days and have been subject to serious criticism[ii]. It is thus not to blame those responsible for the preparation of this specific project, but it was a system-immanent malfunction.

According to the Project Document, the begin of the project was foreseen for August 2003, while the actual begin was July 2004. As begin of project implementation thus experienced a delay of one year even after signature of the Project Document, it was agreed to postpone closure of the project to August 2011.

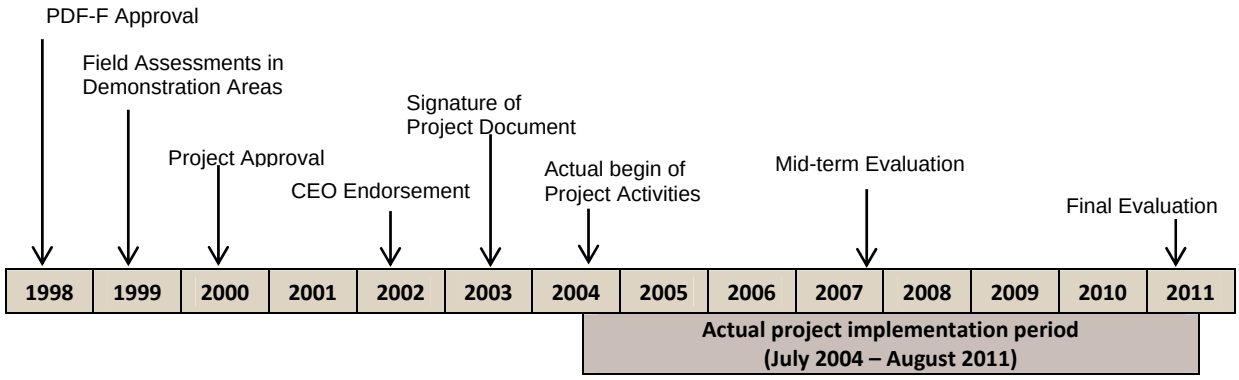

Fig. 1. Important milestones in the development and implementation of the Wetlands Project.

The project costs on GEF side were estimated at the onset at US$8.8 million (including US$0.14 million for PDF-B). Co-financing was estimated that time at US$25.7 million including a contribution of US$22.7 by the Government of Kazakhstan.

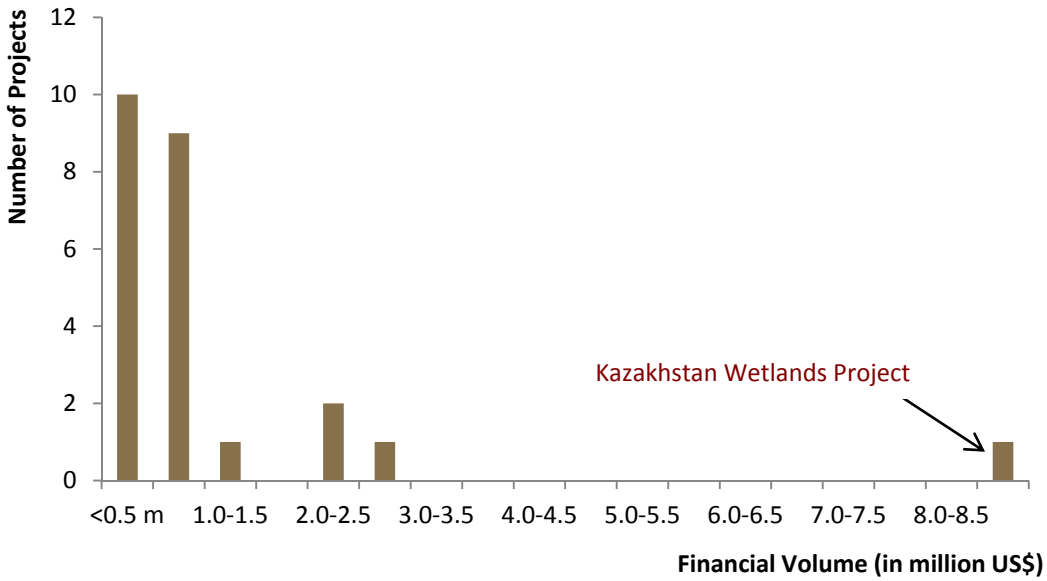

Fig. 2. Size of the Kazakhstan Wetlands Project in comparison to all other GEF Biodiversity Projects in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). The graph shows only the GEF contribution. Source: GEF Database.

The Wetlands Project is by far the biggest operation supported by the GEF in Central Asia in the field of biodiversity (Fig. 2) and is often used by UNDP and others as flagship project. Out of a total of 24 biodiversity projects, all top four projects are located in Kazakhstan. Also the duration of the Wetlands Project is exceptional: no other project in Inner Asia can rely on a similar long project implementation period.

The project is executed by the *Committee for Forestry and Hunting* working under the auspices of the *Ministry of Agriculture*. While the then *Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection* (MNREP) had originally foreseen as executing agency, it was agreed at the beginning of the project to give this task to the *Ministry of Agriculture,* while the (then) *Ministry of Environmental Protection* shall act as a coordinating body. This ministry chairs, for example, the Project Steering Committee.

The project had been submitted to GEF under the Operational Program 2 "Coastal, Marine, and Freshwater Ecosystems".

3. Findings and Conclusions

3.1 Project Formulation

As project formulation took place in the late 1990's, i.e. 10-15 years ago, it is difficult to evaluate retrospectively, and our observations towards this end are based mainly on the Project Document and only to a small extent on interviews and other personal communication.

Project Conceptualization/Design (Overall Rating: Satisfactory)

Problem Analysis. Three main threats to Kazakhstan's wetlands are identified in the Project Document: Unsustainable use of biological resources, unsustainable use of water resources and uncontrolled visitation/tourism in wetland areas. According to our observations, the following aspects of this analysis are inaccurate and/or incomplete:

– The analysis does not take into account the rural exodus that happened after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and that had a tremendous effect on natural resources as well. Rural exodus was particularly high in the Tengiz-Korgalzhyn project area. Collective farms (kolkhozy and sovkhozy) situated in all three demonstration areas collapsed in the early 1990's and many agricultural fields were abandoned and the number of livestock decreased drastically. Until today, only roughly one third of the human population remained in the area around the three demonstration sites. This inevitably led to a general decrease of the human pressure onto natural resources. Rangeland situated relatively far away from human settlement is hardly used any longer for grazing, while grazing land around villages experiences overgrazing. The number of livestock is now gradually increasing again and the previous grazing pressure returns to the steppe areas. Agricultural land abandoned especially in the 1990's shows increased biodiversity. All these changes are not addressed in the problem analysis.

– The problem analysis regards tourism as a threat: While the promotion of tourism and in particular ecotourism is doubtlessly a big chance for wetlands and a chance for local people for creating some income, it is surprising that "uncontrolled visitation/tourism" was described during project formulation as a threat. Actually tourism was at a very low level in all three project demonstration areas at the time when the project started, and only localized. Local stakeholders coincidently reported that tourism at that time was almost non-existent. "We could not even imagine that this area will become a tourist destination one day", a local stakeholder told us at Alakol. So we have the impression that the Project Document described a potential and only very local threat rather than a significant one threatening biodiversity of the demonstration areas.

Logical Framework. The intervention strategy is grouped in five outcomes (called "outputs" in the Project Document). The two outcomes on national level (policy framework and establishment of a Conservation Fund) are clearly shaped. The other three outcomes, however, which target the demonstration sites, have overlapping contents and are not clearly separable. They deal with pro-

tected area management, the productive landscape, and with environmental awareness. Each of these outcomes has subcategories for each of the demonstration areas. We believe that it would have been much easier for project management and monitoring, if these three outcomes had been combined to a single one. There is now, for example, a strict line between protected areas (activities under outcome 2) and productive landscape (activities under outcome 4). This separation may well reflect the legal reality, but does not take into account that conservation and sustainable use has to go hand-in-hand (in the sense of the Convention on Biological Diversity) and would hence be better managed from a single entity.

Indicators. Already the Mid-term Evaluation noted that the project's core indicators have altered over the course of implementation. A major shift occurred between 2005 and 2006 when the project's indicators were radically overhauled. The indicators used thenceforth are an improvement, but are still problematic. The MTE found that these indicators are frequently vague and may easily be interpreted in different ways. As a result, many do not provide a reliable measurement of this project's effectiveness. Most "indicator" problems could be easily fixed with slight adjustments. Although some adjustments were made as a consequence of the MTE, we can still see some major problems:

The indicators defined to measure the achievements at the level of project objective are not appropriate for this purpose. They are merely a selection of indicators referring to the three demonstration sites and completely ignore the fact that the project objective is more than the sum of the results from these three sites. The set of indicators ignores, for example, that the project attempts to enhance the enabling environment for wetland conservation (outcome 1) and that the project is going to establish a financial mechanism towards this end (outcome 5). Furthermore, the indicators do not take socio-economic achievements into account. Based on the current set of indicators, one could conclude that good results in the demonstration areas alone would be enough to achieve the project objective and that the national components (outcomes 1 & 5) could be only an accessory not necessary to achieve the objective. Out of the 16 indicators, only one ("Number of protected wetlands replicating Management model developed by the Project") may help to assess and monitor the project somewhat beyond the demonstration sites. One can conclude that either the set of indicators is incomplete, or the formulation of the project objective is insufficient, or a combination of both.

Further weaknesses of the set of indicators include:

– The bird population indicators do not distinguish between breeding pairs and number of birds (resting population e.g. during migration versus breeding population versus entire population including young at the end of the breeding season!). From the information given, it is at least not clear what has actually been counted in the field.
– The bird species to be monitored should have been confined to easily identifiable species. Species such as Ferruginous Duck are difficult to identify by non-experts (such as rangers) and species such as Pallid Harriers are difficult to count (Ferruginous Ducks may be confused with other female diving ducks such as Tufted Duck or Pochard; Pallied Harriers, especially females, may be confused with Montagu's Harriers or Hen Harriers or even Marsh Harriers); species easy to identify and being highly endangered such as Demoiselle Crane are not listed;
– The number of international conventions and agreements ratified by the Government of Kazakhstan is beyond project responsibility and thus strictly speaking beyond the impact of the project (it would be an indicator for government commitment rather than project achievement);
– "Biodiversity Fund established and operational" is not a good indicator according to the definitions of indicators, but is rather an output or milestone (good indicators should reflect the quantitative progress made towards a certain target at any time).

Country-ownership/Drivenness

The country ownership for this project is very high. There is a broad consensus both on policy level and on the level of local stakeholders in the demonstration areas that the project is extremely useful and pursues objectives that are important for the development of the country. Various stakeholders expressed to the evaluation team that wetland conservation ranks now much higher on the govern-

ment's agenda than at the onset of the project. The project contributed a lot to the awareness of decision-makers for the relevance of wetland ecosystems for rural development.

While the ownership for the project is in particular high for those components dealing with protected areas and the conservation of natural resources (including water resources), it is apparently somewhat on policy level less for those components dealing with the "productive landscape". Protected area planners and decision-makers feel less responsible for this part. This clear separation between protection and use is deeply rooted in society, and the concept of nature-friendly environmentally sound use is still not very much anchored in the thinking of conservationists. Evidence for the high ownership for the protected area components is the high commitment of the GoK to enlarge the protected areas and to establish new ones, to strengthen protected area administrations, etc. Although there are some government programmes e.g. on fishery development in the Ural River Delta (sturgeon plants) and Alakol-Sassykol Lakes System (carp fishery) and agricultural development, it is a general impression that this is not a main concern of PA administrations.

Stakeholder Participation (Overall Rating: Highly Satisfactory)

Stakeholder participation at the onset of the project is difficult to evaluate as the project was designed some 10-15 years ago. However, there is good evidence that project preparation had achieved a maximum of participation both from local people and from government.

One has to take into account that Kazakhstan's situation was quite different from now at the time of project preparation. Practically no local NGOs/CBOs and user groups existed in the demonstration areas, and the institutional set-up at central government has changed significantly since then. Civil society in Kazakhstan became more diverse, visible, and robust in the last decade.

Project preparation included a wide range of meetings with local stakeholders such as the inhabitants of villages in the surroundings of the selected demonstration areas, protected areas staff, local administration and local enterprises. The reports mention approximately 40 of such meetings. The proposal was also widely discussed and disseminated on central government level.

Replication Approach

The national component of the project (outcome 1) has been designed to analyse the experiences made in the demonstration areas, and to disseminate the results to other wetlands. Experiences gained in the project areas should be used for improving the legal framework for protected areas and in particular wetlands and water management, and to increase the awareness of decision-makers for these somewhat neglected ecosystems.

The *Migratory Bird Wetland Conservation Fund*, which had been foreseen as one of the outcomes of the project, is another instrument to up-scale the results of the project. The fund had been foreseen to provide financial means for implementing measures towards the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.

Extensive media coverage was another strategy for replicating project results. Many project initiatives have been reported in the local and national media and created a positive environment for awareness and replication.

A regional conference with government representatives attending from CIS and Eastern European countries was held in 2007 and had the purpose to present and disseminate project results to a professional audience and to decision-makers.

3.2 Project Implementation and Management

Implementation Approach (Overall Rating: Highly Satisfactory)

Project planning. The project has used the logical framework approach in planning and implementation stages. The project team used annual retreats, which usually were held at Astana and lasted two

or three days, to prepare the Annual Work Plans together. In addition to the core project team, key stakeholders including short-term experts took part in these events. The Annual Work Plans include a budget for each of planned activity and they assign responsibilities. The plans were later submitted to the Project Steering Committee for approval and form the basis for all project operations. The project team thus evaluated the own performance on an annual basis and elaborated together with experts alternative approaches whenever necessary.

The progress in activities (as laid down in the Annual Work Plans) and the project's outcomes and activities are regularly reported and well-documented in the Annual Project Reports (APR). The activities defined in the Annual Work Plans are usually linked to the indicators of the logical framework. This was, however, not possible for all activities as the set of indicators does not reflect the full scope of activities required achieving the project objective (see remarks above). Progress and achievements have also been monitored and discussed at the annual meetings of the Project Steering Committee.

The project team also carefully used the electronic APR and PIR instruments to monitor progress and worked to this end in close cooperation with the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor. In the PIR, the overall rating of implementation was assessed by the Regional Technical Advisor as Highly Satisfactory throughout the last four years (2007-2010) and Satisfactory in 2006.[iii]

Project Steering. The Project has a Steering Committee (PSC), which consists of 12 members:

- Ministry of Environment Protection (GEF Focal point/coordinating body),
- Forestry and Hunting Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture (chair),
- Ministry of Education and Science,
- Ministry of Finance,
- Water Resources Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture,
- Fishery Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture,
- Eco-Forum (NGO),
- Oblast Akimat of Atyrau,
- Akimats of Alakol Rayon of Almaty Oblast, Urdzhar Rayon of East Kazakhstan Oblast, Korgalzhyn Rayon of Akmola Oblast,
- UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Kazakhstan.

The committee thus includes representatives of other sectoral ministries and state agencies (agriculture, education, finance, water, fishery), a non-governmental organisation and representatives of the local governments from the three demonstration areas. It is chaired by the Ministry of Environment Protection as coordinating body. There were altogether 12 meetings of the Steering Committee in the lifespan of the project (1-2 meetings per year). Interviews with representatives of the Steering Committee showed that the Committee plays a really active role and that the representatives are aware of ongoing project activities and future challenges. Some of the Steering Committee meetings took place on-site in the demonstration areas.

Project staff. The project had a full-time staff up to 23, with about half of it located in the central project office in Astana and the other half located in the three field offices in Alakol-Sassykol, Tengiz-Korgalzhyn and the Ural River Delta (see Fig. 3). Given the scope of tasks and the long distances between the project areas, this number of staff appears adequate: the team was well-staffed but not over-staffed.

Performance of the project team was excellent. This is well expressed by a high number of diplomas, letters of thanks, certificates, awards, medals of honour, etc. obtained by the project and by team members (project manager, site manager, project assistant). A complete list is given in Annex 8.

In the first two years of the project, the National Project Manager was assisted by an international Chief Technical Advisor (CTA). It was planned from the beginning to hire a CTA for this restricted period only. His main tasks were to assist in setting up project structures and providing technical input mainly in the field of biodiversity management towards planning the interventions.

Guidance by UNDP. UNDP has played a crucial role throughout the project, both at the CO level and the level of the Regional Office in Bratislava. Staff of the UNDP CO not only participated in the Steering Committee meetings and hold contact with its members beyond these meetings, but made also regular visits to the demonstration sites. The Regional Technical Advisor in all phases of the project was fully available to guide the project. Extensive comments on project performance made in the annual PIRs are good evidence for this.

Partnerships and Synergies. The project could reply on a number of strong partnerships on state level and with several non-governmental and private organisations. In all stages, i.e. planning, implementation and monitoring the project, all agencies were generally in a good relationship and understanding with one another. They mostly worked as a team, shared problems and issues, and looked for solutions.

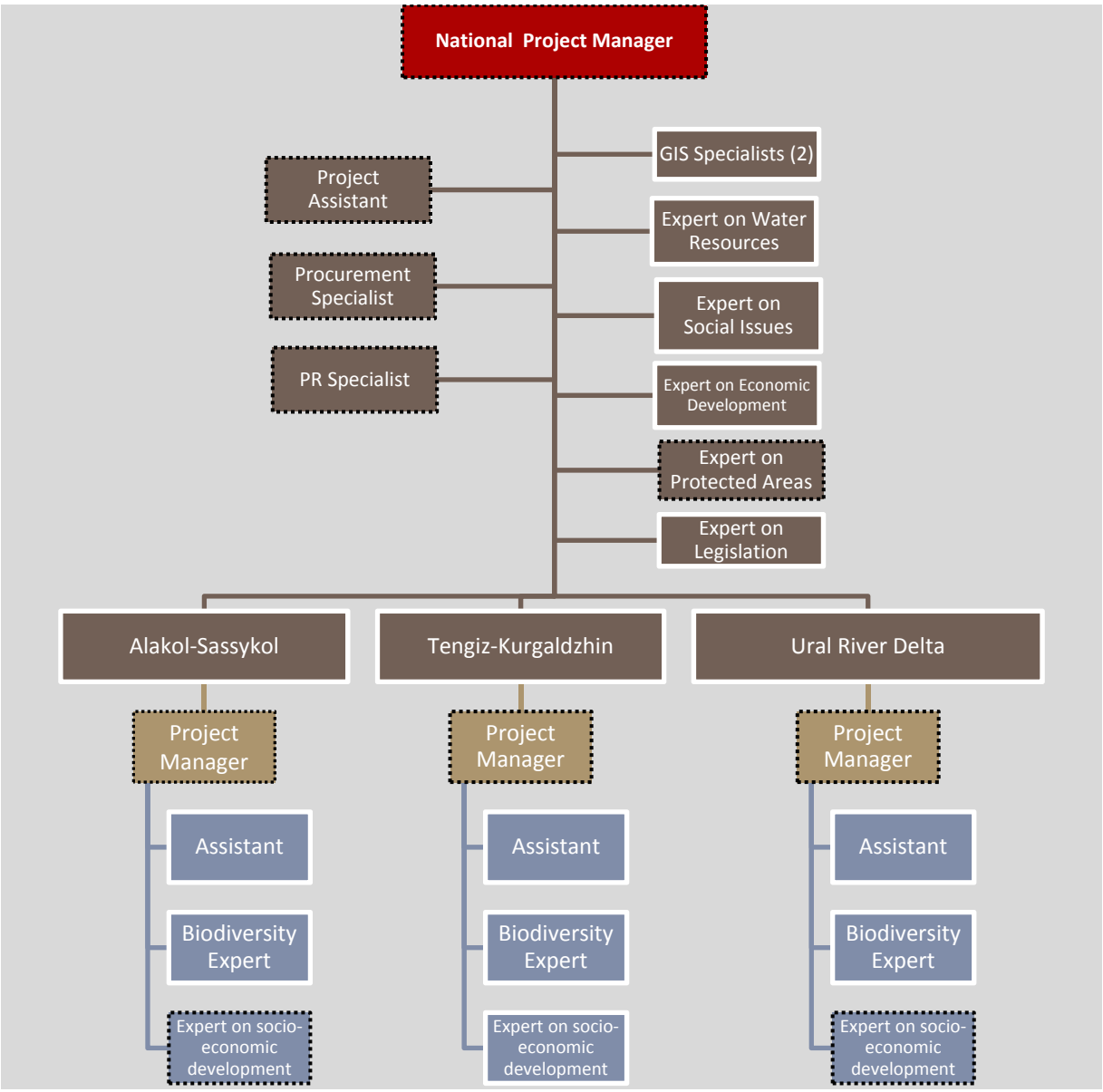

Fig. 3. General Management Structure of the Wetlands Project. Those positions with dotted frames were still in place at the time of the final evaluation (May 2011).

In the area of nature conservation, there is not much potential for synergy with other donors in Kazakhstan, mainly due to the fact that no other donors – beside UNDP - are involved in this sector, even less in the area of strengthening the wetland management in the country. Most major donors are currently not represented in Kazakhstan. However, among the international development partners, some international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are represented in Kazakhstan and active in the area of protected area and wetland management. The NABU, a German NGO, Fauna & Flora International and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) have several programmes and projects in the region, just to mention a few. The project had cooperated with the BUND at the onset of the project (and had foreseen cofinancing by this organisation), but this collaboration ceased mainly due to a shift in priorities and personal interests on NABU side.

In a regional context, there are several GEF projects in the field of wetland biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. These include:

- Belarus: Catalysing Sustainability of the Wetland Protected Areas System in Belarusian Polesie through Increased Management Efficiency and Realigned Land Use Practices (2005-2011, GEF contribution US$2.4 million);
- China: Wetland Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use (started in 2005, GEF contribution US$12.0 million);
- Lithuania: Conservation of Inland Wetland Biodiversity (2004-1020, GEF contribution US$ 3.2 million);
- Russian Federation: Conservation of Wetlands Biodiversity in the Lower Volga Region (2006-2012, GEF contribution US$6.5 million).

The Kazakhstan Wetlands Project had several meetings with some of these projects for exchanging information and experience. Such meetings included a mission of the Project Manager and four experts to the Lower Volga Region (Astrakhan) and a mission of some project management staff from Belarus and Lithuania to Kazakhstan. More meetings were held e.g. in the course of the annual UNDP-GEF training events in Bratislava, in the course of a preparatory meeting for the COP of CBD held in Thailand, and with experts in Iran. All these meetings were among project management staff and/or experts.

No such meetings were organised by the project for decision-makers at the central or local level. Also no study tours for local resource users to show them good practice in protected area management (e.g. co-management approaches, participation on local level, exchange of experience on alternative income generation, etc.) has been facilitated by the project. International partnerships between protected areas are an efficient and cost-effective way to strengthen the protected area system, and such partnerships often last beyond the closure of a project.

Just towards the end of the Wetlands Project, it got involved in negotiations to link up with a team from the Italian Bologna University, which is working in the Po Delta and has much experience in awareness-raising. This project is supported by ENI Oil Company. It was agreed that the Italian team will assist the Ural River Delta in the area of environmental education and ecotourism development, capacity building of the Akzhayik Reserve Administration and preparing the nomination file for inclusion of the reserve into the list of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.

Usage of external assistance. The project extensively called upon external assistance by short and medium-term experts. Project management was supported at the beginning of the project (2004-2006) by an International Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) (see above). Almost no other international experts have been hired by the project, except for the mandatory mid-term and final evaluations. The GEF provided roughly US$450,000 for hiring international consultants, but the project used less than 15% of this amount to call upon international expertise. The saved funds were re-directed mainly to local consultants.

Some international short-term experts worked for the project through other organisations, including an expert for PA planning and management through RSPB (2007-2008), an expert on ecotourism de-

velopment through the Italian Government (2005-2006), another on water management through Southampton University (2006-2008), and a team of experts on sturgeon hatcheries through FAO (2009).

The amount of support for project management by local experts is difficult to quantify, and it is not always easy to distinguish retrospectively between local experts working for managerial and those working for technical issues. There is also no clear distinction between experts working as "local consultants" (Atlas cost category 71310) and those hired through service contracts (Atlas cost category 71405). Nevertheless, the project had apparently all necessary resources to hire local staff and consultants as required, and did make full use of this opportunity.

Exit strategy. No explicit exit strategy has been formulated, but the work plan clearly reflects the phasing-out of the project. Most activities have been defined in the last (2011) Annual Work Plan in a way that they can be completed within the given time frame. Also project staff has gradually been reduced both at central and at site levels, resulting in a smooth phasing-out. We noted only two fields in which the phasing-out may be critical:

- The Wetlands Project supports preparations for establishing biosphere reserves at the demonstration sites (see also discussion of this issue further below). Documentation for submission to the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB) of UNESCO was being prepared at the time of the field mission of the Final Evaluation in May 2011 (for Korgalzhyn and Ural River Delta, the latter in cooperation with Bologna University) and this issue will be followed up by National Commission "Man and Biosphere" at the Ministry for Agriculture. While the formal process is thus well prepared and may lead one day to the formal establishment of biosphere reserves, this type of conservation areas may impose quite new challenges for Kazakhstan, for which the Wetlands Project has not made the necessary preparations. The MAB programme is focused on promoting interactions of mankind with nature in terms of sustainable living, income generation and reducing poverty. In biosphere reserves, nature is not isolated from man, but it is conserved through using it. This is not the concept the Wetlands Project was pursuing (e.g. in terms of capacity building for Protected Area Administrations). So changing the orientation towards the end of the project may put project achievements one day into question.
- There is no clear strategy how to deal with the *Biodiversity Conservation Fund*, which has been established but could not be capitalized. There is some commitment by UNDP CO to follow-up this issue, but no concept how far this needs to be done. For an in-detail discussion see further below (under 3.3.6 Attainments of Outcome 5 - Sustainable Financing).

Monitoring and evaluation (Overall Rating: Marginally Satisfactory)

There was no clearly identifiable "concrete" M&E Plan. However, in spite of a lack of a plan, performance monitoring as carried out by the project satisfied the bare essentials of the GEF since APRs and PIRs were prepared regularly, and independent mid-term and final evaluations were carried out. PIRs identified the action that was required for ratings of MU, U or HU and also noted the responsible party. A management response has been developed to follow-up the results of the mid-term evaluation.

The Management Effectiveness has been monitored with the help of the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT). The results are presented in the next chapter.

Monitoring of biodiversity parameters as required for assessing the achievements towards the project objective still struggles with scientific standards and good practice, resulting sometimes in unreliable data. So it appears that field monitoring are incomplete, some figures are only rough estimations rather than the result of counts, and PIRs have been filled with data from previous years (see below for further information).

Stakeholder participation (Overall Rating: Satisfactory)

Stakeholders' participation in both project implementation and decision-making has been satisfactory to highly satisfactory. The establishment of partnerships and collaborative relationship developed by the project both at the local and national levels seems to have been vital and meaningful in achieving the main objective of the project.

At the local level, strong support from local communities and decision-makers has successfully facilitated the project. The participation process was initiated gradually and considering the context, it is rated as satisfactory. The reason for this gradual engagement was due to the highly centralized and authoritarian system in the past and an absence of almost any form of civil society structures in the demonstration areas. Many obstacles existed in Kazakhstan in the past to ensure full stakeholder involvement, and contacts with local people were gradually intensified. Small economic initiatives by locals and the foundation of local environmental NGOs/CBOs were supported. In Korgalzhyn, for example, one environmental NGO existed in 2004; in the course of the project five more NGOs/CBOs were established between 2005 and 2010 and they are still active.

The GEF regard these civil agents as important partners for the implementation of international conventions on the environment. The large-scale support policies undertaken for this reason have decisively influenced the local NGO/CBO sector, but unfortunately have not always led to the desired results.[iv] Many environmental NGOs/CBOs are established just for the purpose of getting access to grants provided by the international community and for economic reasons with only little social or political attitudes.[v] This is typical for Kazakhstan and other countries of the former Soviet Union, and was also the case in the demonstration areas. In practice, it becomes for example very difficult to distinguish between NGOs/CBOs, cooperatives and local business structures.

The ultimate question is whether these "grant-based" NGOs and CBOs will cease to exist once the external support comes to an end, i.e. whether they can provide institutional sustainability and whether they can become more than the executing agents of international environmental policies. This question was difficult to discuss with local NGOs/CBOs – merely as they sometimes do not know other concepts of NGOs/CBOs than the grant-based one.

At the national level, the involvement of various ministries, government agencies and NGOs is important in gathering inputs and providing the support system, especially at the implementation stage. The composition of the Project Steering Committee, for example, has helped a lot to find consensus among the various decision-making authorities.

Given the largely vertical character of authority in Kazakhstan, UNDP's work across government institutions places it in unique position. UNDP is a "trusted advisor" to the Government in decision-making and UNDP's soft assistance is highly appreciated. UNDP played for example a crucial role in setting up the road map for establishing a Biodiversity Conservation Fund.

Financial Management

The GEF grant for the project is US$8,710,000. US$8,077,075 of these or 92.7 percent has been spent by late May 2011. It can be expected that more or less a hundred percent of the grant will be spent by project closure, which will be in August 2011. The annual expenditures varies between US$0.6 million in the first project year (which actually extended only over 6 months) and US$1.5 million in year 5 and year 7 each (Fig. 4). This pattern of expenditures can be characterised as solid and well-balanced and suggests a smooth project investment pattern.

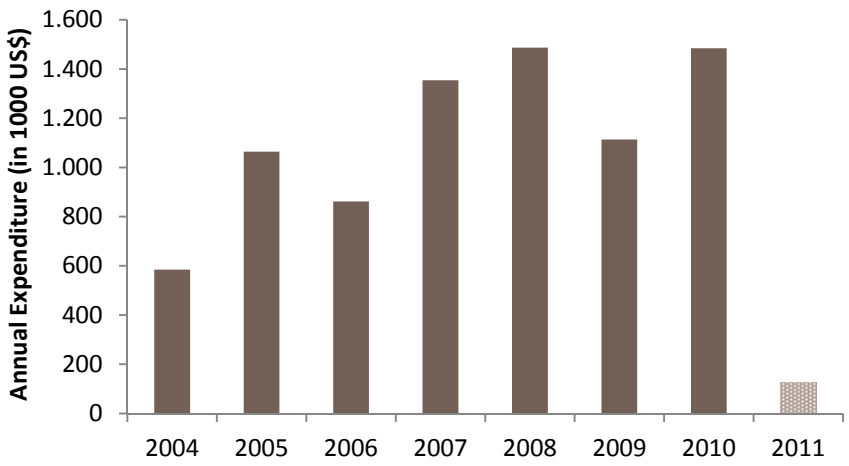

Fig. 4. Annual expenditures of the project. The values for 2011 are as per 24.05.2011 and are therefore incomplete.

