TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP project

Sustainable Management of Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Services PIMS ID: 02019

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 1: Project Summary

<table>
<tr><td>UNEP PIMS ID/SMA[1] ID:</td><td>PIMS ID: 02019, SMA ID: 45694</td><td colspan="2">Grant ID[2] (if applicable):</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>UNEP Management (Division/Branch/Unit):</td><td colspan="4">Ecosystems Division</td></tr>
<tr><td>Implementing Partners:</td><td colspan="4">1. Blue Ventures Conservation
2. Coastal Oceans Research and Development – Indian Ocean (CORDIO) East Africa
3. Commonwealth Secretariat
4. Community Centered Conservation (C3), the Philippines
5. Corals for Conservation (C4C), Fiji
6. Department of Parks & Wildlife Management (DPWM), the Gambia
7. Edinburgh Napier University (ENU), UK
8. Fauna & Flora International (FFI), Kenya
9. GRID-Arendal
10. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
11. Kenya Marine & Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), Kenya
12. Mision Tiburon
13. OCTO
14. The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
15. The Ocean Agency
16. The Reef-World Foundation
17. The University of Queensland
18. Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA), Belize
19. Universitat de Girona
20. University of Bremen
21. University of Portsmouth
22. University of Wollongong
23. Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
24. World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sources of Funding:</td><td>Country[3](ies):
Australia, Belgium, France, Italy, Monaco, Sweden, United States of America.</td><td colspan="3">Institution[4] Name/Type:
European Commission - Multilateral Fund
Global Fund for Coral Reefs - Multilateral Fund
Joint SDG Fund - Multilateral Fund</td></tr>
<tr><td>Relevant SDG(s):</td><td colspan="4">14</td></tr>
<tr><td>MTS (all that apply):</td><td></td><td>UNEP approval date:</td><td colspan="2">28 August 2018</td></tr>
<tr><td>POW Direct Outcome(s) number/reference</td><td>POW Direct Outcome:</td><td>MTS 2025 Outcome(s) number/reference</td><td colspan="2">MTS 2025 Outcome:</td></tr>
</table>

[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.

(applicable for projects approved from 2022): **OR** **POW Output(s) number/reference** *(applicable for projects approved pre-2022)*	***POW Output:*** POW SP3 EAa Output 6: Development and dissemination of tools and methodologies for integrated ecosystem management	*(applicable for projects approved from 2022):* **OR** **POW Expected Accomplishment(s) number/reference** *(applicable for projects approved pre-2022):*	***POW Expected Accomplishment:*** PoW 20/21: SP3 EA (a) The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks, at the national and international levels. PoW 22/23: Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced
Sub-programme:	Nature Action (formerly Healthy and Productive Ecosystems)	**Programme Coordination Project:**	N/A
***Expected* start date:**	01 May 2018	**Actual start date:**	28 Aug 2018
***Planned* completion date:**	30 Jun 2023	**Actual operational completion date:**	TBD
***Planned* total project budget[5] at approval:**	US $	**Actual total expenditures reported as of [date]:**	TBD
***Planned* Extra-budgetary Funds[6]:**	*Cash:* US $	**Secured Extra-budgetary Funds:**	*Cash:* US $ TBD *In-kind:* US $ TBD
	In-kind: US $	**Actual Extra-budgetary Funds expenditures reported as of [date]:**	*Cash:* US $ TBD
First disbursement:	TBD	**Planned date of financial closure:**	TBD
No. of formal project revisions:	3	**Date of last approved project revision:**	TBD
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	TBD	**Date of Last Steering Committee meeting:**	TBD
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation *(planned date):*	March 2020 *(Postponed to September 2020 at 1st revision)*	**Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):**	July 2021
Terminal Evaluation *(planned date):*	December 2021	**Terminal Evaluation (actual date):**	April 2024
Coverage – Implementing Country(ies):	Kenya, Philippines, the Gambia, Belize, Vietnam, Haiti, Fiji, Costa Rica, Solomon Islands, Benin. Madagascar	**Coverage – Implementing Region(s):**	Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean
Dates of previous project phases:	321.1: 2015-2018 321.2: 2015-2019	**Status of future project phases:**	TBD

