

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF Project
“Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD):
sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices”
GEF ID Number: 9407
(2018-2023)



Evaluation Office of the United Nations Environment Programme

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Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF Project “Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD): sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices” GEF ID Number: 9407 (2018-2023))
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About the Evaluation

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Brief Description: This report is a Terminal Evaluation of a UNEP/GEF project “Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD): sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices” implemented between 2018 and 2023. The project's overall development goal was to strengthen restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands for the provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan and catalysing scale up regionally and globally. The evaluation sought 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 learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, and the relevant agencies of the project participating countries.

Source(s) of Funding by Country: *(list countries who have provided project funds and/or co-finance)*

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Foundation/NGO	Yes/No
Private Sector	Yes/No
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Multilateral Fund	Yes /No
Environment Fund	Yes/No

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Primary data collection period: June – August 2024

Field mission dates: 29 July – 6 August 2024

¹ This data is used to aid the internet search of this report on the Evaluation Office of UNEP Website

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EA	Expected Accomplishment
AOAD	Arab Organization of Agriculture Development
CAMRE	Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment
CEDARE	The Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe
CHM	Cleaning House Mechanism
DRC	The Desert Research Center
EOU	Evaluation Office of UNEP
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
GE	Green Economy
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HFDJB	Hashemite Fund for the Development of the Jordanian Badia
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LAS	League of Arab States
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PoW	Programme of Work
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Service
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PRAGA	Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment
PRC	Project Review Committee
PRMP	Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSRMP	Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning
RBG	The Royal Botanic Garden
RCM	Regional Coordination Mechanism
ROWA	Regional Office in West Asia
SD	Sustainable Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToTs	Training of trainers
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

Project identification table

Table 1: Project Identification Table

GEF Project ID/SMA ID:	9407		
Implementing Agency (UNEP Division/Branch/Unit):	UNEP / Ecosystems Division / GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit / Biodiversity and Land Branch	Executing Agency:	International Union for Conservation of Nature - Regional Office for West Asia (IUCN-ROWA)
Sources of Funding (Co-finance):	Countries: Egypt and Jordan	Institution Name/Type: IUCN (International NGO); GIZ (Donor), CEDARE (international inter-governmental Organization) Ministry of Environment Jordan (Government), HFDJB (National NGO – Jordan), DRC (Governmental Institution – Egypt)	
Relevant SDG(s):	SDG 15 – Indicator 15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area SDG 17 – 17.14.1 Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development		
POW Direct Outcome(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved from 2022): OR POW Output(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved pre-2022)	POW Direct Outcome:	MTS 2025 Outcome(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved from 2022): OR POW Expected Accomplishment(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved pre-2022):	MTS 2025 Outcome:
	POW Output: i) Increase in the number of countries and transboundary collaboration frameworks that have made progress to monitor and maintain the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems		POW Expected Accomplishment: EA(a) Use of the ecosystem approach in countries to maintain ecosystem services and sustainable productivity of terrestrial and aquatic systems is increased
Sub-programme:	Subprogramme 3: Ecosystem Management	Programme Coordination Project:	N/A
UNEP approval date:	10 January 2018	GEF approval date:	6 November 2017
GEF Operational Programme #:	GEF 6	GEF Strategic Priority:	LD1-Prog.1: Agro-ecological intensification (Outcome 1.1) LD3-Progr.4: Scaling-up SLM through Landscape Approach (Outcome 3.2)
Project type:	Full-size project	Focal Area:	Land Degradation
Expected start date:	15 October 2017	Actual start date:	1 February 2018
Planned completion date:	February 2022	Actual operational completion date:	June 2023 ²
Planned total project budget at approval:	USD 15,742,982	Actual total expenditures reported as of [31 March 2024]:	USD 19,5523,368
GEF grant allocation:	USD 3,515,982	GEF grant expenditures reported as of [31 March 2023]:	USD 3,383,702
Expected Full-Size Project co-financing:	Cash: 10,827,000 In-kind:1,400,000	Secured Full-Size Project co-financing:	Cash: 3,705,946 In-kind:12,433,720
No. of formal project revisions:	1	Date of last approved project revision:	15 December 2021 (No cost extension 1 countersignature date)
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	4	Date of Last Steering Committee meeting:	2 August 2022
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	September 2020	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	March 2021
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	December 2022	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	June – December 2024
Coverage - Countries:	Egypt and Jordan	Coverage - Region:	League of Arab States region
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	Status of future project phases:	N/A

² A member of the project team reports a second no-cost extension to the end of March 2023; UNEP's internal project Planning, Monitoring and Reporting system (IPMR) records the completion date as end June 2023.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project background

1. The project's idea acknowledged that rangelands and degradation is one of the most pressing environmental challenges, although estimates of the global extent vary considerably. Many countries have weak capacity in the field of rangeland ecology. Despite policies that could often enable sustainable management of rangelands, good practice remains limited, and policies remain poorly implemented in the rangelands. Weak understanding of rangelands and the inappropriateness of some policies and investments has much to do with the long-term marginalization of pastoralists, the principal managers of rangelands. Pastoralism has evolved to guarantee survival in the high resource-variability of rangeland ecosystems, but pastoralists are frequently ignored in decision-making and policies and investments have been at best unhelpful, and at worst antagonistic to their management of rangelands. Long-term underinvestment in basic development, low consultation and weak natural resource governance are major factors in degradation of the rangelands. This phenomenon is one of the main problems facing the Arab Region and has become a serious socio-economic and health issue. Land degradation is triggered by drought, population growth, intensive farming practices and degraded rangelands.
2. The reasoning for the intervention was to support the generation of global environmental benefits both at the site level in Jordan and Egypt and through the influence that the project would exert on countries and regional bodies within Arab Countries to adopt policies and practices that are consistent with the Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD) concept with the ultimate intention of arresting the process of rangeland degradation through Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM). This implies policies and practices that promote biomass growth, conservation of biodiversity and the maintenance of a suite of ecosystem services linked to water, soil and carbon – increasing thereby rangelands' potential for food production in a sustainable way.

This evaluation

3. The evaluation was theory-based and made use of a utilization-focused and a participatory approach. The design of the evaluation included the following tools to collect relevant data: desk review of project documents and reports; focus group discussions; and field visits to project sites.
4. In line with UNEP Evaluation Guidelines and as per the Terms of Reference, the project was assessed against nine evaluation criteria: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Nature of External Context, Effectiveness (availability of outputs, achievement of project outcomes and likelihood of impact), Financial Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability and the Factors Affecting and Performance and Cross-cutting Issues.
5. The Evaluation Office of UNEP (EOU) notes that a terminal evaluation aims to assess the achievement of intended results, as per the project design and funding agreements or their formal revision, rather than completed activities alone. In addition, the EOU places weight on achievements at the outcome level and the likelihood of benefits derived from achieved outcomes being sustained over time. In this case, the EOU highlights that the project objective and outcomes were highly ambitious, aiming to reach a regional effect over a large area of rangeland (500,000 ha) and with specific attributes (*e.g. institutionalised monitoring systems on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators*). However, the design of the project did not

provide a clear causal explanation of how the large-scale effects would be achieved from the much smaller base of its 5 pilot sites in Egypt (actual 80 ha) and Jordan (actual 300 ha), where performance was stronger. It is also noted that implementation took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have affected travel and accessibility and, therefore, consistency and quality of oversight.

6. Table 21 shows the full set of performance ratings assigned by the evaluation team, including their consideration of an initial set of comments. These are adjusted, in some cases, by the Evaluation Office, based on material provided in subsequently submitted comments. The overall project performance ratings in both cases is **Unsatisfactory**.
7. A set of strategic questions, posed in the evaluation Terms of Reference, are addressed in Table 20.

Key findings

8. The project demonstrated relevance to both GEF and UNEP, albeit less than originally envisioned in the ProDoc. Its design was consistent with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW), and Strategic Priorities, as well as GEF's "Land Degradation focal area" priorities. However, the approach to achieving the target of 500,000 hectares under Sustainable Rangeland Management, as specified in the Tracking Tool, lacked clarity in the project design.
9. The Results Framework did not have indicators at output level, and indicators at outcome level were not SMART. In addition, elements formulated as outcomes, were actually outputs. The TOC included in the ProDoc was poorly formulated. The project did not fully deliver its expected outputs as per the results framework. Only 6 out of 15 outputs were fully delivered. As a consequence, none of the ambitious project outcomes were achieved.
10. The high turn-over of project managers at IUCN i.e. three throughout the implementation period, and the occurrence of the COVID-19 may have also played an important role.
11. It is noteworthy that the project delivered the draft law on rangeland management in Egypt. The evaluation acknowledges the importance of drafting that law. At the same time, this delivery does not compensate for the project's undelivered outputs. Certain expected outputs, that were not delivered (such as the National Platforms for Information Sharing and Exchange and the monitoring systems at national level for rangeland management) could have served as foundational elements for implementing the law, pending its formal approval by the Egyptian Parliament.
12. Project reporting was inadequate, lacking detail to accurately track progress, and was often redundant, containing factual errors, see Tables 17, 18 and 19 in this report. This hindered proper follow-up, obscured progress, and failed to identify discrepancies with the expectations set in the ProDoc.
13. The low level of project delivery and achievements, gaps in supporting documentation to verify them, and confusing reporting are three elements that have characterized the work. The same elements suggest the role for quality assurance and oversight was not adequately fulfilled.
14. The ownership of project achievements at a regional level is low because the project did not satisfactorily deliver the expected outputs or achieve its outcomes. However, the satisfaction and ownership within one implementing country was indicated to be high during the extended process of commenting on the draft evaluation report.