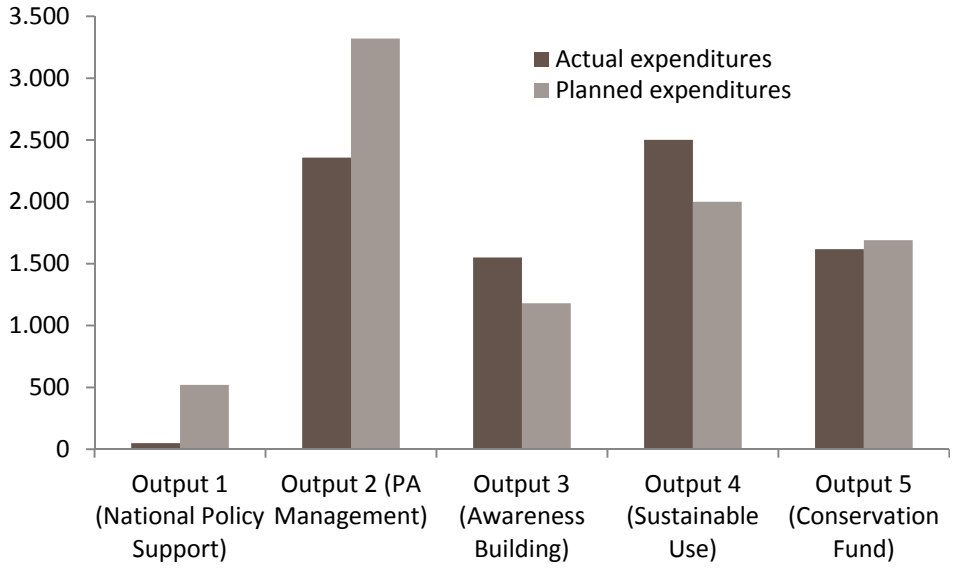

Fig. 5. Project expenditures as per May 2011 by outcomes in comparison with the expenditures planned at the beginning of the project. As the actual expenditures have been divided into 9 categories (versus 5 in the Project Document), management expenditures were distributed over these 5 outcomes according their percentage proportion in the overall expenditure.

In general, the funds seem to be spent more or less for which they had been allocated. In a comparison of the disbursement of funds with the original planning, we made the following observations:

- There is a reduced actual expenditure on National Policy Support (outcome 1); only approximately 10 percent of the originally foreseen costs were spent. This may be explained by an over-estimation of the costs. Core activities were meetings, presentations, discussions, etc., i.e. activities which were conducted mainly by the project team and did not generate high costs.
- Also the expenditures for Protected Area Management (outcome 2) were below the planned budget (70.2 percent of the foreseen expenditures). The reduced expenditures apparently have not compromised the quantity and/or quality of the activities planned for this outcome.

- The expenditures for awareness building and sustainable use of biodiversity in the productive landscape around protected areas were higher than planned. Funds were shifted from outcomes 1-2 to outcome 3-4. We appreciate this undertaking.
- So far, only US$300,000 have been transferred to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund. Further US$760,000 have been transferred to the *Fund for Agricultural Support*, and will be transferred to the *Biodiversity Conservation Fund* at a later time (see discussion below). Bookkeeping was not consistent, as the first tranche to the Agricultural Fund has been booked under Activity 4 (Sustainable Use), while only the second tranche has been booked under Activity 5 (Biodiversity Conservation Fund).

Co-financing

In addition to the GEF grant of US$8.7 million, the project has planned parallel financing of US$ 24.27 by the Government of Kazakhstan and US$2.96 by third parties. This gives a 1:3.12 ratio of GEF funding against co-funding.

The most significant part of co-financing is the in-kind contribution by the Government of Kazakhstan comprising US$ 24.27. According to PIF 2010, 99.1% of this amount has already been disbursed by June 2010 and 100% can be expected by the end of the project. GoK made significant contributions to achieve the project goal. Noteworthy is in particular the establishment of the Ural River Delta protected area administration (including staffing and purchase of physical equipment), the construction of the visitor centre at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn, etc. However, there is no explanation how the amount of over US$ 24 million or approximately US$ 3.5 per year has been derived. While the government contribution is highly significant and highly appreciated, there is no transparency on this aspect and a general feeling that the amount of this in-kind contribution is badly over-estimated.

The German nature conservation NGO NABU made a commitment over US$ 605,000 towards project implementation. It was geared mainly towards Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Protected Area. However, NABU after some initial activities at the beginning of the project has no longer provided support. There are no quantitative data available, but the actual amount of co-financing (or parallel financing) seems to be only a small fraction of the originally foreseen amount.

Funds leveraged include US$ 2.7 million by the *Forest and Hunting Committee*. The same is true what has been said on government funds in general. From the private sector US$ 280,000 could successfully be acquired for the *Biodiversity Conservation Fund*.

Table 2. Overview of project co-financing. Source: PIR 2010 and pers. communication with Project Manager.

	Amount committed in Project Document	Additional amounts committed afterwards	Estimated Total Disbursement by 06/2011	Expected Total Disbursement by end of project
Government of RK	24,271,000		24,071,000	24,271,000
Forest and Hunting Committee		2,730,000	1,560,000	2,730,000
Private companies	2,350,000	280,000		2,630,000
• Zhybek Zholy company	2,140,000			
• Agip	210,000			
• Air Astana		100,000	100,000	100,000
• Kazakhmys JSC		180,000	180,000	180,000
• Kazakhmys JSC		150,000	150,000	150,000
NGOs	620.000	330,000	500,000	950,000
• NABU	605,000			
• Others	15,000			
Other resources		1,800,000	1,800,000	1,800,000

Considerable contributions were made by local farms, NGOs and businesses for developing sustainable agriculture, fishery and hunting management, ecotourism and other alternative livelihoods. They include contributions made by Alakol Tabigaty, Ecosystem Alakol, Ecooazis Alakol Public Associations, Birlestik, Urdzhar Et PE, Sapsen Oil company, etc. Their total co-financing contribution as of 30 June 2010 was estimated US$1.80 million.

Sustainability

Considering the current status of the establishment of Biodiversity Conservation Fund, the sustainability of the project achievements is rated as satisfactory. This particular rating depends greatly on the outcome of the establishment of the Biodiversity Conservation Fund, which is a key element for project sustainability.

Ecological Sustainability. The ecological sustainability of the project is rated as highly satisfactory as there are no significant environmental risks which can undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits. No project activities pose a threat to the environment and to the sustainability of the project achievements. Strengthening two protected areas and adding a new one give a framework to better manage the environment and conserve the wetland biodiversity in Kazakhstan.

Financial Sustainability. Financial sustainability was to be achieved through establishing a Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF) that would be used to ensure the sustainability of activities in the priority sites under this project and to provide reliable funding for managing re-current costs there. The fund would also cover the costs of replicating activities in other globally significant wetland sites in Kazakhstan. The project was successful to establish the fund but was not yet successful to capitalize it as foreseen. While BCF has assumed additional tasks and is therefore operational as such since 2008, still not enough co-funding sources have been identified to match GEF's financial contributions and to generate benefits for Kazakhstan's biodiversity with the help of these funds.

The financial sustainability of Protected Area Administrations in the demonstration areas is rated highly satisfactory. The GoK provides the necessary funds for the personnel and the running costs and there is no evidence that this will not be so in the future. We have, however, serious concerns about the development in the "buffer zone" of the protected areas. The productive landscape in the surrounding of the Protected Areas received direct support by the project and indirect support through other funding mechanisms such as the GEF Small Grants Programme and the *Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture* (FFSA). Most of these sources will not be available after the end of the project.

Income generating measures were supported by these sources on a pilot scale and need to be upscaled now. Although some measures may be continued and/or followed-up by the *Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture* (FFSA), we are afraid that this will be – in the absence of the Biodiversity Conservation Fund - by far not enough to secure sustainability.

Institutional Sustainability. The capacity of the recipients was developed and what was accomplished should be sustained dynamically in the long run. It is the case in particular for the Protected Area Administrations in the three demonstration areas. In addition, several NGOs and CBOs were initiated by the project and they continue to exist, at least as long as there are economic incentives. CBOs have been founded to run fisheries and ecotourism facilities (guest houses). As long as these provide jobs and income, these institutions will continue to exist.

Socio-economic Sustainability. Most of the achievements dealing with the local population are "owned" by the local recipient and no recurrent costs to be supported by an external organisation exist. With the help of FFSA biodiversity micro-credit line, the GEF Small Grants Programme and other instruments, the project generated jobs and income in the fields of tourism, agriculture and fishery, and it is expected that the recipients can easily continue without project support. People will use the skills and knowledge acquired with the project support and will continue with their day-to-day

activities using the achievements as a basis to expand their business. These local achievements are still localized and their replicability to other parts of the country is limited. Getting full access to the opportunities offered by the *Biodiversity Conservation Fund* will become an important milestone for replication and upscaling.

3.3 Project Achievements (Results)

3.3.1 Attainment of the Project Objective

(Overall rating for Project Objective: Satisfactory)

While the Project Objective is quite generic ("Government agencies, non-governmental entities, and local communities are maintaining and improving the integrity and viability of Kazakhstan's priority wetland ecosystems") and may easily be interpreted in different ways, this would be acceptable if the scope of intervention and the objectives were defined by the underlying indicators. However, this is not the case. All indicators (with the exception of one) refer to the three demonstration areas and ignore activities on national level (see also under project formulation). There is thus no sufficient basis to objectively evaluate the attainments of the project objective.

A detailed discussion on the quality of the assessment of the biodiversity indicators is given in the next chapter.

The indicators used by the project obtained the highest rating possible, and for many indicators, the project even exceeded the target level already in 2010. For formal reasons, the project would have to be graded as "highly satisfactory". However, our assessment is more comprehensive and not strictly confined to the (incomplete) set of indicators. While the indicators give an incomplete picture of the scope of project interventions and also of the scope of achievements, the following issues may further highlight project achievements:

- The project could successfully promote on a national level wetlands as home to a rich biodiversity and a basis for rural livelihood. It was confirmed in all discussions with decision-makers that they did not know much about wetlands at the time when the project started. Wetlands were largely neglected and their ecological and socio-economic functions had been little understood. The project in countless meetings, publications and other events could make a contribution towards a better understanding.
- The project could bring wetland conservation on government agenda. Wetland conservation still does not rank high on the government's agenda. However, the project succeeded in bringing more concern to this subject. Last not least, the government made through signing the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands an internationally binding commitment, and the project played a crucial role in this process. Various sectoral ministries (including education, environment and agriculture) have wetland conservation now in one way or the other on their agenda. The Agricultural Fund (*Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture)* considers funding small-scale investments in support of wetland conservation.
- Laws and regulations have been amended in favour of wetland conservation. Water issues are now not only treated in respect to irrigation and human consumption, but also take conservation aspects into account.
- The project generated examples of good practice in wetland conservation; the three demonstration sites provide good examples how to manage wetlands and models as regards socio-economic, institutional and financial implications of conservation actions. The government is now in a position to replicate the same approach (or similar approaches) in other wetland areas.

The project was, on the other hand, less successful in

Table 3. Indicators at the level of project objective and level of achievement by June 2010. Source: PIR and information obtained from the Project Manager.

Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level	Level at 30 June 2011	Rating
No. of Dalmatian Pelicans at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn	600	≥600	1,100	HS
No. of White Headed Duck (breeding and non-breeding) at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn)	1200	≥1,200	1,080 (reduction of population is due to low water levels in key habitats – Saumalkol and Kyzylkol lakes)	MS
No. of Pallid Harriers at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn	70	≥70	800 (increased population due to expanded area of the nature reserve)	HS
No. of Coot at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn	7000	≥7,000	30,000 (favourable wintering conditions and improved habitats)	HS
No. of Dalmatian Pelicans at Alakol-Sassykol	200	≥200	350	HS
No. of Ferruginous Ducks at Alakol-Sassykol	300	≥300	275 (reduced population is due to low water levels in key water bodies in 2009)	S
No. of Relict Gulls at Alakol-Sassykol	2	≥6	46 pairs nested in 2010. It is the first case since the project start when Relict Gull nesting was fixed while only 4 pairs were observed before.	HS
No. of Coots at Alakol-Sassykol	18,000	≥18,000	18,000	HS
No. of Little Egrets in Delta of Ural	400	≥400	500	HS
No. of Glossy Ibis in Delta of Ural	300	≥300	1500 (due to the PA establishment and reduction of anthropogenic influence such as prohibition of spring fisheries and reduction of number of small sized ships)	HS
No. of Great Black-Headed Gulls in Delta of Ural	3000	≥3,000	14,000	HS
No. of Coot in Delta of Ural	4000	≥4,000	7,000	HS
No. of hectares of wetlands under conservation management	279,544 ha	494,970 ha	419,763 ha (draft law of the RK Government on Alakol Reserve expansion is considered for approval by the state bodies)	MS
Water level of Tengiz lake remains constant (required to maintain wetland ecosystems integrity and wetland productivity)	308.5-309.5 m a.s.l.	308.5-309.5 m a.s.l.	308.5-309.5 m a.s.l.	HS
Water level of Alakol remains constant (required to maintain wetland ecosystems integrity and wetland productivity)	345.4-347.6 m a.s.l.	345.4-347.6 m a.s.l.	345.43-347.6 m a.s.l.	S
Number of protected wetlands replicating Management model developed by the Project	0	5	6	HS
Overall rating				**HS**

- Fully integrating the needs of local people living around wetlands into a concept for managing wetlands at a large scale. While the project could strengthen the conservation side of wetland management, the sustainable use aspect was less successful. Project activities have been carried out on a pilot scale only, and Protected Area Administrations, for example, have neither the full mandate nor the capacities to promote local livelihoods. PA Administrations, for example, have in their structure only limited expertise to support local communities in livelihood activities (rangeland management, fishery, etc.).
- Establishing a financial mechanism that provides means for sustainable financing wetland conservation.

3.3.2 Attainments of Outcome 1 (Enabling Environment)

Outcome 1: National wetland biodiversity conservation policy, regulatory and institutional framework approved and in place. – **Overall rating for Outcome 1:** Highly Satisfactory.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
1. Relevant international Conventions and agreements ratified by Kazakhstan (CBD, UNESCO WHS, CITES, UNFCCC, UNCCD, Ramsar, Bonn, AEWA)	• 5 Conventions	• 7 Conventions Baseline + AEWA	• 7 Conventions Baseline + AEWA + Ramsar + Bonn	HS
2. New regulatory and normative acts relevant to wetlands conservation and sustainable use are adopted	• No provisions of wetland conservation in PA law	• Provisions of wetland conservation in PA law	• National register of wetlands of intnat'l & national importance approved by Min. of Agriculture	HS
	• No by-laws on sport and amateurish fishery in law on wildlife	• Decree on sustainable fishery enacted	• Amended law on protection, reproduction and use of wildlife issued	
	• Water Code with no provision on wetlands	• Water Code – includes provisions for wetland conservation and sustainable use	• Rules of classification of water bodies as wetlands of international and national importance approved by Government	
3. Reduction of reported cases of poaching (hunting and fishing) in the project sites				HS
• Korgalzhyn Project Site	• 137	• >20% (109)	• 47	
• Alakol Project Site	• 189	• >20% (151)	• 188	
• Delta of Ural river	• 723+	• >20% (578)	• 312 (48.7% reduction due to the fishing ban in preustuary area)	
Overall rating				**HS**

The project has been a key instrument in helping the government to put in place a sound policy platform, and obtain international recognition for its wetlands. Major achievements to which the project made significant contributions include

- Preparation of a *National Strategy for Wetlands Conservation and Sound Management till 2020*. A draft of this strategy was prepared by the project, and has passed through multiple stakeholder consultations before it was submitted for Government approval. The project is an active partner of the *Standing Interagency Council on Joint Wetlands Management*.

- Amendment of the national law on *Protection, Reproduction and Use of Wildlife* (adopted in January 2010), which sets biodiversity conservation standards with respect to fishing, defines fishing regimes, provides for government subsidies for hatchery rearing, fish rearing for sale, etc.
- The project contributed to the *Fishery Development Concept until 2015*, which was approved by the GoK in 2007.
- The project prepared the necessary justifications for improving the *Water Code* and submitted it to the RoK Government for consideration. On 21 February 2009, the RoK Law on Amendments to the Water Code made amendments related to the definition of wetlands (Article 1, Para 34) and hydrological regime observation (Article 108, Para 2).
- Drafting rules for *Classifying Water Bodies as Wetlands of International Importance*, approved by the Government Resolution No. 567 dd. 14 June 2010. Further, the project has helped set up a national register of wetlands of international and national importance, which is going to be operational under Order of the Minister of Agriculture No. 292 dd. 26 April 2010.
- The project contributed to the preparation of a new law on PAs includes provisions on internationally significant wetlands and unique bodies of water, on procedures for drafting and structuring of PA Management Plans and possibilities for establishing a Biodiversity Conservation and PA Development Fund (2007).

The policy of the GoK regarding the management of wetlands has changed considerably in the last years, and better policies for wetland management have been developed. The project is instrumental in facilitating this policy change.

3.3.3 Attainments of Outcome 2 (Protected Area Operations)

Outcome 2: Well planned and effective protected area management. – **Overall Rating for Outcome 2:** Highly Satisfactory.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
METT scores				
• Korgalzhyn	46	65	75	HS
• Alakol	42	62	77	HS
• Ural River Delta (Akzhaik)	38	50	59	HS
Size of the protected areas				
• Korgalzhyn	258,963 ha	543,171 ha	543,171 ha	S
• Alakol	19,773 ha	74,799 ha	65,217 ha	MS
• Ural River Delta	0 ha	50,400 ha	111,500 ha	HS
No. of staff responsible for conservation management				
• Korgalzhyn	34	62	65	HS
• Alakol	28	36	32	MS
• Ural River Delta	0	44	89	HS
Overall rating				**HS**

Extension of the Protected Areas

The project was very successful as it helped enlarge the protected surface area:

- Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve: After intensive preparation studies carried out by the project, the GoK expanded the area of Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve by 284,208 ha in December 2008. This PA comprises now more than double the original size and is 543,171 ha.
- Alakol Nature Reserve: Land had been reserved for expanding the Alakol Nature Reserve. This could be realised at the end of 2010 and the reserve comprises now 65,217 ha.

- Ural River Delta: There was no protected area in the Delta of Ural River at the onset of the project. By Government Resolution No. 119 (dated 6 February 2009) a new protected area, Akzhaiyk State Nature Reserve, has been established. The total area of the PA is 111,500 ha.

This means that almost 4,000 km² of largely pristine wetlands and adjacent steppe areas have received legal protection as a result of the project. Additional >630 km² are waiting for official approval.

International Recognition

The former USSR joined the Ramsar Convention in 1975. Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lake System was among the first sites registered with the Ramsar Convention in the Soviet era on October 11, 1976. Tengiz-Korgalzhyn remained in the list of wetlands of international importance even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Republic of Kazakhstan joint the Ramsar Convention on May 2, 2007. Six additional wetlands have been designated in 2009 (Table 4) with Alakol-Sassykol and the Ural River Delta being among these. The project had been instrumental in the government's preparations for accessing the Ramsar Convention and in preparing the necessary documentation on the internationally significant wetlands. The project and the government could build on previous work carried out in the Soviet era.

Table. 4. Ramsar Sites in Kazakhstan. Source: Ramsar Database at www.ramsar.org.

Ramsar Site	Date of designation	province	area
Alakol-Sassykol Lakes System	25/11/09	Almaty, E Kazakhstan Oblasts	914,663 ha
Koibagar-Tyuntyugur Lake System	07/05/09	Kostanay Oblast	58,000 ha
Kulykol-Taldykol Lake System	07/05/09	Kostanay Oblast	8,300 ha
Naurzum Lake System	12/07/09	Kostanay Oblast	139,714 ha
Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lake System	11/10/76	Akmola Oblast	353,341 ha
Ural River Delta & adjacent Caspian Sea coast	10/03/09	Atyrau Oblast	111,500 ha
Zharsor-Urkash Lake System	12/07/09	Kostanay Oblast	41,250 ha

Based on some initial work carried out by NABU, the project provided assistance to the GoK in preparing nomination dossiers for the Korgalzhyn Reserve as UNESCO World Heritage. The 32nd session of UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Quebec, Canada on 7 July 2008 issued a decision according to which the Korgalzhyn and Naurzum Reserves became the first UNESCO World Heritage site in Central Asia; it is called 'Sary-Arka: Steppes and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan.'

Management Plans

Management Plans for PAs had been unknown in Kazakhstan prior to the project. The principal concept had been that Protected Areas need absolute protection and wardening, but do not need management. The Wetlands Project needs to be praised for having introduced management plans as a conservation instrument in Kazakhstan. After having initiated the necessary amendments to the PA Law, the project supported the preparation of management plans for Korgalzhyn and Alakol State Nature Reserves. The Project also provided assistance in drafting Akzhaiyk Management Plan for 2010-2014 which was approved by the authority. A nation-wide training workshop was conducted for establishing the methodologies on preparing PA management plans.

Local communities were consulted in the course of preparing the management plans; the degree of participation cannot be fully assessed retrospectively.

Institutional Setup for PA Management

The administrations of the three Protected Areas used as demonstration areas have classical structures with four main divisions, i.e. for research & monitoring, awareness building & education, a ranger service and finance & administration. These set-ups are in line with the majority of PAs through the former Soviet Union.

Ecotourism has become increasingly important in recent years, and the tasks related to ecotourism are conducted by the awareness building & education divisions of PA administrations. Ecotourism is understood as a form of ecological education and at the same time as a source of income. The understanding of the role of the PA Administrations in this field is sometimes still not yet well-developed. Although the legislation of Kazakhstan is clear on that (income from entrance fee goes to the national budget, income from the services of tour guides to the specific PA, income for services rendered to tourists such as for accommodation, souvenirs, etc. to local service providers), this division of tasks and work still seems to be not clear to all local stakeholders in the demonstration areas. We noted that there is a general wish to act as tour operator and to generate income. It is not really understood that this is a task of the private sector (and maybe the so-called "NGOs" and "CBOs"), and that the role of PA Administration in ecotourism should be confined to provide infrastructure and technical skills to carry out these operations.

Other forms of human use of the PAs are not really reflected in the structure of PA Administrations: fishery, rangeland management, hunting, and agriculture are priority issues that need to be dealt with in all three demonstration areas. Despite the great importance for sustainable development, these sectors cannot be located in the PA administrative structure (with the exception of the advisory Scientific and Technical Council of PAs). Without having a proper structure in PA Administrations to support local livelihoods, there is a risk that these issues will not be followed-up properly after the end of the project.

Management Effectiveness

The Management Effectiveness in the three demonstration areas was measured by using the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), a generic system developed to assess protected area management effectiveness and widely used to report progress towards the Convention on Biological Diversity. The methodology is a rapid assessment based on a scorecard questionnaire. It includes six elements of management (context, planning, inputs, process, outputs and outcomes).

METT has been applied for all three demonstration areas at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the project. For Alakol-Sassykol and Tengiz-Korgalzhyn there was a continuous increase of the METT scores, showing an impressive rise in management effectiveness over the years. For Akzhayik (Ural River Delta), the situation was different: as it had not been under legal protection at the beginning of the project and there was hence no management authority in place, the METT scores were very low in 2004. Significant progress was made until 2008/2009, and in 2010, a further increase of METT scores was noted.

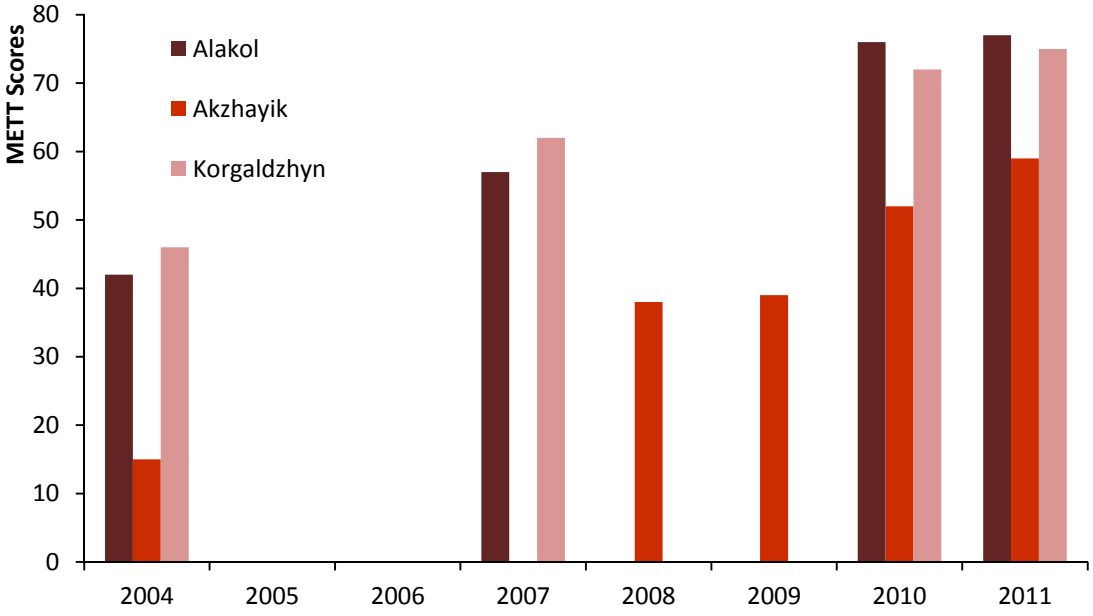

Fig. 6. METT scores for the three demonstration areas of the project.

Environmental Monitoring

The PA Authorities in all three demonstration areas conduct extensive monitoring programmes, and receive support to this end from the project. The divisions for "Research & Monitoring" have specialised staff (biologists, hydrologists, etc.) to monitor environmental parameters, and they normally do this in cooperation with the ranger service of the PAs. A biodiversity monitoring program has been developed based on "Methodical recommendations on biodiversity components monitoring" developed for each project site and approved by the Forestry and Hunting Committee in 2007. This Manual gives guidance on the selection of the monitoring area, on species, time of monitoring, methodological approach and responsible persons.

A three years national monitoring programme is planned for the years 2012-2014 and the Government of RK will provide for it one million Tenge (approximately US$6,700). This programme was developed based on the biodiversity programme of the Wetlands Project.

It is a general impression that the PA staff responsible for monitoring is very motivated and engaged, but they are over-challenged and often unable to cope with this task. The methodological manual developed and the capacity building provided by the project are apparently not sufficient, and it seems that PA staff does not obtain enough guidance. Most technical staff cannot build on track record in field assessments, and identification and quantitative assessments of species of plants and animals are a general weakness.

As a result, the monitoring data do not withstand a critical analysis. As an example, Table 5 shows for some key species the monitoring results that have been documented in the PIRs. Only species which are easy to identify have been selected. What can be seen from the table is that (1) there is no information whether these figures refer to breeding pairs or individuals, and at which season these numbers have been assessed; (2) some of the figures seem to be at best rough estimates rather than numbers based on actual field assessments; (3) field monitoring has apparently not been carried out every year, but figures have been adopted from previous years. It is, for example, not realistic to count exactly 700 Dalmatian Pelicans in three consecutive years. The results of field monitoring do not look very reliable for somebody who is familiar with field surveys.

Table 5. Monitoring results for some selected key species used for assessment of achievements towards the project objective. Please note that the same figures normally appear several times. This is not consistent with natural population fluctuations. Source of information: Annual PIR reports.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Dalmatian Pelican (Tengiz)	n/a	n/a	700	700	700	600	1,235
Dalmatian Pelican (Alakol)	n/a	n/a	100	250	250	225	300
Glossy Ibis (Ural River Delta)	n/a	n/a	300	300	300	450	1,500
White-headed Duck (Tengiz)	n/a	n/a	1,200	1,200	4,000	4,000	1,080
Relict Gull (Alakol)	n/a	n/a	4	4	4	4	46
Greater Black-headed Gull (Ural D.)	n/a	n/a	2,700	5,000	5,000	13,000	14,000

In addition, the data in the PIRs are not consistent with those data available in a database created for filing all monitoring records.

As a result, it is extremely difficult to use the data generated by the monitoring staff as a basis for management decisions.

The function of monitoring in the project context is two-fold: on the one side, the project defined indicators for measuring the project success, and the project needs this information to monitor achievements. On the other side, monitoring data are needed beyond the end of the project as a sound basis for management decisions. Capacity building for monitoring has therefore been an integral part of the project and is well-documented in the Project Document and the Annual Work Plans.

With permanent full-time staff for monitoring & research in all three demonstration areas one would expect at least some information on population development of key indicator species be available. So what could the role of the project have been and why was the project – despite considerable efforts – not very successful in building the necessary monitoring capacities? First, there is in our opinion no clear-cut monitoring concept that is adapted to the local capacities; it needs to be defined which species can be monitored with the available knowledge and resources, which training is needed to identify species, what kind of information is needed, which methodology should be applied for quantitative assessments (e.g. without giving harm to nesting birds), and in which season has monitoring be carried out? The project apparently was not able to create such packages for rapid assessment. Second, there is not sufficient guidance and training for implementing a monitoring programme according to international standards. As the general level of biodiversity monitoring in all of Kazakhstan is still not sufficient, it becomes difficult to identify the necessary expertise on a national level for developing rapid assessment packages and training.

The project purchased technical equipment for automatic meteorological and hydrological monitoring. These two stations (Korgalzhyn and Alakol-Sassykol) are run by the Hydrometeorological Service of the GoK. This equipment is “nice to have”, but is not regarded as essential for achieving the project objective.

3.3.4 Attainments of Outcome 3 (Stakeholder Awareness)

Outcome 3: Established awareness of wetland biodiversity values among local stakeholders and process for generating lessons learned. – **Overall Rating for Outcome 3:** Highly Satisfactory.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
Level of awareness of the main key stakeholders: Level of awareness was determined based on the survey (questionnaire), in percentage from the total number of respondents				
• Decision makers – Korgalzhyn	0.7	0.85	85%	HS
• Local communities – Korgalzhyn	0.5	0.8	80%	HS

• Decision makers – Alakol	0.5	0.8	80%	HS
• Local communities – Alakol	0.25	0.6	60%	HS
• Decision makers – Ural River Delta	0.2	0.8	70%	S
• Local communities – Ural River Delta	0.1	0.5	60%	HS
Reduction in use of fire as a tool to improve the quality of pasture lands (ha of affected land)				
• Korgalzhyn Project Site	15,000	≤15,000	0	HS
• Alakol-Sassykol Project Site	575	≤500	25	HS
• Delta of Ural River	265	≤200	18	HS
Number of schools in which the wetland conservation aspects are integrated into the optional curricula				
• Korgalzhyn territory	0 schools	7 schools	10 schools	HS
• Alakol-Sassykol territory	0 schools	7 schools	9 schools	HS
• Delta of Ural territory	0 school	4 school	5 schools	HS
Mechanisms and processes for disseminating lessons learnt in Kazakhstan and in the region**	No lessons learnt and dissemination mechanisms	Publications on successful wetlands conservation & management practices (Regional Conf. on Wetland Biodiversity (2007)*	Training & experience sharing workshops delivered for staff of 3 project PAs and 3 pilot PAs	HS
Number of examples of integration / use / dissemination of project methodologies by other projects/organisations	0	10	6	S
Overall rating				**HS**

* Conference took place in May 2011. – ** the three pilot PAs identified for dissemination of practices are Barsakelmes, Ustyurt and Irgiz-Torgai Pas.

The project pursues awareness building for sustainable wetland management on a professional scale. It has generated an impressive amount of public awareness materials, media outreach campaigns, educational materials, and training programmes both for the local and national levels. The subjects covered by these materials are wide and the quality of these materials is professional. The project employs a full-time expert and short-time experts for conducting the awareness activities.