2. Project Rationale

[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)

1. Marine and coastal ecosystems provide wide-ranging ecosystem services to coastal and inland populations, including food provision, coastal protection, energy provision, spiritual values and recreational opportunities. These are directly and indirectly linked with economic and social benefits of human beings. Marine and coastal ecosystems are key to the global climate system providing valuable climate change adaptation and mitigation capacity and opportunities. For example, mangroves, seagrass beds and salt marshes are known to store and sequester carbon in their ecosystems and when managed well, limit the release of greenhouse gases and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Coastal and marine ecosystems are also key to food security, with fisheries providing nutrition for billions of people and accounting for 16% of total global animal protein in-take. Coastal ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass stabilize shorelines and protect communities from flooding, storm surges and wave action. Coastal waters also provide significant cultural reference points for coastal communities which relate to their ancestral lands, species of spiritual importance and maritime identity.

2. However, the world's oceans and coasts are under increasing pressure from anthropogenic activities and unsustainable exploitation, resulting in adverse impacts. Overfishing, destructive fishing, mining, dredging and dumping leading to coastal pollution, and marine litter, ocean acidification, and warming sea temperatures, among others, are anthropogenic threats that are negatively impacting the resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems, as well as the communities that depend on them. Delivery of ecosystem goods and services is thus being compromised, making hundreds of millions of coastal people, and especially natural resource-dependent indigenous people, more vulnerable to threats to their lives and livelihoods.

3. Sustainably managing marine and coastal ecosystems so that they remain healthy and continue providing ecosystem goods and services is integral to achieving sustainable development and a more prosperous future for humanity. In addition, promoting equity in access to ecosystem services, including gender equity, is an important aspect of sustainable development.

4. However, barriers to sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems exit. These include:

a) Ecological and social scientific information on coastal and marine ecosystems is still lacking and there are large gaps in knowledge, reducing the scope for appropriate policy development;

b) Current environmental management or sustainable development policies and strategies do not appropriately consider the ecosystem services and their values, so that appropriate management actions are not taken;

c) There is insufficient or limited knowledge and understanding of wider socio-economic benefits derived from coastal and marine ecosystems, so that those benefiting from specific ecosystems services sometimes do not make enough effort to maintain the integrity and health of these ecosystems;

d) For efficient implementation of sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems, stakeholders including private sector and civil society stakeholders are not integrated well enough into process of developing and implementing policies, tools and other solutions. Relevant sustainable financing streams are not widely available;

e) Oceans and seas are transboundary in nature and therefore, marine resources management requires intervention at all levels including global, regional and national level such as through regional frameworks for cooperative management and protection of shared marine and coastal environment.

5. To contribute to addressing these barriers to sustainable management of marine and costal ecosystems, UNEP through; the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Unit (MCEU) of the Marine and Freshwater Branch (MFWB), UNEP Ecosystems Division; designed and implemented the project PIMS 2019: "Sustainable Management of Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Services" (hereinafter referred to as 'the project').

3. Project Results Framework[7]

6. The project results framework is anchored on two outcomes as tabulated below and detailed in Annex 2: Project Results Framework.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE: To incorporate the values of marine and coastal ecosystem services in the development and implementation of coastal and marine policies and decision-making.	
OUTCOMES	**OUTPUTS**
Outcome 1: Governments, Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, and partners use data and information on marine and coastal ecosystem services to implement actions for more sustainable coastal and marine ecosystem management.	**Output 1:** Partnerships established and policy relevant scientific knowledge, data and analysis produced and disseminated on globally critical marine ecosystems
	Output 2. Customized tools and approaches for ecosystem-based management and sustainable blue economy are developed, tested and made available to support sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystem services
	Output 5. Services and guidance made available to strengthen Regional Ocean Governance
Outcome 1B (Direct Outcome): The post 2020 Biodiversity Framework reflects the regional seas programmes and conventions roles in achieving the global biodiversity goals and targets	**Output 5a (EC component)** Mechanisms for the regional seas programmes to contribute to achieving biodiversity related objectives and targets are elaborated and proposed by UNEP and the regional seas secretariats and CBD Parties are informed of the proposed roles of regional seas programmes and conventions in the post 2020 Biodiversity Framework.
Outcome 2: Increased investments in the sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems	**Output 3.** Communication made available on the value of ecosystem services, supported by operational knowledge platform and outreach
	Output 4. Guidance disseminated and technical support provided for the development of innovative financing projects

