

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP project

“631.1 Accelerating the shift to sustainable public procurement and monitoring progress” and “SMA ID 43577”

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

UNEP SMA ¹ ID:	43577	Grant ID ² (if applicable):	
UNEP Management (Division/Branch/Unit):	Economy Division / Resources and Markets Branch / Economic and Trade Policy Unit (ETPU)		
Implementing Partners:	UNEP Regional Offices for Africa, LAC, Europe, West Asia, and Asia Pacific		
Sources of Funding:	Countries³: Republic of Korea Norway	Institution⁴ Name/Type: SAG II (Uganda) PAGE (Kazakhstan, Brazil and Kyrgyzstan) UNDA (Senegal)	
Relevant SDG(s):	Primarily SDG 12.7.1 but also SDG 3,5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15		
MTS (all that apply):	MTS 2018-2021, 2022-2025	UNEP approval date:	July 2020
Most relevant Programme of Work (PoW) Outputs to which Project primarily contributes	(POW 2020-21 and 2022-23) 631 - Tools, technical and policy support provided to governments and other stakeholders to develop and implement sustainable public procurement 122.3 - Global Action on Energy Efficient Appliances and Equipment	PoW Expected Accomplishments	PoW Expected Accomplishments: SP6 – Ea C SP7 – Ea A SP1 – Ea B
Sub-programme:	(MTS 2018-21) SP 6: Resource Efficiency SP 7: Environment under Review SP 1: Climate Change	Programme Coordination Project:	N/A
Expected start date:	August 2020	Actual start date:	27 July 2020
Planned completion date:	December 2023	Actual operational completion date:	31 December 2023
Planned total project budget ⁵ at approval:	US\$ 2,306,956	Actual total expenditures reported as of June 2024:	394,263.30
Planned Extra-budgetary Funds ⁶ :	Cash: US\$ 1,562,706 In-kind: US\$ 744,250	Secured Extra-budgetary Funds:	Cash: 437,300 In-kind: 744,250
		Actual Extra-budgetary Funds expenditures reported as of June 2024:	Cash: 394,263.30
First disbursement: Second disbursement:	US\$ 348,200 US\$ 89,100	Planned date of financial closure:31.12.2023	Estimated 1 year after operational completion.
No. of formal project revisions:	0	Date of last approved project revision:	27.07.2020
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	4	Date of Last Steering Committee meeting:	2021?
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	September 2021	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	None
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	October 2023	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	October 2024

¹ SMA refers to the ID provided by the Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting Solution (IPMR) system, which was introduced by UNEP in July 2023.

² For example, ID references from EC, IKI, UNDA, Adaptation Fund, GCF.

³ Where applicable, list countries who have provided project funds and/or co-finance.

⁴ Indicate where funding institutions are any/all of the following: Foundation/NGO; Private Sector; UN Body; Multilateral Fund; Environment Fund; Other.

⁵ Total budget may include; Regular Budget, Environment Fund, Extra-Budgetary, including 'softly-earmarked' etc.

⁶ Extra-budgetary funds may include co-finance (cash/in-kind).

Coverage – Implementing Countries:	India, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Uganda, Kirgizstan, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Senegal	Coverage – Implementing Regions:	Global (LAC, Europe and Central Asia, Africa and Asia Pacific)
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	Status of future project phases:	N/A

2. Project Rationale

1. Public procurement wields enormous purchasing power, accounting for an average of 12 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in OECD countries, and up to 30 percent of GDP in many developing countries. Leveraging this purchasing power by promoting public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities, plays a key role in achieving Sustainable Consumption and Production (SDG 12) and in addressing the three pillars of Sustainable Development. The ability of Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) to transform markets and contribute significantly to the achievement of the development agenda is widely acknowledged.

2. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has been active in the promotion of Sustainable Public Procurement at national, regional and global levels since 2005. Since 2009, over 20 countries have been assisted in the framework of various projects, and in 2012, UNEP launched the first international SPP initiative at Rio+20 which transformed into the SPP 10 Year Framework Programme in 2014.

3. Stimulating SPP can help gear government spending towards sustainability, but it can also foster private sector and consumer behaviour change, enabling the overall transition to a green, sustainable economy. However, countries have been insufficiently leveraging sustainable procurement to advance their sustainability objectives, drive markets towards sustainability, reduce governments' environmental footprint and contribute significantly to the achievement of SDGs and major sustainability objectives.

4. UNEP developed the first methodology to support countries in the design and implementation of SPP policies. The departure point was the EU funded "Capacity Building for Sustainable Public Procurement in Developing Countries"⁷ project (2009-2011) which assisted seven pilot countries⁸ in the development and implementation of SPP policies and action plans through the Marrakech Task Force Approach to SPP. Incorporating the lessons learned during the pilot phase, UNEP developed a revised methodology in 2012, crystalized as the Sustainable Public Procurement Implementation Guidelines⁹, which remains at the heart of directions for governments on designing and implementing SPP policies and action plans. This methodology was successfully rolled out in over 20 countries in the frameworks of the SPP and Eco-labelling Project (SPPEL)¹⁰ (2013-2017), Eastern Partnership Green Project¹¹ (2013-2017) which later developed as the EU4Environment Initiative¹² (2019-2023) and more recently UNDA project (2018-2021), covering Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

5. The project's theory of change identified a series of problems leading to a poor SPP performance at world level¹³:

- i. *Lack of market readiness and response capacity to deliver sustainable alternatives: green/sustainable products are not available or too expensive*
- ii. *SPP is not sufficiently embedded in sectoral policies and overarching sustainable development strategies (e.g. climate change, energy efficiency, circular economy, decent work, gender equality). There is also a risk that SPP will not be included in the COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 recovery packages if these are not sustainability-friendly.*
- iii. *Lack of coordination and exchanges among families of procurers (public and private sectors)*
- iv. *Lack of credible ecolabels and sustainability standards in developing economies and difficulty to use existing ones in public procurement*

⁷<https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/capacity-building-spp-developing-countries>

⁸ Costa Rica, Colombia, Chile, Lebanon, Mauritius, Tunisia and Uruguay

⁹<http://www.unep.fr/scp/procurement/docsres/ProjectInfo/UNEPImplementationGuidelines.pdf>

¹⁰ Stimulating the Demand and Supply of Sustainable Products through Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling

¹¹<http://www.green-economies-eap.org/>

¹²<https://www.oecd.org/site/eu4environment/about/>

¹³https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/globalreview_web_final.pdf

- v. *Regulatory framework not conducive to green/sustainable procurement*
- vi. *Lack of institutional capacity and tools to develop, implement and monitor SPP policies*
- vii. *Limited regional cooperation on SPP*
- viii. *Global knowledge on SPP insufficient and monitoring formats not harmonized.*

6. The poor performance of SPP leads in turn to the insufficient leveraging of public procurement which results in: limited market transformation, high environmental and social footprints of state actors, and insufficient mitigation of climate change and limited impact on other sustainability objectives.