Establishment of visitor centres in the three demonstration areas. The project established visitor centres at Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve and at Alakol. In the case of Korgalzhyn, the project prepared the architectural design, designed the documentation for the centre and prepared three expositions, while the GoK financed all the construction work. The project also provided assistance through training guides, both in the reserve and in the children's Ecoclub established in the reserve. At Ural River Delta, the visitor centre is still in an early planning stage. Cooperation with Padova University has been agreed upon towards providing the concept and architectural design for the centre.

Korgalzhyn Visitor Centre, which was opened in 2009, is divided into several parts such as the steppe hall, the Children's Educational hall, etc., and is well-equipped with modern information technologies. The centre is probably the most modern one in Central Asia and became a model for similar centres in the region. It serves both as ecological and educational centre for local people and residents and guests of the capital and from foreign countries as well.

Promotion of environmental education at schools in the demonstration areas. The project is strongly linked to primary schools in the three demonstration areas for integrating wetland conservation issues into school curricula in three project sites. So far, 22 pilot schools introduced wetland conservation curricula, with 6 of them having designated classrooms devoted to wetlands. Teacher and student manuals were prepared for two modules, Vegetation of Wetlands and Hydrology. This work has been supported through a handbook on "Ecological Education for Korgalzhyn Region School Teachers", which has been prepared and published by the project.

Public awareness raising at national level. The project has conducted a number of events and produced a number of publications that target the national level. These include for example:

- Public awareness is raised through www.wetlands.kz, the semi-annual Project Newsletters, and TV, radio and printed mass media.
- Two popular science films have been produced: "Bird Path," about the uniqueness of the Alakol-Sassykol Lakes; and "The Secrets of Protected Area," about Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lakes. Both films achieved wide attention and were broadcasted on the national TV channels.
- Video clips on biodiversity conservation that have been produced by the project are being broadcasted during the domestic and international flights of Air Astana.
- Organisation of a "March for Parks" with active participation of schoolchildren and other interested groups and stakeholders. This is the nation's largest walking event for parks. A booklet 'March for Parks in Korgalzhyn' is distributed among local population during the event. The action "March for Parks" is carried out by the Korgalzhyn Reserve since 2002 but was much developed during the lifespan of the project.
- The Flamingo Festival at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Project Site. This festival is conducted annually together with Akmola Oblast Akimat, Korgalzhyn Reserve and Tabigat Alemi Ecoeducational Centre, and is attracting increasing interest far beyond the demonstration area.
- Special events for experts such as a Regional Workshop in Astana to exchange experiences and to disseminate lessons learnt among GEF/UNDP Projects in Eastern Europe and CIS, or an international conference on wetlands management conducted in 2011.

A list of publications produced by the project is given in Annex 7. It is surprising that none of the publications reached a circulation of more than a thousand, not even the post cards. As the population in the demonstration areas including school children is much higher, this shows that these materials have been disseminated to selected people only without pursuing a broad campaign addressing the broad public.

3.3.5 Attainments of Outcome 4 (Sustainable Use in the Productive Landscape)

Outcome 4: Enabled Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetland Biodiversity in the Productive Landscape. – **Overall Rating of Outcome 4** (Sustainable Use): Satisfactory.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
No. of households which replaced the destructive activities with the alternative activities provided by the project*				
• Korgalzhyn	0	10	11	HS
• Alakol-Sassykol	0	5	25	HS
• Delta of Ural	0	5	5	HS
No. of hectares of productive landscapes contributing to conservation and sustainable use of wetland resources**				
• Korgalzhyn	0	58.000	42.000	MS
• Alakol-Sassykol	0	22.500	15.948	MS
• Delta of Ural River	0	7.000	7,043	S
Area in % (ha) of wetlands where fishery management system which is benign to biodiversity has been implemented***				
• Korgalzhyn	0 ha	20% (4,135 ha)	38,2% (7, 895 ha)	HS
• Alakol-Sassykol	0	10% (16,000 ha) (Koshkarkol lake)	9,8% (15,688 ha)	S
• Delta of Ural	0	20% (25,000 ha)	45,4% (56,720 ha)	HS
Overall rating				**S**

***** fishery without consideration of optimal intake, unsustainable land use and cattle- breeding, poaching, hunting without consideration of legislation of the RK in the area of wildlife protection, reproduction **and use. – **** through application of scientifically justified systems of land use, improvement of the structure of area under crop, substitution of mineral fertilizers to organic, new technologies and alternative energy sources, including improvement of pasture lands based

on functional zoning of agricultural lands surrounding wet**lands. – *** optimal species composition of commercial stock, optimal number of fishing sites and number of fishing gears, Fishing Rules are complied with and fishing does not result in depletion of fish resources, local communities have assigned fisheries waters is involved in co-management, etc.

Direct Support by the Project. The project supported the local population in conducting sustainable livelihood activities. Major areas of alternative livelihoods were:

1. Fish farming, development of sturgeon culture
    - fish farms (carp, crucian carp, bream, etc.);
    - creation of aquacultures and hatcheries to produce fingerling;
    - fish rearing for sale;
    - sturgeon culture;
    - changing fishing regulations with regard to stocking requirements.

2. Development of ecotourism
    - Development of ecological routes and tourism infrastructure;
    - arrangement of guest homes;
    - ethnic customs to familiarize foreign tourists (dishes and beverages, ethnic clothes);
    - souvenir production (felt items, osier woven baskets, etc.).

3. Implementation of best practices to replace destructive activities in agriculture:
    - farming – alternatives to existing cropping practices and recultivation of abandoned land;
    - pasture management – enhancement of pastures and introduction of rotational grazing;
    - irrigation – rehabilitation of irrigation canals in order to reduce water consumption.

4. Implementation of alternative energy sources (energy-saving technologies)
    - solar panels;
    - projects to develop energy efficient and energy saving technologies using local resources and materials.

Several of these measures were visited during the Terminal Evaluation Mission. The overall results are impressive. Many people found new jobs and many people shifted their economic activities onto a sustainable level. However, the actual level of conservation benefit or impacts of project activity under this component are difficult to assess. Some of the sustainable livelihood options are not clearly or only indirectly linked to sustainable conservation of wetlands. Fish farming of carps next to Alakol, for example, provides employment and income to local people but will hardly contribute significantly to the conservation of the area.

Cooperation with Grant Supplying Organisations. The Wetlands Project established successful partnerships with several grant supplying organisations such as World Bank projects (Agricultural Competitiveness Project, Forest Protection and Reforestation Project), GEF Small Grants Programme, and the Eurasia Fund. The project was very successful in using these such complementary advantages: the project could provide technical expertise and backstopping and could ensure that the measures make a real contribution towards a development goal. Examples for such cooperation are:

- Mitigation of consequences of unsustainable use of biological resources of Koshkarkol Lake, a key bird area, its biodiversity rehabilitation through sustainable fishery management module implementation. GEF SGP - $50,000, Co-financing $240,026.
- Sustainable pasture management: GEF SGP $31,900, Co-financing: n/a.
- Establishing a specialized ecoroute to implement the Ecotourism Concept in the AS project site elaborated by the Wetlands Project and local community capacity building in ecotourism to reduce negative impact of unorganized tourism on AS biodiversity: GEF SGP $37,500, Co-financing $14,920.
- Northern Alakol coast: introduction of environmentally safe land degradation methods: GEF SGP $41,230, Co-financing $27,430.

- Production of Highly Productive Fodder Crops in the Ural River Delta through Wind Water-Engine Use.
- Development of a special environmental route to implement the ecotourism concept within Alakol-Sassykol. GEF SGP $37,500.

The Micro-credit Programme. Micro-crediting has been identified by the project as useful tool to develop alternative livelihoods and has been an option pursued by the project from the onset. As GEF resources are as a principle not available for micro-crediting, the project planned to rely on existing micro-credit programmes, and to use GEF resources to shape them in a way that they can serve the project objective.

The project hence has developed a Biodiversity Conservation Credit Facility in partnership with the *Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture* (FFSA) of Kazakhstan. FFSA is one of the large joint stock companies founded with government support to support and develop small businesses in villages and rural population and currently providing micro-crediting services. It has a well-established infrastructure consisting of 11 branches and 3 three representative offices throughout Kazakhstan. Credit officers operate in all rural districts of the country allowing for 100% coverage of rural areas. Over the years of its operations FFSA has issued over 63,000 microcredits.

The project provided FFSA with a budget to run a microcredit programme in the three demonstration areas:

- US$ 260,000 of GEF resources in 2008. To be returned to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund latest by August 2011.
- US$ 500,000 of GEF resources in 2010. To be returned to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund in 2015.
- US$ 440,000 of GEF resources are earmarked to be provided to FFSA in July 2011. Return to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund expected in 2015.

All funds are provided on an interest-free basis.

Out of the first tranche of US$ 260,000, altogether 11 micro-credits totalling over KZT 31 million have been implemented. Financing was provided to support ecotourism including arrangement of guest houses and home stay, sewing of ethnic clothes, launch of a kumiss production workshop. Other financing targeted projects to restore hayfields, to develop fishery and to create greenhouse farms.

The new micro-credit programme 2010-2015, for which GEF resources totalling US$940,000 will be provided, is open to borrowers in the surrounding of all 25 Protected Areas of Kazakhstan.

Table. 6. Investments performed with the help of the micro-credit scheme initiated by the project in the three demonstration areas (first tranche credits 2008-2010). Amounts in million KZT.

Demonstration Area	Type of Investment	Amount
Alakol	• Organizing a guest house	1.4
	• Enhancement of hayfields, sowing of perennial grass (lucerne, clover)	1.9
	• Use of local materials and wastes to produce consumer goods	4.6
	• Organizing a guest house	0.7
	• Organizing a guest house	2.3
	• Organizing a fish farm and sport fishing	3.0
Ural River Delta	• Construction of a mini greenhouse in Yerkinkala village	1.0
	• Construction of a mini greenhouse in Taskala village	3.0
Tengiz-Korgalzhyn	• Sewing of ethnic clothes	1.0
	• Development of ecotourism and organizing a guest house	6.0
	• A mini shop for producing kumiss	6.3
TOTAL		**31.2**

In addition to the provision of funds, the project in close cooperation with FFSA conducted a series of workshops for rural communities on business planning and raising awareness on the Microcredit Programme. Also a training manual was developed for rural communities to develop alternative livelihoods.

3.3.6 Attainments of Outcome 5 (Sustainable Financing)

Outcome 5: Sustainable financing for wetland conservation. – **Overall Rating for Outcome 5:** Marginally Unsatisfactory.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
1. Biodiversity Conservation Fund established and operational in project territories	No Fund	Fund registered	Fund established, but endowment part not operational	MU
2. Amount capitalized, in USD	US$0.0	US$6.0 million	US$800,000 (= 13%)	US
Overall rating				**MU**

For finding ways to sustainably finance wetland conservation in Kazakhstan, the project had foreseen the establishment of a "Migratory Bird Conservation Fund". This fund would be used to ensure the sustainability of activities in the priority sites under this project and to provide reliable funding for managing re-current costs in the three priority wetland areas. The fund would also cover the costs of replicating activities in other globally significant wetland sites in Kazakhstan. However, as it was understood that the scope of a fund dedicated to migratory birds is too narrow to wide attract donor and sponsor interest, it was decided to establish a "Biodiversity Conservation Fund" (BCF). This also better accounts for the overall ecological and socio-economic value of biodiversity.

The Fund was registered in accordance with regulatory procedures on 4 October 2007 as a non-profit organisation 'Biodiversity Conservation Fund of Kazakhstan'. Major accomplishments to date include:

- A Trust Fund concept prepared and agreed with major stakeholders;
- Founders (Civil Alliance of Kazakhstan, Ecological Forum of Kazakhstan NGOs Association and Eco-Altai NGO) and Board of Directors selected;
- An Asset Management Company selected and contracted; investment rules finalised based on the comments by the members of the Board of Directors;
- Capacities built through training including participation in an international training programme;
- A fundraising campaign launched with concepts presented to government authorities, non-governmental organisations, international organisations and representatives of domestic and foreign companies.

The structure of the Fund, as agreed to by the UNDP Regional Office and approved by the Fund's Board of Directors, was changed from an endowment type as originally planned and approved by the GEF to a mixed type on 24.02.2010. A sinking component was added to BCF.

Following this decision, BCF was selected to act as agent for the "Competitive Grant Programme" of World Bank's "Forest Protection and Reforestation Project" amounting US$ 2,300,000. More than 15 subprojects with different focus areas and in different regions are under way. The Programme is a soft loan[vi] (IBRD US$30.0m) blended with a GEF grant (US$5.0m) and receiving Funding by the Government of RK (US$28.8m). A significant amount of the GEF contribution is used to fund the "Competitive Grant Programme"[vii]. So BCF manages at the moment financial resources coming from two different GEF sources, namely from the GEF - World Bank programme on forestry and the UNDP-GEF wetlands project.

Kazakhmys JSC, the largest copper producer in Kazakhstan and in the top ten worldwide, provided US$150,000 to the sinking fund. These resources were used for the Korgalzhyn reserve dam rehabilitation project. US$153,000 were committed by Kazakhmys JSC in 2011. These funds are earmarked for implementing saiga population conservation activities.

All running costs of BCF are at present met by World Bank/GEF through the "Competitive Grant Programme".

As regards the capitalization of the endowment part of BCF, the following funding was received so far:

Air Astana		100,000
Kazakhmys		181,000
Wetlands Project (GEF via FFSA)		260,000
Wetlands Project (GEF)		300,000
TOTAL	**US$**	**841,000**

The funds are on a bank account with a fixed interest rate of 7 percent. The Wetlands Project will transfer additional US$940,000 to BCF, again via FFSA, so the total GEF contribution will be (in line with the project document) US$1.5 million.

Despite really big efforts of the project team, the progress to capitalize the Trust Fund is insufficient. The Fund, for example, launched two postage stamps with the fund logo to increase public awareness, or Air Astana shows on domestic and international flights short footages about Kazakhstan's biodiversity and the goals of the Biodiversity Conservation Fund. The project also initiated a letter which was sent to the 43 largest enterprises working on the territory of Kazakhstan, and which was signed by the Minister of Environment Protection with the request for cooperation with Biodiversity Conservation Fund. The Trust Fund began individual work with each of these companies such as ENI Oil Company, Shymkent Cement, Uni Credit, Total, AGIP, the Embassy of Italy, the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Development Bank KfW, Fauna and Flora International, Building Capacity Worldwide, etc. – but so far without success. Countless presentations were given, for example during the Kazakh Petroleum Association meeting, where 30 oil and gas companies convened. There are two main reasons that the project was not successful in capitalizing the Fund: The first one is a change in national legislation that occurred shortly after signing the Project Document, and which prevents transferring ecological penalties to special funds. Funds can thus not be expected from the government. The second main reason is the financial crisis that began in 2007, and which significantly reduced the abilities and the willingness of private sector companies to sponsor environmental projects.

In order to make optimal use of the funds and not to wait an indefinite period till the full capitalization of BCF, the Wetlands Project found an interim solution: It provided the sum of US$260,000 to the Kazakh Fund for Financing Support to Agriculture (FFSA) for a micro-credit programme, and FFSA will paid back this amount to BCF. The same is foreseen with a second tranche of US$500,000 transferred to FFSA in 2010. According to an agreement with the Fund, further US$440,000 are waiting to be transferred from GEF to FFSA and finally to BCF. So a total of US$ 1.5 million will be accumulated in the next years in the Biodiversity Fund.

Capitalization of BCF revealed to be much more complicated than originally thought for reasons which are largely beyond the responsibility of the project (e.gl. global financial crisis, see above). The Biodiversity Conservation Fund has been designed as matching fund, and GEF funds are going to be released in tranches contingent upon matching funds being secured on a 1:3, GEF:co-financing ratio. It now has to be considered that a full capitalization in the amount of US$6m cannot be realized during the next years. This amount is necessary to meet the criteria as laid down in the UNDP-GEF project document, and which is necessary for triggering spending. Actually, there is no evidence that the

necessary capital can be accumulated that would allow the transfer of earmarked GEF resources to BCF.

For finding a solution for the future of BCF, the three conditions given in the project document need to be examined: BCF should (1) be financially sustainable, (2) target biodiversity conservation at the local level, and (3) the GEF contribution should be co-financed in a 1 to 3 ratio.

- It has been suggested that the FFSA's funds can be counted as matching funds. Actually FFSA gives micro-credits for promoting sustainable livelihood in the surroundings of PAs that exceed the GEF contribution (so far US$260,000) by far. However, FFSA is for GEF only an interim solution and the funds will be transferred to BCF at a later time. Therefore this is not a sustainable and suitable option.
- It has been suggested that the money allocated to the "Competitive Grants Programme" of World Bank/GEF (sinking part of BCF) is counted as matching fund. As these funds are sinking funds (and hence are only temporary and do not bear interest), and – even more important – as a significant part of these funds finally also come from the GEF, this is not a suitable option as well ("GEF would co-fund GEF").

BCF has acquired approximately US$280,000 during the last 2-3 years for the endowment component of BCF. Still approximately US$4.2 million have to be acquired to make the endowment component of BCF operational under the 1:3 co-funding condition. There is no evidence that this is achievable at all and may never happen. This view is not shared by the Project Team and some other stakeholders. The Government seems to be extremely keen to retain, grow, and keep capitalizing BCF. Despite this divergence of views on this issue, it is evident that the project is not prepared for this scenario and has not prepared an exit strategy for the case that capitalization of BCF fails.

In our view, it turned out that the conditions of the Wetlands Project for the establishment of BCT are not realistic, at least not under the present circumstances. In our opinion, it does not make sense to continue spending high efforts to capitalize the endowment component of BCF, if the goal is too high and not achievable. Decisions therefore have to be taken as to change the conditions for BCF. It should be taken into account that the biodiversity micro-credit line established with FFSA already fulfils the GEF conditions, if it is redesigned to a permanent mechanism.

The overall rating for this project outcome as "Marginally Unsatisfactory" takes into account that the failure to establish an endowment fund till the end of the project is largely due to reasons beyod the responsibility of the project.

3.4 Assessment of Project Achievements according to OECD-DAC Standards

The OECD-DAC criteria are a standardised way how to look at the achievements of a project. Many of the issues have in principal already been dealt with in the previous chapter but from different perspectives. In order to avoid duplication, this chapter has therefore been drafted in a very concise way.

In the following lists of key issues dots (●) represent prevailingly positive results, while circles (○) indicate results with certain weaknesses.

3.4.1 Relevance

The project is rated as highly relevant ("Highly Satisfactory" in respect to its relevance) as it, among other aspects,

- addresses issues of global importance for biodiversity conservation including the preservation of the habitats for globally threatened species,
- aims at the conservation of ecosystems and habitat types for which the GoK has a global responsibility,
- combines ecological with socio-economic goals,

- addresses both the enhancement of the enabling environment for sustainable wetland management with concrete action on the ground,
- selected project areas with suitable characteristics for demonstration, replication and dissemination,
- is in line with international commitments made by the GoK (international environmental conventions),
- addresses issues which are important for a large proportion of Kazakhstan's rural population and hence for the sustainable development of the country,
- pursues a clear and consistent intervention logic,
- is in line with the priorities outlined by GEF operational policies.

3.4.2 Effectiveness

In respect to its effectiveness, the project is rated "Satisfactory" to "Highly Satisfactory" as it, among other aspects,

- o is built on a problem analysis with certain weaknesses (e.g. not taking into account the rural exodus in the post-Soviet era or building on wrong assumptions as regards the level of tourism at the onset of the project),
- achieved the targets of practically all indicators of success or even exceeded them,
- o used a set of indicators of achievement towards the project objective which reflect only a selection of the interventions,
- achieved very good results in three outcomes (rated "Highly Satisfactory"), good results in one outcome (rated "Satisfactory") and insufficient results (rated "Unsatisfactory") in one outcome,
- brought some 465,000 ha of wetlands and steppe area under legal protection,
- o put considerable efforts into establishing monitoring programmes and into training PA staff for monitoring, whereas the monitoring results can hardly be used for management decision,
- introduced modern management plans as a management tool in Kazakhstan,
- increased the management effectiveness in all three demonstration areas (as indicated by the METT scores),
- generated good practice for generating alternative income for local population living around protected areas,
- created models for the sustainable development of wetlands and adjacent steppe areas through working with local communities,
- o was able to set up the Biodiversity Conservation Fund but was not able capitalize it and to make it operational.

3.4.3 Efficiency

The project is rated "Highly Satisfactory" in regard to efficiency, as it, among other aspects,

- conducted most project activities in a timely manner and achieved most project outcomes in line with the time planning of the annual work plans,
- usually selected the most cost-effective way in order to achieve the intended objective,
- o spent only a small portion of the funds allocated for international and regional experts but shifted them to other budget lines such as the one for local short-term experts (resulting in certain shortcomings in information and knowledge transfer),
- temporarily parked the funds foreseen for the *Biodiversity Conservation Fund* with the *Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture* (FFSA) until the Biodiversity Fund becomes operational.

3.4.4 Impact

The project is rated with regard to its impact as "Highly Satisfactory", as it, among other aspects,

- helped create an enabling environment for sustainable wetland conservation and management including amended laws and regulations in favour of wetland conservation and enhanced capacities of management structures,
- successfully promoted awareness for the importance wetlands for biodiversity and development so that this subject now ranks much higher among decision-makes than at the onset of the project,
  - excludes the local population (local resource users) from very large "no access" areas (strictly protected areas, zaprovedniks), although this is not always justified by conservations needs,
- engaged the local population living around the demonstration areas in sustainable livelihood activities, albeit the project could only show sustainable livelihood principles and could not upscale them,
- created examples for good practice in wetland conservation and models that can be replicated in other areas.

3.4.5 Sustainability

The project is rated "Satisfactory" with respect to sustainability as it, among other aspects,

- strengthened institutional structures both on local level in the three demonstration areas as well as on government level,
- mainstreamed wetland conservation issues into several sectors in particular the agricultural, fishery and tourism sectors,
- made local people, particularly school children, aware of the value of wetlands and the need for protecting them,
- created awareness for the importance of wetlands both in the wider public and among national decision-makers,
- helped the GoK to make international commitments, which imposes long-term obligations for wetland conservation,
- is built on a high level of stakeholder participation on local level (in the demonstration areas) and on government level,
  - often deals with local NGOs and CBOs which are "grant-based", i.e. organisations which may cease to exist once external support comes to an end,
- was able to create local organisations which generate jobs and income for the local population,
  - created a Biodiversity Conservation Fund, but was not able to capitalize it with the foreseen amount.

3.4.6 Coherence and Coordination

The project was successful to highly successful in respect to Coherence and Coordination (rated as "Satisfactory" to "Highly Satisfactory") as it, among other aspects,

- could establish long-term partnerships with funding agencies and grant supplying organisations for the development of the regions around Protected Areas ("productive landscape"),
- established in particular a strategic partnership with the *Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture* (FFSA) towards establishing a micro-credit line for environmentally sound investments in the development zone of Protected Areas,
  - did not fully seize the opportunity of establishing long-term partnerships with other PA Administrations in the region for the purpose of knowledge transfer and exchange of experience, i.e. for creating synergies (on administrative level and on local community level),
- could after some initial attempts not further develop the cooperation with international NGOs such as NABU, while cooperation arrangements could be facilitated with other organisations such as RSPB, Southampton University, University of Bologna, FAO, BfN, etc.

3.4.7 Project Management

The project is rated successful to highly successful ("Satisfactory" to "Highly Satisfactory") as regards overall management as it, among other aspects,

- shows a high ownership by the project executing partners, in particular the Forestry and Hunting Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment,
- was steered by a dedicated and engaged Project Steering Committee consisting of representatives from several government institutions, local administrations and the non-governmental sector,
- was managed by a highly dedicated and professional management team, which received a large number of awards and prizes,
- is built on high personal continuity throughout the project's lifespan,
- could rely on professional and uninterrupted backstopping by the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor,
- did not fully take the opportunities to work extensively with international/regional consultants for the purpose of enhancing knowledge transfer and innovation,
- had a diligent financial management which enabled precise spending of all available funds till the end of the project,
- introduced and promoted the concept of biosphere reserves under the MAB programme at a relatively late stage of the project, too late become operational.

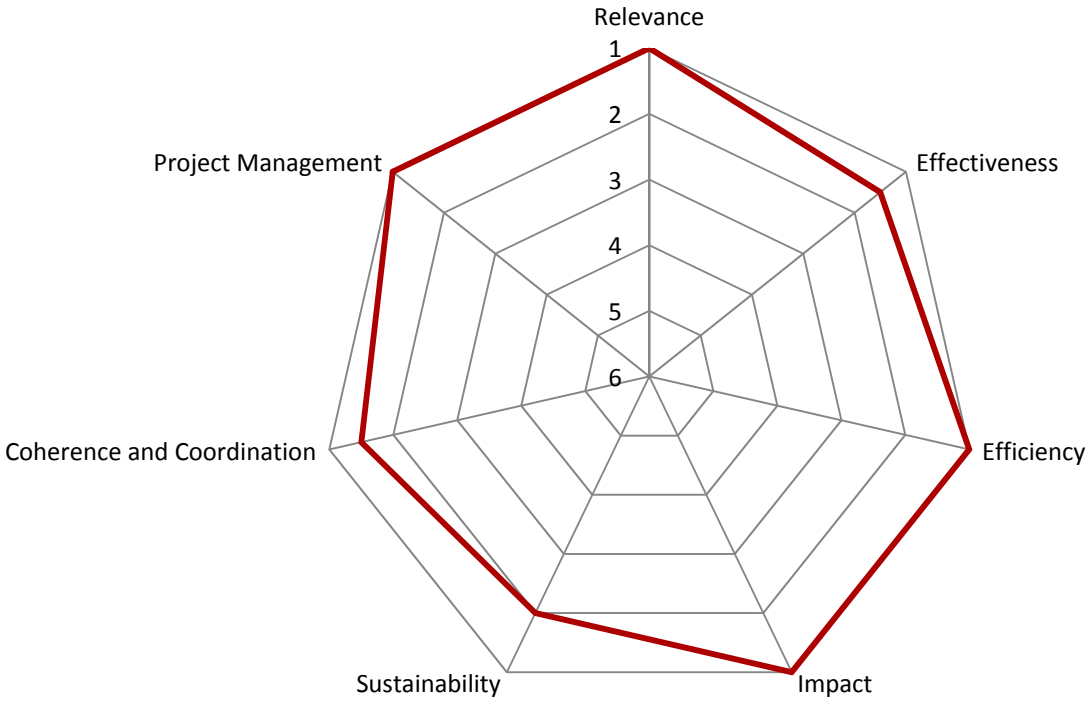

Fig. 7. Rating of the Wetlands Project by using the OECD DAC criteria relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, and with coherence and coordination as well as project management as additional criteria.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Altogether, the Wetlands Project was very successful and it is fully justified that this project is often used as flagship project in the region. Key to this success is surely that the project had enough time for implementation, and had sufficient resources for all necessary sorts of activities.

A substantial part of the project was dedicated to capacity building; the time requirement for capacity building is often under-estimated. Working with people, collective learning and changing habits require long-term engagement, and sound, lasting results cannot be expected within relatively short funding periods. The importance of the long-term promotion of these issues cannot be overstressed. This includes activities such as awareness-building not only for individuals, but for entire communities and societies, accompanied with the change of profound socio-cultural habits and traditions.

The two-level approach, which combines strengthening the enabling environment with concrete operations on the ground, is surely key to success. The achievements in the demonstration areas would have not been possible without an improved enabling environment, and the policy level greatly benefited from the case studies and concrete experiences on the ground.

The establishment and operation of protected areas in Kazakhstan largely continue to be based on the 19th century protected area management philosophy of exclusion of locals in its governance type and therefore fall short in addressing their livelihoods. The historical heritage from the Soviet era has weighed heavily on the conditions governing the creation of protected areas in Kazakhstan and they all appear to have one point in common, that is the almost systematic exclusion of local populations in the areas concerned. Because of this approach, it is difficult if not impossible to adequately manage the existing protected areas sustainably. In the demonstration areas of the Wetlands Project, this is balanced only by the fact that population density has decreased in the rural regions during the last two decades and human pressure is generally moderate to low.

Traditional management options aimed at a clear separation of humans and nature through top-down policies of control and exclusion. In most parts of the world, this is no longer a viable option. There is a growing recognition that humans have often shaped even what is seen as virginal nature. But perhaps the most important reasons for overcoming this separation are practical. Protected area managers usually have neither the capacity nor the resources to continue with the strict separation of humans and nature. The politics of development, of democratisation, and of community and civil society make such options often impossible. Lack of sufficient financial resources further adds to it.

There would be good reasons for accepting humans as integral part of the ecosystem of the demonstration areas:

- Traditional patterns of Kazakh pastoralism involved seasonal migrations of herds and an associated nomadic way of life for pastoralist communities. Such movements helped to avoid overgrazing of specific locations, while ensuring adequate grazing needed to help maintain steppe grasslands and their characteristic species compositions.[viii] The strict exclusion of livestock from Nature Reserves may lead to undesired changes of the vegetation pattern with consequences for fauna and flora composition.
- Fishing at Alakol is mainly for carps, a species which is widespread and abundant, and has probably been introduced to Alakol by man in historic times. Stocking the natural population with artificially reared fingerlings does not make much sense from an ecological point of view, as a five years fishing ban is effective anyhow. Continued fishing on a low level does not harm the population and may under certain circumstances even stimulate population growth (as long as it takes place in the growth phase of population growth).
- Hunting of water birds can be tolerated as long as there is no continuous disturbance by hunters at resting places; in particular in the Ural River Delta and the adjacent Caspian Sea with over a million resting water birds, hunting – when conducted within certain limits – would have only a minor and tolerable effect on bird populations.

The solutions for protected area management that have emerged in the past decades have been based on ideas embodied in buffer-zone management or integrated conservation and development projects. These strategies treat local resident populations as potential partners in protection, and combine the goals of conservation and development. There are three key assumptions about the relationship of protected area management with local participation:

- Greater involvement of local communities will promote better conservation,
- Greater devolution of property rights will lead to better conservation, and
- Improving the incomes of local residents will lead to better conservation because the poor are forced, despite themselves, to overuse resources.

The Wetlands Project has started a transformation that can be characterised as a movement from exclusion to participation. The following issues were noted:

- The participation of local population is confined to the areas adjacent to the PAs, i.e. the buffer zones. The local population has no say in issues regarding the PAs themselves;
- The local population is recipient of training, grants and credits. Participation in decision-making in respect to PAs is confined to the advisory Scientific and Technical Council;
- The form of participation is far from being characterised as “co-management” or “adaptive management”.

Among the various concepts of protected areas, biosphere reserves are among those which best represent the reconciliation between man and nature. Through a zoning system, they promote solutions to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. They are internationally recognized, nominated by national governments and remain under sovereign jurisdiction of the states where they are located. Biosphere reserves serve in some ways as 'living laboratories' for testing out and demonstrating integrated management of land, water and biodiversity. The Wetlands Project decided to promote the designation of the demonstration sites as biosphere reserves and elaborates towards this end the nomination documents. However, this is a critical issue in several respects:

- The insight that biosphere reserves would be an appropriate management option for the demonstration sites came rather late, principally shortly before completion of the project. A first training workshop on the nomination of Biosphere Reserves was conducted by the project in May 2010. Establishing Biosphere Reserves at the demonstration sites would be a paradigm shift as sustainable use is put in the centre of the protected areas, while pure preservation plays a minor role (“managed PA” versus “controlled PA”).
- Biosphere Reserves need technical and financial capacities to deal with sustainable use. Biosphere Reserves need a management structure that is completely different from the present PA management structures at the demonstration sites. The present administrations do not have capacities for dealing with the challenges imposed by agriculture, fishery, rangeland management and other forms of sustainable use (with the exception of ecotourism).