4. Executing Arrangements

7. The project was implemented by the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Unit (MCEU) of the Marine and Freshwater Branch (MFWB) of the Ecosystems Division. The Project Manager was supported by UN Volunteers (UNV) with one employed specifically to assist with financial management under the supervision of the Fund Management Officer (FMO).

8. The implementation of the project was overseen by a Steering Committee, which was expected to meet annually to review progress and approve the workplan for the following year. The membership comprised of staff members of the MCEU and the Regional Seas Programme secretariat, as well as regional offices and other divisional staff. Project implementation was supported by UNEP Divisions, Regional Offices, Regional Seas secretariats and a large number of executing partners from external organisations as shown in Figure 1.

[7] The results framework is an extract from Table 3 of the Project Revision #3 dated 3 July 2023.

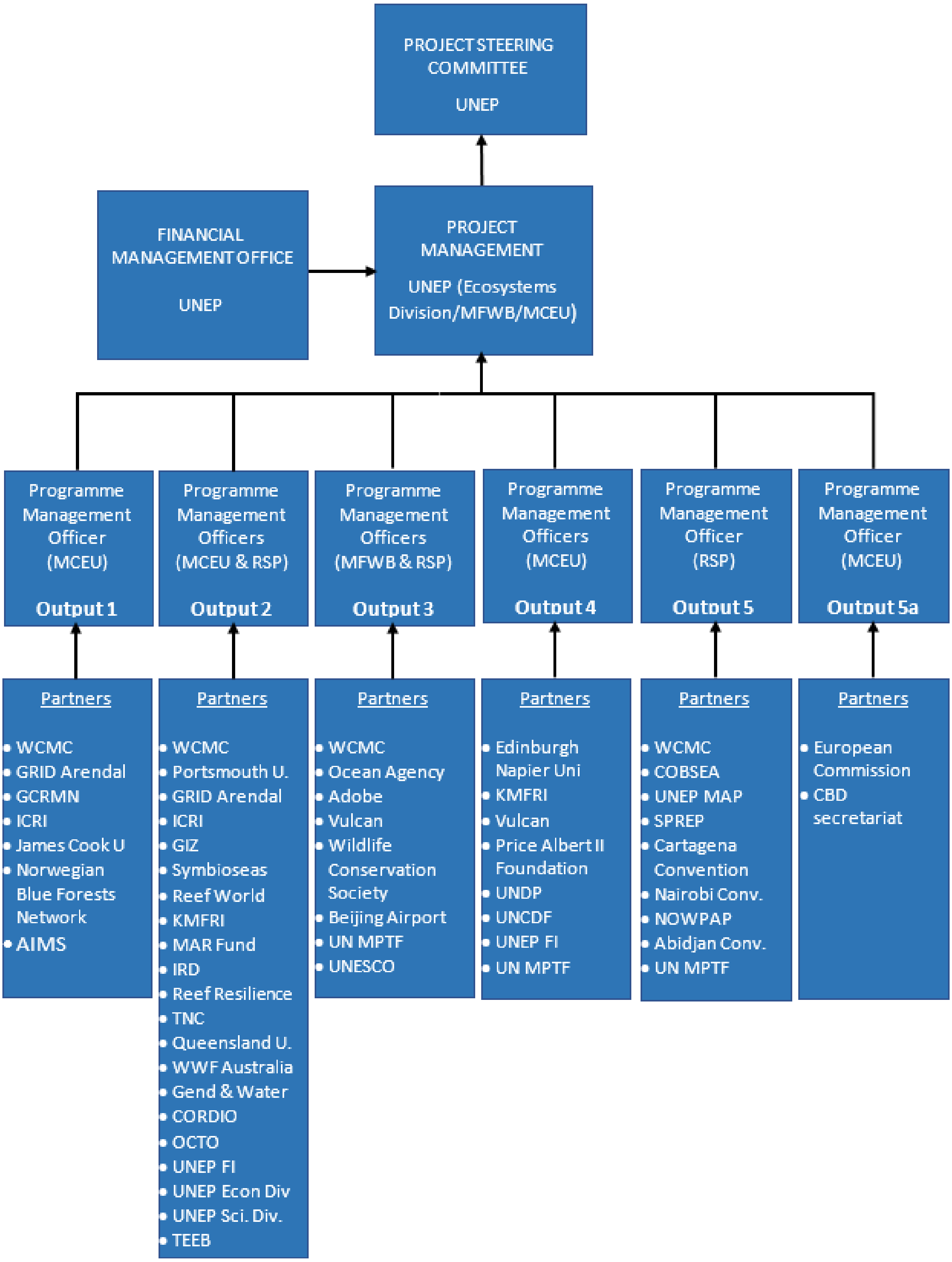

Figure 1[8]: Project implementation structure

[8] Extract from the Mid Term Review of the Project.

5. Project Cost and Financing

9. The total project budget was US$ 18,374,068.62 which included cash (US$ 14,067,380.31secured and US$ 1,100,000 unsecured) and US$ 2,955,988.31 in-kind financing is summarised in Table 2: Total Project Budget below.

Table 2: Total Project Budget

Type of Funding	Source of Funding	Details	Total (USD)
Cash	Environment Fund (EF) activity budget		250,700
	Regular Budget (RB) activity budget		0
	Total (EF+RB)		**250,700**
	Extra Budgetary Funding (XB) (posts + non-post + Programme Support Cost (PSC))	USDOS	2,707,685.18
		Swedish Env.	254,757.97
		Italian	1,520,467.84
		SIDA Reg. Seas	554,944.57
		SIDA	5,505,917.38
		NFL	292,576.37
		European Commission	233,623.45
		GIZ	314,823.61
		Monaco	252,003.34