7. The 2018 SPP project evaluation recommended the launch of a second phase of SPP support to maintain the achievements reaped through prior projects, *“as the former results are still fragile and require follow-up efforts to become mainstream”*. It was therefore essential for UNEP to intervene, through this new SPP project, by strengthening the capacity of public procurers and ensuring an autonomous steering of SPP implementation in project countries.

8. To address the problems identified in the theory of change, the project would intervene at three levels in a complementary way: At the **national level**, the project was expected to assist nine countries in the development and implementation of SPP policies through the UNEP SPP Approach; At **regional level**, the aim was to establish four networks aimed at fostering peer-to-peer learning, capacity building and information exchanges; At **global level**, the project would concentrate on the improvement of the SPP monitoring frameworks and on enhancing the capacity of countries to report on SDG 12.7.1.

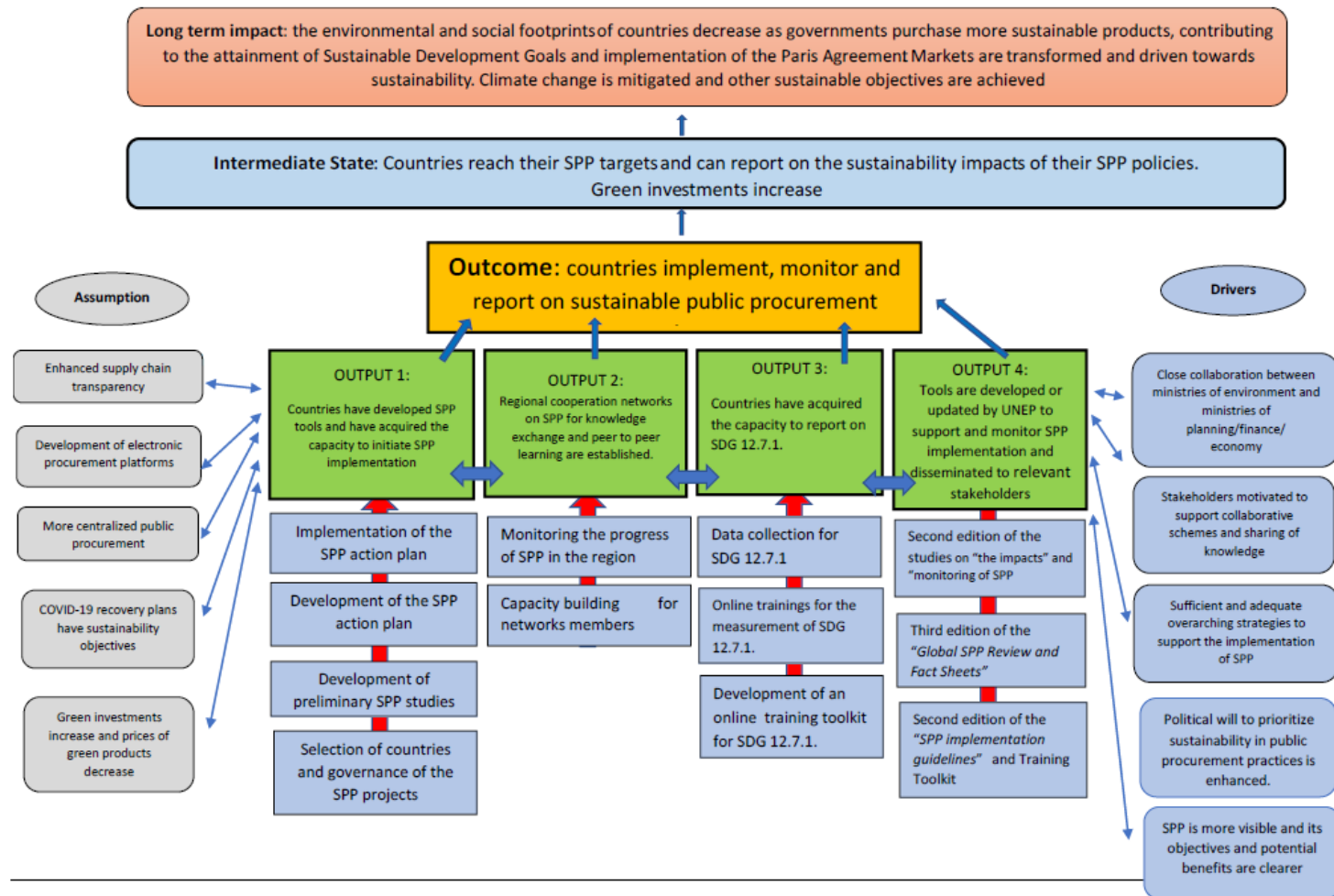
9. Gender is an important element of sustainable public procurement, since gender comprises one of the core socio-economic concerns within supply chains, pertaining to workers' rights, fair pay and modern slavery. Women have been negatively impacted by change in labour practices such as outsourcing, the commercialization of agriculture and the privatization of resources and services. Therefore, the project also took into consideration the different economic and political impacts of public procurement regulations and practices on men and women (gender responsive procurement)¹⁴. Vulnerable groups in the context of SPP include social minorities, disabled people, women, youth and indigenous people. Issues encompassing these people were addressed by the project through consideration of the socio-economic impacts of public procurement since sustainability, at its core, incorporate not only environmental issues but also socio-economic concerns such as labour rights and social inclusivity for SMEs.

3. Project Results Framework

10. The project **objective** is to assist countries in implementing Sustainable Public Procurement policies, establish regional SPP networks and monitor the global progress of SPP, notably through the measurement of SDG 12.7.1. The expected Outcome is that countries implement, monitor and report on sustainable public procurement action. As a result, countries will reach their SPP targets and periodically report on the progress of their SPP policies and sustainability impacts. Thus, state environmental and social footprints are expected to decrease as governments purchase more sustainable products, contributing to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals and to the implementation of the Paris Agreement

11. The **Theory of Change** of the SPP Project is presented below:

¹⁴ https://www.ungm.org/Shared/KnowledgeCenter/Pages/PT_GRP



Source: Project Document July 2020

12. Table 2 below presents an overview of the project's results framework, showing the programmed Outputs, the expected Outcomes, and the performance indicators.