Actually, the GoK is rather late in establishing Biosphere Reserves compared to neighbouring countries (see Table 8). This may have influenced the decision to go for a Biosphere Reserve. The wish to get recognized internationally by the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme may be another incentive. The GoK may have not fully considered other implications.

Table 8. Ramsar Sites and Biosphere Reserves in Kazakhstan in comparison with neighbouring countries.

	Entry into force	Ramsar Sites	Surface area	Biosphere Reserve	No. of Reserves
Armenia	06.11.93	2	492,239	–	0
Azerbaijan	21.05.01	2	99,560	–	0
Georgia	07.06.97	2	34,480	–	0
Kazakhstan	**02.05.07**	**7**	**1,626,768**	**–**	**0**
Kyrgyz Republic	12.03.03	3	676,569	1978	2
Mongolia	08.04.98	11	1,439,530	1990	6
Russian Fed.	11.02.77	35	10,323,767	1978	39
Tajikistan	18.11.01	5	94,600	–	0
Turkmenistan	03.07.09	1	267,124	1978	1
Ukraine	01.12.91	33	744,651	1984	7
Uzbekistan	08.02.02	2	558,400	1978	1

Wetlands play a pivotal role in climate change. The Central Asian steppes and wetlands are particularly sensitive even to slight changes in the amount of precipitation and are therefore highly vulnerable to climate change. Wetlands are likewise vulnerable to the potential impacts of climate change. The interactions of physical, biological and chemical components of the Central Asian wetlands, such as soils, water, plants and animals, enable the wetland to perform many vital functions, for example: water storage, storm protection, flood mitigation, erosion control, groundwater recharge, groundwater discharge, water purification through retention of nutrients, sediments, and pollutants, and stabilization of local climate conditions, particularly rainfall and temperature. Adaptation to climate change is therefore a big challenge for sustaining Kazakhstan's wetland ecosystems, but this challenge has not been addressed by the project.

Recommendations

As terminal evaluation, no recommendations can be made for the future direction of the project and for the improvement of its management. Recommendations are therefore necessarily quite generic and confined to a few general subjects.

1. Make Sustainable Use an Integral Part of Protected Areas Management

The strict separation of man and wildlife in Kazakhstan's protected area system does not represent the global state-of-the-art. More open approaches which strongly promote the participation of local resource users in decision-making the delegation of responsibility to them are necessary to integrate sustainable use principles into protected areas planning. Establishing biosphere reserves is an option that should be further pursued. However, it needs to be considered that biosphere reserves are strongly based on sustainable use and their management structures needs to build on technical expertise and financial resources (e.g. for rangeland management, sustainable agriculture, fishery management, sustainable hunting), which are quite different from Kazakhstan's Nature Reserve concept.

2. Ensure Replication and Upscaling of Project Results

The Wetlands Project has achieved a lot in making government policies more "wetlands-friendly" and prepared the ground for better conserving Kazakhstan's wetlands. Through the three demonstration areas, the project provided "good practice" and models that show how to manage wetlands in a sustainable way. There is, however, a certain risk that the GoK will not fully replicate and upscale the project results in the absence of financial and technical support by the project. UNDP is in a comfortable situation and can keep things alive through so-called "soft assistance" – for example through continuing the policy dialogue on biodiversity and wetland issues. It is recommended to do this not only on an *ad-hoc* basis, but in a systematic way that requires expertise and resources. The open questions regarding the Biodiversity Conservation Fund may be taken as a chance to stay in dialogue with relevant decision-makers in the GoK and to assist the government in scaling up project results.

3. Develop an Exit Strategy for the Biodiversity Conservation Fund

To make the endowment component of the Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF) fully operational, three conditions are required. The BCF should (1) be financially sustainable, (2) target biodiversity conservation at the local level, and (3) the GEF contribution should be co-financed in a 1 to 3 ratio. At the moment, it seems that for reasons that are clearly beyond project responsibility, the 1:3 co-funding rate for the endowment component of BCF is no longer a realistic goal and an exit strategy needs to be developed if this goal will not be achieved within a certain time. Possible solutions may consider to change the principle or amount of matching funds, or to shift the available GEF funds to biodiversity-friendly credit lines already successfully tested under the project.

4. Adapt Kazakhstan's wetlands to Climate Change

Climate change will doubtlessly affect Kazakhstan's wetland and steppe ecosystems as they are particularly sensitive even to slight changes in the amount of precipitation and are therefore highly vulnerable to climate change. Climate change may lead to drastic changes of Kazakhstan's wetland ecosystems with serious consequence for global biodiversity and local livelihood. Climate Change was so far not on the Project's agenda but needs to get integrated into national planning. The Government of Kazakhstan may wish to draw on external assistance for developing concepts for adapting wetlands to climate change.

More specific recommendations are:

- Make sure that no commitments are made in the project planning phase which are beyond the impact of the project. The project took responsibility for capitalizing the Biodiversity Conservation Fund, although this is beyond the project's direct influence.
- Adapt the structure of evaluation report so that they are in line with OECD/DAC evaluation criteria.
- Apply a consistent rating for all GEF operations (4-scale rating versus 6-scale rating).

Endnotes

[i] See http://thegef.org/MonitoringandEvaluation/MEPoliciesProcedures/mepoliciesprocedures.html

[ii] See in particular „GEF Project Cycle“ GEF/C.31/7, May 14, 2007

[iii] The rating system had not been fully in place in 2004 and 2005.

[iv] See also Kreiser & Lachmann: Local Environmental NGOs in Kazakhstan: An Assessment of Efficiency. NABU 2003.

[v] See also ADB (2005): Overview of NGOs/Civil Society. Asian Development Bank.

[vi] One percent interest rate. See Financial Agreement between World Bank and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

[vii] See project document of World Bank-GEF: “The US$ 5 m in GEF financing enables the project to … undertake additional subprojects for innovative forest management activities through the competitive grants program.”

[viii] See e.g. Kazakh “Steppe Conservation and Management” Project funded by UNDP-GEF.

Annexes

Annex 1: Evaluation TORs
Annex 2: Rating Tables
Annex 3: Itinerary
Annex 4. List of persons interviewed
Annex 5: Summary of field visists
Annex 6: List of documents reviewed
Annex 7: Publications produced by the Wetlands Project
Annex 8: Letters of thanks, diplomas and certificates of honour
Annex 9: GEF Tracking tool (METT)

Annex 1: Evaluation TORs

Terms of Reference
For Project Final Evaluation

UNDP/GEF/Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan Project
'Integrated Conservation of Priority Globally Significant Migratory Bird Wetland Habitat: Demonstration at Three Project Sites'

Functional Title:	Independent International Consultant/Team Leader – Final Evaluation
Duration:	01.05.2011- 30.06.2011 (32 working days)
Terms of payment:	Lump sum payable upon satisfactory completion and approval by UNDP of all deliverables, including the Evaluation Report
Travel costs:	Consultant's in-country mission costs will be paid separately.

I. Introduction

In accordance with UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policies and procedures, all regular and medium-size projects supported by GEF should undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation.

The Final Evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and achievement of global and national environmental goals.

The Final Evaluation also identifies/documents lessons learned and makes recommendations that project partners and stakeholders might use to improve the design and implementation of other similar projects and programmes.

The evaluation is to be undertaken in accordance with the "GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy"(see http://thegef.org/MonitoringandEvaluation/MEPoliciesProcedures/mepoliciesprocedures.html).

Evaluations in the GEF explore five major criteria:

(i) Relevance – the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time.
(ii) Effectiveness – the extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
(iii) Efficiency – the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.
(iv) Results – the positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short-to medium term outcomes, and longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects and other, local effects.
(v) 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.

This Final Evaluation is undertaken by the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre as the GEF Implementing Agency for this project and aims to provide managers (at the level of regulatory bodies of the Ministry of Environment Protection and the Ministry of Agriculture, and UNDP/GEF) with a comprehensive overall assessment of the project and with a strategy for replicat-

ing the results. It also provides the basis for learning and accountability for managers and stakeholders.

II. Project Description

The Republic of Kazakhstan is the ninth largest country in the world. Located in the center of Eurasia, Kazakhstan harbors a distinctive and varied landscape. Nearly every biogeographic zone can be found here, from the forest-steppe of the Siberian lowland, to the Caspian Sea coastline and the central desert steppe, up to the alpine systems of the Tien Shan Mountains. This ecological diversity supports Kazakhstan's globally important plant and animal life. Over 6,000 species of plants are known to occur here and fourteen percent of these species are endemic. The animal assemblage is equally as diverse. Approximately 489 species of birds have been found in Kazakhstan.

Two of the world's major flyways and their respective branches, the Central Asian-Indian Flyway and the East African Flyway, converge on Kazakhstan's Eurasian wetlands. This fact makes these wetlands especially important for migratory birds as they pass through on their way north from Africa and India and south from Europe and arctic Russia. In essence, Kazakhstan is an international migratory bird "hub". Birds from as far away as Italy and Finland on the west to Yakutia on the East and from the Arctic in the north and Australia to the south rely on wetlands resources in Kazakhstan for nesting and feeding habitat. In fact, Kazakhstan supports the largest population (over 130 species) of waterfowl in Asia. It is estimated that over 50 million birds migrate semi-annually through Kazakhstan from winter feeding grounds to summer nesting grounds and back again. Approximately 20% of these are estimated to nest in Kazakhstan. As such, Kazakhstan is one of the priority areas for wetland conservation in this part of the world.

The goal of the project is to demonstrate integrated methods of conservation and sustainable use of ***biological diversity in the three priority wetlands.***

The proposed project will establish the basis for the development and testing of an integrated and participatory approach to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in three priority wetland sites (Ural River Delta and adjacent Caspian Sea coast, Tengiz-Korgalzhyn and Alakol-Sassykkol lake systems). The said sites lie along globally significant migratory flyways.

The GEF alternative is designed to provide a policy and regulatory framework to support wetland conservation and sustainable use. There are several dozens of wetland sites in Kazakhstan that meet Ramsar criteria and are of recognized global significance for their importance to Euro-Asian migratory birdlife. The GEF alternative is designed at the ground level to integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in three priority protected sites and the relevant surrounding landscape. The three protected sites lie along different migratory flyways which enables the project to demonstrate solutions to different challenges facing management of Kazakhstan's wetland biodiversity resources:

1) The Ural River Delta wetland will enable the project to demonstrate locally based public-private, multiple-use wetland management with an emphasis in the productive landscape on demonstrating effective partnerships between public (government), NGOs, and the private (commercial) organizations.

2) The Tengiz-Kurgaldzhin site will enable the project to demonstrate a more open and effective management approach for the reserve in Kazakhstan's new social and economic landscape. Emphasis will be placed upon demonstrating more sustainable wetland resource management including the Nura river basin resources.

3) Alakol-Sassykol site will enable the project to demonstrate a more open and effective management approach for the reserve. Emphasis in the surrounding productive landscape will be on developing commercially viable, yet sustainable and biodiversity-friendly economic activities including ecotourism.

Main expected outputs of the project are as follows:

1. A national integrated institutional, policy and regulatory framework for wetland biodiversity conservation
2. Strengthened protected area operations
3. Increased stakeholder awareness and support
4. Stakeholders empowered to sustainably utilize the productive landscape around priority sites
5. Migratory bird wetland conservation fund.

From the project design and implementation perspective, key stakeholders of this project are as follows:

- Forestry and Hunting Committee of the RK MoA, Ministry of Environment Protection;
- protected area staff and management;
- communities in areas surrounding the three project wetland sites;
- the private sector in project sites involved in fisheries, agriculture, and tourism;
- global community.

The project document was signed on August 20, 2003; the project commenced on June 15, 2004. The total project budget is U.S.$ 35,945,000, including the GEF input of U.S.$ 8.71 million Government parallel financing of U.S.$ 24.27 million and third-party parallel financing of U.S.$2,965,000.

The Forestry and Hunting Committee of the RK Ministry of Agriculture is the project implementing Agency; the Ministry of Environment Protection is the coordinating agency.

Mid-term project evaluation was performed in November 2007. According to the mid-term monitoring report, the overall evaluation was positive and reflects a 'Satisfactory' rating. The report has noted that the Project had achieved much, but it still has many objectives to address. The project performs in a very satisfactory manner, contributing to improved management of the two existing protected areas and setting the stage for establishment of the third one. In the remaining ecosystems, the project is yet to eliminate threats and demonstrate integrated conservation and sustainable use.

This full-scale project is one of the first GEF projects implemented in Kazakhstan via UNDP.

III. Objectives of the evaluation

Evaluation aims to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the project and provides an opportunity to assess the strategies, results, problems and limitations. In this activity the project will be evaluated on the basis of the indicators presented in the logical framework of the project (see Appendix B).

The main purpose of the evaluation is to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of project activities in relation to the stated objective. The evaluation is expected to produce possible recommendations on:

- the key elements of success of the project and further steps to be taken to secure successful initiatives in all project sites;
- any gaps remaining after the project implementation to be addressed in further initiatives by the partners and the Government;
- identifying risks to the sustainability of the project initiatives to be considered by the partners in the course of management of wetlands in future.

The Final Evaluation is to consider the currently evolving policy and economic climate in consideration of the risks and the further development of the project initiatives.

The Final Evaluation serves as an agent of change and plays a critical role in supporting accountability. The emphasis of the evaluation should be the following:

<u>Project indicators</u>
Final evaluators will assess the achievement of indicators and review the work plan, planned duration and budget of the project.

Implementation
The evaluation will assess the implementation of the project in terms of quality and timeliness of inputs and efficiency and effectiveness of activities carried out. Also, the effectiveness of management as well as the quality and timeliness of monitoring and backstopping by all parties to the project should be evaluated. In particular, the evaluation is to assess the Project team's use of adaptive management in project implementation and the Project team's fulfillment of Management Responses to evaluation recommendations made during the mid-term evaluation in November 2007.

Project outputs, outcomes and impact
The evaluation will assess the outputs, outcomes and impact achieved by the project as well as the likely sustainability of project results. This should encompass an assessment of the achievement of the immediate objectives and the contribution to attaining the overall objective of the project. The evaluation should also assess the extent to which the implementation of the project has been inclusive of relevant stakeholders and to which it has been able to create collaboration between different partners. The evaluation will also examine if the project has had significant unexpected effects, whether of beneficial or detrimental nature.

The Final Evaluation will also cover the following aspects:

1. Progress Towards Results

Changes in development conditions. Address the following questions, with a focus on the perception of change among stakeholders:
- ✓ Have critically endangered globally significant species been properly and adequately protected within the wetlands?
- ✓ Have there been changes in local stakeholder behaviour (i.e. threats, number of protocols, etc.) that have contributed to improved conservation? If not, why not?
- ✓ Is there distinct improvement in biodiversity information turnover and use in decision making among wetland stakeholders?
- ✓ Has awareness on biodiversity conservation and subsequent public participation in biodiversity monitoring and management increased as a result of the project?
- ✓ Is there adequate territorial planning in place ensuring long-term conservation of biodiversity and cultural values?

Measurement of change*:* Progress towards results should be based on a comparison of indicators before and after (so far) the project intervention. Progress can also be assessed by comparing conditions in the project site to conditions in similar unmanaged sites.

Project strategy: how and why outcomes (listed as outputs in the project document) and strategies contribute to the achievement of the expected results:
- examine their relevance and whether they provide the most effective route towards results.

Sustainability: Extent to which the benefits of the project will continue, within or outside the project area, after it has come to an end. Relevant factors include for example: development of a sustainability strategy, establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms, mainstreaming project objectives into the economy.

Gender perspective: Extent to which the project accounts for gender differences when developing and applying project interventions. How are gender considerations mainstreamed into project interventions?

2. Project's Adaptive Management Framework

(a) Monitoring Systems
- ✓ Assess the monitoring tools currently being used:

- Do they provide the necessary information?
- Do they involve key partners?
- Are they efficient?

- Ensure the monitoring system, including performance indicators, at least meets GEF minimum requirements[1]. Apply SMART indicators as necessary.

✓ Apply the GEF Tracking Tool and provide a description of comparison with initial application of the tool.

(b) Risk Management

✓ Validate whether the risks identified in the project document and PIRs are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate. If not, explain why. Describe any additional risks identified and suggest risk ratings and possible risk management strategies to be adopted.

✓ Assess the project's risk identification and management systems:
  - Is the GEF-UNDP Risk Management System[2] appropriately applied (with particular emphasis on the financial risks related to the trust fund)?
  - How can the GEF-UNDP Risk Management System be used to strengthen project management?

(c) Work Planning

✓ Assess the use of the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to it
  - Ensure the logical framework meets GEF-UNDP requirements in terms of format and content
  - What impact did the retro-fitting of impact indicators have on project management?

✓ Assess the use of routinely updated workplans.

✓ Assess the use of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities

✓ Are works planning processes result-based[3]?

✓ Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions. Any irregularities must be noted.

(d) Reporting

✓ Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management

✓ Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

3. Underlying Factors

✓ Assess the underlying factors beyond the project's immediate control that influence outcomes and results. Consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of the project's management strategies for these factors.

✓ Re-test the assumptions made by the project management and identify new assumptions that should be made.

✓ Assess the effect of any incorrect assumptions made by the project.

4. UNDP Contribution

✓ Assess the role of UNDP against the requirements set out in the UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results. Consider:

[1] See section 3.2 of the GEF's "Monitoring and Evaluation Policies and Procedures", available at http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html

[2] UNDP-GEF's system is based on the Atlas Risk Module. See the UNDP-GEF Risk Management Strategy resource kit, available as Annex XI at http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html

[3] RBM Support documents are available at http://www.undp.org/eo/methodologies.htm

- Field visits
- Steering Committee/TOR follow-up and analysis
- PIR preparation and follow-up
- GEF guidance

✓ Consider the new UNDP requirements outlined in the UNDP User Guide[4], especially the Project Assurance role, and ensure they are incorporated into the project's adaptive management framework.

✓ Assess the contribution to the project from UNDP "soft" assistance (i.e. policy advice & dialogue, advocacy, and coordination).

5. Partnership Strategy

✓ Assess how partners are involved in the project's adaptive management framework:
- Involving partners and stakeholders in the selection of indicators and other measures of performance;
- Using already existing data and statistics;
- Analysing progress towards results and determining project strategies.

✓ Identify opportunities for stronger substantive partnerships;

✓ Assess how local stakeholders participate in project management and decision-making. Include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project and suggestions for improvement if necessary.

✓ Consider the dissemination of project information to partners and stakeholders and if necessary suggest more appropriate mechanisms.

The Final Evaluation is to consider that a mid-term evaluation has been completed and that the management of the project has prepared management response to this evaluation and to a certain degree, tailored further activities in the project taking into consideration the recommendations from the mid-term evaluation.

Due to the broad scale of the project objectives and the large territory occupied by the three project sites, it is important for the evaluators to be careful in selecting stakeholders to be included in the evaluation to form as objective a picture of the project results, accomplishments and remaining challenges as possible.

Ownership of the project processes and outcomes by the key stakeholders will be one of the key factors in project success to achieve project sustainability and thus the evaluators are asked to make an objective assessment of the ownership of the project outcomes/results by the key stakeholders.

IV. Key products of expected evaluation

The key product expected from this final evaluation is a comprehensive analytical report in English that should, at least, include the following contents:

Please note that some of the categories in the findings and conclusions need to be rated in conformity with the GEF guidelines for final evaluations.

1. Executive summary

• Brief description of project
• Context and purpose of the evaluation
• Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

2. Introduction

[4] The UNDP User Guide is currently only available on UNDP's intranet. However UNDP can provide the necessary section on roles and responsibility from http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/rmoverview/progprojorg/?src=print

• Purpose of the evaluation
• Key issues addressed
• Methodology of the evaluation
• Structure of the evaluation

3. The project(s) and its development context
• Project start and its duration
• Problems that the project seek to address
• Immediate and development objectives of the project
• Main stakeholders
• Results expected

4. Findings and Conclusions

In addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (R) should be rated using the following divisions: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory.

TABLE 1: CRITERIA USED TO EVALUATE THE PROJECT BY THE FINAL EVALUATION TEAM

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Project is expected to achieve or exceed **all** its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as "good practice".
Satisfactory (S)	Project is expected to achieve **most** of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.
Marginally Satisfactory (MS)	Project is expected to achieve **most** of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve **some** of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits.
Marginally Unsatisfactory (MU)	Project is expected to achieve **some** of its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only **some** of its major global environmental objectives.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Project is expected **not** to achieve **most** of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits**.**
Highly Unsatisfactory (U)	The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, **any** of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.

4.1. Project Formulation

- Conceptualization/Design (R). This should assess the approach used in design and an appreciation of the appropriateness of problem conceptualization and whether the selected intervention strategy addressed the root causes and principal threats in the project area. It should also include an assessment of the logical framework and whether the different project components and activities proposed to achieve the objective were appropriate, viable and responded to contextual institutional, legal and regulatory settings of the project. It should also assess the indicators defined for guiding implementation and measurement of achievement and whether lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) were incorporated into project design.

- Country-ownership/Drivenness. Assess the extent to which the project idea/conceptualization had its origin within national, sectoral and development plans and focuses on national environment and development interests.

- Stakeholder participation (R) Assess information dissemination, consultation, and "stakeholder" participation in design stages.

- Replication approach. Determine the ways in which lessons and experiences coming out of the project were/are to be replicated or scaled up in the design and implementation of other projects (this also related to actual practices undertaken during implementation).

- Other aspects to assess in the review of Project formulation approaches would be UNDP comparative advantage as IA for this project; the consideration of linkages between projects and other interventions within the sector, cost effectiveness, and the definition of clear and appropriate management arrangements at the design stage.

4.2. Project Implementation

- Implementation Approach (R). This should include assessments of the following aspects:

  (i) The use of the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to this as a response to changing conditions and/or feedback from M and E activities if required.

  (ii) Other elements that indicate adaptive management such as comprehensive and realistic work plans routinely developed that reflect adaptive management and/or; changes in management arrangements to enhance implementation.

  (iii) The project's use/establishment of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities.

  (iv) The general operational relationships between the institutions involved and others and how these relationships have contributed to effective implementation and achievement of project objectives.

  (v) Technical capacities associated with the project and their role in project development, management and achievements.

- Monitoring and evaluation (R). Including an assessment as to whether there has been adequate periodic oversight of activities during implementation to establish the extent to which inputs, work schedules, other required actions and outputs are proceeding according to plan; whether formal evaluations have been held and whether action has been taken on the results of this monitoring oversight and evaluation reports.

- Stakeholder participation (R). This should include assessments of the mechanisms for information dissemination in project implementation and the extent of stakeholder participation in management, emphasizing the following:

  (i) The production and dissemination of information generated by the project.

  (ii) Local resource users and NGOs participation in project implementation and decision making and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project in this arena.

  (iii) The establishment of partnerships and collaborative relationships developed by the project with local, national and international entities and the effects they have had on project implementation.

  (iv) Involvement of governmental institutions in project implementation, the extent of governmental support of the project.

- Financial Planning: Including an assessment of:

  (i) The actual project cost by objectives, outputs, activities

  (ii) The cost-effectiveness of achievements

  (iii) Financial management (including disbursement issues)

  (iv) Co-financing[5].

- Sustainability. Extent to which the benefits of the project will continue, within or outside the project domain, after it has come to an end. Relevant factors include for example: development of a sustainability strategy, establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms, mainstreaming project objectives into the economy or community production activities.

- Execution and implementation modalities. This should consider the effectiveness of the UNDP counterpart and Project Co-ordination Unit participation in selection, recruitment, assignment of experts, consultants and national counterpart staff members and in the definition of tasks and responsibilities; quantity, quality and timeliness of inputs for the project with respect to execution responsibilities, enactment of necessary legislation and budgetary provisions and extent to which these may have affected implementation and sustainability of the Project; quality and timeliness of inputs by UNDP and GoC and other parties responsible for providing inputs to the project, and the extent to which this may have affected the smooth implementation of the project.

4.3. Results

- Attainment of Outcomes/ Achievement of objectives (R)*:* Including a description *and rating* of the extent to which the project's objectives (environmental and developmental) were achieved using Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory ratings. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), the evaluators should seek to determine it through the use of special methodologies so that achievements, results and impacts can be properly established.

- This section should also include reviews of the following:

- Sustainability*:* Including an appreciation of the extent to which benefits continue, within or outside the project domain after GEF assistance/external assistance in this phase has come to an end.

- Contribution to upgrading skills of the national staff.

5. Recommendations

- Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
- Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
- Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives.

6. Lessons learned

This should highlight the best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success.

7. Evaluation report Annexes

- Evaluation TORs

[5] Please see guidelines at the end of Annex 1 of these TORs for reporting of co-financing

- Itinerary
- List of persons interviewed
- Summary of field visists
- List of documents reviewed
- Questionnaire used and summary of results
- Final GEF Tracking tool (METT – prepared by national project team and reviewed/commented by evaluator prior to its finalization)

The length of the final evaluation report shall not exceed 50 pages in total (not including annexes).

8. Evaluation team

A team of independent experts composed of one international consultant or team leader and one national consultant will conduct the evaluation. The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities. The consultants shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Former cooperation with GEF is an advantage.

Team Qualities:

(i) Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
(ii) Experience applying participatory monitoring approaches;
(iii) Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
(iv) Recent knowledge of the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy;
(v) Recent knowledge of UNDP's results-based evaluation policies and procedures
(vi) Competence in Adaptive Management, as applied to conservation or natural resource management projects;
(vii) Recognized expertise in the management and sustainable use of wetlands in Central Asian ecosystems;
(viii) Familiarity with policies and management structures of protected areas, agriculture, fishing and hunting industries in Kazakhstan;
(ix) Demonstrable analytical skills;
(x) Work experience in relevant areas for at least 10 years;
(xi) Experience with multilateral or bilateral supported conservation projects;
(xii) Project evaluation experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
(xiii) Excellent English communication skills.

Specifically, the international expert (team leader) will perform the following tasks:

- Lead and manage the evaluation mission;
- Design the detailed evaluation scope and methodology (including the methods for data collection and analysis);
- Assist in drafting terms of reference of the national consultant;
- Decide the division of labor within the evaluation team;
- Conduct an analysis of the outcome, outputs and partnership strategy (as per the scope of the evaluation described above);
- Draft related parts of the evaluation report;
- Finalize the whole evaluation report taking into account feedback from the project staff, UNDP and the project implementing agency.

Individual consultants are invited to submit applications together with their CV for a position.
Applications are welcome from anyone who feels they can contribute to the team because they possess three or more of the listed qualities. Obviously, the more qualities can be demonstrated, the better is the chance of selection.

The evaluation will be undertaken in line with GEF principles[6]:

• Independence
• Impartiality
• Transparency
• Disclosure
• Ethics
• Partnership
• Competencies and Capacities
• Credibility
• Utility.

The evaluators must be independent from both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of assistance. Therefore, applications will not be considered from evaluators, who have had any direct involvement with the design or implementation of the project. This may apply equally to evaluators who are associated with organizations, universities or entities that are, or have been, involved in the PA decision-making process and/or delivery of the project. Any previous association with the project, the RK MoA Forestry and Hunting Commiuttee, the Ministry of Environment Protection, UNDP in Kazakhstan or other partners/stakeholders must be disclosed in the application.

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

If individual evaluators are selected, UNDP will appoint one Team Leader. The Team Leader will have overall responsibility for the delivery and quality of the evaluation products. Team roles and responsibilities will be reflected in the individual contracts.

9. Methodology or evaluation approach

An outline of an evaluation approach is provided below, however, the evaluation team is responsible for revising the approach as necessary. Any changes should be in line with international criteria and professional norms and standards (as adopted by the UN Evaluation Group[7]). They must be also cleared by UNDP before being applied by the evaluation team.

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

The evaluation should provide as much gender disaggregated data as possible.

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

- Documentation review - the list of documentation to be reviewed is included in Annex A to the Terms of Reference;
- Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at minimum: UNDP in Kazakhstan, UNDP/GEF RTA, the RK MoA Forestry and Hunting Commiuttee, the RK Ministry of Environment Protection, project team, members of the Project Steering Committee, Biodiversity Conservation Fund of Kazakhstan, representatives of key akimats, NGOs, etc.;
- Field visits;
- Questionnaires;
- Participatory techniques and other approaches for the gathering and analysis of data.

[6] See p.16 of the GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
[7] See http://www.uneval.org/

10. Implementation Arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation lies with UNDP in Kazakhstan. UNDP project office in Kazakhstan is the main operational point for the evaluation responsible for liaising with the project team to set up the stakeholder interviews, arranges the field visits and co-ordinate with the Executing Agency and other counterparts. UNDP in Kazakhstan will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Implementation Unit will be responsible for liaising with the evaulation team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements.

The Contract will come into effect on 1 May 2011, and expire on 30 June 2011.

The report shall be submitted to the UNDP Project office in Kazakhstan (Ms. Victoria Baigazina, by e mail victoria.baigazina@undp.org or by address: 26 Bukeikhan Str., Astana, (8-7172) 59-25-50, fax 59-25-40).

Prior to approval of the final report, a draft version shall be circulated for comments to government counterparts and project management: the Project Director and Directors of the three PAs, and members of the project steering committee representing the following institutions:

- Ministry of Environment Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Forestry and Hunting Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Ministry of Education and Science
- RK Ministry of Finance
- RK MoA Water Resources Committee
- Fishery Committee of the RK MoA
- Eco-Forum NGO
- Atyrau Oblast Akimat
- Akimats of Alakol Raion of Almaty Oblast, Urdzhar Raion of East Kazakhstan Oblast, Korgalzhyn Raion of Akmola Oblast
- UN Development Programme in Kazakhstan.

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

The activity and timeframe are broken down as follows:

Activity	Timeframe and responsible party
Desk review	6 days by the international consultant and national consultant
Visits to the field, interviews, questionnaires, debriefings	10 days by the international and national consultants
Preparation of draft report, validation of preliminary findings with stakeholders through circulation of initial reports for comments, meetings and other types of feedback mechanisms:	13 days by the international and national consultants
Finalization of the evaluation report (incorporating comments received on first draft)	3 days by the international consultant

Expected results and payments:

No.	Results	Timing	Amount (optional)
1	Desk reviewed	1-16 May	1st tranche (20%)
2	Field visits of three project PAs (meeting with UNDP Kazakhstan CO, Implementing Agency, the Foresrty and Hunting Commette of the MA of	17-26 May	According to UNDP procedures

	the RK and other project partners).		
3	First version of Final Evaluation Report	15 June	2nd tranche (20%)
4	Receiving the comments from National Partners and UNDP	24 June	
5	Final version of Final Evaluation Report	30 June	3rd tranche (60%)

Working Days:
Team Leader (international expert) – 32 working days including 10 calendar days with 17-26 May 2011 field visits.