		Foundation of Prince	138,382.26
		Australia	180,800.00
		Belgium	100,000.00
		GCRF	588,404.00
		FIJI	379,137.00
		France	14,938.42
		UNEP-FAO-ROLAC	9,639.64
		UNEP-UNDP FUND	19,279.28
		GFCR	1,000,000.00
	Total (XB Budget)		**14,067,380.31**
	Unsecured Funding	GFCR M&E	1,000,000.00
		SIDA 2023	100,000.00
	Total (Unsecured Funding)		**1,100,000.00**
In-Kind	Environment Fund post costs	D1 (10%), P5 (100%), P4 (100%), P4 (30%), P3 (100%), P2 (100%).	2,073,815.81
	Regular Budget post costs	N/A	
	OTA	P3 (13%), G5 (100%).	218,119.17
	Other (Extra-Budget)	P2 (100%), P4 (30%), UNV (100%), UNV (100%), UNV (50%).	664,053.33
	Total In-Kind Budget		**2,955,988.31**
Total Secured Budget			**14,318,080.31**
Total Planned Budget (secured + unsecured)			**15,418,080.31**
Total Revised Planned Budget (Planned + In-Kind)			**18,374,068.62**

6. Implementation Issues

10. A project mid-term review was conducted in July 2021 rated the project Moderately Satisfactory. Four project revisions were undertaken during the life of the project as summarised below.

Revision#	Date of Revision	Reason(s) for Revision
1	20 April 2020	○ To refine project activities and outputs following stakeholder engagement during the inception phase. ○ Incorporate additional funding from SIDA and the European Commission.
2	17 March 2022	○ Extension of the project operational completion until June 2023. ○ Incorporate new funding (USD 3,500,000).
3	3 July 2023	○ Revision to allow the new secured funding to be placed in the unit from US Department of State, SIDA, Monaco, GFCR and Joint SDG amounting to USD 1,258,582.67 ○ Extending the duration for 7 months from 30 June 2023 to 31 January 2024.
4	24 April 2024	○ No cost extension for the project for 3 months until 30 April 2024 to allow for operations (mainly payroll) until the new project is approved (the new project is in the PRC process).