Table 2. Logical Framework

Project Outcome ¹⁵	Indicators	Relevant Subprogramme Expected Accomplishment and Indicator ¹⁶
Countries implement, monitor and report on sustainable public procurement action	Number of countries having included SPP provisions in their public procurement legal framework [Baseline: 0, target 2023: 1] Number of countries that state they have launched tenders using new sustainable procurement criteria for at least two product groups. [Baseline: 0, target 2023: 1] Number of countries that report improved SPP practices as a result of their regional network activities [Baseline: 0, target 2023: 10] Number of countries providing SDG 12.7.1 data and SPP factsheets [baseline: 0, target 2023: 60] Number of countries reporting on the use of SPP to promote gender equality [baseline: 0, target 2023: 30]	SP6 - Ea(c): Public and private sectors are increasingly aware of and support the adoption of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption patterns EaC Indicator of achievement (i): the number of countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies with UNEP support SP7 – Ea A: Governments and other stakeholders use quality open environmental data, analyses and participatory processes that strengthen the science-policy interface to generate evidence-based environmental assessments, identify emerging issues and foster policy action. SP7 EaA (ii) Increase in the number of countries reporting on the environmental dimension of sustainable development through shared environmental information systems with country-level data made discoverable through UN Environment Programme SP1 – EaB: Countries increasingly adopt and/or implement low greenhouse gas emission development strategies and invest in clean technologies SP1 EaB (i) The number of countries supported by UNEP that make progress in adopting and/or implementing low greenhouse gas emission development plans, strategies and/or policies.
Project outcome milestones		Milestone attainment date
M1. Data pertaining to SDG 12.7 are collected from 30 countries.		December 2020
M2. Sustainable purchasing criteria are developed and approved by the management of the Government e-Market place of India (GeM). At least thirty countries have filled their SPP progress fact sheets inclusive of gender equality sections.		June 2021
M3. Sustainable purchasing criteria are integrated in the Government e-Market place of India (GeM), using the new procurement criteria.		December 2021
M4. Data pertaining to SDG 12.7 are collected from an additional 20 countries.		June 2022
M5. 10 Asia Pacific countries report improved practices and/or enhanced capacity to implement SPP owing to their regional network activities.		December 2022
M6. In Uganda, public procurement laws are revised based on recommendations from the legal review.		June 2023
M7. Data pertaining to SDG 12.7 are collected from an additional 10 countries.		December 2023

¹⁵ Outcomes: The uptake, adoption or use of project outputs by the project beneficiaries. Observed as change of Behavior, Attitude/Action, Condition, Knowledge or Skill

¹⁶ When a project is relevant to more than one Expected Accomplishment, outcomes and outputs for each EA indicator are included.

2. Project Outputs ¹⁷		Indicators
A) Countries have developed SPP tools and have acquired the capacity to initiate SPP implementation	-Number of countries that have carried out a legal study inclusive of a gender equality section [baseline: 0, target 2023: 4]	
	-Number of countries that have developed new procurement guidelines [baseline: 0, target 2023: 5]	
	Number of countries that have developed an SPP monitoring system [baseline: 0, target 2023: 1]	
	Number of countries that have developed information tools such as a website, a newsletter and periodic webinars. [baseline: 0, target 2023: 1]	
Project output Milestones:		Milestone attainment date
M1 Consultant in charge of supporting GeM on SPP in India is hired. Sustainable procurement guidelines for construction materials are developed for Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Grenada.		December 2020
M2 GeM consultant proposed draft procurement Guidelines and standard bidding documents. Sustainable procurement guidelines for construction materials are approved by the public procurement authorities of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Grenada and disseminated to contracting authorities. A legal review of SPP is conducted in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Grenada. Virtual national workshops are held in Antigua, Grenada and Dominica to validate procurement procedures and promote best practices.		June 2021
M3 Uganda carried out a legal review. India (GeM) completed its procurement Guidelines and standard bidding documents.		December 2021
M4 Uganda developed new procurement guidelines		June 2022
M5 Uganda developed information tools such as a website, a newsletter and periodic webinars.		December 2022
M6 Uganda developed an SPP monitoring system		June 2023
M7 Uganda updated its procurement guidelines		December 2023
B) A regional cooperation network on SPP for knowledge exchange and peer to peer learning is established in Asia Pacific	Number of networks complying with the following criteria: composed of 12 countries or more, with at least 3 participants from each country (each member representing a different institution/organization), and carry out minimum 4 concrete activities [baseline: 0, target 2023: 1]	
Project output Milestones:		Milestone attainment date
M1 The Asia Pacific Green Public Procurement Network is officially launched.		December 2020
M2 The first training workshop of the Asia Pacific Network is organized		June 2021
M3 Countries fact sheets are collected		December 2021
M4 First set of case studies is developed		June 2022
M5 Countries fact sheets are updated		December 2022
M6 Second set of case studies is produced		June 2023
M2 The second training workshop of the Asia Pacific Network is organized		December 2023

¹⁷ Outputs: are the products, capital goods and services delivered by the project. Outputs relate to the completion of activities and managers have a high degree of control over them

2. Project Outputs ¹⁷	Indicators
C) Countries have acquired the capacity to report on SDG 12.7.1.	-Number of SPP national focal points participating in webinars on measurement of SDG 12.7.1. [baseline: 0, target 2023: 30] -Number of SPP national focal points participating in online training on measurement of SDG 12.7.1. [baseline: 0, target 2023: 60] -Number of SPP national focal points trained in-situ to measure, monitor and report on the 12.7.1 indicator [baseline: 0, target 2023: 3] - Number of SDG 12.7.1 online Training Toolkit developed [baseline: 0, target 2023: 1]
Project output Milestones:	Milestone attainment date
M1 30 countries take part in webinars to facilitate the measurement of SDG 12.7.1.	December 2020
M2 An online training toolkit is developed to facilitate remote training sessions on the Index Methodology for SDG 12.7.1. 3 countries are trained in-situ to measure, monitor and report on SDG 12.7.1.	June 2021

4. Executing Arrangements

13. The project was managed by the Economic and Trade Policy Unit of the Resources and Markets Branch, Industry and Economy Division. The diagram below represents the implementation arrangements.