APPLICATION: Please send your applications and a brief concept paper (no more than 5 pages outlining the approach and methodology you will apply to achieve the assignment) to Ms. Aliya Akhmetova, Programme Assistant, at 26 Bukeikhan Street, Astana, 010000, Kazakhstan; e-mail: aliya.akhmetova@undp.org. Deadline for applications is 28/03/2011**.**

11. FE Terms of Reference Annexes:

Annex A: List of documents to be reviewed
Annex B: Rating tables
Annex C: Co-financing table
Annex D: Final stage METT
Annex E: Terminology in the GEF Guidelines to Terminal Evaluation
Annex F: Logical Framework

Following documents can be used as a basis for evaluation of the project (titles underlined are available in Russian with an English annotation):

Document	**Description**
Project document	The Project Document and Logframes
Project reports	Project Inception Reports, Annual Project Reports for 2004-2010 Mid term Evaluation report
Annual Project Report to GEF	Project Implementation Review for 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010
Minutes	Minutes of the Project Steering Committee's meetings; Meetings with experts, team staff etc.
Other relevant materials	Field scientific research reports, social economic research report, thematic maps, GEF Tracking tools and etc.
Information materials produced by the project activities	President Decree about Accedence of the Rebuplic of Kazakhstan to Ramsar Convention, Water code, Protected Areas RK Law, Fauna protection RK Law, Amendments to wetland conservation legislation and other legislative acts PA Management Plans (3 PAs), biodiversity and environmental system monitoring Programme, Globally Significant Bird Species Management Action Plans, Capacity assessment of project Pas, thematic mapping for the three project sites Environmental Education Programme, Communication strategy of the Wetland Project, Audio and video materials, popular science films, Visit Centre and Nature Meseum establishing Conception. Manuals in rational use of water resourses, sustainable development of agriculture and fishery manuals, interagency agreement, interagency council, Manual on development of alternative livelihoods on three project site, microcredit programme. Biodiversity conservation fund establishing Conception, Fund's reports

Annex 2. Rating Tables

TABLE 1: STATUS OF OBJECTIVE / OUTCOME DELIVERY AS PER MEASURABLE INDICATORS

Project Objective: Government agencies, non-governmental entities, and local communities are maintaining and improving the integrity and viability of Kazakhstan's priority wetland ecosystems

Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level	Level at 30 June 2011	Rating
No. of Dalmatian Pelicans at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn	600	≥600	1,100	HS
No. of White Headed Duck (breeding and non breeding) at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn)	1200	≥1,200	1,080 (reduction of population due to low water levels in key habitats – Saumalkol and Kyzylkol lakes)	MU
No. of Pallid Harriers at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn	70	≥70	800 (increased population due to expanded area of the nature reserve)	HS
No. of Coot at Tengiz-Korgalzhyn	7000	≥7,000	30,000 (favourable conditions at winter grounds (?) and improved habitats)	HS
No. of Dalmatian Pelicans at Alakol-Sassykol	200	≥200	350	HS
No. of Ferruginous Ducks at Alakol-Sassykol	300	≥300	275 (reduced population due to low water levels in key water bodies in 2009)	HS
No. of Relict Gulls at Alakol-Sassykol	2	≥6	187 pairs nested in 2010. It is the first case since the project start when Relict Gull nesting was registered while only 4 pairs were observed in 2004-2009.	HS
No. of Coots at Alakol-Sassykol	18,000	≥18,000	18,000	HS
No. of Little Egrets in Delta of Ural	400	≥400	500	HS
No. of Glossy Ibis in Delta of Ural	300	≥300	1500 (due to the PA establishment and reduction of anthropogenic influence such as prohibition of spring fisheries and reduction of number of small-sized ships)	HS
No. of Great Black-Headed Gulls in Delta of Ural	3000	≥3,000	14,000	HS
No. of Coot in Delta of Ural	4000	≥4,000	7,000	HS
No. of hectares of wetlands under conservation management	279,544 ha	494,970 ha	419,763 ha (draft law of the RK Government on Alakol Reserve expansion is considered for approval by the state bodies)	HS
Water level of Tengiz lake remains constant (required to maintain wetland ecosystems integrity and wetland productivity)	308.5-309.5 m a.s.l.	308.5-309.5 m a.s.l.	308.5-309.5 m a.s.l.	HS
Water level of Alakol remains constant (required to maintain wetland ecosystems integrity and wetland	345.4-347.6 m a.s.l.	345.4-347.6 m a.s.l.	345.43-347.6 m a.s.l.	HS

productivity)					
Number of protected wetlands replicating Management model developed by the Project	0	5	6		HS
Overall rating					**HS**

Outcome 1: National wetland biodiversity conservation policy, regulatory and institutional framework approved and in place.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
1. Relevant international Conventions and agreements ratified by Kazakhstan (CBD, UNESCO WHS, CITES, UNFCCC, UNCCD, Ramsar, Bonn, AEWA)	• 5 Conventions	• 7 Conventions Baseline + AEWA	• 7 Conventions: Baseline + AEWA under consideration; Ramsar, Bonn with direct help of the project; AEWA was lobbied and is under consideration	HS
2. New regulatory and normative acts relevant to wetlands conservation and sustainable use are adopted	• No provisions of wetland conservation in PA law	• Provisions of wetland conservation in PA law	• National register of wetlands of internat'l & national importance approved by Order of the Minister of Agriculture	HS
	• No by-laws on sport and amateurish fishery in law on wildlife	• Decree on sustainable fishery enacted	• Amended law on protection, reproduction and use of wildlife issued	
	• Water Code with no provision on wetlands	• Water Code – includes provisions for wetland conservation and sustainable use	• Rules of classification of water bodies as wetlands of international and national importance approved by Government	
3. Reduction of reported cases of poaching (hunting and fishing) in the project sites				HS
• Korgalzhyn Project Site	• 137	• >20% (109)	• 47	
• Alakol Project Site	• 189	• >20% (151)	• 188	
• Delta of Ural river	• 723+	• >20% (578)	• 312 (48.7% reduction due to the fishing ban in preustuary area)	
Overall rating				**HS**

Outcome 2: Well planned and effective protected area management.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
METT scores				
• Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve	46	65	75	HS
• Alakol Nature Reserve	42	62	77	HS
• Delta of Ural River (Akzhaik)	38	50	59	MS
Size of the protected areas				
• Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve	258,963 ha	543,171 ha	543,171 ha	HS
• Alakol Nature Reserve	19,773 ha	74,799 ha	69,217 ha	MS
• Delta of Ural River	0 ha	50,400 ha	111,500 ha	HS
No. of staff responsible for conservation management at three PA sites				
• Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve	34	62	65	HS
• Alakol Nature Reserve	28	36	32	S
• Delta of Ural river	0	44	89	HS
Overall rating				HS

Outcome 3: Established awareness of wetland biodiversity values among local stakeholders and process for generating lessons learned.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2011	Rating
Level of awareness of the main key stakeholders: Level of awarness was determined based on the survey (questionnaire), in percentage from the totall number of respondents				
• Decision makers – Korgalzhyn	0.7	0.85	85%	HS
• Local communities – Korgalzhyn	0.5	0.8	80%	HS
• Decision makers – Alakol	0.5	0.8	80%	HS
• Local communities – Alakol	0.25	0.6	60%	HS
• Decision makers – Ural River Delta	0.2	0.8	70%	S
• Local communities – Ural River Delta	0.1	0.5	60%	HS
Reduction in use of fire as a tool to improve the quality of pasture lands (ha of affected land)				
• Korgalzhyn Project Site	15,000	≤15,000	0	HS
• Alakol-Sassykol Project Site	575	≤500	25	HS
• Delta of Ural river	265	≤200	18	HS
Number of schools in which the wetland conservation aspects are integrated into the				

optional curricula				
• Korgalzhyn territory	0 schools	7 schools	10 schools	HS
• Alakol-Sassykol territory	0 schools	7 schools	9 schools	HS
• Delta of Ural territory	0 school	4 school	5 schools	HS
Mechanisms and processes for disseminating lessons learnt in Kazakhstan and in the region*	No lessons learnt and dissemination mechanisms	Publications on successful wetlands conservation & management practices (Regional Conf. on Wetland Biodiversity (2007)	Training & experience sharing workshops delivered for staff of 3 project PAs and 3 pilot PAs	HS**
Number of examples of integration/use /dissemination of project methodologies by other projects/organizations	0	10	6	S
Overall rating				**HS**

* Due to favorable climate conditions, activities held among local authorities and nature conservation organizations on enhancement of fire control and public awareness increasing activities according to the official statement of the relevant stakeholders no fires were identified at the Alakol Sasykol project site. – ** Conference took place in May 2011. – *** the three pilot PAs identified for dissemination of practices are Barsakelmes, Ustyurt and Irgiz-Torgai Pas.

Outcome 4: Enabled Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetland Biodiversity in the Productive Landscape.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2010	Rating
No. of households which replaced the destructive activities with the alternative activities provided by the project*				
• Korgalzhyn	0	10	11	S
• Alakol-Sassykol	0	5	25	HS
• Delta of Ural	0	5	5	MS
No. of hectares of productive landscapes contributing to conservation and sustainable use of wetland resources**				
• Korgalzhyn	0	58.000	42,000	S
• Alakol-Sassykol	0	22.500	15,948	S
• Delta of Ural River	0	7.000	7,043	S
Area in % (ha) of wetlands where fishery management system which is benign to biodiver-				

sity has been implemented***				
• Korgalzhyn	0 ha	20% (4,135 ha)	38,2% (7, 895 ha)	HS
• Alakol-Sassykol	0	10% (16,000 ha) (Koshkar-kol lake)	9,8% (15,688 ha)	HS
• Delta of Ural	0	20% (25,000 ha)	45,4% (56,720 ha)	HS
Overall rating				**S**

***** fishery without consideration of optimal intake, unsustainable land use and cattle- breeding, poaching, hunting without consideration of legislation of the RK in the area of wildlife protection, reproduction **and use. – **** through application of scientifically justified systems of land use, improvement of the structure of area under crop, substitution of mineral fertilizers to organic, new technologies and alternative energy sources, including improvement of pasture lands based on functional zoning of agricultural lands surrounding wet**lands. – ***** optimal species composition of commercial stock, optimal number of fishing sites and number of fishing gears, Fishing Rules are complied with and fishing does not result in depletion of fish resources, local communities have assigned fisheries waters is involved in co-management, etc.

Outcome 5: Sustainable financing for wetland conservation.

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status as per 30.06.2010	Rating
1. Biodiversity Conservation Fund established and operational in project territories	No Fund	Fund registered	Fund established, but not operational	US
2. Amount capitalized, in USD	US$0.0	US$6.0 million	US$ 916,000 (15.3%) + US$2.3m are used as amortization fund in frame of World Bank project	US
Overall rating				**US**

TABLE 2: PROJECT RATINGS

Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Marginally Satisfactory (MS), and Unsatisfactory (U)

PROJECT COMPONENT OR OBJECTIVE	RATING SCALE			
	U	MS	S	HS
PROJECT FORMULATION				
Conceptualization/Design			●	
Stakeholder participation				●
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION				
The use of the logical framework				●
Adaptive management				●
Use/establishment of information technologies				●
Operational relationships between the institutions involved				●
Technical capacities				●
Monitoring and evaluation		●		
Stakeholder participation			●	
Production and dissemination of information				●
Local resource users and NGOs participation			●	
Establishment of partnerships			●	
Involvement and support of governmental institutions				●
PROJECT RESULTS				
Attainment of Outcomes/ Achievement of objectives				
• Achievement of objective			●	
• Outcome 1				●
• Outcome 2				●
• Outcome 3				●
• Outcome 4			●	
• Outcome 5	●			
OVERALL PROJECT ACHIEVEMENT & IMPACT			●	

Annex 3: Itinerary

17th May 2011

- Arriving to Astana
- *14.00*. Meeting with PIU (Project Implementing Unit), Director of Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF), with participation of UNDP
- *18.00.* Visit to CFH (Committee of Forestry and Hunting)

18th May 2011

- *7.00.* Driving to Tengiz-Korgalzhyn project site, 130 km - Korgalzhyn village (the district center)
- *10.00.* Visit to Korgalzhyn district authorities (akimat) and a school
- *In the afternoon and till 21.00.* Visits to farms in the project area and to another school in Shal-kar village
- Night in Korgalzhyn

19th May 2011

- *9.00.* Visit to Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve (KSNR) office, meetings with administration and staff, and after - with local NGO and craftsmen.
- *In the afternoon* - visit to KSNR territory (Karazhar post & guesthouses), looking at monitoring plots etc.
- *19.00*. Driving to Astana, night in Astana

20th May 2011

- *9.30.* Visit to Ministry of the Protection of Environment
- *11.00.* Visit to Fund for Financial Support to Agriculture (FFSA)
- *12.30*. Meeting with deputy chairman of the Committee of Science of Ministry of Education and Science in the project office; working with documents in the office
- *In the afternoon* - additional meeting with director of BCF and working with received materials
- Night in Astana

21st May 2011

- *8.30*. Flight to Atyrau, 10.00 - arriving to Atyrau (Ural River Delta project site)
- *12.00.* Visit to Atyrau region authorities (akimat)
- *In the afternoon* - visits to 2 farms (hothouse and tourism facilities) and to "Akzhayik" State Na-ture Reservat's protected area in Ural river delta (with cars and with boats), till the evening.
- Night in Atyrau

22nd May 2011

- *9.30.* Visit to "Akzhayik" SNR office, meeting with administration and staff, and with NGO and a representative of Regional education department
- *14.00 and till evening* - visit to Atyrau fish-breeding factory and to the project area
- *21.50*. Flight to Almaty
- Night in Almaty

23d May 2011

- Driving to Usharal (Alakol-Sasykkol project site) - 650 km
- In the evening - arriving to Usharal
- Night in Usharal

24th May 2011

- *9.00.* Visit to Alakol district authorities (akimat), and to district department of land use planning
- *11.00*. Visit to Alakol State Nature Reserve (ASNR) office, meetings with ASNR staff and administration and with local NGO and craftsmen.
- *14.00 and till evening* - visit to project site to Alakol lake area (guesthouses, tourism zone, irrigation areas, farm with improved grazing areas)
- Night in Usharal

25th May 2011

- *9.00 - 16.00.* Visit to ASNR (ecological routes, new cordon with solar batteries, boat trip) and to Koshkarkol Lake (fish-breeding farm with ponds)
- *17.00*. Driving to Taldykorgan - 350 km
- Night in Taldykorgan

26th May, 2011

- *8.30.* Flight Taldykorgan-Astana
- *11.00*. Arriving to Astana, visit to project office
- *12.30.* Visit to UNDP
- *In the afternoon* - flights of experts back home

Annex 4: List of persons interviewed

	Surname, name	*Affiliation and position*
National level (Astana)		
Project Management Unit		
1	Kerteshev Talgat	Project manager
2	Bessembayeva Zhanel	National expert on economical development
3	Belgubayeva Aray	National protected areas expert
4	Imasheva Aksaule	Expert on procurements
5	Makatov Victor	Expert on data bases ("Automated information system")
Ministries		
6	Mussabayev Khairbek	Deputy Head of Committee of Forestry and Hunting of Ministry of Agriculture
7	Bragin Alexander	Director of Department of Introducing of International Ecological Standards of Ministry of Protection of Environment
8	Khusainova Lazzat	Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Science of Ministry of Education and Science
Financial institutions, UNDP et al.		
9	Kabykeyev Zein	Director of Biodiversity Conservation Fund
10	Tokpay Medet	Director of the Department of Crediting of the Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture
11	Kim Stanislav	Head of Energy and Environment Unit of UNDP, Kazakhstan
12	Baigazina Victoria	Programme Associate of the Energy and Environment Unit of UNDP, Kazakhstan
Tengiz-Korgalzhyn project site		
Site project team		
13	Koshkina Olga	Site biodiversity expert & specialist on ecotourism of Korgalzhyn district akimat
14	Baybakisheva Azhar	Site expert on social-economical development
Regional and local authorities		
15	Batyrkhanov Shynarbek	Deputy Head of Department of Tourism, Physical culture and Sport of Akimat of Akmola region
16	Akkozhina Sagdat	Deputy Akim of Korgalzhyn district
17	Khamitov Sabken	Head of Agriculture Department of Korgalzhyn district
Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve (KSNR)		
18	Aytzhanov Murat	Director of KSNR
19	Ryspayev Berik	Head of Section for science of KSNR
20	Rybakov Boris	Head of Protection service (rangers) of KSNR
21	Luft Nilolay	Head of Section for ecological education and public awareness of KSNR
Other stakeholders and involved persons		
22	Luft Lyudmila	Head of NGO "Rodnik" (guesthouses & propaganda)
23	Kazdarbekov Baybol	Head of NGO "Zhumay" (farmer)
24	Zhunusov Edil	Head of NGO "Merey" (farmer)
25	Kulkayev Zhumazhan	Head of NGO "Birzhan" (farmer)
26	Mukatova Karshyga	Director of school of ecological orientation (Shalkar village)
27	Alimzhanov (family)	Owners of guesthouse in Korgalzhyn village
28	Zhakupbekova Valentina	Crafts-woman (felt items)

Ural River Delta project site		
Site project team		
29	Muratullin Zhanadil	Site (territorial) project coordinator
30	Selyaninova Nadezda	Site biodiversity expert
Regional and local authorities		
31	Abdirov Askar	Deputy Head (Akim) of Atyrau region
32	Kuanov Erbol	Head of Department of Natural resources and Regulations of Nature use of Atyrau region
33	Ryskaliyev Syrym	Head of Department of agriculture of Atyrau region
34	Bekbayeva Karlygash	Head of Tourism section of Department of tourism and sport of Atyrau region
35	Baymukhanova Aliya	Teaching methods specialist of Department of education of Atyrau city
State nature reservat "Akzhayik" (SNRA)		
36	Rakhmetov Elemes	Director of SNRA
37	Syrasheva Nursaule	Deputy Director of SNRA for science
38	Kurmanbayev Arman	Deputy Director of SNRA for protection (ranger service)
39	Ivasenko Alexander	Head of Section for science and monitoring
40	Daulbayev Alimgaly	Head of Section for protection and reproduction of nature complexes and nature use
41	Segizbaeyva Marzhagul	Head of Section for ecological education and tourism
Other stakeholders and involved persons		
42	Kalidullin Rashiden	Director of Atyrau fish hatchery
43	Muratullina Asem	Head of Laboratory of Atyrau fish hatchery
44	Zhanbala Unerbek	Head of farm (working for tourism)
45	Uteshkaliyev Serik	Head of farm (hothouse)
46	Bisenova Zhybek	Director of NGO (Public Fund) "Bolashak"
Alakol-Sasykkol project site		
Site project team		
47	Akhmetzhanov Georgiy	Site (territorial) project coordinator
Regional and local authorities		
48	Zhakanbayev Alibek	Akim of Alakol district
49	Nugumanov Olzhabek	Deputy Akim of Alakol district for agriculture
50	Menlibayeva Saltanat	Deputy Akim of Alakol district for tourism, NGO, social question
Alakol State Nature Reserve (ASNR)		
51	Zhumankulov Maden	Director of ASNR
52	Tursunbayev Valentin	Deputy Director of ASNR for science
53	Mukamadiyeva Ayzhan	Head of Section of science of ASNR
54	Kazhykerey Serikbol	Head of Section of ecological education and public awareness of ASNR
Other stakeholders and involved persons		
55	Kazhynov Erlan	Head of NGO "Alakol Tabigatty"
56	Bektemisova Kulyary	Head of NGO "Ecosistema Alakol"
57	Kurmayev Rinat	Head of NGO "Alakol Kamkor"
58	Smagulov Toylan	Head of NGO "Ecohoasis Alakol"
59	Shybraimov Nurzhan	Head of NGO "Balyk Kamkor"
60	Zhamotin Alexander	Head of NGO "Alakol Center - A"
61	Biyakhmetov Erzhan	Head of Country Production Cooperative "Birlistik"

62	Kaliyeva Kulmaran	Leader of local initiative group of Aktubek village
63	Kabduldinov Satmukhanbet	Leader of local initiative group of Zhaypak village
64	Kurmayev Ruslan	Leader of local initiative group of Usharal town
65	Kim Afrikan	Head of farm “K-Den”
66	Ibraimov Aset	Director of school (Menlibayev named) in Usharal
67	Urustemov Khasen	Teacher for ecological education of school (Menlibayev named) in Usharal

Annex 5: Summary of field visists

National level

Importance of Kazakhstan for wetlands conservation

- Ninth largest country in the world with various landscapes and biogeographic zones, from the forest-steppe of the Siberian lowland, to the Caspian Sea coastline and sand deserts, up to the alpine belt and glaciers of the Tien Shan and taiga forest of Altay mountains.
- Globally important plant and animal life, including 90 globally threatened species (NT, VU, EN, CR).
- Two of the world's major flyways (the Central Asian-Indian and the West Siberian - African) converge on Kazakhstan's Eurasian wetlands.
- An international migratory bird "hub". Birds from as far away as Finland on the west to Yakutia on the East rely on wetlands resources in Kazakhstan for nesting and feeding habitat.
- Over 50 million birds migrate semi-annually through Kazakhstan from winter grounds to summer nesting grounds and back again. Approximately 20% of these are estimated to nest in Kazakhstan.
- Of 121 IBA confirmed by BirdLife International, 74 they are important as wetlands, and 58 of these (with total area of 3,746,251 ha) correspond to three or four of Ramsar criteria.

Threats

The main threats for wetlands in Kazakhstan are unsustainable use of biological resources, unsustainable use of water resources and in some areas uncontrolled visitation & tourism and pollutions. In large scale, the status of wetlands depend not only of local situation and activities, but of national politics and legislation, and without solving of a number of questions at national level the practical solutions on places are almost impossible. The situation to the start of the project was as described below.

Kazakhstan lacks an effective, national wetland conservation policy and program. A national Implementation Program for the Protection of Wetlands was partially developed in 1993. But the required coordination and joint activities among the agencies have not taken place due to frequent organizational changes in GoK Ministries. Similar lack of an integrated approach exists in the legal framework as well. None of existing laws and by-laws give wetlands any specific status. None of them mandate a sustainable use regime for wetlands and none adequately assign specific responsibilities for management of wetland areas.

Water resources in Kazakhstan have been treated as an "open access" resource. Control over volume and method of extraction of water has been inadequate, water use is priced artificially low, and lines of responsibility are not clear.

The institutional, policy, and regulatory framework affecting Kazakhstan's wetlands is incomplete and the application of it is uncoordinated. Several agencies have legal and policy mandates related to proposed project activities though there is no strict authority sharing between the institutions. There is a lack of direct responsibility for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.

The situation in protected areas funding and management became much worse in 1990th than in 1980th in connection with general bad situation in economy, and luck of funds was the reason of drop of protection level. The situation became better in early 2000-th but anyway the funding is low and additional mechanisms of financing are necessary. There is no effective monitoring system for ecosystem status even in PAs with full staff of researchers, and there is general luck of qualification after old generation of specialists left the PAs.

Public awareness on importance of wetlands and threats for them is generally low in Kazakhstan both among population and decision-makers which lead to low attention to wetland problem and conservation.

Results and activities

Two of five project outputs were implemented as whole at national level: “National integrated institutional, policy and regulatory framework for wetland biodiversity conservation and management” and “Migratory Bird and Wetland Conservation Fund”.

The work at national level was carried out on 5 directions: policy and legislation, including connected with international conventions; capacity building; attraction of funding from other agencies for project goals; public awareness and information; creation of the Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF) of Kazakhstan.

Policy and legislation

The project pushed the process of joining of Kazakhstan to Ramsar and Bonn conventions (2005). The substantiation reports were prepared for relevant ministries, the hearings in Ministry of Foreign Affairs were organized. In 2007, the project helped to solve the question with annual fee of Kazakhstan to Ramsar Convention. Designation of all three project sites (Alakol-Sasykkol, Tengiz-Korgalzhyn, Ural Delta) as Ramsar Sites has been done.

Workshop “Implementing the Ramsar and Bonn Convention in Kazakhstan – instruments, opportunities and perspectives” was organized jointly with partners (ACBK et al.), the plan for implementation of the conventions was approved by CFH in 2006. The “List of wetlands of international importance” of 17 sites was prepared after discussions with experts, approved by CFH (2006) and late on - by order of Minister of Agriculture (2010), as priority sites for conservation and for designation as Ramsar sites.

The policy and lobbying work for join of Kazakhstan to AEWA (in frame of CMS) has been done but the process is not finished yet - the question is under consideration in Ministry of Economy.

With participation of the project, the nomination dossier was prepared for the Object of World Nature Heritage “Saryarka- steppes and lakes of Northern Kazakhstan” confirmed by UNESCO, which includes Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve as on of two clusters.

In the project documents, the creation of special “Law on wetlands” was prospected. In course of the project, after discussions with relevant ministries, the idea was rejected as unnecessary and other way was proposed - the correction of existing legislation and creation new by-laws if necessary. The relevant legislation of Kazakhstan was analyzed, the agreements with relevant ministries about joint work on legislation improvement were signed. As results, the term “Wetlands” has been included in “Water Code” of Kazakhstan. A number of proposals were done for Laws “On Wildlife”, “On Specially Protected Areas” etc.; some are adopted, some are currently in Kazakhstan’s parliament for approval. The “Rules for considering wetlands as internationally and nationally important” are approved by Decree of Government (June 2010) and the corresponding list of sites has been approved by order of Minister of Agriculture. Several by-laws and corrections for existing they were prepared and approved for water-use and fishery, for payments and limits for use of wildlife and for fishing. By the project or with its direct participation, they were prepared documents regulating work of all PAs in Kazakhstan: “Rules for elaboration of feasibility studied and economical backgrounds for extension or creation of PA”, “Methodical directions for Nature Chronicle in PA being legal entities”, “Direction for elaboration of Management Plan for PA” etc.

The Interagency Council for effective management of wetlands was established, with participation of Ministry of Protection of Environment, and Committees of Water Resources, of Forestry and Hunting, and of Fishery (of Ministry of Agriculture). The strategic document "Concept of conservation and

rational use of wetlands of the Republic of Kazakhstan till 2020" has been approved.

In frame of joint work with another GEF project (on water management) the "Basin Councils" were established in big river basins, and directors of PAs at project sites became their members.

Capacity building

For improvement of monitoring system at protected areas, the "Automated information system" was elaborated, programmed and introduced for use in three project sites. Later, by the order of CFH, the system has been introduced at 3 more protected areas - Katon-Karagay national park, Markakol and Naurzum nature reserves. Ministry of Finances granted 1 million USD to CFH for introducing the information system in all PAs of Kazakhstan (not only wetlands) in 2012.

Unified methods for complex field research for monitoring, unified methods for hydrology research, as well as recommendations for organization of monitoring of meteorological data influencing wetland ecosystems were elaborated and introduced.

Trainings for several persons from CFH and from relevant ministries were organized on questions of monitoring, ecotourism, trust funds functioning etc., and for persons from project sites and from PIU - for water-use, use of GIS, etc. (including visits to abroad). Republican training for specialists from protected areas of Kazakhstan on elaboration of Management Plans was carried out. Seminar on improvement of protected areas work on public relations was carried out for people from 5 nature reserves and 2 national parks, other trainings (on struggle against steppe fires et al.) were done. A number of visits of persons from one PAs to others were organized for exchange of experience.

Manuals, guidelines, identification books have been published for capacity building.

Attraction of funding from other agencies for project goals

Project worked with GEF Small Grant Program and helped to prepare grant application for initiative groups and NGO at the project sites. Several grants were received and later project followed at these and helped with monitoring, financial reporting etc.

Since 2008 the work with Fund for Financial Support for Agriculture (FFSA) is being done. UNDP has signed an agreement with the FFSA for use UNDP money (1,200,000 USD intended in the future for BCF) for loans at project sites aimed for alternative kinds of activities of local communities. 27 credits are provided at 3 project sites, and these projects are quite successful. In 2011, the 3d phase of credits - "Tabigy Orta" - is started for lands adjacent to protected areas in all Kazakhstan. After repayment the money has to go to BCF, and the interest money are used for operational costs of FFSA. An idea of FFSA for the future - to open large-scale governmental budget credit line for CFH priorities as it is done now for traditional agriculture credits (Ministry of Agriculture priorities). Possible directions - ecotourism, renewable energy etc.

Public awareness and information

A lots of printed materials, both educational or public awareness and scientific (books, leaflets, posters etc.) have been published, and they are distributed widely in Kazakhstan.

Project persons gave presentation about the project and importance of wetlands of the country at tens of seminars, conferences, workshops. Information of the project and wetlands appeared regularly in mass-media.

Project site - www.wetlands.kz - has been created and provided information not only on the project but on wetlands importance, on legislation etc.

A number of meeting were organized (with participation of partners or by the project itself), including final International conference "Conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of wetlands" (Astana, 11-13th May 2011).

Biodiversity Conservation Fund

The BCF has been created on 4th October 2007, as alternative mechanism for funding of conservation of biodiversity. In the project proposal, the creation of "Migratory Bird and Wetland Conservation Fund" was planned. But later after intensive discussions it was decided that it will be more difficult to capitalize money for wetlands and migratory birds only, and for donors and public it is better to have wider field of operations of the fund. The trust funds are absolutely new thing for Kazakhstan and it has taken much efforts to organize BCF. There is no tradition for business in the country to give money as donors - and there are no tax preferences and so on stimulating business to do this.

After its establishment, BCF carried out a lot of meetings and presentations with possible donors - business structures, Ministries, banks etc. The letter on collaboration were sent to 45 the most reach extractive industry and other companies. PR materials were published, set of possible projects was formed, short movies for TV were prepared and demonstrated (including demonstrations in airplanes of "Air Astana"). The post stamps and postcards were issued by "Kazpost" with logo of BCF. The experience of trust funds from other countries was studied.

At the moment, there are 2 stable business partners by the BCF: copper company "Kazakhmys" and "Air Astana" airlines. They provided together 450,000 USD for capitalization. The total capitalization, with GEF money, is 750,000 USD.

Now, the operational cost of the BCF is covered from government program for grants for forest restoration (2,300,000 USD) which is maintained by BCF. By the vision of BCF director, the government support is absolutely necessary for future operation of the BCF.

Evaluation

On policy and legislation work, the project was able to establish wide collaboration with a number of governmental and non-governmental institutions, NGO, other projects et al.. This helped a lot in successful work of the project in these field - by expression of Mr. Bragin from Ministry of Protection of Environments, "this was the project with the most visible and numerous results". The project helped to improve legislation not only on wetland and water use and fishery questions, but on wide range of problems connected with protected areas, wildlife use and protection etc. There are still some gaps in regulations for fisheries but it will be possible to close these after approval of corrections to "Law on Wildlife" which are now in parliament for consideration. The work on Ramsar convention, including designation of Ramsar sites, as well as on CMS, World Nature Heritage, lobbying of AEWA signing was quite good - the only AEWA is still not signed but agreed in relevant ministries and is in Ministry of Economy for approval. Much of this is result of joint efforts of a number of institutions, but the project in most of the cases leaded the process or did key role in lobbying.

In capacity building at national level the achieved results are very good - trainings, seminars, printed manuals etc. allowed to increase qualification of many people from protected areas, governmental agencies, project staff. The only problem here is that the staff is not stable and trained people often leave the job - especially in protected areas where the salaries are very low. It was visible at project sites, too, e.g. in Alakol Nature Reserve. But the project did a lot. The manuals, identification books, rules for monitoring etc. approved by CFH will be used anyway after project termination.