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

7. Objective of the Evaluation

11. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy[9] and the UNEP Programme Manual[10], 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 target countries. 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

12. 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.

13. **The "Why?" Question.** As this is a Terminal Evaluation and a follow-up project is likely or similar interventions are envisaged for the future, 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.

14. **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.

15. **Communicating evaluation results.** A key aim of the Evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant(s) 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(s) 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.

9. Key Strategic Questions

16. In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Evaluation will address the **strategic questions** listed below. These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:

[9] https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies

[10] https://wecollaborate.unep.org

(a) In which ways did the project adapt to changes in the UNEP delivery model during project implementation?

(b) What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?

(c) In what ways, and to what extent, have the needs and interests of differentiated groups been considered in the implementation and monitoring of the project?

10. Evaluation Criteria

17. 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(s) can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

A. Strategic Relevance

18. 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 Strategy11 (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

19. 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 Building[12] (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 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

20. 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

21. 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 Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) 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.

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[11] 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 Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes. https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents

[12] *http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm*

iv. Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence[13]

22. An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization[14], 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

23. 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 rating[15] 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

24. At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval[16]). 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 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 Outputs[17]

25. 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.

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

14 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.

15 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.

16 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.

17 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, 2019)

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 supervision[18]

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes[19]

26. The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed[20] 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

27. 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 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.

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 disproportionally 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.

28. The Evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role[21] or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a

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

19 Outcomes are the use (i.e. uptake, adoption, application) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behavior, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

20 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.

21 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

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.

29. 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

30. 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

31. 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.

32. 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.

33. 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 complementarities[22] with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

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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.

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

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

34. 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

35. Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART[23] 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

36. 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

37. UNEP has a centralised Integrated Planning, Management, and Reporting (IPMR) solution in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant(s) 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 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

38. Sustainability[24] 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

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

24 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) 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

39. 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

40. 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 still remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

41. 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

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

i. Preparation and Readiness

42. 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

43. 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.

44. 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

45. 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

46. 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. Within this human rights context the Evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment[25].

47. In particular the Evaluation will consider to what extent project 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 those related to gender) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

48. 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 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

49. 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 requirements[26] 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 r*eport* 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).

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

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[25] *The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the 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*

[26] *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.*

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

51. 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

52. 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. <u>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.</u>

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

53. 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.)

54. The findings of the Evaluation will be based on the following:

(a) A **desk review** of relevant background documentation, inter alia.

- 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.;
- Mid-Term Review of the project;

(b) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with:

- UNEP Project Manager (PM);
- Project management team;
- UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
- Project partners listed under section 1.1 1. Project General Information.
- Sub-Programme Coordinators for Nature Action and Environmental Governance.
- Relevant resource persons;
- Representatives from civil society and specialist groups (such as women's, farmers and trade associations etc).

(c) **Field visits** to selected project sites in Kenya, Belize and/or Fiji.

11. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

55. The Evaluation Team 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.

56. 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.

57. **Review of the Draft Evaluation Report**. The Evaluation Consultant(s) 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(s) 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(s) for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

58. Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the Evaluation Consultant(s) 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.

59. 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(s). 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.

60. 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

61. For this Evaluation, the Evaluation Consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager, in consultation with the UNEP Project Manager, Fund Management Officer, the Sub-programme Coordinator for Nature action and the Sub-programme Coordinator for Environmental Governance. 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.

62. The Evaluation Consultant will be hired over a period of six (6) months [October 2024 to March 2025] 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; a minimum of eight (8) years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a good/broad understanding of Marine and Coastal Ecosystems is desired. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement and proficiency in /knowledge of French is desirable. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with field visits.

63. 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. The consultant will ensure that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

64. 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(s) to selected countries, visit the project locations, interview project partners and stakeholders, including a good representation of local communities. 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 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 evaluand 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

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

Table 3: Tentative schedule for the Evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	September 2024
Inception Report	October 2024
Field visits, E-based interviews, surveys etc.	November 2024
PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	November 2024
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	January 2025
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	February 2025
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	March 2025
Final Report	March 2025
Final Report shared with all respondents	March 2025

14. Contractual Arrangements

66. Evaluation Consultants will be 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(s) 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.