15. Work in the field was technically well-executed and local stakeholders and herding communities reported being satisfied with it. The most effective outputs were those delivered through partner collaboration with local stakeholders. Local agreements supported smooth implementation of activities, and partners were well-regarded by stakeholders. However, the fieldwork did not promote the scaling up of Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) practices. At the regional level, output delivery was poor, with no evidence of efforts to engage relevant stakeholders for scaling SRM in other Arab countries as per ProDoc's expectations.

Conclusions

16. The design of the Results Framework, ultimately, suffered from a misunderstanding around what is an outcome and lack of clear causal thinking. Implementation challenges such as the identification of suitable solutions for project activities, engagement with project stakeholders, and setting up rules for effective engagement and implementation of activities were misinterpreted as project outcomes. The overall project performance is assessed at the 'Unsatisfactory' level both by the evaluation team and by the Evaluation Office, after receiving, and responding to, extensive comments.
17. The project design's significant flaws were not recognized by UNEP project staff, IUCN, or UNEP itself. In this regard, the Project Steering Committee meetings, the Inception Workshop, and the Mid-Term Review exercise were missed opportunities to provide concrete suggestions for improving the project.
18. The lack of proper means and sources of verification, coupled with an ineffective monitoring system, i.e. the Results Framework during project implementation, were major flaws that impacted output delivery. As a result, the project failed to meet expectations, with its contributions to outcomes falling significantly short.
19. The efficiency of project implementation was low. By the end of the project, the tangible results were limited to field-level efforts in sustainable rangeland practices and trainings. However, the ProDoc had envisioned the institutionalization of national and regional rangeland monitoring systems based on commonly agreed, scale-dependent indicators for different end-user groups, along with the GEF Tracking Tool's target of bringing 500,000 hectares of rangeland under sustainable land management. ProDoc expectations were not fulfilled.
20. The fieldwork conducted by project partners: the Royal Botanical Garden, Hashemite Fund for the Development of the Jordanian Badia, the Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe and the Desert Research Center (RBG, HFDJB, CEDARE, and DRC respectively) was the key positive aspect identified by the TE. It was technically well-executed, and stakeholders at project sites expressed strong enthusiasm for the implementation of Sustainable Rangeland practices and the revolving funds.
21. The piloting of Sustainable Rangeland Practices and the establishment of revolving funds were successful, as acknowledged by the Terminal Evaluation (TE). However, the activities lacked specific targets, and the 380-hectare area covered could have been larger or smaller without affecting the recognition of success. From an accountability perspective, the project had significant freedom in implementing the piloting activities. The TE recognizes this success qualitatively, noting that the fieldwork was well-executed and stakeholders, including herding communities, were satisfied.

22. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the project improved herders' technical knowledge, particularly on individual grazing practices. However, these improvements are limited, as there is still a lack of capacity to manage rangelands collectively.

Lessons Learned

Lesson Learned #1: <i>Reflection on Results Framework and TOC.</i>	Project documents always include a Results Framework and a Theory of Change (TOC), along with three key milestones for monitoring and evaluation: the Inception Workshop, Mid-Term Review, and Terminal Evaluation. They also call for the establishment of a Project Steering Committee, meetings and regular project reporting. These elements are not merely formalities of project implementation; they should serve as opportunities for reflection on the project, its goals, and the challenges it faces. Regular collective analysis of the project design and its robustness in relation to its objectives is essential for progress and increasing the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes. This reflection should cover all aspects of the project, from the formulation of the TOC to defining achievable results through rigorous outcome and output statements with SMART indicators. A clear understanding of the change from the baseline to the project's final status is crucial. Without consistent and ongoing reflection throughout implementation, the likelihood of achieving positive results diminishes drastically as proved by the HERD project.
Context/comment:	This lesson applies to any project implemented by UNEP. It arises from the observation that there was no significant reflection on the project's design throughout the implementation period. Key milestones such as the Inception Workshop, Mid-Term Review, and Project Steering Committee failed to foster any meaningful discussion about the project's structure. This lack of reflection is surprising, given that the project design had serious and obvious flaws, the most significant being a misinterpretation of what an outcome is. In the original Results Framework, three outcomes were preconditions for implementing project activities – challenges that the project implementer needed to address to move forward with implementation. In addition, most of outcomes' indicators were not SMART and there were no output indicators.
Lesson Learned #2: <i>UNEP monitoring and supervision</i>	UNEP project monitoring and supervision cannot rely solely on reviewing progress reports. Active participation in Project Steering Committee meetings should be the rule. UNEP's supervising role must focus on promoting effective implementation of project activities in line with the pursuit of realistic project outcomes and objective. The supervision should ensure that all project deliverables are aligned with the specifications included in the ProDoc in qualitative and quantitative terms. Therefore, it is crucial to thoroughly review all project deliverables and compare the quality of outputs with the expected standards set in the original document. While deviations from the ProDoc may happen – and sometimes should – they must be well-justified and based on adaptive responses to changes in the project's implementation context. Quality concerns about the work done by project partners and around project deliverables should be clearly communicated to them and remedial actions or justification requested. Finally, UNEP monitoring and supervision should be based on a solid and realistic Results Framework and TOC.
Context/comment:	This lesson applies to any project implemented by UNEP. It stems from the fact that UNEP's participation³ is only evident in one Project Steering Committee (according to the documentation available to the evaluation exercise⁴) and, more significantly, that project deliverables do not match the specifications included in the ProDoc.

³ From the Inception Workshop report and participants list, there is no evidence of UNEP's participation in the Inception Workshop, even though they were the Implementing Agency. This took place in March 2019, prior to the COVID-19 restrictions.

⁴ The Task Manager reports having visited the project 4 times and having attended 1 PSC meeting online during COVID-19.

Lesson Learned #3: <i>Reporting is part of project management and supervision</i>	Accurate project reporting is an essential pre-requisite for good project management aiming at achieving project results and complying with high standards of accountability. Executing agencies, working in partnership with UNEP, must submit progress reports that are comprehensive and exhaustive. All deliverables should be described so as to understand whether they comply with the expectations of the ProDoc (if there are discrepancies between the delivery and expectations, such discrepancies should be spelt out and well explained and justified) and have the progress status described against SMART indicators. As part of the supervision role of UNEP, progress reports from project partners should be accepted only when they comply to certain quality standards. When reporting is confusing, the likelihood to deliver and contribute to achieve expected results diminishes drastically.
Context/comment:	This lesson applies to any project implemented by UNEP. It stems from the very poor- and low-quality project reporting related to the Project.

Recommendations

23. UNEP's Evaluation Office makes two recommendations (full details in Conclusions):

Recommendation 1: That UNEP undertakes a technical review of its project work on sustainable land management projects (ongoing and in development) where commitments have/are being made to bring large areas of land under some form of sustainable management or governance. In particular, the results strategies and supervision/management of projects with designs that are based on implementing land management approaches in pilot areas, with a view to scaling up to much larger areas, need to be reviewed and action taken to ensure the results are achieved.

Recommendation 2: That UNEP carries out a participatory workshop with its Task/Project Managers to share experience on designing and implementing projects effectively when they have a pilot-to-scale design.