Quite successful was the work for attraction of additional funding for work on places (project sites) from GEF/SGP and via FFSA. But the last used the money of GEF intended for BCF, and the early the money go to BCF the better. Unfortunately, promised co-funding from "AGIP", "NABU", "Zhibek Joly" Company stated in the project document was provided only in small scale (NABU) or not provided at all ("AGIP", "Zhibek Joly") in spite of project efforts. This is clear problem not project implementation but project document planning process.

On public awareness and information, the work was great - is was the most well-known UNDP project in Kazakhstan, not only because of the longest duration (7 years) but due to a number and high quality of printed materials, active work with media, in Internet etc.

The only not quite successful work at national level - the establishment and operationalisation of BCF. The capitalization now is only 750,000 USD as compared with 6,000,000 USD in project document necessary for stable work of the fund. Visible problems here are the lack of a sponsoring traditions, lack of trust of business to any funds, lack of tax preferences for sponsors etc. The active governmental support for work with large companies is needed, as well as future help from UNDP side. UNDP money allocated for the BCF - in total 1,500,000 in project documents - has to be placed there in near future. Only 300,000 of these are already here, and this was conditioned by 50:50 rule (some amount of Kazakhstan money first and then - the same amount from GEF). At the moment, 1,200,000 USD from GEF are used for credits of FFSA and has to be sent to BCF afterwards. But at least the psychologically important figure 1,000,000 USD has to be reached as soon as possible and this will make the work with donors more easy.

As whole, the work at national level can be considered as highly successful to successful.

Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Project Site

Importance and Relevance of the area

- Large wetland system extending over 2,600 km^2;
- One of the most important migratory bird wetlands in Kazakhstan;
- One of the world's largest nesting populations of Greater Flamingo (Phoenicopterus roseus) with 15,000-60,000 ind.
- Breeding of rare and globally threatened bird species like Dalmatian Pelican (Pelecanus crispus - around 600 breeding, up to 3,000-6,000 on passage), White-headed Duck (Oxyura leucocephala - up to 500 ind. breeding, up to 3,500-5,000 on passage), Ferruginous Duck (Aythya nyroca - 50-350 ind.), Sociable Lapwing (Vanellus gregarius - more than 100 pairs) etc.
- Five rare and endemic species of plants: Marsilia strigosa, Damasonium alisma, Eleocharis ox-ilepis, and the relicts Lemna minor and Utricularia intermedia.
- Steppe landscapes that are one of the key sites for conservation of north-east part of Betpakdala population of the critically endangered antelope Saiga.

Conservation Status

Main part of the wetland designated as Ramsar Site in 1974, as a nature reserve in 1975. In the course of the project (in 2008) the nature reserve was included in the List of World Heritage Sites as a part of the "Saryarka - steppes and lakes of Northern Kazakhstan". In 2008, eight Important Bird Areas (IBA) were identified and confirmed by BirdLife International. Steps were undertaken to declare the area UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Threats

1. Unsustainable-use of water resources. The core part of wetland area included in Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve (KNR) was created many years ago artificially with a number of dams at Nura river and the whole system is dependent strictly of the dams condition (part of these were almost destroyed before 2004) and of water income from Nura. Unless managed in an integrated manner, a planned water supply system for the new capital city of Astana with use of water from Nura is a clear potential threat. The site is threatened as well by possible pollution from Astana and by mercury polluted sediment in the bed of the Nura River generated during Soviet times.

2. Unsustainable use of biological resources. Fishing, waterfowl hunting, cattle grazing, hay cutting, reed gathering were done by local communities before the start of the project often at a border of nature reserve causing conflicts with its administration and outside the reserve - causing damage to biodiversity.

3. Uncontrolled visitation/tourism. Tengiz-Korgalzhyn was (and is) a popular destination for foreign birdwatchers but due to low number of their groups the threat of disturbance of birds from their side is actually low. The area as whole became more and more popular among Astana people for recreation, fishing and hunting, and in some places there was an impact for bird population already because of chaotic driving along the lakeshores, destruction of the soil and plant cover, pollution from camping and fires. But to the time of start of the project, this threat was in reality more potential than actual; nevertheless it was clear that it will grow and it was necessary to be prepared for new situation with more tourists, to conserve the biodiversity and get benefits for local communities and the nature reserve.

Local human population was not high at the beginning of the project – the total number in 2003 was around 10 000, and depended in large scale from the nature resources of the area. These are mainly animal husbandry with hay-making, fishery, and for some people hunting. A remarkable perspective exists for the economic development of this territory, based on intensification of animal husbandry and vegetable growing, especially due to proximity to the growing capital of the republic Astana cre-

ating favorable circumstances for livelihood improvement here, including growth of tourism. All this confirms full relevance of the site to the project goals.

Activities and Results of the Project

The management of KNR was strengthened, key infrastructure was improved. Necessary equipment was procured and staff was trained in the effective use of these in field. Information panels, signs etc. were installed; brochures, tourist maps etc. were printed.

A comprehensive biodiversity assessment was conducted in 2004-2005; a list of species to be monitored was compiled, the plots for future monitoring were planned, and the necessary equipment was provided. The systematic monitoring programme includes water quality, habitat quality, bird numbers and resource use. Monitoring data are put in specially developed data base.

Participatory management plan developed according to international standards and with participation of international experts. The plan was elaborated for 5 years (2007-2011), and has to be renewed for next 5-year periods. The management plan is integrated for whole TK complex, incorporating local community resource (e.g. water) use requirements and strategies to mitigate threats from surrounding land use practices.

A feasibility study and legal and socio-economic background studies prepared for enlargement of KNR area. After this, the Governmental decree on the extension was signed, the funds were allocated and the area was increased at 284,208 hectares in 2008.

Ecological zoning was done for the whole project area with use of GIS technology and the zoning maps were used as basis for planning of project activities. Zonation included core protection areas to be excluded from waterfowl hunting (additional areas outside of the reserve) and buffer zones.

For three bird species, Single Species Action Plans (SSAP) were developed (close to AEWA standards) - for Dalmatian Pelican, White-headed Duck, Pallid Harrier. The SSAPs were approved by Committee of Forestry and Hunting and then were implemented by KNR staff.

A Basin Council was established with participation of main water-users, local authorities etc. to solve the water issues. Works on controlling the hydro regime of the lake system were successfully completed and a number of small dams and the big Tabiyak dam were repaired. A required minimum of amount of water for the lakes was determined and agreed upon by the Basin Council. The works for regulation of discharge water amount in Nura River were done for prevention of damage for biodiversity by too strong unexpected floods. As a result, the water level in the lake system is managed much more effectively now then at the beginning of the project, the required amount of water is secured by the participation of the newly created Basin Council on Water Use, the discharge water is coming in accordance with developed recommendation without damage for wildlife.

For the improvement of degraded arable land and grazing areas a number of pilot activities were supported. Training was conducted for local farmers and people in villages to involve them in grant programs and strengthen civil society. As result, 5 projects on improving grazing land were realized with support of GEF Small Grant Program, with the total costs more than US$200,000. The trainings included irrigation/water use training for farmers with instruction on how to integrate biodiversity concerns into their agricultural practices (planting methods & schedules, water use schedules etc.). The demonstration project on use of ecologically save methods against land degrading was done in “Maksat” farm at the area of 340 ha.

As result of works on development of sustainable nature use, there were 10 pasturing areas (remote from villages) where 20% of whole domestic livestock are kept (at the beginning of the project there were 2 pasturing). In the project area, 130,000 ha correspond in 2011 to term “sustainable land use” (in the project log-frame 58,000 ha were planned to 2011).

Training was also provided on alternative income sources - ecotourism, manufacture of handmade goods from felt and clay, fish breeding, including training for local authorities in ecotourism in Moscow.

In the field of education and public awareness, the project provided training for teachers on ecological education, elaborated the special program for facultative on wetlands and their conservation (unique in Kazakhstan), prepared, printed and disseminated a number of education and public awareness materials (books, booklets, posters etc.). Two schools were selected as pilot schools where wide range of activities was performed such as creation of "ecology classroom", ecology pupil teams, participation of schoolchildren in monitoring works etc. For these activities, the schools were equipped with photo-cameras, tents, binoculars, education materials etc. After testing of the ecology programme a brochure was prepared and proposed to regional department of education for use it in all schools of the district. The "Flamingo Festival" was established and conducted several times with the help of the project as well as such celebrations as "Bird Day". In 2009-2010 the "Flamingo Festival" was accomplished mainly for governmental budget in much bigger scale.

The area of the TK Nature Reserve is increased from 284,208 hectares (for 110%) and is 543,171 ha now; a 2-km buffer zone is confirmed around all TKNR borders. The Reserve has achieved much better management (METT 73.9% in 2010 against 47.9% in 2004), including improved facilities and equipment, increased staff number, higher qualifications of workers etc. A modern visitor centre has been established and is being used. The project paid for the design and the government paid for the building itself (approx. USD 800,000); birdwatching hide with information materials has been placed at Isey lake.

The KNR management is accomplished in accordance with "Management Plan", the SSAPs on Dalmatian Pelican, White-headed Duck, Pallid Harrier are in force, too. The monitoring of ecosystems is established and is being done regularly by KNR staff; the monitoring plots planned in course of the project are used; the automatic meteorological station at Sultankeldy lake work; the data are being entered in automatic system of information gathering (data base) and are used for annual reports of KNR to Committee of Forestry and Hunting.

Education on wetland conservation is given in all 22 schools of Korgalzhyn district; the school in Shalkar village became ecologically oriented (this school and another one are using the tents, cameras, notebooks, binoculars etc. received from the project). District schools conduct the nature-conservation events "Wetland Day", "Birds Day", "March of Parks" themselves now with the help of regional authorities.

Alternative business development:

- through micro credits from "Agroinnovation" Fund - national clothes manufacturing (6,800 USD), guesthouse enlargement (40,800 USD), creation of bottlery for "kumys" (national drink from horse milk – 42,800 USD);
- through grants from GEF Small Grant Program and other funds - 5 guesthouses created (31,958 USD);
- 19 women have been trained in manufacturing of souvenirs and national cloches from felt; 9 of them do this job in case of special request; and one of these - Mrs Zhakupbekova from Shalkar village - does this business now professionally having 4 employed women and participating in many exhibitions and fairs.
- One fishery (fish pond) was established («MTS-Korgalzhyn»).

The akimat (local authority) of Korgalzhyn district established in 2010 the programme of ecotourism development and opened "resource center for tourism" with 1 staff person. The construction of "Ethnic Village" is planned for governmental budget money, the funding (411,000 KZT, or USD 2900) was allocated for elaboration of draft design.

The civil activity of local communities has increased - in 2004 there was 1 NGO in ecology field in the district, in 2005-2010 five more NGO were established and are active.

Input of Equipment

- In 2004-2005, 2 cars (UAZ and Niva), 2 motorboats with the engines, portable radio transmitters, and a number of other small items;
- After extension of the KNR area, two living vans were provided for use in new remote parts of the reserve as inspector's posts;
- For the monitoring, portable devise (laboratory) for control of water quality;
- An automatic meteorological station (full set including living van, computer with special soft etc.) and installed at the Karazhar scientific base at Sultankeldy lake;
- A number of small items were provided to pilot schools for ecology classes.

Evaluation of Results

Very good results have been achieved in two directions: improvement of management of KNR and education & public awareness. The area of the KNW was extended considerably, the capacity of the Reserve was increased including better qualification of personnel of all levels, the monitoring system is established and adjusted (but it seems not used actively for real practical needs), much more stable hydro regime of the lake system is secured etc. The educational component became very successful, the numerous prepared and printed education and public awareness materials are widely used, the public awareness is accomplished now by schools themselves under support of local and regional authorities etc.

As a good sample the stable relations with local and regional authorities can be considered, what ensures the stable development of this component without direct support from project side.

Good results have been obtained regarding improved land-use, improvement of pastures, development of infrastructure for community-based tourism. Additional funds attracted from GEF Small Grant Program and from other sources allowed to realize several projects which definitely will be sustainable because these are profitable for local people. The selection of the projects for demonstration can be considered as right but future adoption of this experience will depend of support of local authorities.

Fishery questions could not be solved sufficiently in the absence of an appropriate legislation as well as in the absence of interest for collaboration with the project from the side of local fishermen. The legislation was partly improved with the help of the project at national level, but some questions still not could not be solved. Nevertheless, one fish pond (fish breeding farm) was created ("MTS-Korgalzhyn").

The work with hunting societies (hunting areas) was not quite successful, too; they were not interested in collaboration. The expected game (e.g. pheasants) breeding were not started at project area due to necessity of large amount of money for start of the work as well as to absence of grant support of this direction at project area. But the trainings organized by the project for hunting areas should allow more accurate surveys of hunting species and more sustainable use of wildlife.

Some ideas like "visitor accommodation with wind powered electricity" were not realized due to adjustment of real situation "on the ground" in course of the project. But in fact this does not play substantial role in total success of the project because the same goals - demonstration of alternative energy and source of income - were achieved by another way. Partly it can show too big number of tasks and not quite well evaluation of reality in the project proposal.

Towards the end of the project, the project started to work on the designation of TK as biosphere reserve and aspects such as participatory management, ecological zoning, etc. is in place. Further implementation will be very difficult without the help of the project e.g. for providing expertise, designing a new management structure for the Reserve, etc.

In total, the work at the area was accomplished quite successfully, the planned goals are achieved in sufficient scale, and figures on a number of project indicators became more than planned.

Ural River Delta Project Site

Importance and relevance of the area

- The Ural River Delta (URD) and the nearby Caspian coast is one of the most important wetland for migratory birds on the Western Siberian/Caspian Sea branch of the Western Siberia - Africa Flyway;
- Up to 5 million ducks, up to 500,000 geese, up to 100,00 swans, up to 35,000 Flamingo, up to 10 million waders and up to 2 million Coots use the Ural River Delta and northeast coast of Caspian sea as resting site during migration;
- Rare and endangered breeding bird species include Glossy Ibis (Plegadis falcinellus), Euroasian Spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia), Little Egret (Egretta garzetta), Cattle Egret (Bubulcus ibis), Squacco Heron (Ardeola ralloides), Purple Swamp-hen (Porphyrio porphyrio);
- Mass moult area for swans and other waterfowl;
- Habitation of sturgeons and others especially protected species, such as the Caspian Salmon (Salmo trutta), the Caspian Lamprey (Caspiomezon wagneri), Stenodus leucikhtys;
- Place of occurrence of the Caspian Seal (*Phoca caspica*);

Conservation Status

Till 2009 the small part of territory entered into the hunting area "Zolotyonok". The URD also received some indirect protection because it occurs along the edge of the "North Caspian Reserved Zone", a special environment zone that encompasses all of Kazakhstan's northern Caspian waters. Although there is no proactive management done by the GoK in this zone, the designation helped to leverage work by oil companies to avoid impacting biodiversity resources adversely in the zone. In 2008, Important Bird Area "Ural River Delta" was identified and confirmed by BirdLife International. In 2009, the State Nature Reserve "Akzhayik" was established in the delta with direct participation of the project, at the area of 111,500 ha and additional 2-km protected zone of 29,436 ha.

Threats

1. Unsustainable use of biological resources. Most of the URD is without any special biodiversity management regime. The level of protection and sustainable-use management is inadequate. Approximately 7,300 people inhabit six villages in the area immediately adjacent to URD (without taking into consideration Atyrau city which is not far). The main kinds of economic activity are fishing and agriculture (cattle raising, farming, hay making, reed harvesting), done without taking into account parameters of sustainable use of resources. In URD, there are some hunting and fishery enterprises, acting on commercial basis, thus the control over their activity is insufficiently effective. Official government-run commercial production of caviar and sturgeon fish totals approximately 550 tons/year in end of 1990th / early 2000th. Nearly 1,400 tons of fish were caught within the borders of the wetland in 1998. Besides, the constant illegal catch of sturgeons (having very high commercial value) exists despite of the existing legal protection and rangers work. As a result, the populations of sturgeons and the Caspian salmon have decreased.

2. Unsustainable-use of water resources. There is no integrated approach to water resources management. The solving of questions of rational use of water is complicated by existence of the out-of-date structures and methods of an irrigation and water supply. Despite of quite good amount of fresh water in Ural River, the question on preservation of its level necessary for maintenance of water biodiversity arises. Growing oil extraction in the region is a serious potential threat as a possible source of pollution, especially in case of accidents. Generally there is no significant influence of other pollutions on biodiversity by the moment of the beginning of the project.

3. Uncontrolled Visitation/Tourism. The URD with adjoining territories is widely known as an area for recreation, fishing and hunting. The influence caused by these visits, is basically uncontrollable and not regulated. Practically there is no infrastructure for tourism, except some small houses for

hunters in hunting areas. Tourists from the Atyrau city, and also visitors - as workers of oil fields (up to 15-20 thousand a year in the whole region), and visitors from Russia - have a rest on peninsulas and islands of delta which are the places of nesting of a number of bird species. Vacation spots become soiled, constantly there is a danger of fires, cases of destruction of colonies of birds are observed. Not only the control is absent, but also the information for tourists about the value of wetlands, necessities of their conservation, etc. Thus the number of visitors of territory in connection with development of oil extraction increases.

A number of the threats in a combination with high importance of the area for biodiversity and prospects of fast economic development of the region confirm relevance of the site for the project.

Activities and Results of the Project

One of the most important tasks and challenges of the project was creation of SPA in URD. For this purpose, the feasibility study and technical and economic background have been prepared on the basis of the complex field research, and other necessary documentation is prepared. A number of meetings with local authorities, local communities and organizations using resources of territory were lead. Special public hearings with participation of some local NGO, press conferences for mass-media, propaganda actions were done, including procession of pupils with headers "We support creation of Akzhayik Reserve!" in Erkinkala village.

As a result, it was possible to get approval of all interested parties, to agree allotment of land; 2 farms existing there are included in a buffer zone. State Nature Reserve "Ak Zhayik" was created by Governmental Decree N 119 of 2/6/2009 on the area of 111,500 ha (including core zone with 36,077 ha and buffer zone with 75,423 ha); the security 2-km zone with total area of 29,436 ha was established also arount the Reserve (funds for designing of a security zone have been allocated from CFH, approx. US$20,000). The means for creation of the Reserve are allocated in 2009 from the republican budget - this is approx. US$336,000. But these means was enough only for the salary of the personnel and small operational costs, therefore all available equipment of the Reserve were been purchased by the project, including vehicles, furnitures, communication facilities, boats, living vans for inspectors, etc. Full state financing for the Reserve is expected to be since 2012.

The construction of an office building of Reserve will begin in 2012. With the help of the project the land plot in Atyrau was designated for this purpose. Now, the administration rents a premise. The plot of 6 ha for construction of visit-center is received also in Damba village (design of the visit-centre is funded by ENI Group).

In the Reserve, the standard structure with departments of science (7 persons), public awareness and tourism (5 persons), protection (44 inspector's protected sections) is created. The total staff number is 86 persons (paid by CFH).

For employees of the Reserve, a number of trainings on the organization of protection, monitoring, tourism were conducted, both on a place, and with trips of the staff to others SPAs. Management Plan as well as Program of Science Research for 2010-2014 are developed, approved by CFH and are accomplished. Quality of management of the territory on METT scale has changed from 15.6 % in 2004 (the hunting area "Zolotyonok") up to 54.2 % in 2010.

Local Single Species Action Plans are elaborated for the species included in the Red book of Kazakhstan: Great Black-headed Gull (*Larus ichtyaetus*), Glossy Ibis, Little Egret.

The system of monitoring of ecosystems, vegetation and fauna is organised. A baseline survey was organised by the project in 2004-2005. Further monitoring was conducted by invited experts, and since April, 2009 - by scientific department of the Reserve with participation of inspectors. Monitoring species of birds (22 species), mammal (11), plants (16) are selected, the observations are conducted on sample sites and routes. The alouded limit for scientific catch is necessary for monitoring of fishes; now, it is not conducted. 5 stations for hydrobiological research are in place; since 2011 a

photometer for hydrochemistry is available. A "Manual on monitoring of fishes in the Reserve" is prepared. Interaction between "Kazginromet" State Enterprise and Reserve is accomplished for use of data of hydrological stations; two stations were restored by Ministry of Environment Protection after proposal of the project (near Zhanatalap and Rakusha villages). The stations grant data on quality and amount of water; for these, the project provided additional equipment to "Kazginromet". All monitoring data are entered in the database developed by the project, same, as in other project sites.

With creation of the Reserve, extraction of cockleshells on island Shalyga is stopped; as result colonies of Great Black-headed Gull and Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus cachinnans*) were restored. The number of Great Black-headed Gull has increased from 1,500 individuals in 2005 up to 11,000 individuals in 2010, Little Egret from 20 in 2005 up to 400, Glossy Ibis from 250 up to 1,700. The numbers of Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*), Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*), Teal (*Anas querquedula*), Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) and Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmaeus*) are growing also. 100-150 White-tailed Sea-eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) annually winter. Number of the muskrat is unstable (from sharp growth to return to initial number in 20,000 because of falling water level), the Caspian Seal is observed now regularly in up to 50-75 individuals.

The department of public awareness and tourism of the Reserve has lead 7 seminars, including 5 within the project, and 2 independently. In 2010-2011 the department published more than 30 articles in local mass-media; there is an active cooperation with TV. Work with schools and with the Atyrau city department of education is conducted. Two eco-routes are elaborated and approved for the territory of the Reserve.

For maintenance of functioning of the Reserve and conservation of biodiversity of the URD as a whole, a number of normative documents both at level of CFH and at a local level have been accepted: “Rules of realization of the limited economic activities (fishery, hunting, tourism, etc.) in a buffer zone of the State Nature Reserve "Ak Zhayik", "The background for expansion of a zone forbidden for fishing in Ural River delta with the purpose of regulation of fishery” etc.

The Akimat of the region with participation of the project has developed the Plan of conservation of the Ural River as transboundary reserve, which is on the coordination in Russia. Work with Ural-Caspian Water Basin Department was done for the maintenance of annual requirement of water for optimum water delivery and conservation of biodiversity in process of distribution of limits of water consumption. The proposals for the "Scheme of complex use and protection of water resources of Ural basin" are prepared and presented to Institute "Kazgiprovodkhoz"; the proposals are considered. The Scheme was agreed with the interested regional organizations and with Basin Water-Use Department of West-Kazakhstan region. The Program on sustainable management of fish resources in URD is developed (together with Committee of Fishery, "Atyraubalyk", KazNIIRKh, Akimat of Atyrau region etc.). The Programme includes 5 sections: condition of fish populations at URD and adjoining parts of Caspian Sea, the analysis of condition of fisheries, ways of achievement of sustainable fishing, priorities for sustainable fishing, involving of local communities in wise use of fish resources. The full interdiction on fishery in the sea near river mouth is restored. The status of "fishery water bodies" is given to the parts and lakes of delta, this allowed allocating the sites for definit users for 10 years (since 2006) with obligations on reproduction actions.

The arrangement with the state and non-state organisations about use of uniform system of monitoring of fish resources is achieved. During ecological zoning of URD, the subzone of sustainable fishery (Ural River and Caspian Sea coast outside of the Reserve) and buffer zone with an interdiction there industrial fishery but the sanction of sports fishery have been allocated. Rules of amateur fishery in a buffer zone have been approved by CFH in 2010, after entering the concept of «amateur fishery» in the Law on Wildlife in Kazakhstan done by the project in February 2010.

Consulting support to Atyrau fish hatchery on reproduction of sturgeon fishes was provided during the international scientific-practical conference on fish culture in 2009 (organised by the project together with FAO). The project helped in attraction for the factory the funds from "KGO Agip"

(US$2,300,000) in 2009. The project on private sturgeon breeding (owner - Kemelbay) was started, at first with support of GEF SGP, then with support of SEC (Social-Entrepreneurial Corporation) "Caspian sea" in volume up to US$3,000,000; however with the termination of SEC financing from Fund "Samruk-Kazyna" the promised financing is received only partially (the equipment is purchased).

For local communities a number of seminars on alternative activities including tourism etc. and on legal aspects were conducted:

- on sustainable management of rural and fish economy in URD,
- on effective business-planning,
- training water-users concerning irrigation safe for wetlands biodiversity and water resources management,
- on the legislation and sustainable hunting management and fishing management,
- on use of reed, including for detention of sand, etc.

Support on preparation of projects for the grants received from GEF SGP is provided:

- Installation of solar batteries on Reserve's inspector cordons
- Use of a wind power for irrigation of remote grazing-haying areas in URD;
- The organization of ponds for cultivation of sturgeon fishes (see above).

Grants of "Caspian Ecological Program"

- Development of ecotourism in Damba rural district
- The information company for development of ecotourism

The microcredits attracted from "Fund of financial support of agriculture"**:**

- Construction of a small greenhouse in Erkinkala rural district (1,000,000 tenge).
- Construction of a small greenhouse Taskala rural district (3,000,000 tenge).

The concept of development of ecotourism in the region is developed with participation of experts from Moscow. For 5 villages, seminars on receiving of microcredits for development of ecotourism are lead. Information tours for tour-operators are conducted, the exposition of the Reserve had been presented at ecotourism exhibition in Italy. Now four local guest houses work at URD.

The joint project is begun with Italian ENI Group on creation of Nature Park «Delta of the river Ural» on the sample of park «Delta of the river Po», with participation of University of Bologna (Italy). The project has helped to come into contacts and was the initiator of cooperation. At the support of ENI, an arrangement of tourist routes in a buffer zone of the Reserve is being accomplished, by installation of 4 viewing towers, the organization of places for rest etc. With participation of Italians the application for inclusion of Reserve in the list of biosphere reserves of UNESCO is planned to be prepared. At their support, the courses for improvement of qualification of personnel on tourism will be done in July 2011.

The Programme and manual for ecological lessons (facultative) at schools, in Russian and Kazakh languages (34 hours, 50 % in classes, 50 % in field) is developed for pupils of 6-8 classes (2010). The Programme (3 modules on flora, fauna, and water) is recommended to use by Regional Institute of improvement of professional skill of teachers. It is used at 5 schools at URD. The project provided for these schools about 50 kinds of teaching materials. Seminar for teachers of rural schools on introduction of the Programme was conducted. At support of the project, the numerous actions and celebrations, thematic competitions, photo-exhibitions etc. were conducted with schoolchildren. The clubs of young naturalists are established in 2 schools in Erkinkala and Zhambyl villages.

In May, 2009 in coordination with Akimat of the Atyrau city the action on cleaning of coast of the Ural River banks from the garbage was conducted. In the action the fishing organizations from Balykshy, Damba, Atyrau, Erkinkala rural districts, and also joint-stock company "Atyraubalyk", a sturgeon fish-breeding factory and employees of the Reserve "Ak Zhayik" have participated.

A number of propaganda materials, including tourist map of territory, postcards on URD nature etc. is printed.

Input of Equipment

For the Reserve the basic equipment for 31,385,000 tenge (or for 215,000 dollars), including:

- 5 motor vehicles and a tractor,
- 2 boats with motors,
- Sea boat with a spare engine,
- Trailer for transportation of boats,
- 5 computers,
- 2 living vans for cordons,
- 2 motor-pumps, 10 portable (backpack) fire extinguishers,
- Observation towers,
- 86 telephones "Dalakom",
- Office furniture,
- Device "Polintest" for analyses of water quality,
- echometer, binoculars, GPS, other scientific and field equipment,
- A number of other smaller items.

For Atyrau Center for Hydrometeorology

- Vehicle "UAZ",
- Devices for analyses of quality of water: pH-meter, sampling system PE-1220, Oxigen-meter / BPK-Tester Anion-7040.

Evaluation of Results

The greatest success on URD is the creation of Reserve "Ak Zhayik", that was especially difficult, considering a high degree of use of territory and connected with it financial interests of fishermen (both legal and illegal), oil industries, etc. Nevertheless, the project was able to manage good interaction both with local authorities and the population, and with other interested parties that have allowed realizing this major component. This is a good example for participatory planning. The Reserve has received both all-round technical and material support, and huge efforts of the project on capacity building. Without this the work of the Reserve would be in an extreme difficult situation. It is quite early to speak about success of work of the Reserve on monitoring (it exists only 2 years); nevertheless, the scientific department makes good impression and is completed by the experts. As a result of creation of the Reserve and its works, number of some species of birds, first of all colonial, has already increased.

Work on normative and legislative maintenance of conservation of URD is rather successful; these are the approved plans, programmes, instructions, etc., first of all for sustainable use of fish resources. It is important to note, that in preparation of these documents both local authorities of a level of region and districts, and the fishery, scientific and state governing organizations have been involved. Concrete results of work in this direction should be visible in 2-3 years.

Work on development of alternative activities can be regarded as satisfactory - during the project the good examples are demonstrated, but they were not duplicated yet despite of a number of seminars etc. Obviously, the mentality of the local population which has been not focused, for example, on vegetable growing, brakes duplicating such projects, as greenhouse construction, despite of their obvious commercial success. The same may be true for ecotourism - there is a sufficient number of potential tourists, excellent opportunities, but it is not enough people who are ready to put resources in this business. Work on public awareness can be considered as quite successful; the good base for the future is made and this part of the project most likely will be steady considering interest of regional authorities to this. As a whole, the work on URD can be estimated as successful.

Alakol-Sasykkol Project Site

Importance and relevance of the area

- Important stop-over place for migratory water birds on the Central-Asian-Indian flyway with up to 20,000-25,000 water birds observed here simultaneously;
- Extensive wetland comprising about 330,000 ha with adjoining sites;
- Breeding birds include 12 globally threatened species and 39 species listed in the Red book of Kazakhstan;
- The regular nesting place of Relict Gull (Larus relictus) in Kazakhstan with 0 to 700 pairs during last 35 years (special sanctuary designated in 1971);
- Significant populations of globally threatened Dalmatian Pelican (Pelecanus crispus): 120-160 individuals, White Pelican (P. onocrotalu): 50-500 on passage), Ferruginous Duck (Aythya nyroca): 100-140 individuals.
- About 250 species of water plants, two of which (Tranchelomonas pseudofelix, Dactylocopsis linearis) are included in the Red Book of Kazakhstan;
- Fish fauna includes 17 species, two of these are rare and endemic (Schizothorax intermedius and Perca schrenki).

Conservation Status

Since 1971 the islands of lake Alakol were designated as a sanctuary, in 1998 these sites and a part of Tentek river delta became the Alakol State Nature Reserve (ASNR). Two IBA are described here and confirmed by BirdLife in 2008: "Lake Alakol Islands" and "Delta of the Tentek River". Most parts of the site are not protected. In 2009 Alakol-Sasykkol Lakes (by direct participation of the project) included in Ramsar List.

Threats

1. Unsustainable use of biological resources. The local population (approx. 9,000 people lives close to the area) is working in agriculture, fishing, education and public health, for some people the hunting was an essential source of means of subsistence. Officially, the unemployment level was approximately 60% in 1999. Fishing is the most relevant economic activity in this region and approximately 3,000 tons of fish are caught annually. Overfishing is significant threat. Established quotas on catch of fish were considerably exceeded and fishing was conducted with use of destructive methods. It has led to practical disappearance of valuable species of fishes in a number of places and to sharp reduction of catch and of incomes of fishermen. So, the Ily Marinka population has almost disappeared in Alakol Lake, a carp population in Koshkarkol Lake etc. Haymaking, cattle grazing, agriculture are conducted in some cases irrationally, with damage to the nature and with sharp local decreasing of land productivity.