67. 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:

Table 4: Schedule of Payment for the Evaluation Consultant/Principal Evaluator

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report (as per annex document #9)	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report (as per annex document #10)	40%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report	30%

68. 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.

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

70. In case the consultants are 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 consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

71. If the consultant(s) fail 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 consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard[27].

[27] 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 provided by the Evaluation Manager during the Inception Phase and use those versions throughout the Evaluation.

List of tools, templates and guidance notes available:

Document #	Name
1	00_Tools Description and Mapping (Word file)
2	00a_UNEP Glossary Results Definitions (PDF file)
3	00b_List of Documents Needed for Evaluations (Word file)
4	01_Evaluation Criteria (Word file)
5	02_Criterion Rating Descriptions Matrix (Word file)
6	03_Evaluation Ratings Table ONLY (Word file)
7	04_Weighed Ratings Table (Excel file)
8	05_Project Identification Table ONLY (Word file)
9	06_Inception Report Structure and Contents (Word file)
10	07_Main Evaluation Report Structure and Contents (Word file)
11	08_TOC Reformulation Justification Table ONLY (Word file)
12	09_Quality of Project Design Assessment (Word file)
13	09a Quality of Project Design Assessment Template.xlsx (Excel file)
14	10_Stakeholder Analysis Guidance Note (Word file)
15	11_Gender Methods Note for Consultants (Word file)
16	12_Safeguards Methods Note for Consultants (Word file)
17	13_Use of Theory of Change in Project Evaluations (Word file)
18	14_Financial Tables (Word file)
19	15_Likelihood of Impact.xlsm (Excel file)
20	15a_Likelihood of impact Test Case (Excel file)
21	16_Recommendations Quality Guidance Note (Word file)
22	16a_In Report Template Presenting Recommendations and Lesson Learned (Word file)
23	17_TE-MTE GEF Cover Page Prelims and Style Sheet Main Evaluation Report (Word file)
24	18_TE-MTE Non GEF Cover Page Prelims and Style Sheet Main Evaluation Report (Word file)
25	19_Quality of Evaluation Report Assessment FINAL ONLY (Word file)
26	20_Evaluation Methodology Structure (Word file)
27	21_GEF Portal Annex Template (Word file)
28	Process 1_Evaluation Process Guidelines for Consultants (Word file)
29	Process 2_Template for Attestation Letter (Word file)
30	Process 3_Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form (Word file)
31	Process 4_Guidelines for Field Work During Coronavirus (Word file)
32	Process 5_Evaluation Consultants Team Roles (Word file)
33	Process 6_ Template for Reference Checks (Word file)

Annex 2: Project Results Framework[28]

Project Objective[29]	**Relevant Programme of Work Outcomes**
To incorporate the values of marine and coastal ecosystem services in the development and implementation of coastal and marine policies and decision-making	**2A** An economically and socially sustainable pathway for halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem integrity is established. **2B** Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks. **2C** Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced.

Project Outcome[30]	**Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Outcome 1: Governments and partners use data and information on marine and coastal ecosystem services and implement actions for more sustainable coastal and marine ecosystem management.	Number of regions and countries that have adopted ecosystem-based management measures which increase the area of their Exclusive Economic Zones under ecosystem-based management (SDG14.2)	6 (2021)	12
	Number of partners and countries that are implementing ecosystem-based approaches/integrated ocean management for management of coastal and/or marine environments	3 (2019)	12
	Number of regions that are implementing coordinated actions under agreements between Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, regional economic commissions and/or regional environmental conventions, to support ocean governance.	1	3
	Number of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans that are implementing priority actions identified in the strategic document influenced and supported by UNEP and sharing good practices through knowledge exchange.	0	5
	Number of Regional Seas Programmes and countries, in liaison with the UNCT office, adopt sustainable blue economy approaches and gender mainstreaming principles in their strategic plans.	0	2 regional seas 4 countries
	Number of global ocean-related political fora whose outcome documents make reference to knowledge generated by this project.	0	4