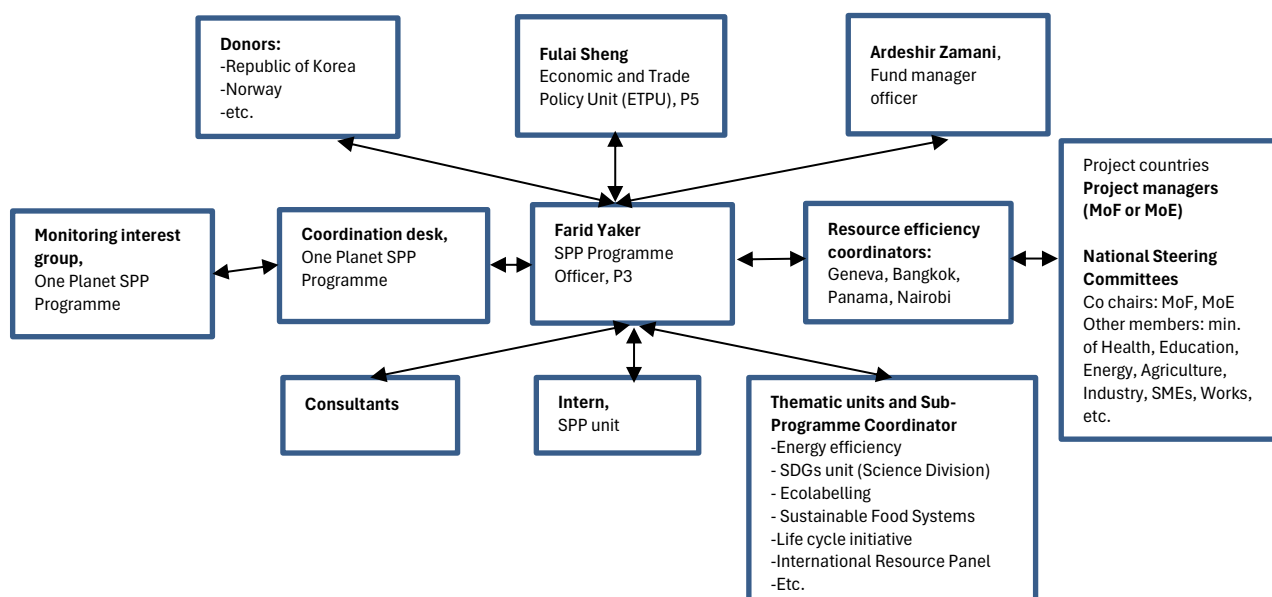


Fig 1. Organizational Diagram

14. UNEP Regional Offices played an important role in supporting governments on SPP development and in the management of SPP regional networks. The regional offices which were involved included the Africa Office, the Europe Office, the Latin America and Caribbean Office, the Asia and Pacific Office, and the West Asia Office. Regional offices were expected to play an important role in supporting governments on SPP development and in the management of SPP regional networks. Regional offices provided capacity to countries on the reporting of SDG 12.7.1. and assisted in data collection pertaining to this indicator. They also contributed to the collection of information for the 2021 SPP Global Review and corresponding country fact sheets.

15. The Economy Division SPP team supported these Regional Offices to implement the SPP related activities of their projects. The SPP team ensured the transfer of SPP knowledge to the Regional and Country offices to enable them to fully support member states in SPP implementation. The contact points at Regional Offices were the Resource Efficiency coordinators.

16. Besides Regional Offices, substantive teams were also involved to ensure maximum synergies between SPP projects and other work areas in the planning and in the implementation of national and regional level activities.

17. Synergies and cooperation with existing programmes which partially support national level SPP activities were also pursued, for example, with the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), the United for Efficiency programme, the Switch Asia and Switch Africa Green programmes, and projects managed by UNEP's Europe Office such as the UNDA and EU4Environment projects which cover respectively Eastern Europe and Central Asia; at the global level, the SDG Monitoring Capacity Building project managed by the Science Division.

5. Project Cost and Financing

18. The total project budget (as indicated in the Project Documents) was **USD 2,456,956** of which USD 1,712,706 (cash) comprised Extrabudgetary Funding, and USD 744,250 (in-kind) comprised contributions from the Environment Fund, SAG II, UNDA and PAGE. See Table 3 below for details:

Table 3. Project Budget Summary

TYPE OF FUNDING	SOURCE OF FUNDING	Details	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
CASH	Extrabudgetary Funding	Republic of Korea (Korea Environmental Industry and Technology Institute / KEITI)	236,549				236,549
		Norway	296,296				296,296
		PSC_ RoK(13%)_ Note 2	30,751				30,751
		PSC_ Norway (8%)	23,704				23,704
		Unsecured XB funding		425,000	425,000	275,406	1,125,406
		XB Sub-total	587,300	425,000	425,000	275,406	1,712,706
	TOTAL XB BUDGET		587,300	425,000	425,000	275,406	1,712,706
IN-KIND	Environment Fund post costs		58,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	478,000
	SAG II (Uganda)		30,000	70,000			100,000
	UNDA (Senegal)			25,000			25,000
	PAGE (Kazakhstan, Brazil and Kyrgyzstan)		45,000	96,250			141,250
	TOTAL IN-KIND BUDGET		133,000	331,250	140,000	140,000	744,250
Total Budget			2,456,956				

19. Funds amounting to USD 266,250 were received from PAGE (for activities in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Brazil) and SAG II programme (Uganda), and the UNDA financial instrument (Senegal). These funds are considered as in-kind contributions. The project also received in-kind contributions (USD 478,000) from UNEP through the salary of the Project Manager (covered by the Environment Fund post cost); it also counted as in-kind contributions to support the SPP team (see Table 3 above).

20. At the national level, and as recommended by the previous SPP project evaluation, participating governments had to demonstrate interest by contributing to the project's expenses, usually in the form of in-kind contributions such as salaries, meeting venues, etc.

21. To finance and support regional level activities, memorandums of understanding and donor agreements were signed with potential donors such as the Organization of American States, the Francophone Organization and interested countries. A donor agreement (attached) has already been signed with the Republic of Korea who is financing the Asia Pacific Network.

Annual requests were to be made to Norway and Sweden which has a dedicated budget to support UNEP projects. Additional funding to support national implementation was mobilized through the PAGE programme since many countries were likely to integrate SPP in their PAGE work plans and dedicate funding to SPP activities. Other funding came from the World Bank, department of operations.