2. Unsustainable use of water resources. During Soviet time extensive irrigation systems have been built in Alakol depression, for cultivation of sugar beet and other vegetables. After disintegration of collective farms and state farms, the network of channels has become unsuitable for use and many its parts have been destroyed, resulting in a huge losses of water by transportation for irrigation. As a result, with reduction of the irrigation areas in several times, consumption of water from the river Tentek (the source of water for existence of the most productive wetlands) has increased. It has led to deficiency of water in delta of the river and to threaten biodiversity. There are also the problems common for Kazakhstan as whole - imperfection of normative base for water use and for effective water resource management, absence of concept of ecologically necessary water inflow for wetlands and the concept of "wetlands" itself.

3. Uncontrolled Visitation/Tourism. During planning of the project the influence of tourism was more potential than real. Till to 2005, access to the region has been complicated, as there was border zone here. The factor of disturbance from non-controllable tourism has been visible only on very

restricted areas. Therefore in the project documents the questions of development of tourism, attraction of visitors as alternative source of the income for local population, etc. were put. A few new small hotels have been built near the lake in early 2000s, but tourism infrastructure was still poor. Since 2007 the situation has sharply changed: Alakol became a popular tourist destination with annual growth of number of visitors. Tourism gives up to 60 million tenge of taxes annually in the local budget. The factor of disturbance (and also pollution by litter) began to threaten really to coastal landscapes and biodiversity. There was a question not about attraction of tourists, but about real monitoring and regulation of recreational activity, planning of development on the coast etc.

Activities and Results of the Project

In 2004-2005, complex research on the ecosystems of the area were carried out. On this basis, the feasibility study and technical-economical background for the expansion of ASNR were prepared by the project, the coordination with local authorities and the population had been done and their approval was received. As a result in October 2010 the territory of ASNR is expanded by Governmental Decree №1025 on 45,505 hectares (in territory of the East Kazakhstan region) and makes now 65,218 hectares. In Almaty region, 18,140 more ha is reserved for future expansion. The additional 2-km buffer zone around all perimeter (total area of 115,050 ha) is established.

In 1998-2006 the Reserve was in difficult situation, there was not enough equipment, the staff, etc. In 2007 the active support from the project has begun. For employees of all departments of the Reserve (protection, scientific, public awareness and tourism) a number of seminars on improvement of professional skill (on place and with trips of the personnel to other protected areas of Kazakhstan) is carried out. The equipment for protection, improvements of infrastructure, for scientific researches was provided by the project to the Reserve.

The scheme of ecosystem monitoring (28 ecosystems are identified) is established and is maintained. The monitoring of waterfowl was done since 1998 (from the establishing of the Reserve) with help of experts of Institute of Zoology; complex monitoring is begun since 2004. In first two years, the monitoring was carried out under leadership and with participation of the experts of Institute of Zoology et al. involved by the project. They established the set of monitoring species, monitoring plots and have prepared relevant methodical manual. Since 2007 the work is conducted by a scientific department of the Reserve (water- and land plants, birds, ichthyology and mammals). But the data are entered into the database created by the project only 2 times a year, and only on monitoring species and they are used very seldom for practical work.

For monitoring of climate and water level in Alakol Lake the project has got and has installed the automated meteorological station in Akshy village in 2008. The Station is handed to “Kazgidromet” state enterprise which, according to the signed contract, provides obtained data in the Reserve. Hydroposts on lakes Sasykkol, Koshkarkol, Zhalanashkol are installed.

The Management Plan is developed for the Reserve under leading of the project; in the development the partners (ACBK, RSPB, etc.), local authorities, local communities have been involved (participatory planning). The Council of the Reserve includes local authorities, NGOs etc. Local Single Species Action Plans are elaborated and are being implemented for Dalmatian Pelican, Relict Gull, and Ferruginous Duck.

The project developed the design of a visitor centre for the Reserve. Because of absence of state budgetary funds in CFH the project has made a decision to make repair of the existing museum of the nature. Halls were repaired, a number of expositions installed etc. Renewed museum of the nature is opened in July, 2010. With attraction of means of other funds and participation of local NGOs, two ecological routes (trails) in the Reserve are equipped with the information about wildlife, the observation tower on cordon Baybala is constructed.

For operative struggle against fires, the project has provided backpack fire extinguishers to 24 rural districts (5 pieces to each district).

In 2008 the project has held the seminar on the legislation and sustainable fishery in Usharal, and on the legislation and sustainable hunting management in Taldykorgan. The "Society of hunters and fishermen of Alakol district" is organized; it has received for the hunting management the area of 38,400 hectares that will allow lowering a level of poaching.

A number of seminars on development of alternative kinds of activity for local population were carried: on manufacturing cheese in house conditions, on manufacturing dairy production, on manufacturing felt products, manufacturing horse harnesses and national souvenirs, on ecotourism and catering services for tourists, etc. Recommendations on introduction of alternative kinds of activity are prepared. In the villages of Zhajpak and Kaynar steady professional groups of handicraftsmen on manufacturing felt products, horse harnesses, national souvenirs became organized. From 3 up to 7 NGOs from the area participate in all regional exhibitions (souvenirs, etc.). NGO "Ecosystem Alakol" and farm "Rinat" using means of the project have planted fast-growing poplars for further use of their wood.

The project assisted a number of local NGOs to prepare grant applications for GEF/SGP and other funds. As a result more than US$ 250,000 were attracted to Alakol area for development of alternative kinds of activity.

The “Fund of Financial Support of Agriculture” has carried out seminars on business-planning for alternative activity. The fund has given out credits for work under 6 projects for the total sum 13,949,400 tenge (US$ 95,550):

- 3 projects for arrangement of the guest houses and ecotourism development - Dzhakanbayev 720,000 tenge, Mazatbekov 2,300,000 tenge, Bekisheva 1,400,000 tenge.
- Tolganbay for the organization of pond fish-breeding and sports fishery - 3,000,000 tenge
- Sarsembekov for use of local materials and waste of wood - 4,600,000 tenge
- Kabdoldayev for development of a forage base and the organization of crops of long-term grasses - 1,920,000 tenge.
- The project has assisted by preparation of applications and monitoring of their performance on GEF/SGP:
- On ecologically safe methods of struggle against degradation of grounds ("Urdzhar-Et").
- On sustainable grazing ("Birlistik").
- On restoration of fish stocks and sustainable fishery in Koshkarkol Lake.
- On creation of eco-route and ecotourism development.

After sharp increase a number of tourists in 2007, the district authorities pay to tourism special attention. Ecological zoning of the area with zones of recreation was done by the project. With participation of the project and for means of the regional budget the General Plan for development of coast, in view of ecological normative, including a water-protection zone is created. The Concept of ecotourism development was elaborated with participation of the project, regional and authorities, developers of the General Plan, NGOs, ASNR etc. Actions under the Concept are included in the programme of development of tourism of Almaty area. Shifting ecotourism (part of tourists) towards mountains is stipulated; the project has helped to develop and equip 2 mountain routes.

On the beginning of the project one NGO existed in the area, now there are nearly 15. 72 commercial organizations operate now in tourism business.

For rational consumption of water, full inventory of the irrigated areas is carried out. The group of water-users was sent to South-Kazakhstan region for exchange of experience. Trainings on water-savings and on organisations of cooperative societies are organized. For use of 37,000 ha of irrigated grounds 8 UWCS (the Union of Water-user Cooperative Societies) were created. The project purchased 1 excavator, tractor and welding unit for repair of irrigation networks. UWCS repair on-turn the irrigation network, sharply having lowered losses of water. Typical schemes of irrigating sites with use of modern techniques are developed, the moisture loving soya is replaced with more favorable forage crops. Work with Republican State Enterprise "Alakolirrigation" on necessarily repair of

regulators on the river Tentek, and also with Balkhash-Alakol Basin Water Management Department for maintenance of annual need of water for wetlands was conducted. The concept of „ecological flow" is entered. NGO "Alakol Tabigatty" has cleared the Tentek riverbed having taken out 3,500 m³ of ground. As a result of reduction of water consumption and losses the amount of water in the delta is considerably increased, its scientifically proved level is achieved and maintained. Offers on system of lakes are included in the "Scheme of complex use and protection of water resources of Balkhash-Alakol basin" of the Committee on Water Resources of Ministry of Agriculture.

The drop irrigation on the area of 3 ha was organized, akimat (district authority) and the project have allocated means for creation of two hothouses 20x38 m for NGO "Ecosystem Alakol" and farms "Den"; sustainable pasture area rotation was organized in farm "Birlistik" at 20 ha as demonstration project.

Workshops and seminars with representatives of fisheries, local authorities and public associations on ways of improvement of management of fishing were conducted. On substantiation of the project and by support of local community and fishermen, the interdiction on fishery at Koshkarkol lake for the period of 5 years (since 2010) for restoration of fish resources was done. Consulting company "Biology of the sea" has developed «Recommendations on sustainable fishery for Alakol-Sasykkol lake system". NGO "Alakol Tabigaty" has constructed fish-breeding facilities and ponds for cultivation of hatchlings of carp at Koshkarkol lake. The equipment for this fish-farm is got with support of GEF/SGP; 25 workplaces are created. Already 3 million hatchlings of carp were reintroduced in the lake in 2010. The children's "Green Patrol" operates in schools near Koshkarkol lake.

Nature protection propagation, both by public awareness department of ASNR and schools of area is conducted very actively. The project prepared teaching materials. Facultative ecology lessons are entered into the programme of all of 25 schools of Alakol district. One school in Usharal town is pilot. In it the ecological class is equipped, the educational meteorological station, several tents, the equipment for observations etc. are provided. Ecological club "Atameken" works there successfully some years. The school has won first place at republican competition on ecological education. A lot of actions - annual "March of parks", "Day of birds", exhibitions of drawings and photos, competitions, conference "Healthy wetlands - healthy people", planting of trees, placing of nest boxes and feeders etc. were conducted. In 2010 the trainings on "Ecological tourism at SPAs" and "Formation of new ecological thinking through children's ecological movement" were conducted for teachers of 17 schools of project territory and 22 schools of other regions, at the base of ASNR.

A number of propaganda and teaching materials, tourist maps, film "Kus Zholy - Road of birds" is published.

Input of Equipment

For ASNR (for the sum 6,870,690 tenge or 52,851 dollars)

- a lorry GAS,
- a motor vehicle "Niva-Shevrolet",
- a motor boat «Master-540», a motor and trailer,
- for a scientific department - chemical reactants for analysis of water, laboratory capacities, the device for a taking of bottom samples, a camera,
- other equipment.
- For Alakol group of fish-protection service
- a motor **boat with the pendant motor and trailer for transportation.**

For cooperative societies of water-users

- **An** Excavator**,**
- **A** tractor,
- wel**ding unit.**

For “Kazgidromet”

- automated meteorological station

Evaluation of Results

An obvious success of the project is the extension of the area of ASNR for more than 45,000 ha, or almost 4 times the original size, despite the opposition of fishermen, water users and local authorities.

Capacity building was quite successful for the protection department of the reserve, but still there are some problems in scientific department. The work of the reserve is still not quite adjusted because of initial lack of qualification of big part of people and change of staff (some trained people resigned). Due to remoteness of the area from big cities, it is difficult to find experts.

The data base on ecosystem monitoring established by the project is not used for introduction of data on all registered species but for monitoring they only despite of recommendations of the project. Data on monitoring are not used for management; the department cannot tell about population trends from data base. New director of the ASNR competently uses means, the Reserve in general obviously improves.

Excellent work is being done on public awareness; the ecological club in the school in Usharal is very good and active.

Good results are achieved as regards water saving in agriculture, including both practical measures on the ground, and creation of normative preconditions. The "ecological flow" introduction is very important. A good result is the creation of Unions of Water Users, which operates now in a self-contained way. The situation with water level in Tentek delta became much more stable and predictable.

There are complexities on fishery question - it was possible to manage the interdiction of fishing and fish-breeding farm creation at Koshkarkol Lake, but was not possible to create the union (good communication) of fishermen at all Alakol-Sasykkol lake system. The Koshkarkol Lake is now officially shared between groups of fishermen which are doing joint fish-breeding will be a sample for whole lake system.

The "Alakol district hunting and fishing society" created on initiative of the project is a good success and this will allow to strengthen wildlife protection, but requires the further support because the sustainable management of hunting areas is rather expensive and needs qualified people.

In the ecotourism, there was a change of priorities in course of the project. After sharp increasing of number of visitors in 2007, the question of regulation of tourism and of the development near the lakes became very important. The project reacted in time and has joined to the elaboration of the scheme of development - preparation of the General Plan. In reality, the small private guest houses in settlements like Koktuma have almost lost sense for project goals - they influence only well-being of their owners, but not on the general situation with tourism. Ecological routes in mountains are useful, but their influence on derivation of people from lake disputably is real. More likely, they can increase total number of visitors to project area due to its increased attractiveness because of a greater variety of kinds of rest. In any case, the tracks are useful to ordering visits.

As a whole, the project work in the area can be considered as successful.

Annex 6: List of documents reviewed

1. Project document for the project KAZ/00/G37/A/1G/99 “Integrated Conservation of Priority Globally Significant Migratory Bird Wetland Habitat: A Demonstration on Three Sites”
2. Logical framework for the project KAZ /00/G37 “Integrated conservation of priority globally significant migratory bird wetland habitat: A demonstration on three sites”
3. Minutes of the meetings of Project Steering Committee (meetings N 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 12)
4. Resolution of start seminar of the project of July 23-24th, 2004
5. Annual report of the project for 2004
6. Annual report & project implementation report (PIR) of the project for 2005
7. Annual report & project implementation report (PIR) of the project for 2006
8. Annual report & project implementation report (PIR) of the project for 2007
9. Annual report & project implementation report (PIR) of the project for 2008
10. Annual report & project implementation report (PIR) of the project for 2009
11. Annual report & project implementation report (PIR) of the project for 2010
12. Statement of Assets and Equipment of the project as at 31 December 2010
13. Mid-Term Evaluation for the project “Integrated Conservation of Priority Globally Significant Migratory Bird Wetland Habitat: A Demonstration on Three Sites”
14. Evaluation of the Akzhayik Nature Reserve management effectiveness on METT methodic, progress report for 2004-2010
15. Evaluation of the Alakol Nature Reserve management effectiveness on METT methodic, progress report for 2004-2010
16. Evaluation of the Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve management effectiveness on METT methodic, progress report for 2004-2010
17. The draft of Law of Republic of Kazakhstan “On changing and additions in some legislation acts on questions of forestry, wildlife and specially protected areas”
18. Agreement of cooperation N 2 between the Committee for Forestry and Hunting of the RoK Ministry of Agriculture and Corporate Foundation ‘Biodiversity Conservation Fund of Kazakhstan’ on Joint Activities for Sustained Financing of Biodiversity Conservation Projects
19. Collaborative agreement between the Committee of Forestry and Hunting of Ministry of Agriculture of RK and the “Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture” JSC for joint realization of the Micro-credit Program “Tabigy Orta” (2010-2015) in frame of the project of GEF/UNDP/Government RK /CFH of MA of RK “Integrated Conservation of Priority Globally Significant Migratory Bird Wetland Habitat: A Demonstration on Three Sites”
20. Letter (MEMO) of project manager Mr. Kerteshev to Ms. Steliana Nedera, Resident Representative a.i. UNDP Kazakhstan, on use of UNDP funds for “Tabigy Orta” microcredit program in 2010-2015
21. Micro-capital grant agreement between UNDP and the “Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture” JSC for the provision of grants funds, of 01.08.2008

Annex 7: Publications produced by the Wetlands Project

The project has released various publications for different target groups:

Tital / Item	**No. produced**
Atlas of Key Species. The atlas of higher plants and vertebrates is recommended for PA researchers and a wider audience.	1,000 in Kaz. & Russ.
Ecological Education Handbook for Korgalzhyn Region School Teachers	500 in Kaz. & Russ.
Manual '*Training Program on Irrigation Safe for Wetland Biodiversity and Water Management for Water Users'* for AS and URD	300
Manual on Development of a Management Plan for Protected Areas in Kazakhstan.	500
A list of supported biodiversity of the three project sites.	500
Booklet on development of alternative livelihoods in Tengiz-Korgalzhyn project site.	150
Booklet on biodiversity of TK project site.	200
Annual calendars featuring photos from the project database of biodiversity conservation sites.	150-200
KSNR and ASNR Popular Management Plans.	500 in Russ. & Engl.
Booklet *'Minimization of Fire Use as a Way to Improve Rangeland Quality'*	200 in Russ. & Kaz.
Guidelines on the habitat system monitoring programme for the three project sites (monitoring of water bodies),	500
An album featuring photos of project activities in Tengiz-Korgalzhyn lake system,.	200
Booklets about the Biodiversity Conservation Fund of Kazakhstan (in Russian and English),	200
A set of postcards featuring photos from the project sites,	300
Substantiation of expansion of the Ural River restricted pre-estuary zone for regulating fisheries (URD.	50
Guidelines for Monitoring Biodiversity Components at the Three Project Sites	300
Manuals for farmers '*Crops for Restoring Degraded Land*' and '*Sustainable Land Use on Productive Landscapes*'	500 each in Russ. & Kaz.
Training Program on Irrigation Safe for Wetland Biodiversity for Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lake System	200
Individual programmes of a specialized course in conservation of wetlands for 6-8 grades for the three project sites	ASPS – 200, URD – 200, TKPS - 200 (in Russ. & Kaz.)
Popular scientific monograph '*Globally Significant Wetlands in Kazakhstan*' in three volumes: Ural River Delta (Volume 1), Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lake System (Volume 2), Alakol-Sassykkol Lake System (Volume 3).	1,000
Book '*Works of Korgalzhyn Reserve*' devoted to the 40th anniversary of Koglazhyn Reserve published in	200
Map booklet on wetlands of Kazakhstan in Kazakh, Russian and English,	200
A booklet about opisthorchiasis (fish disease) for residents of Akmola Oblast published and distributed in cooperation with the RK Ministry of Healthcare in.	1,000
A booklet on alternative livelihoods at Alakol-Sassykkol project site	200
Brief Key to Animals and Plants listed in the CITES Appendices for Kazakh customs authorities	500
Handbook on birds '*Touch the World of Local Birds*' in Russian and Kazakh. Approved by the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Kazakhstan	1,000 each in Kaz. & Russ.
A collection of scientific articles '*Works of Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve*' released to celebrate the 40th anniversary of KSNR	100
Training Program on Irrigation Safe for Wetland Biodiversity and Management of Water Resources of Tengiz-Korgalzhyn lake system	300
A booklet about Red Book tulips in URD and TK project sites	1,000 each in Russ. & Kaz.

A booklet 'March for Parks in Korgalzhyn' copied and distributed among local population during the March for Parks	200
Manual '*Ecosystem Approach to Fishery Management: Lake Koshkarkol Demonstration Pilot Site'*,.	500
URD booklets	500
The book '*Ecosystem Approach to Fishery Management'*	500
A booklet on ecotourism in Alakol-Sassykkol lake system	150
Postcards featuring the URD nature (birds, animals and plants).	300 sets in 3 blocks
Posters 'Bluebill and Pelican'	
Booklets and certificates for Flamingo-2009 Festival; T-shirts and caps bearing the festival logo; a commemorative stamp and three banners to be used during subsequent festivals were made	100 booklets, 100 T-shirts
A2-size leaflets and posters advocating the need to conserve the relict gull and white-eyed duck (ASPS)	100
Desktop and wall calendars for the year 2009 bearing the project logo	150
Recommendations on Implementation of Innovative Approaches to Sustainable Agriculture in MTS-Korgalzhyn Ltd of Korgalzhyn Raion, Akmola Oblast until 2015 published together with KazAgroInovatsiya JSC and Kazakh Research Institute for Processing of Agricultural Products	300
Manual '*Globally Significant Bird Management Action Plan*'	500 each in Kaz. & Russ.
FCBK booklets and flyers containing updated details	Booklet: 500 Russ. + 500 Engl. Flyers: 100 Russ. + 100 Kazakh + 100 Engl.
Geographic Atlas of Wetlands of Kazakhstan	500
Booklets '*Bird Day*', '*March for Parks*, '*Tulip Day*' dedicated to environmental events	Booklet: 200 March: 200 Tulip Day: 500
Ecotourism outline maps for each project site in English, Russian and Kazakh	500 each for each of the 3 languages
Ecological education manuals for modules '*Waterworld of Kazakhstan*', '*Flora of Wetlands in Kazakhstan*'	Water World: 500 Kazakh, 500 Russian Waterworld of Kazakhstan: 500 Kazakh, 500 Russ.
Guide '*Alternative Livelihoods: Principal Approaches and Lessons Learned'*	500 in Kazakh &Russian
Proceedings of the International Conference 'Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands'	300
Album 'Wetlands of Kazakhstan'	500
Project newsletter published annually	500

Annex 8: Letters of thanks, diplomas and certificates of honour

On behalf of the RoK Government:

- Medal of Honour 'Prominent Person in Ecology' awarded to Talgat Kerteshev, National Project Manager, 2009

On behalf of the Ministry of Tourism and Sport:

- Medal of Honour awarded to Talgat Kerteshev 'For Contribution into Ecotourism Development in Akmola Oblast', June 2011

On behalf of the Committee for Forestry and Hunting, MoA:

- Awarded to the Wetlands Project for its contribution into the wetlands biodiversity conservation in Kazakhstan, 2.02.2008
- Awarded to Rustem Vagapov, Project's expert, for his contribution into establishing the Akzhaiyk Reserve, 6.02.2008
- Awarded to Olga Koshkina, Site expert, for her contribution into expanding the Korgalzhyn Reserve
- Awarded to Arai Belgubayeva, Project's expert, for her contribution into expanding the Alakol Reserve, 25.06.2010

On behalf of the GEF/UNDP Small Grants Programme:

- Awarded for successful activities for extension of the small grants programmes in rural areas, 16.04.2008, Kazakhstan
- Awarded for the contribution into implementation of the GEF Small Grants Programme, 5.12.2009, New York

On behalf of Almaty Oblast Akimat

- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For the Conservation of Alakol-Sassykkol Wetlands', 14.06.2010

On behalf of Alakol Rayon Akimat, Almaty Oblast:

- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For Ecotourism Development in the Alakol-Sassykkol Project Site', 15.06.2009
- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For Implementing the Ecoeducation Programme in Alakol Rayon Schools', 25.04.2009
- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For Introducing Alternative Livelihoods in Alakol Rayon', 10.09.2010

On behalf of Akmola Oblast Akimat:

- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For Active Participation in Ecotourism Development in Akmola Oblast', 12.12.2010
- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For Holding the 2009 Flamingo Festival', September 2009

On behalf of Korgalzhyn Rayon Akimat, Akmola Oblast:

- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For the Contribution into the Conservation of Korgalzhyn PA Flora and Fauna', 21.12.2008
- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For the Support in the 2009 Flamingo Festival', August 2009
- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For the Support in the 2010 Flamingo Festival', August 2010

On behalf of Atyrau Oblast Akimat:

- Awarded to the Wetlands Project 'For Establishing the Akzhaiyk State Nature Reserve', 6.02.2009
- Awarded to Talgat Kerteshev, National Project Manager 'For Contribution into the Ural River Delta Biodiversity', June 2011

On behalf of UNDP Country Office in Kazakhstan:

- Awarded to Talgat Kerteshev, National Project Manager, 'Best Project Manager in 2008', 24.12.2008, signed by UNDP Resident Representative, Haoliang Xu
- Awarded to Shynar Zhetpissova, Project's PR Specialist PR 'Winning Spirit Award 2008', 24.12.2008, signed by UNDP Resident Representative, Haoliang Xu
- Awarded to Talgat Kerteshev, National Project Manager for effective project management and support to the Biodiversity Conservation Trust Fund in Kazakhstan, 18.12.2009, signed by UNDP Resident Representative, Haoliang Xu
- Awarded to Olga Koshkina, Site Expert, 'For Successful Wetlands Project Implementation in the Teniz-Korgalzhyn Project Site', 18.12.2009, signed by UNDP Resident Representative, Haoliang Xu
- Awarded to Azhar Baibakisheva, Site Expert, 'For Successful Wetlands Project Implementation in the Teniz-Korgalzhyn Project Site', 18.12.2009, signed by UNDP Resident Representative, Haoliang Xu
- Awarded to Zhanel Bessembayeva, Project's Economic Development Expert, 'For Developing Alternative Livelihoods in Three Project Sites', 20.12.2009, signed by UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Steliana Nedera
- Awarded to Olga Koshkina, Site Expert, 'For Contributing into the Wetlands Project Implementation', 20.09.2010, signed by UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Steliana Nedera
- Awarded to Dina Madiyeva, Assistance to National Project Manager, 'For Compleat Professionalism', 20.12.2010, signed by UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Steliana Nedera

CERTIFICATES:

- Project Planning and Management Prince, International Certificate, UK, 24.11.2006
- On behalf of Nika Public Speaking Center and Tumar Practical Psychology Center: Conflict Management Certificate awarded to Talgat Kerteshev, December 2010
- Training Certificate 'Basics of ArcGIS 8' issued by ESRI GIS-INGEO Products Training Center under the Geography Institute to Olga Koshkina, Site expert, 8 April 2005.
- Training of Trainers Certificate 'The flyway approach to the conservation and wise of waterbirds and wetlands' awarded to Olga Koshkina by Wings Over Wetlands Project Regional Centre for Central Asia, the Caucasus and Russia, 30 October 2010.
- Certificate of PA Management Planning Workshop hosted by Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve (Belarus), organized by the Wetlands Project and Zapovedniki Ecoeducation Center, issued to Olga Koshkina, Site expert, July 2006.

Annex 9: GEF Tracking tool METT

– Prepared by national project team –

Evaluation of the Akzhayik Nature Reserve Management Effectiveness (METT) 2004-2010

Issue	Criteria	Score				Comments
		2004	2008	2009	2010	
1. Legal status Does the rotected area have legal status? *Context*	The protected area is not gazette	0	0	0	0	*Note:* see fourth option for private reserves
	The government has agreed that the protected area should be gazetted but the process has not yet begun	1	1	1	1	
	The protected area is in the process of being gazetted but the process is still incomplete	2	2	2	2	
	The protected area has been legally gazette (or in the case of private reserves is owned by a trust or similar)	3	3	3	3	
2. Protected area regulations Are inappropriate land uses and activities (e.g. poaching) controlled? *Context*	There are no mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area	0	0	0	0	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist but there are major problems in implementing them effectively	1	1	1	1	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist but there are some problems in effectively implementing them	2	2	2	2	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist and are being effectively implemented	3	3	3	3	
3. Law enforcement Can staff enforce protected area rules well enough? *Context*	The staff have no effective capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations	0	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* What happens if people are arrested?
	There are major deficiencies in staff capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations (e.g. lack of skills, no patrol budget)	1	1	1	1	
	The staff have acceptable capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations but some deficiencies remain	2	2	2	2	
	The staff have excellent capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and Regulations	3	3	3	3	
4. Protected area objectives Have objectives been agreed? *Planning*	No firm objectives have been agreed for the protected area	0	0	0	0	
	The protected area has agreed objectives, but is not managed according to these Objectives	1	1	1	1	
	The protected area has agreed objectives, but these are only partially implemented	2	2	2	2	
	The protected area has agreed objectives and is managed to meet these objectives	3	3	3	3	
5. Protected area design Does the protected area need enlarging corridors etc to meet its	Inadequacies in design mean achieving the protected areas major management objectives of the protected area is impossible	0	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* does the protected area contain different
	Inadequacies in design mean that achievement of major objectives are constrained to some extent	1	1	1	1	

objectives? *Planning*	Design is not significantly constraining achievement of major objectives, but could be improved	2	2	2	2	management zones and are these well maintained?
	Reserve design features are particularly aiding achievement of major objectives of the protected area	3	3	3	3	
6. Protected area boundary demarcation Are the boundaries known and demarcated? *Context*	The boundary of the protected area is not known by the management authority or local residents/neighbouring land users	0	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* are there tenure disagreements affecting the protected area?
	The boundary of the protected area is known by the management authority and local residents and is appropriately demarcated	1	1	1	1	
	The boundary of the protected area is known by both the management authority and local residents but is not appropriately demarcated	2	2	2	2	
	The boundary of the protected area is known by the management authority and local residents and is appropriately demarcated	3	3	3	3	
7. Is there a management plan and is it being implemented? *Planning*	There is no management plan for the protected area	0	0	0	0	
	A management plan is being prepared or has been prepared but is not being implemented	1	1	1	1	
	An approved management plan exists and is being implemented	2	2	2	2	
	There is an approved management plan and has being implemented	3	3	3	3	
Additional scores *Planning*	The planning process allows adequate opportunity for key stakeholders to influence the management plan	+1	+1	+1	+1	
	There is an established schedule and process for periodic review and updating of the management plan	+1	+1	+1	+1	
	The results of monitoring, research and evaluation are routinely incorporated into planning	+1	+1	+1	+1	
8. Regular work plan Is there Annual work plan ? *Planning/ tasks*	No regular work plan exists	0	0	0	0	
	A regular work plan exists but activities are not monitored against the plan's targets	1	1	1	1	
	A regular work plan exists and actions are monitored against the plan's targets, but many activities are not completed	2	2	2	2	
	A regular work plan exists, actions are monitored against the plan's targets and most or all prescribed activities are completed	3	3	3	3	
9. Resources inventory Do you have enough information to manage the area? *Context*	There is little or no information available on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is not sufficient to support planning and decision making	0	0	0	0	
	There is little or no information available on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is not sufficient to support planning and decision making	1	1	1	1	
	Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is sufficient for key areas of planning/decision making but the necessary survey work is not being maintained	2	2	2	2	
	Information concerning on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is sufficient to support planning and decision making and is being maintained	3	3	3	3	
10. Research	There is no survey or research work taking place in the protected area	0	0	0	0	

Is there a programme of management-orientated survey and research work? *Inputs*	There is some ad hoc survey and research work	1	1	1	1	
	There is considerable survey and research work but it is not directed towards the needs of protected area management					
	There is a comprehensive, integrated programme of survey and research work, which is relevant to management needs	3	3	3	3	
11. Resource management Is the protected area adequately managed (e.g. for fire, invasive species, poaching)? *Process*	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values have not been assessed	0	0	0	0	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are known but are not being addressed	1	1	1	1	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are only being partially addressed	2	2	2	2	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are being substantially or fully addressed	3	3	3	3	
12. Staff numbers Are there enough people employed to manage the protected area? *Inputs*	There are no staff	0	0	0	0	
	Staff numbers are inadequate for critical management activities	1	1	1	1	
	Staff numbers are below optimum level for critical management activities	2	2	2	2	
	Staff numbers are adequate for the management needs of the site	3	3	3	3	
13. Personnel management Are the staff managed well enough? *Process*	Problems with personnel management constrain the achievement of major management objectives	0	0	0	0	
	Are the staff managed well enough?	1	1	1	1	
	Personnel management is adequate to the achievement of major management objectives but could be improved	2	2	2	2	
	Personnel management is excellent and aids	3	3	3	3	
14. Staff training Is there enough training for staff? *Inputs/Process*	Staff are untrained	0	0	0	0	
	Staff training and skills are low relative to the needs of the protected area	1	1	1	1	
	Staff training and skills are adequate, but could be further improved to fully achieve the objectives of management	2	2	2	2	
	Staff training and skills are in tune with the management needs of the protected area, and with anticipated future needs	3	3	3	3	
15. Current budget Is the current budget sufficient? *Inputs*	There is no budget for the protected area	0	0	0	0	
	The available budget is inadequate for basic management needs and presents a serious constraint to the capacity to manage	1	1	1	1	
	The available budget is acceptable, but could be further improved to fully achieve effective management	2	2	2	2	
	The available budget is sufficient and meets the full management needs of the protected area	3	3	3	3	
16. Security of budget Is the budget secure?	There is no secure budget for the protected area and management is wholly reliant on outside or year by year funding	0	0	0	0	
	There is very little secure budget and the protected area could not function adequately without outside funding	1	1	1	1	
	There is a reasonably secure core budget for the protected area but many innovations and initiatives	2	2	2	2	