Project Outcome [31]Milestones	**Milestone Attainment Date**
M1: UN Environment commitment to form a partnership for mapping, assessment and valuation of marine and coastal ecosystem health and services for sustainable blue economy policy-making.	June 2020
M2: At least three regional seas have started cross sectoral cooperation based on the ecosystem approach.	June 2020
M3: At least 8 regional seas demonstrate the progress in establishing ecosystem approach projects and strategies which have full financing plans.	November 2022

[28] The results framework is an extract from Table 3 of the Project Revision #3 dated 3 July 2023.
[29] The project objective is the intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development result to which the project is expected to contribute. The project objective should be obtained from either: the Intermediate state of the project's ToC; the 2025 PoW Outcome to which it best contributes to, or alternatively, the Direct Outcome of the PoW, if pertinent.
[30] Outcomes: The uptake, adoption or use of project outputs by the project beneficiaries. Observed as change of Behavior, Attitude/Action, Condition, Knowledge or Skill.
[31] Milestones: Are benchmarks (not activities) that represent attainment of a project stage or project achievement that show progress towards project outcome(s) and outputs. Milestone attainment should be strictly answerable with a "Yes" or "No" answer. Milestones need to be defined within the secured funding only. Outcome milestones show progress on a particular outcome indicator target, but can also be, in particular at the beginning of the project, a major significance benchmark, that is necessary for outcome achievement.

M4: 2 regional seas and/or countries are using ecosystem-based management/integrated ocean and costal management tools to develop their strategic documents.	June 2020
M5: 2 regions that are implementing coordinated actions under agreements between Regional Seas Programmes/Conventions and Action Plans, Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, regional economic commissions and/or regional environmental conventions, to support ocean governance.	December 2021
M6: 1 regional Seas Programmes and 2 countries, in liaison with the UNCT office, adopt sustainable blue economy approaches in their strategic plans.	December 2021
M7: 2 global ocean-related political fora whose outcome documents make reference to knowledge generated by this project.	November 2022
M8: At least 2 partners implementing sustainable blue economy principles and frameworks.	December 2022
M9: An additional 2 partners implementing sustainable blue economy principles and frameworks.	December 2022
M10: 5 regions have adopted ecosystem-based management measures which increase the area of their Exclusive Economic Zones under ecosystem-based management.	June 2023
M11: Two more partners are implementing ecosystem-based approaches/integrated ocean management for management of coastal and/or marine environments.	December 2023

Project Outputs[32]	**Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Output 1. Partnerships established and policy relevant scientific knowledge, data and analysis produced and disseminated on globally critical marine ecosystems.	Number of new or updated functioning partnerships and expert networks, ensuring gender balance, established and operational for knowledge products and dissemination.	1	5
	Number of policy-relevant knowledge products on the status of coral reefs, mangroves, kelp and seagrass ecosystems prepared and disseminated, including chapters on gender.	0	4
Output 2. Customized tools and approaches for ecosystem-based management and sustainable blue economy are developed, tested, and made available to support sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystem services.	Number of Marine Protected Area toolboxes developed and made available within an online platform	0	2
	Number of training workshops on implementation of MPA tools, ensuring gender balance	0	1
	Number of decision-support frameworks with associated guidance documents describing potential pathways for a sustainable blue economy approach, prepared and made available.	0	2
	Number of Regional Seas reports on existing tools, methodologies and knowledge sharing mechanisms prepared and made available.	0	1
	Number of guidance documents for good practices for coral reef restoration as well as climate modelling within the context of ecosystem-based management prepared and made available.	0	2
	Number of small grants for supporting sustainable coral reef management implemented, including payments for ecosystem services schemes and support to women's conservation groups.	0	10
	Number of reports on good practices and key elements regarding the role of gender in management of coastal ecosystems and blue economy prepared and made available.	1	2
	Number of approaches on gender mainstreaming for marine and coastal ecosystems management tested and disseminated.	0	1

[32] 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.