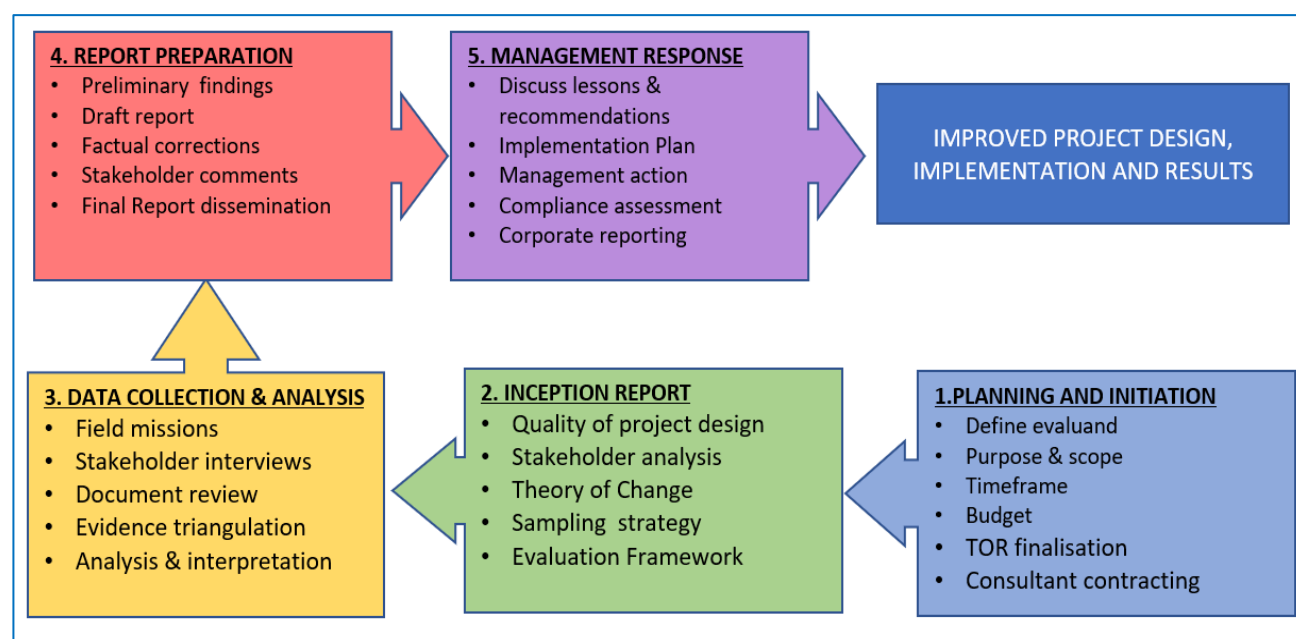
1 INTRODUCTION

24. The project was funded under the 6th GEF Operational Programme. It pertains to the GEF focal area Land Degradation (LD) specifically, which falls under its Strategic Objective LD1 – Agroecosystems - Prog.1: Agroecological intensification, and its Strategic Objective LD3 – Integrated Landscape - Progr.4: Scaling-up SLM through Landscape Approach.
25. The project document (ProDoc) was aligned with UNEP's mandate, functions and Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2014 – 2017 and its biennial Programme of Work (PoW) 2016 – 2017.
26. The ProDoc was consistent with the UNEP Subprogramme 3 Ecosystem Management thematic priorities. Specifically, it was expected to contribute to the achievement of Expected Accomplishment EA (a): "Use of the ecosystem approach in countries to maintain ecosystem services and sustainable productivity of terrestrial and aquatic systems is increased"
27. The project Implementing Agency (IA) was the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), specifically the GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, which is part of the UNEP Biodiversity and Land Branch within the Ecosystems Division. The Executing Agency (EA) was International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through its Regional Office in West Asia (IUCN-ROWA). The field implementing partners were the Royal Botanical Garden (RBG), Hashemite Fund for the Development of the Jordanian Badia (HFDJB), The Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) and the Desert Research Center (DRC).
28. UNEP approved the project on 10 January 2018, GEF approved it on 6 November 2017. The original planned duration was 48 months (from February 2018 to February 2022). An extension of 12 months was granted; therefore the actual duration of the project was 60 months. A mid-term review (MTR) was prepared as a management-led process and delivered in 2020.
29. The planned project budget was USD 15,742,982. GEF funding was USD 3,515,982 and planned co-financing contributions summed up to USD 12,227,000 (USD 1,400,000 cash, and 10,827,000 in-kind).
30. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy and the UNEP Programme Manual, the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the GEF/UNEP project "Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD): sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices" was 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.
31. As per its Terms of Reference (Annex VII), the Terminal Evaluation had 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 IUCN.
32. The TE was expected to identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation. Recommendations relevant to the whole house were also expected to be identified during the evaluation process.
33. The main intended users of the evaluation are: GEF secretariat (the donor); UNEP (IA); and IUCN (EA) and the four project partners HFDB, RBG, DRC, and CEDARE.

2 EVALUATION METHODS

34. The TE was conducted by an independent consultant (hereinafter referred to as the Evaluator). It took place between March 2024 and December 2024 under the management of the Evaluation Office of UNEP, based in Nairobi.
35. The TE process is shown in Figure 1. The process commenced with a planning phase aimed at defining the scope of the TE, which initially resulted in an Inception Report (stage 2). Subsequently, it progressed to a data collection phase, followed by the drafting and finalization of this Final Report (stage 4). Following this, the project team would typically undertake the task of preparing a management response or implementation plan to address the recommendations of the TE (stage 5).

Figure 1 - Evaluation process



36. In line with UNEP Evaluation Guidelines and as per the Terms of Reference, the project was assessed against nine evaluation criteria: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Nature of External Context, Effectiveness (availability of outputs, achievement of project outcomes and likelihood of impact), Financial Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability and the Factors Affecting and Performance and Cross-cutting Issues.
37. The Quality of Project Design criterion was assessed during the Inception Phase of the TE and revised afterwards during the Reporting Phase.
38. The TE was requested to rate each criterion on a six-point scale as per UNEP guidance and as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory; (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU) and Nature of External Context is rated from Highly Favourable (HF) to Highly Unfavourable (HU). The ratings against each criterion are 'weighted' to derive the Overall Project Performance Rating. The greatest weight is placed on the achievement of outcomes, followed by dimensions of sustainability. In addition, the UNEP Evaluation Office has developed detailed descriptions of

the main elements required to be demonstrated at each level (i.e. Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory) for each evaluation criterion. The Evaluator has considered all the evidence gathered during the exercise in relation to this matrix in order to generate evaluation criteria performance ratings.

39. The TE was theory-based and made use of a utilization-focused and participatory approach. A theory-based evaluation focuses on analysing a project's underlying logic and causal linkages⁵. Projects are built on assumptions of how and why they are supposed to achieve the agreed results through the selected strategy; this set of assumptions contributes to the project 'Theory of Change' (TOC).
40. The project design document contained a Results Framework and TOC, which was found to be unsuitable for a consistent assessment of the project's results-based performance in the manner required by UNEP's Independent Evaluation Office. The reconstruction of the TOC, during the inception stage of the evaluation process, became a contentious element of the evaluation process. There was no agreement between the Evaluator and the UNEP Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit in UNEP's Ecosystem Division on the initially reconstructed TOC. A revised reconstruction was prepared in conjunction with the Evaluation Office. However, due to the lack of consensus on the reconstructed TOC, the analysis of the criterion 'effectiveness' is presented twice in this report: one analysis is based on the original Results Framework, and another on the reconstructed TOC.
41. A utilization-focused approach is based on the principle that evaluations should be judged on their usefulness to their intended users. Therefore, they should be planned and conducted in ways that enhance the likely utilization of both the findings and recommendations to inform decisions⁶.
42. The Evaluator maintained close communication with the project team at IUCN and exchanged information throughout the TE implementation. The design of the evaluation included the following tools to collect relevant data: desk review of project documents and reports; individual and group interviews; focus group discussions; and field visits to project sites.
43. The TE made use of a "purposeful sampling" to identify stakeholders to be consulted⁷. The sampling was designed in consultation with the project management. The sampling and the consequent schedule of meetings for interviews, focus group discussions and field visit necessarily took into account the willingness and availability of stakeholders to meet the Evaluator. The purposeful sampling met the needs of the TE. This involved identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals who are especially knowledgeable or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. Studying information-rich cases, that is, interviewing people who are well informed about the project and who have a link with it, generates knowledge and deep understanding instead of empirical generalizations, which are typical of statistically representative probability sampling⁸.

⁵ Rossi, P., Freeman, H. & Hofmann, G., 1999. Evaluation. A Systematic Approach. 6th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage

⁶ Patton, M. Q., 2008. Utilization-focused evaluation. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

⁷ "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and understanding rather than empirical generalizations." Patton MQ. Qualitative research and evaluation methods. 3rd Sage Publications; Thousand Oaks, CA: 2002.

⁸ Patton, M. Q., 2008. Utilization-focused evaluation. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

44. In total, 112 individuals were involved in the data collection phase, 27 women and 85 men, and all project areas were covered. These results reflect the expectations included in the Inception Report.

Table 2: Table of respondents

M = Male F = Female		# people involved	# people contacted	# respondents	% respondents
Project team (those with management responsibilities e.g. PMU)	Implementing Agency	3 (3M/0F)	3 (3M/0F)	3 (3M/0F)	100%
	Executing Agency	3 (3M/0F)	3 (3M /0F)	3 (3M/0F)	100%
	# entities involved	# entities contacted	# people contacted (M/F)	# respondents (M/F)	% respondents
Project (implementing / executing) partners (receiving funds from the project)	4	4	5 (4M/0F)	4 (4M/0F)	80%
Project (collaborating / contributing⁹) partners (not receiving funds from the project)	3	3 (2M/1F)	3 (2M/1F)	3 (2M/1F)	100%
Beneficiaries: <i>Examples: Duty bearers, Gate keepers, Direct beneficiaries, Indirect beneficiaries, Civil society representatives</i>	Not reported	Not reported	91(65M/26F)	91 (65M/26F)	100%

45. Annex II and Annex III present respectively the list of people consulted, and the list of documents consulted during the TE.

46. The Evaluator ensured anonymity and confidentiality by not directly mentioning the names of respondents while making quotes. In addition, all responses are reported as aggregate findings without mentioning the source. Human rights were ensured by including and protecting the views of all respondents irrespective of their sex, age or position.

47. The primary mode of analysis centered on exploring the evidence supporting the causal pathways outlined in the Theory of Change (TOC). The TE sought to gain a detailed understanding of how the project aimed to facilitate change processes and which contributing factors were required and already in place to support these changes.

48. In order to substantiate the relationship between project efforts and its outcomes and impact, the Evaluator sought to establish attribution¹⁰ of project results whenever feasible. In cases where attribution was not achievable due to inadequate evidence, the Evaluator aimed at determining substantive contributions or establishing credible associations¹¹. This approach involved triangulating evidence and information from various sources to the greatest extent

⁹ Contributing partners may be providing resources as either cash or in-kind inputs.