6. Implementation Issues

22. According to reporting on the Project Information and Management System (PIMS), the following points summarise some of the challenges that were faced during project implementation:

- *Information for the development of SPP Factsheets required the completion of a rather extensive "National Government Questionnaire." National governments did not always complete the Questionnaire in its entirety, therefore certain fields in the SPP Factsheets of some countries remained blank. Participating countries would have benefitted from a SPP Factsheet template, to avoid having incomplete information and minimize the time taken to extract information from the Questionnaires. In this regard, a training manual for knowledge transfer would also have been beneficial.*
- *Significant time and resources are needed for the analysis and reporting of SDG Indicator 12.7.1. The collection of contributions from governments has required close follow-up, repeated reminders and personal guidance and assistance in the filling of the reports. The analysis of all the reports provided and related evidence has required much more time than expected as, despite the instructions provided, references supplied were not detailed enough and took a lot of time to be verified, which was made even more difficult in the case of evidence only available in native language.*
- *Difficult and long nomination process, particularly in Asia and, to some extent, in Latin America: There was good representation of focal points for data collection in Europe and LAC region, but weaker representation in Asia Pacific. Shorter chains of command facilitated the nomination process in Europe and Canada, where usual SPP focal points had more leeway to report on SDG 12.7.1 indicator, while official nomination of focal points in Asia has been more difficult due to lengthy, top-down approval processes.*
- *Difficulty in defining a common framework: terminology and understanding of SPP differs in various areas of the world, including how the developed methodology is perceived as a valuable, common framework. However, past pilot testing exercises significantly facilitated data collection, engagement, and understanding of tools and guidance. Also beneficial was the identification of relevant departments/focal points, as well as engagement from those who were consulted and given the opportunity to participate in the methodological development of the SDG 12.7.1 indicator. In terms of communication, webinars have been key in enhancing understanding of the methodology and tools. Webinars gathering a range of 10-20 attendees were especially proven optimal for exchanges.*
- *Translation of reporting tools and documents in several languages facilitated involvement and participation. Regular communication and update-sharing (e.g. Frequently Asked Questions) have also had a positive effect in fostering engagement.*
- *Reporting timeframe: The set period for data collection (November-December) and for further exchanges (January -February 2021) were found to be an unsuitable reporting time for departments, making it difficult for reporting entities to complete data collection in time. Data collection also took more time than expected to due bilateral exchanges for necessary clarifications/complements.*
- *SPP action plan and policy implementation monitoring: There was great variability in monitoring of progress; some countries conduct detailed reporting with quantified targets, while some others showed no monitoring, or irregular monitoring.*

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

(Apart from section 9, where you could insert up to 5 strategic questions that are in addition to the evaluation criteria, this section is standard and does not need to be revised for each project)

7. Objective of the Evaluation

23. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy¹⁸ and the UNEP Programme and Project Management Manual¹⁹, the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at operational completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The Evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and the project's main project partners. Therefore, the Evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially where a second phase of the project is being considered. Recommendations relevant to the whole house may also be identified during the evaluation process.

8. Key Evaluation Principles

24. Evaluation findings and judgements will be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the Evaluation Report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

25. **The "Why?" Question.** As this is a Terminal Evaluation, particular attention will be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the "why?" question should be at the front of the consultants' minds all through the evaluation exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultant(s) needs to go beyond the assessment of "what" the project performance was and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of "why" the performance was as it was (i.e. what contributed to the achievement of the project's results). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

26. **Attribution, Contribution and Credible Association:** In order to *attribute* any outcomes and impacts to a project intervention, one needs to consider the difference between what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project (i.e. take account of changes over time and between contexts in order to isolate the effects of an intervention). This requires appropriate baseline data and the identification of a relevant counterfactual, both of which are frequently not available for evaluations. Establishing the *contribution* made by a project in a complex change process relies heavily on prior intentionality (e.g. approved project design documentation, logical framework) and the articulation of causality (e.g. narrative and/or illustration of the Theory of Change). Robust evidence that a project was delivered as designed and that the expected causal pathways developed supports claims of contribution and this is strengthened where an alternative theory of change can be excluded. A *credible association* between the implementation of a project and observed positive effects can be made where a strong causal narrative, although not explicitly articulated, can be inferred by the chronological sequence of events, active involvement of key actors and engagement in critical processes.

27. **Communicating evaluation results.** A key aim of the Evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the evaluation process and in the communication of evaluation findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all evaluation deliverables. Draft and final versions of the Main Evaluation Report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Evaluation Manager. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The consultant will plan with the Evaluation Manager which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key evaluation findings and lessons to them. This may include some, or all, of the following: a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of an Evaluation Brief or interactive presentation.

¹⁸ <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/41114>

¹⁹ <https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/42752>

9. Key Strategic Questions

28. In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Evaluation will address the **strategic questions** listed below (no more than 5 questions are recommended). These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:

- (a) The project aimed to ensure that national capacity on SPP is developed and strengthened to ensure the sustainability of SPP policies that support stronger public demand for more green/sustainable products, and lead to significant financial savings. To what degree of success did the project improve market readiness and response capacity to deliver sustainable alternatives at the national-level?
- (b) At project design, SPP was not sufficiently embedded in sectoral policies and overarching sustainable development strategies (e.g. climate change, energy efficiency, circular economy, decent work, gender equality), and in some countries the regulatory frameworks were not conducive to green/sustainable procurement. Citing examples, to what extent was the project successful in promoting the inclusion of SPP in sectoral legislations and/or national action plans?
- (c) In what ways has the project been successful in enhancing SPP cooperation at the regional level with, inter alia, the establishment of Regional SPP Networks, and what is the probability that these networks will be sustained post project?
- (d) In what ways, and to what extent, has the project taken integrated gender and human rights considerations in its implementation and monitoring of results?
- (e) What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?