Inputs	are reliant on outside funding					
	There is a secure budget for the protected area and its management needs on a multi-year cycle	3	3	3	3	
17. Management of budget Is the budget managed to meet critical management needs? *Process*	Budget management is poor and significantly undermines effectiveness	0	0	0	0	
	Budget management is poor and constrains effectiveness	1	1	1	1	
	Budget management is adequate but could be improved	2	2	2	2	
	Budget management is excellent and aids effectiveness	3	3	3	3	
18. Equipment Are there adequate equipment and facilities? *Process*	There are little or no equipment and facilities	0	0	0	0	
	There are some equipment and facilities but these are wholly inadequate	1	1	1	1	
	There are equipment and facilities, but still some major gaps that constrain management	2	2	2	2	
	There are adequate equipment and facilities	3	3	3	3	
19. Maintenance of equipment Is equipment adequately maintained? *Process*	There is little or no maintenance of equipment and facilities	0	0	0	0	
	There is some ad *hoc* maintenance of equipment and facilities	1	1	1	1	
	There is maintenance of equipment and facilities, but there are some important gaps in maintenance	2	2	2	2	
	Equipment and facilities are well maintained	3	3	3	3	
20. Education and awareness programme I s there a planned education programme? *Process*	There is no education and awareness programme	0	0	0	0	
	There is a limited and ad *hoc* education and awareness programme, but no overall planning for this	1	1	1	1	
	There is a planned education and awareness programme but there are still serious gaps	2	2	2	2	
	There is a planned and effective education and awareness programme fully linked to the objectives and needs of the protected area	3	3	3	3	
21. State and commercial neighbours Is there co-operation with adjacent land users? *Process*	There is no contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users	0	0	0	0	
	There is limited contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users	1	1	1	1	
	There is regular contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users, but only limited co-operation	2	2	2	2	
	There is regular contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users, and substantial co-operation on management	3	3	3	3	
22. Indigenous people Do indigenous and traditional peoples resident or regularly using the PA have input to management decisions? *Process*	Indigenous and traditional peoples have no input into decisions relating to the management of the protected area	0	0	0	0	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples have some input into discussions relating to management but no direct involvement in the resulting decisions	1	1	1	1	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples directly contribute to some decisions relating to management	2	2	2	2	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples directly participate in making decisions relating to management	3	3	3	3	
23. Local communities	Local communities have no input into decisions relating to the management of the protected area	0	0	0	0	

Do local communities resident or near the protected area have input to management decisions? *Process*	Local communities have some input into discussions relating to management but no direct involvement in the resulting decisions	1	1	1	1	
	Local communities directly contribute to some decisions relating to management	2	2	2	2	
	Local communities directly participate in making decisions relating to management	3	3	3	3	
Additional points *Outputs*	There is open communication and trust between local stakeholders and protected area managers	+1	+1	+1	+1	
	Programmes to enhance local community welfare, while conserving protected area resources, are being implemented	+1	+1	+1	+1	
24. Visitor facilities Are visitor facilities (for tourists, pilgrims etc) good enough? *Outputs*	There are no visitor facilities and services	0	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* Do visitors damage the protected area?
	Visitor facilities and services are Inappropriate for current levels of visitation or are under construction	1	1	1	1	
	Visitor facilities and services are adequate for current levels of visitation but could be improved	2	2	2	2	
	Visitor facilities and services are excellent for current levels of visitation	3	3	3	3	
25. Commercial tourism Do commercial tour operators contribute to protected area management? *Process*	There is little or no contact between managers and tourism operators using the protected area	0	0	0	0	Possible issue for comment: examples of contributions
	There is contact between managers and tourism operators but this is largely confined to administrative or regulatory matters	1	1	1	1	
	There is limited co-operation between managers and tourism operators to enhance visitor experiences and maintain protected area values	2	2	2	2	
	There is excellent co-operation between managers and tourism operators to enhance visitor experiences, protect values and resolve conflicts	3	3	3	3	
26. Fees If fees (tourism, fines) are applied, do they help protected area management? *Outputs*	Although fees are theoretically applied, they are not collected	0	0	0	0	
	The fee is collected, but it goes straight to central government and is not returned to the protected area or its environs	1	1	1	1	
	The fee is collected, but is disbursed to the local authority rather than the protected area	2	2	2	2	
	There is a fee for visiting the protected area that helps to support this and/or other protected areas	3	3	3	3	
27. Condition assessment Is the protected area being managed consistent to its objectives? *Outcomes*	Important biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being severely degraded	0	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* It is important to provide details of the biodiversity, ecological or cultural values being affected
	Some biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being severely degraded	1	1	1	1	
	Some biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being partially degraded but the most important values have not been significantly impacted	2	2	2	2	
	Biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are predominantly intact	3	3	3	3	
Additional points *Outputs*	There are active programmes for restoration of degraded areas within the protected area and/or the protected area buffer zone	+1	+1	+1	+1	
28. Access assessment Is access/resource	Protection systems (patrols, permits etc) are ineffective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	0	0	0	0	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.)	1	1	1	1	

use sufficiently controlled? *Outcomes*	are only partially effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives					
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are moderately effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	2	2	2	2	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are largely or wholly effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	3	3	3	3	
29. Economic benefit assessment Is the protected area providing economic benefits to local communities? *Outcomes*	The existence of the protected area has reduced the options for economic development of the local communities	0	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* how does national or regional development impact on the protected area?
	The existence of the protected area has neither damaged nor benefited the local economy	1	1	1	1	
	There is some flow of economic benefits to local communities from the existence of the protected area but this is of minor significance to the regional economy	2	2	2	2	
	There is a significant or major flow of economic benefits to local communities from activities in and around the protected area (e.g. employment of locals, locally operated commercial tours etc)	3	3	3	3	
30. Monitoring and evaluation Are management activities monitored against performance? *Planning/Process*	There is no monitoring and evaluation in the protected area	0	0	0	0	
	There is some ad hoc monitoring and evaluation, but no overall strategy and/or no regular collection of results	1	1	1	1	
	There is an agreed and implemented monitoring and evaluation system but results are not systematically used for management	2	2	2	2	
	A good monitoring and evaluation system exists, is well implemented and used in adaptive manage-ment	3	3	3	3	
TOTAL SCORE		**15 (96) 15,6 %**	**38 (96) 39,6 %**	**39 (96) 40,6 %**	**52 (96) 54,2 %**	

Evaluation of the Alakol Nature Reserve Management Effectiveness (METT) 2004-2010

Issue	Criteria	Score			Comments
		2004	2007	2010	
1. Legal status Does the protected area have legal status? *Context*	The protected area is not gazette	0	0	0	*Note:* see fourth option for private reserves
	The government has agreed that the protected area should be gazetted but the process has not yet begun	1	1	1	
	The protected area is in the process of being gazetted but the process is still incomplete	2	2	2	
	The protected area has been legally gazette (or in the case of private reserves is owned by a trust or similar)	3	3	3	
2. Protected area regulations Are inappropriate land uses and activities (e.g. poaching) controlled?	There are no mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area	0	0	0	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist but there are major problems in implementing them effectively	1	1	1	

Context	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist but there are some problems in effectively implementing them	2	2	2	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist and are being effectively implemented	3	3	3	
3. Law enforcement Can staff enforce protected area rules well enough? *Context*	The staff have no effective capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* What happens if people are arrested?
	There are major deficiencies in staff capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations (e.g. lack of skills, no patrol budget)	1	1	1	
	The staff have acceptable capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations but some deficiencies remain	2	2	2	
	The staff have excellent capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and Regulations	3	3	3	
4. Protected area objectives Have objectives been agreed? *Planning*	No firm objectives have been agreed for the protected area	0	0	0	
	The protected area has agreed objectives, but is not managed according to these Objectives	1	1	1	
	The protected area has agreed objectives, but these are only partially implemented	2	2	2	
	The protected area has agreed objectives and is managed to meet these objectives	3	3	3	
5. Protected area design Does the protected area need enlarging corridors etc to meet its objectives? *Planning*	Inadequacies in design mean achieving the protected areas major management objectives of the protected area is impossible	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* does the protected area contain different management zones and are these well maintained?
	Inadequacies in design mean that achievement of major objectives are constrained to some extent	1	1	1	
	Design is not significantly constraining achievement of major objectives, but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Reserve design features are particularly aiding achievement of major objectives of the protected area	3	3	3	
6. Protected area boundary demarcation Are the boundaries known and demarcated? *Context*	The boundary of the protected area is not known by the management authority or local residents/neighbouring land users	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* are there tenure disagreements affecting the protected area?
	The boundary of the protected area is known by the management authority and local residents and is appropriately demarcated	1	1	1	
	The boundary of the protected area is known by both the management authority and local residents but is not appropriately demarcated	2	2	2	
	The boundary of the protected area is known by the management authority and local residents and is appropriately demarcated	3	3	3	
7. Is there a management plan and is it being implemented? *Planning*	There is no management plan for the protected area	0	0	0	
	A management plan is being prepared or has been prepared but is not being implemented	1	1	1	
	An approved management plan exists and is being implemented	2	2	2	
	There is an approved management plan and has being implemented	3	3	3	
Additional scores *Planning*	The planning process allows adequate opportunity for key stakeholders to influence the management plan	+1	+1	+1	
	There is an established schedule and process for periodic review and updating of the management plan	+1	+1	+1	

	The results of monitoring, research and evaluation are routinely incorporated into planning	+1	+1	+1	
8. Regular work plan Is there Annual work plan ? *Planning/ tasks*	No regular work plan exists	0	0	0	
	A regular work plan exists but activities are not monitored against the plan's targets	1	1	1	
	A regular work plan exists and actions are monitored against the plan's targets, but many activities are not completed	2	2	2	
	A regular work plan exists, actions are monitored against the plan's targets and most or all prescribed activities are completed	3	3	3	
9. Resources inventory Do you have enough information to manage the area? *Context*	There is little or no information available on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is not sufficient to support planning and decision making	0	0	0	
	There is little or no information available on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is not sufficient to support planning and decision making	1	1	1	
	Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is sufficient for key areas of planning/decision making but the necessary survey work is not being maintained	2	2	2	
	Information concerning on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is sufficient to support planning and decision making and is being maintained	3	3	3	
10. Research Is there a programme of management-orientated survey and research work? *Inputs*	There is no survey or research work taking place in the protected area	0	0	0	
	There is some ad hoc survey and research work	1	1	1	
	There is considerable survey and research work but it is not directed towards the needs of protected area management	2	2	2	
	There is a comprehensive, integrated programme of survey and research work, which is relevant to management needs	3	3	3	
11. Resource management Is the protected area adequately managed (e.g. for fire, invasive species, poaching)? *Process*	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values have not been assessed	0	0	0	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are known but are not being addressed	1	1	1	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are only being partially addressed	2	2	2	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are being substantially or fully addressed	3	3	3	
12. Staff numbers Are there enough people employed to manage the protected area? *Inputs*	There are no staff	0	0	0	
	Staff numbers are inadequate for critical management activities	1	1	1	
	Staff numbers are below optimum level for critical management activities	2	2	2	
	Staff numbers are adequate for the management needs of the site	3	3	3	
13. Personnel	Problems with personnel management	0	0	0	

management Are the staff managed well enough? *Process*	constrain the achievement of major management objectives				
	Are the staff managed well enough?	1	1	1	
	Personnel management is adequate to the achievement of major management objectives but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Personnel management is excellent and aids	3	3	3	
14. Staff training Is there enough training for staff? *Inputs/Process*	Staff are untrained	0	0	0	
	Staff training and skills are low relative to the needs of the protected area	1	1	1	
	Staff training and skills are adequate, but could be further improved to fully achieve the objectives of management	2	2	2	
	Staff training and skills are in tune with the management needs of the protected area, and with anticipated future needs	3	3	3	
15. Current budget Is the current budget sufficient? *Inputs*	There is no budget for the protected area	0	0	0	
	The available budget is inadequate for basic management needs and presents a serious constraint to the capacity to manage	1	1	1	
	The available budget is acceptable, but could be further improved to fully achieve effective management	2	2	2	
	The available budget is sufficient and meets the full management needs of the protected area	3	3	3	
16. Security of budget Is the budget secure? *Inputs*	There is no secure budget for the protected area and management is wholly reliant on outside or year by year funding	0	0	0	
	There is very little secure budget and the protected area could not function adequately without outside funding	1	1	1	
	There is a reasonably secure core budget for the protected area but many innovations and initiatives are reliant on outside funding	2	2	2	
	There is a secure budget for the protected area and its management needs on a multi-year cycle	3	3	3	
17. Management of budget Is the budget managed to meet critical management needs? *Process*	Budget management is poor and significantly undermines effectiveness	0	0	0	
	Budget management is poor and constrains effectiveness	1	1	1	
	Budget management is adequate but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Budget management is excellent and aids effectiveness	3	3	3	
18. Equipment Are there adequate equipment and facilities? *Process*	There are little or no equipment and facilities	0	0	0	
	There are some equipment and facilities but these are wholly inadequate	1	1	1	
	There are equipment and facilities, but still some major gaps that constrain management	2	2	2	
	There are adequate equipment and facilities	3	3	3	
19. Maintenance of equipment Is equipment adequately maintained? *Process*	There is little or no maintenance of equipment and facilities	0	0	0	
	There is some ad *hoc* maintenance of equipment and facilities	1	1	1	
	There is maintenance of equipment and facilities, but there are some important gaps in maintenance	2	2	2	
	Equipment and facilities are well maintained	3	3	3	
20. Education and awareness	There is no education and awareness programme	0	0	0	

programme I s there a planned education programme? *Process*	There is a limited and ad *hoc* education and awareness programme, but no overall planning for this	1	1	1	
	There is a planned education and awareness programme but there are still serious gaps	2	2	2	
	There is a planned and effective education and awareness programme fully linked to the objectives and needs of the protected area	3	3	3	
21. State and commercial neighbours Is there co-operation with adjacent land users? *Process*	There is no contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users	0	0	0	
	There is limited contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users	1	1	1	
	There is regular contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users, but only limited co-operation	2	2	2	
	There is regular contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users, and substantial co-operation on management	3	3	3	
22. Indigenous people Do indigenous and traditional peoples resident or regularly using the PA have input to management decisions? *Process*	Indigenous and traditional peoples have no input into decisions relating to the management of the protected area	0	0	0	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples have some input into discussions relating to management but no direct involvement in the resulting decisions	1	1	1	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples directly contribute to some decisions relating to management	2	2	2	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples directly participate in making decisions relating to management	3	3	3	
23. Local communities Do local communities resident or near the protected area have input to management decisions? *Process*	Local communities have no input into decisions relating to the management of the protected area	0	0	0	
	Local communities have some input into discussions relating to management but no direct involvement in the resulting decisions	1	1	1	
	Local communities directly contribute to some decisions relating to management	2	2	2	
	Local communities directly participate in making decisions relating to management	3	3	3	
Additional points *Outputs*	There is open communication and trust between local stakeholders and protected area managers	+1	+1	+1	
	Programmes to enhance local community welfare, while conserving protected area resources, are being implemented	+1	+1	+1	
24. Visitor facilities Are visitor facilities (for tourists, pilgrims etc) good enough? *Outputs*	There are no visitor facilities and services	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* Do visitors damage the protected area?
	Visitor facilities and services are Inappropriate for current levels of visitation or are under construction	1	1	1	
	Visitor facilities and services are adequate for current levels of visitation but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Visitor facilities and services are excellent for current levels of visitation	3	3	3	
25. Commercial tourism Do commercial tour operators contribute to protected area management?	There is little or no contact between managers and tourism operators using the protected area	0	0	0	Possible issue for comment: examples of contributions
	There is contact between managers and tourism operators but this is largely confined to administrative or regulatory matters	1	1	1	
	There is limited co-operation between managers and tourism operators to enhance visitor	2	2	2	

	experiences and maintain protected area values				
Process	There is excellent co-operation between managers and tourism operators to enhance visitor experiences, protect values and resolve conflicts	3	3	3	
26. Fees If fees (tourism, fines) are applied, do they help protected area management? *Outputs*	Although fees are theoretically applied, they are not collected	0	0	0	
	The fee is collected, but it goes straight to central government and is not returned to the protected area or its environs	1	1	1	
	The fee is collected, but is disbursed to the local authority rather than the protected area	2	2	2	
	There is a fee for visiting the protected area that helps to support this and/or other protected areas	3	3	3	
27. Condition assessment Is the protected area being managed consistent to its objectives? *Outcomes*	Important biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being severely degraded	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* It is important to provide details of the biodiversity, ecological or cultural values being affected
	Some biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being severely degraded	1	1	1	
	Some biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being partially degraded but the most important values have not been significantly impacted	2	2	2	
	Biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are predominantly intact	3	3	3	
Additional points *Outputs*	There are active programmes for restoration of degraded areas within the protected area and/or the protected area buffer zone	+1	+1	+1	
28. Access assessment Is access/resource use sufficiently controlled? *Outcomes*	Protection systems (patrols, permits etc) are ineffective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	0	0	0	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are only partially effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	1	1	1	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are moderately effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	2	2	2	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are largely or wholly effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	3	3	3	
29. Economic benefit assessment Is the protected area providing economic benefits to local communities? *Outcomes*	The existence of the protected area has reduced the options for economic development of the local communities	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* how does national or regional development impact on the protected area?
	The existence of the protected area has neither damaged nor benefited the local economy	1	1	1	
	There is some flow of economic benefits to local communities from the existence of the protected area but this is of minor significance to the regional economy	2	2	2	
	There is a significant or major flow of economic benefits to local communities from activities in and around the protected area (e.g. employment of locals, locally operated commercial tours etc)	3	3	3	
30. Monitoring and evaluation Are management activities monitored against performance?	There is no monitoring and evaluation in the protected area	0	0	0	
	There is some ad hoc monitoring and evaluation, but no overall strategy and/or no regular collection of results	1	1	1	
	There is an agreed and implemented monitoring and evaluation system but results are	2	2	2	

Planning/Process	not systematically used for management				
	A good monitoring and evaluation system exists, is well implemented and used in adaptive management	3	3	3	
TOTAL SCORE		**42 (96) 43,7 %**	**57 (96) 59,4 %**	**76 (96) 79,2 %**	

Evaluation of the Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve Management Effectiveness (METT) 2004-2010

Issue	Criteria	Score			Comments
		2004	2007	2010	
1. Legal status Does the protected area have legal status? *Context*	The protected area is not gazette	0	0	0	*Note:* see fourth option for private reserves
	The government has agreed that the protected area should be gazetted but the process has not yet begun	1	1	1	
	The protected area is in the process of being gazetted but the process is still incomplete	2	2	2	
	The protected area has been legally gazette (or in the case of private reserves is owned by a trust or similar)	3	3	3	
2. Protected area regulations Are inappropriate land uses and activities (e.g. poaching) controlled? *Context*	There are no mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area	0	0	0	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist but there are major problems in implementing them effectively	1	1	1	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist but there are some problems in effectively implementing them	2	2	2	
	Mechanisms for controlling inappropriate land use and activities in the protected area exist and are being effectively implemented	3	3	3	
3. Law enforcement Can staff enforce protected area rules well enough? *Context*	The staff have no effective capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* What happens if people are arrested?
	There are major deficiencies in staff capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations (e.g. lack of skills, no patrol budget)	1	1	1	
	The staff have acceptable capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and regulations but some deficiencies remain	2	2	2	
	The staff have excellent capacity/resources to enforce protected area legislation and Regulations	3	3	3	
4. Protected area objectives Have objectives been agreed? *Planning*	No firm objectives have been agreed for the protected area	0	0	0	
	The protected area has agreed objectives, but is not managed according to these Objectives	1	1	1	
	The protected area has agreed objectives, but these are only partially implemented	2	2	2	
	The protected area has agreed objectives and is managed to meet these objectives	3	3	3	
5. Protected area design	Inadequacies in design mean achieving the protected areas major management objectives of	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* does the

Does the protected area need enlarging corridors etc to meet its objectives? *Planning*	the protected area is impossible				protected area contain different management zones and are these well maintained?
	Inadequacies in design mean that achievement of major objectives are constrained to some extent	1	1	1	
	Design is not significantly constraining achievement of major objectives, but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Reserve design features are particularly aiding achievement of major objectives of the protected area	3	3	3	
6. Protected area boundary demarcation Are the boundaries known and demarcated? *Context*	The boundary of the protected area is not known by the management authority or local residents/neighbouring land users	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* are there tenure disagreements affecting the protected area?
	The boundary of the protected area is known by the management authority and local residents and is appropriately demarcated	1	1	1	
	The boundary of the protected area is known by both the management authority and local residents but is not appropriately demarcated	2	2	2	
	The boundary of the protected area is known by the management authority and local residents and is appropriately demarcated	3	3	3	
7. Is there a management plan and is it being implemented? *Planning*	There is no management plan for the protected area	0	0	0	
	A management plan is being prepared or has been prepared but is not being implemented	1	1	1	
	An approved management plan exists and is being implemented	2	2	2	
	There is an approved management plan and has being implemented	3	3	3	
Additional scores *Planning*	The planning process allows adequate opportunity for key stakeholders to influence the management plan	+1	+1	+1	
	There is an established schedule and process for periodic review and updating of the management plan	+1	+1	+1	
	The results of monitoring, research and evaluation are routinely incorporated into planning	+1	+1	+1	
8. Regular work plan Is there Annual work plan ? *Planning/ tasks*	No regular work plan exists	0	0	0	
	A regular work plan exists but activities are not monitored against the plan's targets	1	1	1	
	A regular work plan exists and actions are monitored against the plan's targets, but many activities are not completed	2	2	2	
	A regular work plan exists, actions are monitored against the plan's targets and most or all prescribed activities are completed	3	3	3	
9. Resources inventory Do you have enough information to manage the area? *Context*	There is little or no information available on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is not sufficient to support planning and decision making	0	0	0	
	There is little or no information available on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is not sufficient to support planning and decision making	1	1	1	
	Information on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected area is sufficient for key areas of planning/decision making but the necessary survey work is not being maintained	2	2	2	
	Information concerning on the critical habitats, species and cultural values of the protected	3	3	3	

	area is sufficient to support planning and decision making and is being maintained				
10. Research Is there a programme of management-orientated survey and research work? *Inputs*	There is no survey or research work taking place in the protected area	0	0	0	
	There is some ad hoc survey and research work	1	1	1	
	There is considerable survey and research work but it is not directed towards the needs of protected area management	2	2	2	
	There is a comprehensive, integrated programme of survey and research work, which is relevant to management needs	3	3	3	
11. Resource management Is the protected area adequately managed (e.g. for fire, invasive species, poaching)? *Process*	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values have not been assessed	0	0	0	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are known but are not being addressed	1	1	1	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are only being partially addressed	2	2	2	
	Requirements for active management of critical ecosystems, species and cultural values are being substantially or fully addressed	3	3	3	
12. Staff numbers Are there enough people employed to manage the protected area? *Inputs*	There are no staff	0	0	0	
	Staff numbers are inadequate for critical management activities	1	1	1	
	Staff numbers are below optimum level for critical management activities	2	2	2	
	Staff numbers are adequate for the management needs of the site	3	3	3	
13. Personnel management Are the staff managed well enough? *Process*	Problems with personnel management constrain the achievement of major management objectives	0	0	0	
	Are the staff managed well enough?	1	1	1	
	Personnel management is adequate to the achievement of major management objectives but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Personnel management is excellent and aids	3	3	3	
14. Staff training Is there enough training for staff? *Inputs/Process*	Staff are untrained	0	0	0	
	Staff training and skills are low relative to the needs of the protected area	1	1	1	
	Staff training and skills are adequate, but could be further improved to fully achieve the objectives of management	2	2	2	
	Staff training and skills are in tune with the management needs of the protected area, and with anticipated future needs	3	3	3	
15. Current budget Is the current budget sufficient? *Inputs*	There is no budget for the protected area	0	0	0	
	The available budget is inadequate for basic management needs and presents a serious constraint to the capacity to manage	1	1	1	
	The available budget is acceptable, but could be further improved to fully achieve effective management	2	2	2	
	The available budget is sufficient and meets the full management needs of the protected area	3	3	3	
16. Security of budget	There is no secure budget for the protected area and management is wholly reliant on outside or year by	0	0	0	

	year funding				
Is the budget secure? *Inputs*	There is very little secure budget and the protected area could not function adequately without outside funding	1	1	1	
	There is a reasonably secure core budget for the protected area but many innovations and initiatives are reliant on outside funding	2	2	2	
	There is a secure budget for the protected area and its management needs on a multi-year cycle	3	3	3	
17. Management of budget Is the budget managed to meet critical management needs? *Process*	Budget management is poor and significantly undermines effectiveness	0	0	0	
	Budget management is poor and constrains effectiveness	1	1	1	
	Budget management is adequate but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Budget management is excellent and aids effectiveness	3	3	3	
18. Equipment Are there adequate equipment and facilities? *Process*	There are little or no equipment and facilities	0	0	0	
	There are some equipment and facilities but these are wholly inadequate	1	1	1	
	There are equipment and facilities, but still some major gaps that constrain management	2	2	2	
	There are adequate equipment and facilities	3	3	3	
19. Maintenance of equipment Is equipment adequately maintained? *Process*	There is little or no maintenance of equipment and facilities	0	0	0	
	There is some ad *hoc* maintenance of equipment and facilities	1	1	1	
	There is maintenance of equipment and facilities, but there are some important gaps in maintenance	2	2	2	
	Equipment and facilities are well maintained	3	3	3	
20. Education and awareness programme I s there a planned education programme? *Process*	There is no education and awareness programme	0	0	0	
	There is a limited and ad *hoc* education and awareness programme, but no overall planning for this	1	1	1	
	There is a planned education and awareness programme but there are still serious gaps	2	2	2	
	There is a planned and effective education and awareness programme fully linked to the objectives and needs of the protected area	3	3	3	
21. State and commercial neighbours Is there co-operation with adjacent land users? *Process*	There is no contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users	0	0	0	
	There is limited contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users	1	1	1	
	There is regular contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users, but only limited co-operation	2	2	2	
	There is regular contact between managers and neighbouring official or corporate land users, and substantial co-operation on management	3	3	3	
22. Indigenous people Do indigenous and traditional peoples resident or regularly using the PA have input to management decisions? *Process*	Indigenous and traditional peoples have no input into decisions relating to the management of the protected area	0	0	0	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples have some input into discussions relating to management but no direct involvement in the resulting decisions	1	1	1	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples directly contribute to some decisions relating to management	2	2	2	
	Indigenous and traditional peoples directly participate in making decisions relating to	3	3	3	

	management				
23. Local communities Do local communities resident or near the protected area have input to management decisions? *Process*	Local communities have no input into decisions relating to the management of the protected area	0	0	0	
	Local communities have some input into discussions relating to management but no direct involvement in the resulting decisions	1	1	1	
	Local communities directly contribute to some decisions relating to management	2	2	2	
	Local communities directly participate in making decisions relating to management	3	3	3	
Additional points *Outputs*	There is open communication and trust between local stakeholders and protected area managers	+1	+1	+1	
	Programmes to enhance local community welfare, while conserving protected area resources, are being implemented	+1	+1	+1	
24. Visitor facilities Are visitor facilities (for tourists, pilgrims etc) good enough? *Outputs*	There are no visitor facilities and services	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* Do visitors damage the protected area?
	Visitor facilities and services are Inappropriate for current levels of visitation or are under construction	1	1	1	
	Visitor facilities and services are adequate for current levels of visitation but could be improved	2	2	2	
	Visitor facilities and services are excellent for current levels of visitation	3	3	3	
25. Commercial tourism Do commercial tour operators contribute to protected area management? *Process*	There is little or no contact between managers and tourism operators using the protected area	0	0	0	Possible issue for comment: examples of contributions
	There is contact between managers and tourism operators but this is largely confined to administrative or regulatory matters	1	1	1	
	There is limited co-operation between managers and tourism operators to enhance visitor experiences and maintain protected area values	2	2	2	
	There is excellent co-operation between managers and tourism operators to enhance visitor experiences, protect values and resolve conflicts	3	3	3	
26. Fees If fees (tourism, fines) are applied, do they help protected area management? *Outputs*	Although fees are theoretically applied, they are not collected	0	0	0	
	The fee is collected, but it goes straight to central government and is not returned to the protected area or its environs	1	1	1	
	The fee is collected, but is disbursed to the local authority rather than the protected area	2	2	2	
	There is a fee for visiting the protected area that helps to support this and/or other protected areas	3	3	3	
27. Condition assessment Is the protected area being managed consistent to its objectives? *Outcomes*	Important biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being severely degraded	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* It is important to provide details of the biodiversity, ecological or cultural values being affected
	Some biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being severely degraded	1	1	1	
	Some biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are being partially degraded but the most important values have not been significantly impacted	2	2	2	
	Biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are predominantly intact	3	3	3	

Additional points *Outputs*	There are active programmes for restoration of degraded areas within the protected area and/or the protected area buffer zone	+1	+1	+1	
28. Access assessment Is access/resource use sufficiently controlled? *Outcomes*	Protection systems (patrols, permits etc) are ineffective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	0	0	0	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are only partially effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	1	1	1	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are moderately effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	2	2	2	
	Protection systems (patrolling, omission and etc.) are largely or wholly effective in controlling access or use of the reserve in accordance with designated objectives	3	3	3	
29. Economic benefit assessment Is the protected area providing economic benefits to local communities? *Outcomes*	The existence of the protected area has reduced the options for economic development of the local communities	0	0	0	*Possible issue for comment:* how does national or regional development impact on the protected area?
	The existence of the protected area has neither damaged nor benefited the local economy	1	1	1	
	There is some flow of economic benefits to local communities from the existence of the protected area but this is of minor significance to the regional economy	2	2	2	
	There is a significant or major flow of economic benefits to local communities from activities in and around the protected area (e.g. employment of locals, locally operated commercial tours etc)	3	3	3	
30. Monitoring and evaluation Are management activities monitored against performance? *Planning/Process*	There is no monitoring and evaluation in the protected area	0	0	0	
	There is some ad hoc monitoring and evaluation, but no overall strategy and/or no regular collection of results	1	1	1	
	There is an agreed and implemented monitoring and evaluation system but results are not systematically used for management	2	2	2	
	A good monitoring and evaluation system exists, is well implemented and used in adaptive manage-ment	3	3	3	
TOTAL SCORE		**46 (96) 47,9 %**	**62 (96) 64.6 %**	**71 (96) 73.9 %**	