¹⁰ *Attribution* can be claimed when comprehensive evidence proving the cause-and-effect relationship between the project and the observed results is presented. To make a strong claim of attribution one needs to be able to isolate the effects of an intervention from changes over time and differences in contexts (UNEP guidance).

¹¹ *Contribution* can be claimed when compelling evidence supports a cause-and-effect relationship through which intended results are achieved by the combined efforts of more than one project (UNEP guidance). Instead, a claim to a *credible association* can be made based on the project's intentions (stated in the ProDoc), its causality pathways (the TOC), and evidence derived from the chronology of events, the roles played by executing partners and the influence of identified drivers that shows that the intention was followed and the expected causality pathways emerged

possible and adhering to guidance from the UNEP Evaluation Office regarding the utilization of TOC in project evaluations. Additionally, efforts were made to address and reconcile discrepancies and overcome limitations in data collection.

49. The Evaluation Framework matrix (Annex IV) constituted the main tool to guide data collection and analysis.
50. Briefly, the evaluation methods included the following: (I) thorough scrutiny and cross-referencing of project documentation – source of secondary data; (II) interviews and focus group discussions with project stakeholders – source of primary data; (III) field visits to project sites; (IV) continuous reference to the Evaluation Framework matrix as the main tool for data collection and analysis; and (V) utilization of UNEP Evaluation Office guidelines, templates and samples.

Limitations:

51. The design of the evaluation did not present any specific limitations in terms of validity to fulfil the evaluation requirements. It was sound and fit the requirements of the TE. The design was based on qualitative methods because there was little relevant quantitative baseline data on indicators of relevance to the stated results. A quantitative approach was consequently not needed. The qualitative approach was also methodologically justified by the fact that the evaluation's interest was understanding how and why the project delivered its results. In fact, quantitative methods do not provide answers about how and why something has occurred¹².
52. At a practical level, the TE faced some relevant constraints related to the availability of project documentation in relation to the delivery of outputs. Not all documents and reports quoted in the PIRs were available for the evaluation exercise. As a matter of fact, the request for material, from the Evaluator to the project management team, became a continuous exercise, with emails sent by the Evaluator throughout the evaluation period and not all requested documents were made available. A database of project beneficiaries and a GIS database of project sites, although not explicitly specified in the ProDoc, were also missing.
53. The Evaluator conducted online interviews with stakeholders who had reliable internet access, specifically the main project partners. During the field mission in Egypt and Jordan, he focused solely on field activities, such as conducting focus group discussions with herders, local authorities, and community members, i.e. the project beneficiaries. In Jordan, the Evaluator was able to interview women who received grants through the project's revolving fund. Instead, in Egypt, due to cultural norms, such access was not possible, resulting in the evaluation being biased towards the male perspective in that country.
54. Since the project had a significant regional dimension within its component 4, the Evaluator requested to have contacts of individuals residing in the League of Arab States (LAS) outside the two project countries, Jordan and Egypt. A contact of an individual residing in region was provided by IUCN to the Evaluator. However, this person was not interviewed for the evaluation, as she responded to the Evaluator's email stating that her awareness of the HERD project was extremely minimal. Her participation in the evaluation was, therefore, deemed unnecessary.
55. Finally, it is important to highlight (as noted in para 38, above) that the GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit in UNEP's Ecosystem Division, i.e. the unit in charge of the project, and

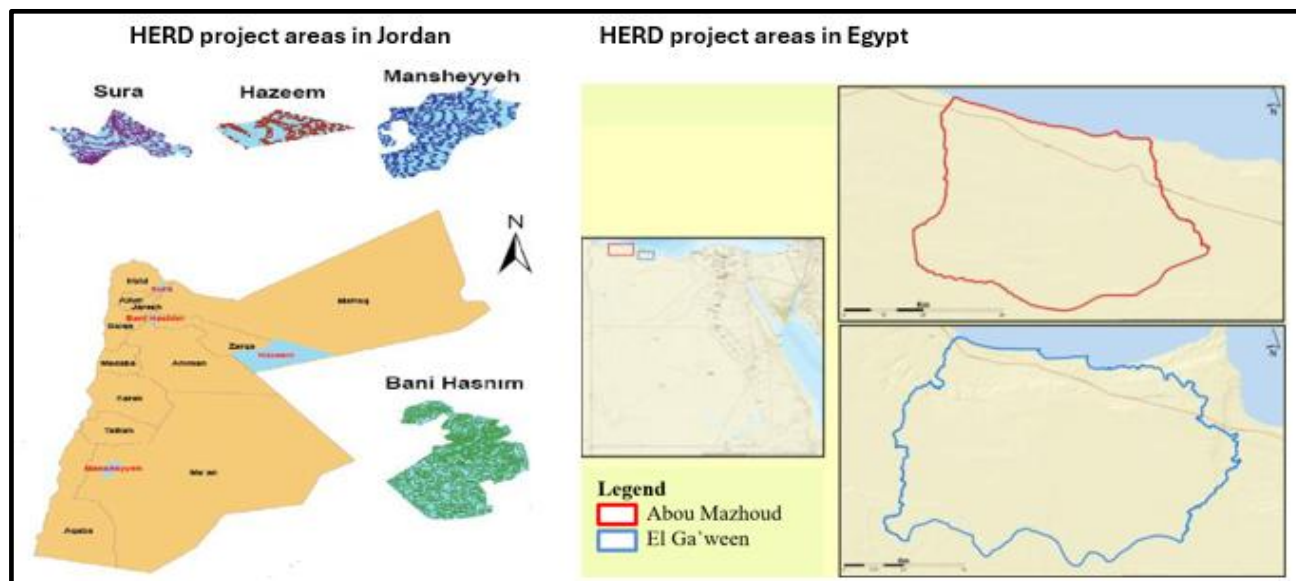
¹² Patton, M. Q., 2008. Utilization-focused evaluation. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

IUCN did not agree with the TOC reconstructed by the Evaluator and included in the inception report. A revised ToC was prepared with inputs from the Evaluation Office for this report and is used to assess the performance of the project. In addition, and because of the lack of consensus on the reconstructed TOC, the analysis of the criterion effectiveness is presented twice in this report: one analysis is based on the original Results Framework, and another on the reconstructed TOC.

3 THE PROJECT

3.1 Context

Figure 2 - Map of project sites visited by the Evaluator.



3.2 Results Framework

56. The **project objective** was “To strengthen restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands for the provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan and catalyzing scale up regionally and globally” (source: ProDoc, 2017). The magnitude of the scaling up was reflected in Outcome 2.1 as a target area of approximately 500,000 ha.

57. The Project Document (ProDoc) comprised 4 components, 6 outcomes and 16 outputs, as follows:

Component 1: Technical assistance for adaptive management and learning (evidence- based decision- making).

OUTCOME 1.1: *Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups.*

Output 1.1.1: Rangeland landscape assessments conducted at local, and national levels using agreed biophysical and socio-economic indicators and participatory approaches where applicable.

Output 1.1.2: Development of Prototype National platforms for information sharing and exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands.

OUTCOME 1.2: *Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.*

Output 1.2.1: Review of policies and laws, including relevant international agreements, related to sustainable rangeland management, identifying opportunities and barriers policy implementation.

Output 1.2.2: Cost-benefit analysis of sustainable rangeland management policies and practices using economic methodologies.

Output 1.2.3: Good practices and policies in integrated rangeland management validated following agreed methodologies and indicators.

Component 2: Stronger institutions for rangeland governance.

OUTCOME 2.1: *Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares.*

Output 2.1.1: Capacity/needs assessment of local organizations, including community groups and local public service providers.

Output 2.1.2: Stronger organizational capacities through appropriate training, including training of partner institutions in Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning (PRMP).

OUTCOME 2.2: *Participating communities use PRMP to guide the establishment of rules and regulations for improved rangelands management (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure).*

Output 2.2.1: PRMP implemented in all participating communities and updated annually.

Output 2.2.2: Documentation of existing community land use practices (rules and regulations over rangeland resource management: pasture, water, trees, wildlife, livestock corridors, etc.).

Output 2.2.3: Local agreements between communities and between communities and state institutions (Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws etc.) developed according to national legal opportunities.

Component 3: Identifying and up-scaling good practices in Sustainable Rangeland Management, based on Rangeland Management Planning.

OUTCOME 3.1: *Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies.*

Output 3.1.1: Training and awareness raising in rangeland restoration and management innovations and adapting services for sustainable rangeland management.

Output 3.1.2: PRMP based sustainable rangeland management systems are piloted.

Output 3.1.3: PRMP-based supporting activities are piloted.

Component 4: Knowledge management to promote an enabling environment for regional scale-up of Sustainable Rangeland Management.

OUTCOME 4.1: *Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy- making, nationally, regionally and globally.*

Output 4.1.1: Lessons on the value of rangeland ecosystems and good practices in SRM are documented and communicated through a regional Communal Rangelands Leadership network of scientists, pastoralists and Civil Society Organizations for South-South learning and cooperation.

Output 4.1.2: Regional dialogue to influence the design and implementation of policies and investments for SRM, including coordinated influence of international agreements.

Output 4.1.3: Sustainable Rangeland Management initiatives are submitted (regionally and outside the region) for funding under the HERD umbrella, based on “bankable” investment options and innovative financing strategies.