10. Evaluation Criteria

29. All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria. A weightings table in excel format will be provided by the Evaluation Manager to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The Evaluation Consultant can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

A. Strategic Relevance

30. The Evaluation will assess the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the donors, implementing regions/countries and the target beneficiaries. The Evaluation will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

i. **Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy²⁰ (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities**

31. The Evaluation should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building²¹ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen

²⁰ UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UNEP's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UNEP's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as POW Outcomes and POW Direct Outcomes of the Sub-programmes. <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

²¹ <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries.

ii. Alignment to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities

32. Donor strategic priorities will vary across interventions. The Evaluation will assess the extent to which the project is suited to, or responding to, donor priorities. In some cases, alignment with donor priorities may be a fundamental part of project design and grant approval processes while in others, for example, instances of 'softly earmarked' funding, such alignment may be more of an assumption that should be assessed.

iii. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities

33. The Evaluation will assess the alignment of the project with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030. The extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented will be considered. Examples may include: UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) or national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc. Within this section consideration will be given to whether the needs of all beneficiary groups are being met and reflects the current policy priority to leave no one behind.

iv. Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence²²

34. An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization²³, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies within the same country, sector or institution) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The Evaluation will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include UNDAFs or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality
- Country ownership and driven-ness

B. Quality of Project Design

The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the evaluation inception phase, ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established. The complete Project Design Quality template should be annexed in the Evaluation Inception Report. Later, the overall Project Design Quality rating²⁴ should be entered in the final evaluation ratings table (as item B) in the Main Evaluation Report and a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage should be included within the body of the report.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):

- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality

C. Nature of External Context

35. At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval²⁵). This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavourable or

²² This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.

²³ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

²⁴ In some instances, based on data collected during the evaluation process, the assessment of the project's design quality may change from Inception Report to Main Evaluation Report.

²⁵ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management by the project team. From March 2020 this should include the effects of COVID-19.

Highly Unfavourable external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

i. Availability of Outputs²⁶

36. The Evaluation will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and making them available to the intended beneficiaries as well as its success in achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any formal modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, reformulations may be necessary in the reconstruction of the Theory of Change (TOC). In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The availability of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their provision. It is noted that emphasis is placed on the performance of those outputs that are most important to achieve outcomes. The Evaluation will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision²⁷

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes²⁸

37. The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed²⁹ Theory of Change. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. Emphasis is placed on the achievement of project outcomes that are most important for attaining intermediate states. As with outputs, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary to allow for an assessment of performance. The Evaluation should report evidence of attribution between UNEP's intervention and the project outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UNEP's 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the project outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality
- Communication and public awareness

iii. Likelihood of Impact

38. Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (*i.e. from project outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact*), the Evaluation will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long-lasting impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment Decision Tree'. Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from project outcomes to

²⁶ Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2023)

²⁷ 'Project management and supervision' refers to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments.

²⁸ An outcome is a change at institutional level, or changes in behaviours, attitudes or conditions achieved from the use (*i.e.*, uptake, adoption, application) of outputs by intended beneficiaries. (UNEP, 2023)

²⁹ All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any formal changes made to the project design. In the case of projects pre-dating 2016 the intervention logic is often represented in a logical framework and a TOC will need to be constructed in the inception stage of the review

impacts, taking account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

39. The Evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects (e.g. will vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities and/or women and children, be disproportionately affected by the project?). Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental and Social Safeguards.

40. The Evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role³⁰ or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a demonstration component or implicitly as expressed in the drivers required to move to outcome levels) and as factors that are likely to contribute to greater or long-lasting impact.

41. Ultimately UNEP and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-lasting or broad-based changes. However, the Evaluation will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the long-lasting changes represented by the Sustainable Development Goals, and/or the intermediate-level results reflected in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and the strategic priorities of funding partner(s).

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management)
- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality
- Country ownership and driven-ness
- Communication and public awareness

E. Financial Management

42. Financial management will be assessed under three themes: *adherence* to UNEP's financial policies and procedures, *completeness* of financial information and *communication* between financial and project management staff. The Evaluation will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output/component level and will be compared with the approved budget. The Evaluation will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted. The Evaluation will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The Evaluation will assess the level of communication between the Project Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

43. Under the efficiency criterion, the Evaluation will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution.

³⁰ The terms catalytic effect, scaling up and replication are inter-related and generally refer to extending the coverage or magnitude of the effects of a project. Catalytic effect is associated with triggering additional actions that are not directly funded by the project – these effects can be both concrete or less tangible, can be intentionally caused by the project or implied in the design and reflected in the TOC drivers, or can be unintentional and can rely on funding from another source or have no financial requirements. Scaling up and Replication require more intentionality for projects, or individual components and approaches, to be reproduced in other similar contexts. Scaling up suggests a substantive increase in the number of new beneficiaries reached/involved and may require adapted delivery mechanisms while Replication suggests the repetition of an approach or component at a similar scale but among different beneficiaries. Even with highly technical work, where scaling up or replication involves working with a new community, some consideration of the new context should take place and adjustments made as necessary.

44. Focussing on the translation of inputs into outputs, *cost-effectiveness* is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. *Timeliness* refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The Evaluation will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The Evaluation will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

45. The Evaluation will give special attention to efforts made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities³¹ with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

46. The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. As management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to implementing parties.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)
- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation

G. Monitoring and Reporting

47. The Evaluation will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting.

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

48. Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART³² results towards the provision of the project's outputs and achievement of project outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. In particular, the Evaluation will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management. The Evaluation will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for Mid-Term and Terminal Evaluation/Review should be discussed if applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

49. The Evaluation will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period. This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups, including gendered, marginalised or vulnerable groups, such as those living with disabilities, in project activities. It will also consider the quality of the information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation and how it was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The Evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

iii. Project Reporting

50. UNEP has a centralised project information management system³³ in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant by the Evaluation Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team. The Evaluation will assess the extent

³¹ Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

³² SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

³³ Prior to 2022 it was the Project Information Management System (PIMS) and from 2022 UNEP has the Integrated Planning Monitoring and Reporting (IPMR) solution.

to which both UNEP and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Consideration will be given as to whether reporting has been carried out with respect to the effects of the initiative on disaggregated groups.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality (e.g. disaggregated indicators and data)

H. Sustainability

51. Sustainability³⁴ is understood as the probability of the benefits derived from the achievement of project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The Evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the endurance of achieved project outcomes (i.e. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of project outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

52. The Evaluation will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of the benefits derived from project outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the Evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

53. Some project outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed e.g. to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other project outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained, e.g. continuation of a new natural resource management approach. The Evaluation will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where a project's outcomes have been extended into a future project phase. Even where future funding has been secured, the question remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

54. The Evaluation will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure. In particular, the Evaluation will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined)
- Communication and public awareness
- Country ownership and driven-ness

I. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

55. (These factors are rated in the ratings table but are discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above. If these issues have not been

³⁴ As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-lasting maintenance of outcomes and consequent impacts, whether environmental or not. This is distinct from the concept of sustainability in the terms 'environmental sustainability' or 'sustainable development', which imply 'not living beyond our means' or 'not diminishing global environmental benefits' (GEF STAP Paper, 2019, *Achieving More Enduring Outcomes from GEF Investment*).

addressed under the evaluation criteria above, then independent summaries of their status within the evaluated project should be given.)

i. Preparation and Readiness

56. This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (i.e. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The Evaluation will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular, the Evaluation will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. *(Project preparation is included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).*

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

57. In some cases, 'project management and supervision' may refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, it may refer to the project management performance of an implementing partner and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP. The performance of parties playing different roles should be discussed and a rating provided for both types of supervision (UNEP/Implementing Agency; Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-category established as a simple average of the two.