Project Outputs[32]	**Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Target**
	Number of online platforms for Green Fins sustainable tourism developed and made accessible (Baseline: 0, Target: 1)	0	1
Output 5. Services and guidance made available to strengthen Regional Ocean Governance	Number of partnerships established between the Regional Seas conventions and action plans and the Regional Fisheries bodies and/or regional economic commissions.	0	2
	Number of strategy papers, technical reports and guidance documents produced and disseminated on integrated ocean governance.	0	5
	Number of annual Regional Seas meetings convened, and meeting outcomes disseminated to stakeholders.	20	23
	Number of global outlook reports prepared on SDG targets 14.2 and 14.5 and made available to UN Ocean Conference.	0	1
Project Outcome	**Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Outcome 1B (Direct Outcome): The post 2020 Biodiversity Framework reflects the regional seas programmes and conventions roles in achieving the global biodiversity goals and targets	The post 2020 Global Biodiversity framework reflects the roles of regional seas programmes and conventions and other regional marine organisations in achieving the global biodiversity goals and targets.	0	1
Project Outcome Milestones		**Milestone Attainment Date**	
M1: At the second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, regional seas level targets/objectives and indicators are formally recognised by the Parties.		30 Nov 2022	
M2: At the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, regional approach for follow-up is agreed upon.		30 Nov 2022	
M3: The post 2020 Global Biodiversity framework reflects the roles of regional seas programmes and conventions and other regional marine organisations in achieving the global biodiversity goals and targets.		30 Nov 2022	
Project Outputs	**Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Output 5a (EC component): Mechanisms for the regional seas programmes to contribute to achieving biodiversity related objectives and targets are elaborated and proposed by UNEP and the regional seas secretariats and CBD Parties are informed of the proposed roles of regional seas programmes and conventions in the post 2020 Biodiversity Framework.	Number of case study and gap analysis documents are prepared in collaboration with regional seas secretariats and disseminated as background information for establishing a mechanism for the regional seas programme contribution to achieving biodiversity related objectives and targets in the post 2020 Biodiversity Framework.	0	1
	Consultative meeting held with the regional seas secretariats to discuss and agree on future roles of the regional seas in the post 2020 Biodiversity Framework.	0	1
	A proposal document for the roles of the regional seas programmes is formulated though a consultative process with the regional seas programmes and submitted to the Parties of the CBD Convention to the process of developing the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.	0	1

Project Outcome	Indicators	Baseline	Target
Outcome 2: Increased investments in the sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems.	Number of projects by partners that are approved by financial institutions incorporating innovative financing or blue economy financing principles for sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems.	0	4
	Number of global Funds launched to support SDG 14.	0	2
Project Outcome Milestones		**Milestone Attainment Date**	
M1: Global Fund for Coral Reefs launched and capitalized.		June 2022	
M2: 2 projects by partners are approved by financial institutions incorporating innovative financing or blue economy financing principles.		December 2022	
M3: An additional 2 projects by partners are approved by financial institutions incorporating innovative financing or blue economy financing principles.		June 2023	
M4: Sustainable Blue Economy Transition and Readiness Assessment approach is reflected in 3 national, regional and/or global capacity building and guidance processes/activities.		December 2023	
Project Outputs	**Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Target**
Output 3: Communication made available on the value of ecosystem services, supported by operational knowledge platform and outreach.	Number of campaigns launched and special events organized aimed at policy changes and increased investment in marine and coastal ecosystems.	0	1 campaign 5 special events
	Regional Seas knowledge management and information sharing platform established, operational and disseminating good practices.	0	1
	Number of policy briefs prepared and disseminated through Regional Seas mechanisms and UNEP political mechanisms.	0	10
	Number of communications products on Sustainable Blue Economy and Marine Protected Areas produced and disseminated.	0	2
Output 4: Guidance disseminated and technical support provided for the development of innovative financing projects.	Number of guidance documents prepared and disseminated on sustainable blue economy financing principles.	0	1
	2: Number of partners supported to develop new financing models.	0	3
	3: Guidance document disseminated on marine protected area business planning.	0	1
	4: Technical workshop held to share experiences and prepare recommendations on sustainable blue economy financing principles and MPA business planning.	0	1