3.3 Stakeholders

As per the ProDoc, the main stakeholders involved in the project were the following:

Global stakeholders

58. UNEP was the implementing agency for this project, expected to provide quality assurance, oversight, and support. It should have facilitated linkages to other relevant programs and projects, access to data and specialized technical advisory services. UNEP was also responsible for the project’s GEF specific M&E function, including evaluation services according to its UNEP-GEF procedures, as well as compliance with GEF requirements. UNEP was responsible for project implementation at the global, regional and national levels, given that the project had these three entry points.
59. IUCN was the executing agency responsible for project execution at the global, regional and national levels. IUCN was accountable to UNEP for delivering the project objective and outcomes and for using the project’s budget in accordance with the Project Document. IUCN was expected to draw on specialized knowledge and expertise among its staff, commissions and members, for advising on relevant project activities and global policy matters as needed. IUCN hosts the World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP), an important forum for connecting global HERD stakeholders and improving the knowledge base regarding rangelands, as well as IUNC’s Global Drylands Initiative and the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management.

Regional stakeholders

60. IUCN’s Regional Office in West Asia (IUCN ROWA) had the core mandate for coordinating the project with country level partners, including with, and among, governments in Jordan, Egypt and other countries in the region. More specifically, IUNC ROWA was the budget holder for the project through an agreement signed with UNEP for the purpose.
61. The League of Arab States (LAS) has been playing a strong advocacy role in the region on issues of land degradation neutrality, sandstorms, climate change and resilience, and now also rangeland management. The project was expected to keep an open dialogue with the LAS through IUCN ROWA to fully explore synergies and collaboration.
62. UNEP’s Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP-ROWA) was the project partner for component four, ‘Knowledge management to promote an enabling environment for regional SRM scale-up’. The office leads the Arab Regional LDN initiative and hosts a strong knowledge base of regional mechanisms, policies, and networks to foster dialogue, capacity development and partnerships and promote synergies with MEAs and SDGs. In addition, UNEP-ROWA is IUCN-

ROWA's partner in a number of regional environmental programs and operates through the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) with LAS/Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

63. CEDARE is a knowledge-based and technology-driven Centre of Excellence established by the Arab Ministers of Environment and which receives support from UNDP. CEDARE maintains a strong network of governmental, non-governmental and supra-national partners within the Arab region, and it could be engaged to help raise awareness about rangelands and disseminate the models proposed for SRM under the HERD project.
64. The Arabian Pastoralist Communities Network was created to revive, document and develop the traditional knowledge in the Arabic Region to invest in the development of Bedouin pastoral groups and building their capacities for effective participation in rehabilitation and improvement of sustainable participatory management of rangelands through mainstreaming and networking with civil society organizations, researchers, experts, decision makers and other stakeholders and networks. The partnerships of the project with the Arabian Pastoralist Communities Network aimed at fostering capacity building, shared learning, networking and exchange of experience in the region.
65. Other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) partners working at the regional level could play a role in and maintain projects and initiatives that are relevant for the HERD project.

Stakeholders in Jordan

66. HFDJB was a key project and co-financier, and hence a member of the Project Steering Committee. Based in Amman, the Fund's aim is to improve the socio-economic conditions in the Badia by building the capacities of local communities, and by implementing well-planned projects in various relevant sectors. The Fund's way of working includes both direct and indirect involvement in development activities taking place in the Badia. It maintains a corps of research experts and networks with government, local NGOs, donors and community-based organizations, permitting it to implement a suite of projects relevant for Badia development. The Fund could potentially play a role in the implementation of some project activities.
67. The Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Water were project partners and co-financiers, responsible for ensuring the project's alignment with national priorities and investments and for supporting adoption of SRM approaches in national policies and budgeting processes. They were expected to participate actively in the Project Steering Committee. At the national level in Jordan, both line ministries were also expected to facilitate for liaison with other ministries, sub-national governments (at the governorate and district levels e.g.), with local authorities and with foreign partners through LAS dialogue, to ensure coordination at the national and regional levels.
68. The Royal Botanic Garden (RBG) was a key project partner at the national level. It was a close project partner, co-financier and member of the project steering committee.
69. The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) was well positioned to assist in the implementation of certain project activities. More specifically those activities implemented in the selected landscapes (Hazeem) that fall under its institutional responsibility.
70. GIZ-Jordan was a project partner and co-financier. GIZ and IUCN have been instrumental in supporting a payment for ecosystem service (PES) project in Jordan through each a key study on the economic valuation of a large-scale rangeland restoration has been implemented in

Jordan, building on the Hima system. The lessons from the PES project are crucial for disseminating the model in other sites in Jordan, besides the pilot in Bani Hashem and the Zarqa Basin.

Stakeholders in Egypt

71. DRC was a key project partner at the national level and co-financier, and hence a member of the Project Steering Committee since it has been mandated by the government to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Egypt. The Center functions mostly as a research entity, made up of experts and specialists on all aspects of managing drylands in Egypt. Responsible for other and on-going rangeland management projects, the Center is expected to play a role in the implementation of activities in relevant project components.
72. Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation were project partners responsible for ensuring the project is aligned with national priorities and investments and for supporting adoption of SRM approaches in national policies and budgeting processes. They were expected to participate actively in the Project Steering Committee. At the national level in Egypt, both line ministries were also expected to facilitate for liaison with other ministries, sub-national governments (at the governorate and district levels e.g.), with local authorities and with foreign partners through LAS dialogue, to ensure coordination at the national and regional levels. Under the Ministry of Environment, more specifically, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency could potentially support the project by researching and categorizing pastoral lands and species, documenting indigenous knowledge, the economic value of pastoral plants and reinforcing environmental laws.
73. Sub-national authorities in the Matrouh Governorate. Because the on-the-ground implementation of the project in Egypt focused on rangelands within the Matrouh governorate, the involvement of sub-national authorities in Matrouh was expected to be crucial, including in terms of fully participating in the mainstreaming of SRM in the land-use planning for the Governorate.
74. The Agricultural Research Center was expected to be relevant for the livestock sector and crops be particularly useful in informing the management.

Stakeholders in both project countries

75. Pastoralists, including local communities of agro-pastoralists, transhumants and nomads were the key beneficiaries of the project, given their absolutely central role in managing rangelands. They are often not organized into CBOs. An innovation to be brought by the project was to find ways of connecting pastoral communities using mobile technology and, in this way, create networks among them to support the implementation of landscape management plans in rangelands.
76. Local farming communities, along with pastoralists, sedentary farmers should be part of the solutions for rangelands and the transition towards SRM. While livestock production systems are still highly dependent on complementary feed produced by cropping, this may change, to the extent that rangelands become more sustainably managed and its pasture resources can contribute more significantly to livestock rearing systems.

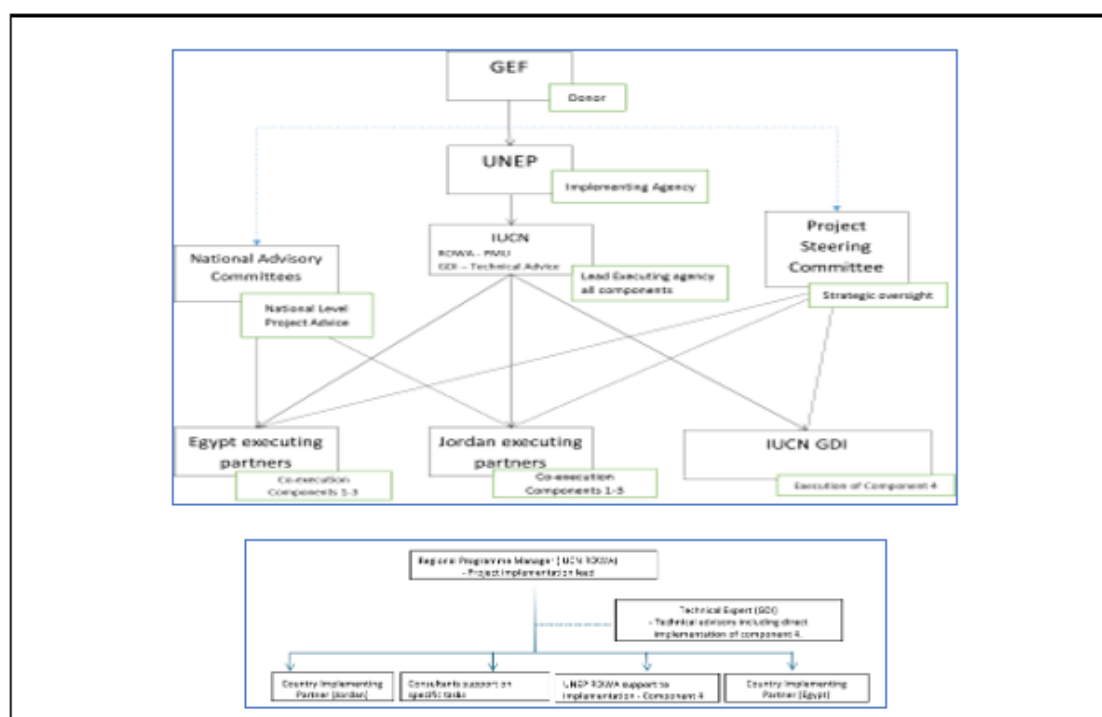
77. Local rangeland service providers. Extension agents were expected to be the main intermediaries for participatory planning and, as such, to be trained to roll out the methodology.
78. Local government departments were expected to be responsible for endorsing the project approach at local level, help prepare and endorse land use management plans that have a bearing for SRM and identifying opportunities and community priorities that will reinforce the project objectives and agenda. This includes coordinating across public sectors to avoid conflicting investments.
79. National and local CSOs/CBOs could potentially participate in the implementation of project activities. As with rangeland service providers, they could be made responsible for the delivery of specific actions in partnership with IUCN ROWA.
80. Secondary stakeholders in both countries. Private Sector, the media, donor agencies that support baseline activities could be important but secondary stakeholders. They could be involved in the project according to activities and relevance.
81. The ProDoc had great ambitions to get a very large number of diversified stakeholders on board to support the achievements of the project. The ProDoc also had the ambition to involve women in project implementation.