58. The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); maintaining project relevance within changing external and strategic contexts; communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

59. Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP and the implementing partner(s). The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups should be considered.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

60. The Evaluation will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

61. Within this human rights context, the Evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention, following an adequate gender analysis at design stage, has implemented the identified actions and/or applied adaptive management to ensure that Gender Equality and Human Rights are adequately taken into account and the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment³⁵. In particular the Evaluation will consider to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible inequalities (especially those related to gender) in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

62. Note that the project's effect on equality (i.e. promoting human rights, gender equality and inclusion of those living with disabilities and/or belonging to marginalised/vulnerable groups) should be included within the TOC as a general driver or assumption where there is no dedicated result within the results framework. If

³⁵The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved over time. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy-2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

an explicit commitment on this topic is made within the project document, then the driver/assumption should also be specific to the described intentions.

v. Environmental and Social Safeguards

63. UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening at the project approval stage, risk assessment and management (avoidance, minimization, mitigation or, in exceptional cases, offsetting) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The Evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements³⁶ were met to: *review* risk ratings on a regular basis; *monitor* project implementation for possible safeguard issues; *respond* (where relevant) to safeguard issues through risk avoidance, minimization, mitigation or offsetting and *report* on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken. UNEP requirements for proposed projects to be screened for any safeguarding issues; for sound environmental and social risk assessments to be conducted and initial risk ratings to be assigned, are evaluated above under Quality of Project Design).

64. The Evaluation will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

65. The Evaluation will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, i.e. either a) moving forwards from outputs to project outcomes or b) moving forward from project outcomes towards intermediate states. The Evaluation will consider the engagement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices (e.g. representatives from multiple sectors or relevant ministries beyond Ministry of Environment). This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long-lasting impact to be realised. Ownership should extend to all gender and marginalised groups.

vii. Communication and Public Awareness

66. The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The Evaluation should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

67. The Terminal Evaluation will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the Evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) will provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.). The findings of the Evaluation will be based on the following:

- (a) A desk review of:

³⁶ For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project design since 2011.

- Relevant background documentation
 - Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;
 - Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence etc.;
 - Project deliverables;
 - Evaluations/reviews of similar projects (where applicable).
- (b) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with:
- UNEP Project Manager (PM);
 - Project management team;
 - UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
 - Project partners;
 - Sub-Programme Coordinator;
 - Relevant resource persons;
 - Representatives from civil society and specialist groups (such as women's, farmers and trade associations etc).
- (c) **Surveys** (if deemed appropriate)
- (d) **Field visits** (if deemed necessary)
- (e) **Other data collection tools** as deemed appropriate by the Evaluation Consultant

11. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The Evaluation Consultant will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** (see Annex 1 for a list of all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.
- **Preliminary Findings:** typically in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings. In the case of highly strategic project/portfolio evaluations or evaluations with an Evaluation Reference Group, the preliminary findings may be presented as a word document for review and comment.
- **Draft and Final Evaluation Report:** containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the evaluation findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

68. An **Evaluation Brief** (a 2-page overview of the evaluand and evaluation findings) for wider dissemination through the UNEP website may be required. This will be discussed with the Evaluation Manager no later than during the finalization of the Inception Report.

69. **Review of the Draft Evaluation Report.** The Evaluation Consultant will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Evaluation Manager will share the cleared draft report with the Project Manager/Implementing Partner, who will alert the Evaluation Manager in case the report contains any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Manager will then forward the revised draft report (corrected by the Evaluation Consultant where necessary) to other project stakeholders, for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Evaluation Manager for consolidation. The Evaluation Manager will provide all comments to the Evaluation Consultant for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

70. Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the Evaluation Consultant and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final Main Evaluation Report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and the Evaluation Manager on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The Evaluation Office ratings will be considered the final ratings for the project.

71. The Evaluation Manager will prepare a **quality assessment** of the first draft of the Main Evaluation Report, which acts as a tool for providing structured feedback to the Evaluation Consultant. The quality of the final report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in template listed in Annex 1 and this assessment will be appended to the Final Evaluation Report.

72. At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a **Recommendations Implementation Plan** in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals by the Project Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six-monthly basis for a maximum of 12 months.

12. The Evaluation Consultant

73. For this Evaluation, the Evaluation Consultant will consist of a Principal Evaluator who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager (Pauline Marima), in consultation with the UNEP Project Manager, Economic and Trade Policy Unit (Asad Naqvi), Administrative Assistant (Fatma Pandey), Fund Management Officer (Fuaad Alkizim), and the Head of Resources and Markets Branch (Elisa Tonda).

74. The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Evaluation, including travel. It is, however, each consultants' individual responsibility (where applicable) to arrange for their visas and immunizations as well as to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Project Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the Evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

75. The Evaluation Consultant will be hired over a period of **approximately 8 months (from the contract start date)** and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area is required and an advanced degree in the same areas is desirable. at least 7 years' professional experience in the field of environmental or social sciences is required; working experience in the areas of resource management, sustainable consumption and production and/or sustainable public procurement is an added advantage. Previous experience in undertaking evaluation of projects, preferably using a Theory of Change approach, is required. Previous work experience in Madagascar is an advantage. Knowledge of English language along with excellent writing skills in English is required, and for this assignment, fluency in French is also required. Experience in managing partnerships, knowledge management and communication is desirable for all evaluation consultants. The work will be home-based with a possible field visit to Madagascar.