Project Implementation Structure and Partners

82. The project Implementing Agency (IA) was the UNEP GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, which is part of the UNEP Biodiversity and Land Branch within the Ecosystem Division. The lead Executing Agency (EA) was the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through its Regional Office in West Asia (IUCN ROWA). The field implementing partners were RBG, HFDJB, CEDARE and DRC.

The institutional arrangements for the implementation of the project are described in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Organigram of the Project with key project stakeholders



3.4 Changes in Design during Implementation

83. The project design did not undergo any changes during the implementation of activities. A no-cost extension of 12 months was requested to cover the time lost in implementation created firstly by delays between formal inception of the project and initiation of most activities, resulting from delays in securing formal approval of the project by the governments of Egypt and Jordan and later by the sanitary restrictions put in place worldwide to reduce the spread of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). A second no cost extension was submitted and UNEP's records show that the project reached operational completion in June 2023.

3.5 Project Financing

Table 3: Project budget vs expenditure

Main budget lines	Estimated cost at design	Last budget revision (Dec. 2022)	Actual Cost/ expenditure (as per March 31, 2023)	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Personnel component	USD 731'993.02	USD 731'993.02	USD 730'408.43	99,78 %
Sub-contract component	USD 1'534'269.68	USD 1'549'269.68	USD 1'544'135.03	99.66 %
Training component	USD 883'736.80	USD 883'736.80	USD 877'243.97	99.36 %
Equipment and premises component	USD 14'779.12	USD 14'779.12	USD 14'779.22	99,86%
Miscellaneous component	USD 351'203.04	USD 336'203.04	USD 217'135.51	64.58%
TOTAL	USD 3'515'982.66	USD 3'515'982.66	USD 3'383'702.16	96,23%

Table 4: Project co-financing

Co-financing Type/Source	IUCN		Min. Env. Jordan		CEDARE	
	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD
Cash	---	---	2,000,000	2,071,456	300,000	---
In-kind	300,000	1,717,174	---	---	---	277,733
Total	300,000	1,717,174	2,000,000	2,071,456	300,000	277,733
Co-financing Type/Source	DRC		HFDJB		GIZ	
	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD
Cash	6,527,000	---	1,900,000	1,554,490	100,000	80,000
In-kind	---	8'219'313	1,100,000	2,219,500	---	---
Total	6,527,000	8'219'313	3,000,000	3,773,990	100,000	80,000
Co-financing Type/Source	Project					
	Planned USD	Actual USD	% Actual/Planned			
Cash	10,827,000	3,705,946	34.23%			
In-kind	1,400,000	12,433,720	888,12%			
Total	12,227,000	16,139,666	132,00%			

4 THEORY OF CHANGE AT EVALUATION

84. As noted in paragraphs 38 and 53, as the UNEP BD&LD Unit (IA) and IUCN (EA) did not agree with the TOC reconstructed by the Evaluator and included in the inception report, a revised ToC was prepared with substantive guidance from the Evaluation Office. The second reconstructed TOC (evaluator and Evaluation Office) is discussed here.
85. The reconstruction was made without diverging significantly from the most relevant outputs, outcomes and indicators included in ProDoc and its Results Framework: it is important to keep in mind that the area under SRM practices in Jordan and Egypt should be kept as a key element to measure the project objective, i.e. by the end of implementation 500,000 ha of rangeland in both countries should be managed according to SRM principles, in terms of governance and actual field practices.
86. The reconstructed TOC at country level, Jordan and Egypt, is visualized in Figure 4. In addition, Figure 5 represents the reconstructed ToC at regional level, since the ProDoc claims to have regional ambitions (Component 4) in terms of SRM scaling up.
87. The evaluator notes that, from the perspective of the Evaluation Office of UNEP, and in-line with the content of the UNEP Glossary of Results Definitions, 'enhanced capacity' is only accepted as an outcome level result when there is evidence to confirm that this strengthened capacity has actually been demonstrated.
88. The project is implemented both at national and regional levels. The central idea of the project was to have activities implemented in Jordan and Egypt that would serve both as a learning-by-doing exercise for project partners and end-beneficiaries. The learnings generated through the implementation were intended to inform the activities implemented at regional level.

TOC at country level

89. Three pathways are identified in the reformulated ToC (see Table 6 for justification of reconstruction) that may lead to the *reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) demonstrated enhanced capacities for SRM*.
90. In fact, a great deal of project activities deliver outputs that are typical of capacity development initiatives: they related to training, knowledge generation, and knowledge dissemination. These three pathways require a few assumptions to be in place - *local organizations access on a regular basis the knowledge management portals and information included in the portals is easily understandable and relevant for SRM; skills and knowledge acquired through training are relevant, well received and understood by trainees and relevant for SRM; further awareness about benefits of SRM effectively increases the knowledge on SRM* – to be effective.
91. The remaining activities deliver three tangible outputs at field level such as implementation of SRM in project site and development of institutional monitoring systems. These outputs, i.e. *Reconstructed output A, formerly Outcome 1.1 Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups, output 3.1.2: PRMP-based SRM systems are piloted, and output 3.1.3 PRMP-based supporting activities are piloted*. The monitoring systems and the PRMP-based piloting exercise also feed into the knowledge generation and dissemination.

92. A pathway from the *output 3.1.2: PRMP-based SRM systems are piloted* is identified in the reformulated ToC that may lead to *Outcome 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies* and then to the *Reconstructed Outcome B: Increase in the income of herders*. The pathway requires an assumption to be in place - *SRM is technically well implemented* – to be effective.
93. A pathway from reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) demonstrated enhanced capacities for SRM is identified, which, as well may lead to Outcome 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration. The pathway requires an assumption to be in place – governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations – to be effective.
94. Finally, the three outcomes (reconstructed outcome A, outcome 3.1, and reconstructed outcome B) and output 3.1.2: PRMP-based SRM systems are piloted, may generate in the long-term a pathway, in form of a virtuous circle, to contribute to the desired impact of the project - restoration of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity. To do so, it is assumed that SRM is technically well implemented; governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations; and capacity acquired, higher income and application of SRM practice (governance and field level) promote a self-sustaining virtuous circle able to adapt to changing circumstances.
95. The drivers that may contribute to the impact are the understanding of the advantages of SRM (communities and partners) and the political willingness and financial capacity to engage with SRM (partners). The two elements are seen as convincing factors to promote SRM at country level.

TOC at regional level

96. Two pathways are identified in the reformulated ToC that may lead to project outcome in the region – Relevant organization are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS region. In fact, all regional project activities deliver outputs that are typical of capacity development initiatives: they related to knowledge generation, knowledge dissemination, and awareness raising. These two pathways require few assumptions to be in place - knowledge material is effectively relevant for SRM, and used (read, transmitted) by targeted relevant entities at regional level, and further awareness about benefits of SRM effectively increases the knowledge on SRM – to be effective.
97. Finally, the outcomes and an output – 5 major investments in SRM under development within the LAS and other participating countries – may generate in the long-term a pathway, in form of a virtuous circle, to contribute to the desired impact of the project at regional level – Scaling up of SRM (LAS Region). To do so, it is assumed that national and/or international funds are made available to implement SRM and proposals are relevant for SRM scaling up, approved by pertinent donors and implemented.
98. The drivers that may contribute to the impact are the political willingness and the financial capacities to engage with SRM (relevant regional entities).

Figure 4 - TOC at Evaluation (country)

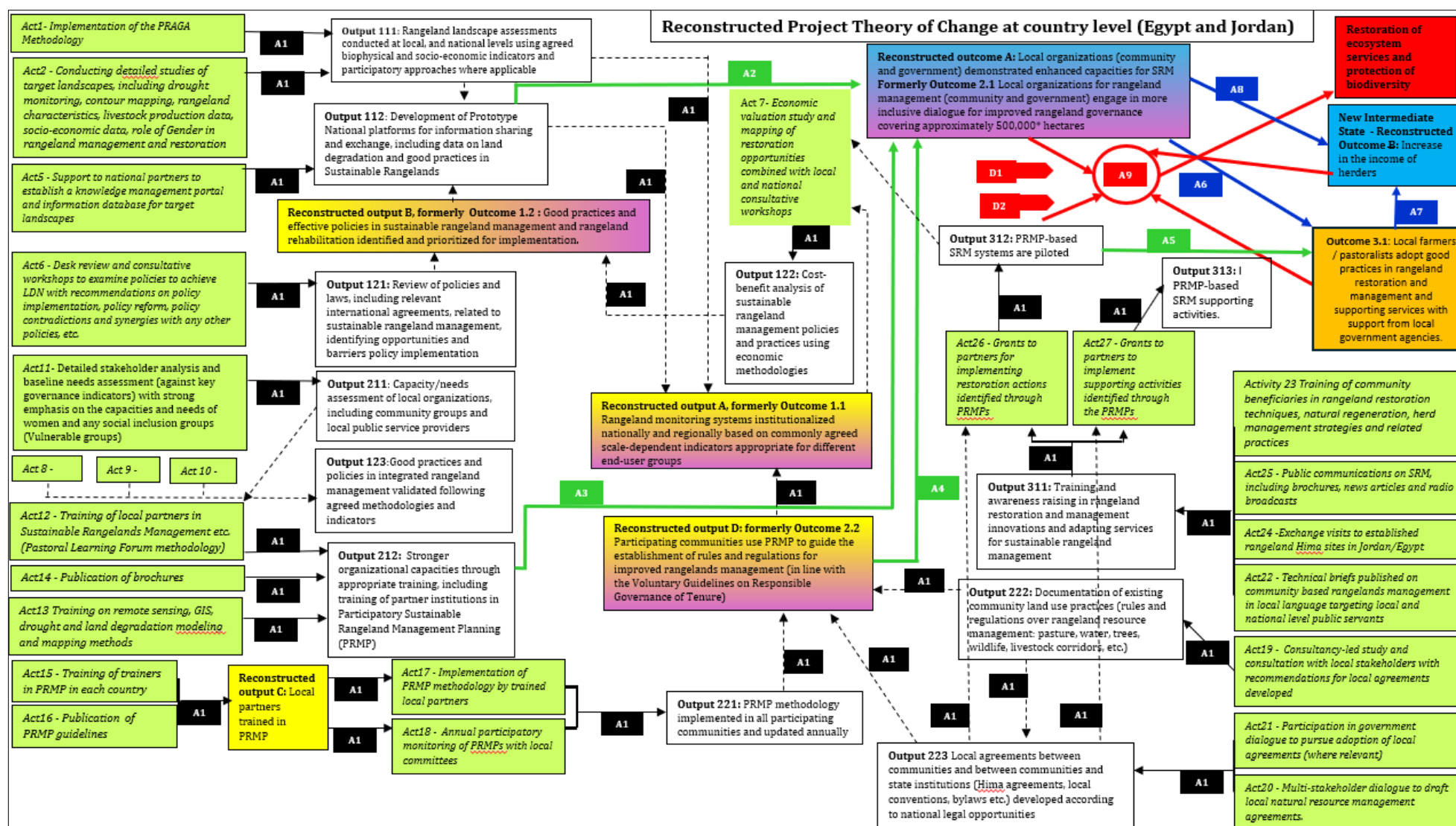


Figure 5 -TOC at Evaluation (regional)

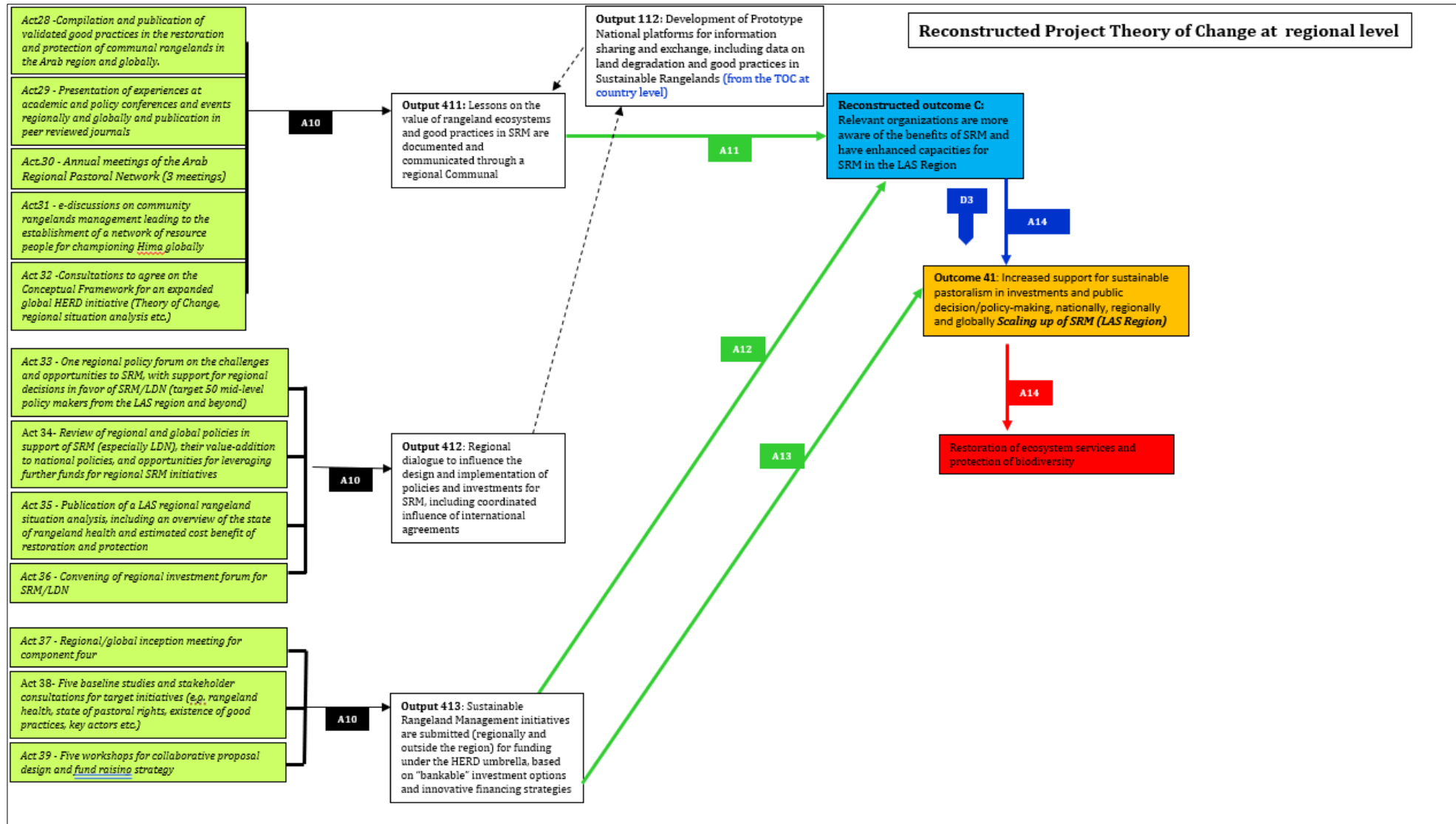


Table 5: Assumptions and drivers of the reconstructed TOC

Assumptions
Assumptions to deliver outputs (national level): A1: Capacity of project partners to engage in project activities and involved end-beneficiaries. <i>The stakeholders involved in the delivery of the outputs are all project stakeholders (IUCN, its project partners, end-beneficiaries and consultants). There are no external influences of significance: local administrators/authorities may have a marginal role in affecting the delivery of outputs. However, they are considered project stakeholders.</i>
Assumption to achieve the reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) demonstrated enhanced capacities for SRM. A2: Local organizations access on a regular basis the knowledge management portals and information included in the portals is easily understandable and relevant for SRM. A3: Skills and knowledge acquired through training are relevant, well received and understood by trainees and relevant for SRM. A4: Further awareness about benefits of SRM effectively increases the knowledge on SRM. <i>The stakeholders involved in the causal pathways from project outputs to the outcome are all project stakeholders (IUCN, its project partners, end-beneficiaries and consultants). The three assumptions identified are basically related to the capacities of project implementers to provided tools and services that are relevant and effective in enhancing the capacities of project recipients (end-beneficiaries and project partners). From this perspective it is important to note that project partners are both implementers and recipients of trainings.</i>
Assumptions to achieve outcome 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies. A5: SRM is technically well implemented A6: Governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations <i>The stakeholders involved in the causal pathways to the increase of income are mainly the herding communities and local partners that may support them in the long term.</i>
Assumptions to achieve the reconstructed Outcome B: Increase in the income of herders A7: Governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations A8: SRM is technically well implemented <i>The stakeholders involved in the causal pathways to the increase of income are mainly the herding communities and local partners that may support them in the long term.</i>
Assumptions to achieve the long-term impact "Restoration of ecosystem service and protection of biodiversity": SRM is technically well implemented; governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations; and capacity acquired, higher income and application of SRM practice (governance and field level) promote a self-sustaining virtuous circle able to adapt to changing circumstances. <i>The stakeholders involved in the causal pathways to the increase of income are mainly the herding communities and local partners that may support them in the long term.</i>
Assumptions to deliver outputs (regional level): A10: Capacity of project partners to engage in regional project activities with relevant regional stakeholders. <i>The stakeholders involved in the delivery of the outputs are all project stakeholders (IUCN, its project partners, relevant regional stakeholders and consultants).</i>