76. The Evaluation Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Office of UNEP for overall management of the Evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables, above. The consultant will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

77. In close consultation with the Evaluation Manager, the Evaluation Consultant will be responsible for the overall management of the Evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, data collection and analysis and report-writing. More specifically:

Inception phase of the Evaluation, including:

- preliminary desk review and introductory interviews with project staff;
- draft the reconstructed Theory of Change of the project;
- prepare the evaluation framework;
- develop the desk review and interview protocols;
- draft the survey protocols (if relevant);
- develop and present criteria for country and/or site selection for the evaluation mission;

- plan the evaluation schedule;
- prepare the Inception Report, incorporating comments until approved by the Evaluation Manager

Data collection and analysis phase of the Evaluation, including:

- conduct further desk review and in-depth interviews with project implementing and executing agencies, project partners and project stakeholders;
- (where appropriate and agreed) conduct an evaluation mission to the project countries, visit the project locations, interview project partners and stakeholders, including a good representation of local communities where feasible, and ensure independence of the Evaluation and confidentiality of evaluation interviews.
- regularly report back to the Evaluation Manager on progress and inform of any possible problems or issues encountered and;
- keep the Project/Task Manager informed of the evaluation progress.

Reporting phase, including:

- draft the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that the evaluation report is complete, coherent and consistent with the Evaluation Manager guidelines both in substance and style;
- liaise with the Evaluation Manager on comments received and finalize the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that comments are taken into account until approved by the Evaluation Manager
- prepare a Response to Comments annex for the main report, listing those comments not accepted by the Evaluation Consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection; and
- (where agreed with the Evaluation Manager) prepare an Evaluation Brief (2-page summary of the evaluation and the key evaluation findings and lessons)

Managing relations, including:

- maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence;
- communicate in a timely manner with the Evaluation Manager on any issues requiring its attention and intervention.

13. Schedule of the Evaluation

78. The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	Within 1 week from start date
Inception Report	1 month from starting date
Primary and secondary data collection and analysis	1.5 - 2 months from starting date
Presentation of preliminary findings	2.5 months from starting date
Draft report submitted to Evaluation Manager	3.5 months from starting date
Draft Report submitted to Task Manager and core project team	5 months from starting date
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	6 months from starting date
Submission of Final Report	7-8 months from starting date

14. Contractual Arrangements

79. Evaluation Consultants are selected and recruited by the Evaluation Office of UNEP under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the Consultant shall certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests

(within six months after completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

80. Fees will be paid on an instalment basis, paid on acceptance by the Evaluation Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

Schedule of Payment for the Evaluation Consultant

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report (<i>as per Guidance Note</i>)	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report c	40%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report (<i>as per Guidance Note</i>)	30%

Fees only contracts: Where applicable, air tickets will be purchased by UNEP and 75% of the Daily Subsistence Allowance for each authorised travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel will only be reimbursed where agreed in advance with the Evaluation Manager and on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

The consultant may be provided with access to UNEP's information management systems (e.g. SharePoint, Dropbox, etc.) and if such access is granted, the consultant agrees not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluation report.

In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Director of the Evaluation Office until the consultant has improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

If the consultant fails to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultant's fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard³⁷.

³⁷ This may include contract cancellation in-line with prevailing UN Secretariat rules.

Annex 1: Tools, Templates and Guidance Notes for use in the Evaluation

The tools, templates and guidance notes listed in the table below, and available from the Evaluation Manager, are intended to help Evaluation Managers and Evaluation Consultants to produce evaluation products that are consistent with each other, and which can be compiled into a biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report. The biennial summary is used to provide an overview of progress to UNEP and the UN Environmental Assembly.

This suite of documents is also intended to make the evaluation process as transparent as possible so that all those involved in the process can participate on an informed basis. It is recognised that the evaluation needs of projects and portfolio vary and adjustments may be necessary so that the purpose of the evaluation process (broadly, accountability and lesson learning), can be met. Such adjustments should be decided between the Evaluation Manager and the Evaluation Consultants in order to produce evaluation reports that are both useful to project implementers and that produce credible findings.

ADVICE TO CONSULTANTS: As our tools, templates and guidance notes are updated on a continuous basis, kindly download documents from the link below and use those versions throughout the Evaluation.

<https://communities.unep.org/display/EOU/INDEPENDENT+EVALUATION+TOOLS+AND+TEMPLATES>

List of tools, templates and guidance notes available:

Terminal Evaluation Essential Tools

-  00 Evaluation Tools Description 09.11.21
-  00a_UNEP Glossary of results definitions_December 2023
-  00b_List of Documents for Evaluation 31.01.2024
-  01_Evaluation Criteria 31.01.2024
-  02_Criterion Rating Descriptions Matrix 31.01.2024
-  03_Evaluation Criteria Ratings Table 31.01.2024
-  04_Weighted Ratings Table 31.01.2024
-  05_Evaluation Methodology Guidance 31.01.2024

Terminal Evaluation Inception Report

-  06_Project Identification Table 31.01.2024
-  07_Inception Report Structure and Contents 31.01.2024
-  08_TOC Reformulation Justification Table 31.01.2024
-  09_Quality of Project Design Table 31.01.2024
-  09a_Quality of Project Design Template 31.01.2024
-  10_Stakeholder Analysis Guidance 31.01.2024
-  11_Gender Methods Guidance 31.01.2024
-  12_Safeguards Assessment Template 31.01.2024

Terminal Evaluation Main Evaluation Report

-  13_Evaluation Report Structure and Contents 10.05.22
-  14_Use of TOC in Project Evaluation 31.01.2024
-  15_Financial Tables 31.01.2024
-  16_Likelihood of impact Flow Chart 31.01.2024
-  16a_Likelihood of impact Test Case 31.01.2024
-  17_GEF_Evaluation Main Report Template 31.01.2024
-  18_NonGEF Evaluation Main Report Template 31.01.2024
-  19_Quality Of Eval Report FINAL ONLY 31.01.2024 FOR USE BY UNEP
-  20_Recommendations Quality Guidance 31.01.2024
-  20a_In Report Template Presenting Recs and LL 31.01.2024
-  21_GEF Portal Annex Template 31.01.2024

Terminal Evaluation Process Guidance

-  Process 1_Evaluation Process Guidelines for Consultants 31.01.2024
-  Process 2_Template for Attestation Letter 31.01.2024
-  Process 3_Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form 31.01.2024
-  Process 4_Guidelines for Field Work During Coronavirus 31.01.2024
-  Process 5_Evaluation Consultants Team Roles 31.01.2024
-  Process 6_ Template for Reference Checks 31.01.2024
-  Process 7_Letter of Introduction for Visa Applications Template 31.01.2024