Assumptions to achieve reconstructed outcome C "Relevant organizations are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS Region" A11: Knowledge material is effectively relevant for SRM, and used (read, transmitted) by targeted relevant entities at regional level. A12: Further awareness about benefits of SRM effectively increases the knowledge on SRM <i>The stakeholders involved in the delivery of the outputs are all project stakeholders (IUCN, its project partners, relevant regional stakeholders and consultants).</i>
Assumptions to achieve impact "Scaling up of SRM (LAS Region)" A13: National and/or international national funds are made available to implement SRM. A14: Proposals are relevant for SRM scaling up, approved by pertinent donors and implemented. <i>The stakeholders involved in the delivery of the outputs are all project stakeholders (IUCN, its project partners, relevant regional stakeholders and consultants).</i>
Assumptions to achieve the long-term impact "Restoration of ecosystem service and protection of biodiversity": SRM is technically well implemented; knowledge material is effectively relevant for SRM, and used (read, transmitted) by targeted relevant entities at regional level; Further awareness about benefits of SRM effectively increases the knowledge on SRM; national and international national funds are made available to implement SRM; proposals are relevant for SRM scaling up, approved by pertinent donors and implemented. <i>The stakeholders involved in the delivery of the outputs are all project stakeholders (IUCN, its project partners, relevant regional stakeholders and consultants).</i>
Drivers D1: Understanding of the advantages of SRM (communities and partners) D2: Political willingness and financial capacities to engage with SRM (partners) D3: Political willingness and financial capacities to engage with SRM (relevant regional entities)

Table 6: Justification for the adjustments to the ToC at Evaluation (outcome and impact)

Formulation (as per Project Document)	Changes of ToC at Evaluation	Justification for Changes	Project Indicators and targets (as per Project Document)
LONG TERM IMPACT/OBJECTIVE			
Strengthen restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands for the provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan to catalyze the scale up of SRM, both regionally and globally.	Reformulation: Restoration of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity	The reformulation is needed to narrow down the original formulation. The concept of "scaling up" is implied/included in the original outcomes 3.1 and 4.1.	The ProDoc does not present any indicators, and consequently, any targets.
Outcome 1.1			
Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups.	It is not reformulated. It is identified by the terminal evaluation as an output (Reconstructed output A) of the reconstructed ToC.	The downgrading the outcome 1.1 to output within the hierarchy level of the project ToC is justified by the fact that in the original Results Framework and ToC it is wrongly identified as outcome. It is actually an output.	Original indicators are: # of institutional partners supporting rangeland monitoring system; and # of institutional arrangements for rangeland monitoring. Their target is PRAGA methodology adapted and conducted by national partners in at least four landscapes; 3 in Jordan and 1 in Egypt To assess the delivery of the output (i.e. the outcome 1.1 downgraded to output), the terminal evaluation will make use of the newly

Formulation (as per Project Document)	Changes of ToC at Evaluation	Justification for Changes	Project Indicators and targets (as per Project Document)
			formulated indicator: # Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized at national level; target 2.
Outcome 1.2			
Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.	It is not reformulated. It is identified by the terminal evaluation as an output (Reconstructed output B) of the reconstructed ToC.	The identification of good practices stems directly from - SRM practices implemented (all project sites) that later are studied through an economic valuation study at the end of the project. It is an actual delivery of the project.	Original indicators are: # good practices and SRM policies identified and approved by project stakeholders; # of good practices that explicitly address the roles and responsibilities of women land users. Their targets: At least one specific SRM practice (e.g. controlled grazing or reseeding) approved for implementation in each site with clear guidance over the role of women land managers; Community based rangelands management is implemented in all project landscapes (192,621 ha in Jordan and 332,942 ha in Egypt); Dialogue for improved policy for community rangeland management under way in Egypt. Targets and indicators are not coherent, as such they are not utilizable.
Outcome 2.1			
Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares.	Reformulated into Reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) demonstrated enhanced capacities for SRM	The reformulation is necessary because the participation in activities cannot be considered an outcome. The enhancement of capacity is a more appropriate formulation as it entailed an actual change.	Original indicators are: # of a) Rangeland User Associations or Hima Communities and b) Local government entities at governorate and/or district levels that participate in SRM planning; # of women members of participating organisations. Their targets: a) 6 Hima Communities and 4 Rangeland User Association and b) 1 local government partner in Egypt and 3 in Jordan; Women participate in all community based SRM planning, either through their membership of Hima Communities and rangeland User associations, or through membership of women's organisations. The indicator is not SMART. It is an indicator of participation in project activities.
Outcome 2.2			
Rules and regulations for improved rangelands management are established (in line with the VGGT) based on PRMPs in participating communities.	Is not reformulated. It is identified by the terminal evaluation as an output (Reconstructed output C) of the reconstructed ToC.	Actually the 5 SRM agreements (the target of the indicator) are already mentioned as an output (i.e. output 2.2.3 in the original Results Framework). Therefore, the outcome 2.2 is downgraded to output in the new ToC.	Original indicator is: # of local SRM agreements developed within communities and between communities and state institutions, based on PRMPs and in line with VGGT [E.g. Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws etc.]. Its target: At least 5 SRM agreements developed across both countries. The indicator cannot be used for the TE purposes since it already informs output 2.2.3.
Outcome 3.1			
Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies.	No changes	N/A	Original indicators are # communities with improved income from sustainably managed rangelands obtained by local communities as a result of implementing SRM practices; # of women participating in income generating activities related to SRM; # new SRM practices implemented by communities of rangeland managers. Their targets: At least 3 communities across both countries, report increased income (livestock and non-livestock) or production (i.e. subsistence) as a result

Formulation (as per Project Document)	Changes of ToC at Evaluation	Justification for Changes	Project Indicators and targets (as per Project Document)
			of rangeland rehabilitation; At least one income generating activity targeting women rangeland users is implemented in each project site; At least 3 SRM practices adopted across both countries. The first indicator will not be used to inform the analysis of the achievement of the outcome. It will inform instead the newly added outcome New Intermediate State - Reconstructed Outcome B .
New Intermediate State - Reconstructed Outcome B: Increase in the income of herders			
N/A	Increase in the income of herders is defined as a new intermediate state	The insertion is needed to identify the changes included in the indicators of the outcome. The insertion acknowledges that the change in the income happen after the adoption of good SRM practices	New indicator: # communities with improved income from sustainably managed rangelands obtained by local communities as a result of implementing SRM practices. Its target: at least 3 communities across both countries, report increased income (livestock and non-livestock).
Reconstructed outcome C: Relevant organizations are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS Region			
N/A	Relevant organizations are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS Region is defined as a new intermediate state	The insertion acknowledges that the changes in awareness and capacities may lead to an increase of support for investment	No indicator available.
Outcome 4.1			
Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy- making, nationally, regionally and globally	No changes	N/A	Original indicators are: # new investments under development in the region or globally that draw on project lessons and partnerships; # regional and national policy dialogues initiated or enhanced through project actions. Their targets: 5 major investments in SRM under development within LAS and other participating countries; 5 policy dialogues towards community based SRM are influenced by project actions. The first indicator is already used at output level since one original output is 4.1.3 Sustainable Rangeland Management initiatives are submitted (regionally and outside the region) for funding under the HERD umbrella, based on "bankable" investment options and innovative financing strategies. Both indicators are not SMART since they do not measure what is formulated as outcome.
Note: At national level (Jordan and Egypt), the changes the project aspired to contribute to mainly refer to the capacity in place for replication (reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) have enhanced capacities for SRM). This may have an impact on adoption of good practices (Outcome 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies), which in turn may lead to an increase of the income of herders (new outcome: Increase in the income of herders). In the two countries, the project worked directly with herding community, project partners and other institutions. They are all active project stakeholders, i.e. directly involved in project activities. For that, the original outcomes (at country level, i.e. 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, and 2.2) are considered as outputs and/reformulated into the capacity development outcome. The reconstructed outcome B stems from an accountability necessity: the increase in income is identified as an indicator, therefore the evaluation exercise will take this outcome into consideration in its analysis. At regional level, the project			

Formulation (as per Project Document)	Changes of ToC at Evaluation	Justification for Changes	Project Indicators and targets (as per Project Document)
represents a showcase of experience and a repository of knowledge aiming at enhancing the capacities of regional stakeholders that can promote chances in their own countries belonging to the League of Arab States.			

Table 7: Justification for the adjustment to the ToC at Evaluation (assumptions and drivers)

Formulation (as per ToC of Project Document)	Reformulation of ToC at Evaluation	Justification for Reformulation
Assumptions to achieve reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) demonstrated enhanced capacities for SRM		
Learning on SRM can be pro-actively instigated.	A2: Local organizations access on a regular basis the knowledge management portals and information included in the portals is easily understandable and relevant for SRM. A3: Skills and knowledge acquired through training are relevant, well received and understood by trainees and relevant for SRM. A4: Further awareness about benefits of SRM effectively increases the knowledge on SRM.	Other assumptions included in the original ToC are no longer relevant, since the ToC has been significantly modified.
Assumptions to achieve outcome 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies		
No assumption identified	A5: SRM is technically well implemented A6: Governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations	
Assumptions to achieve reconstructed outcome B: Increase in the income of herders		
SRM can deliver results, within only a few years, in improvements in land productivity and in increased income	A7: Governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations A8: SRM is technically well implemented	The assumption of the original ToC implies that appropriate capacities are there. The new formulation, instead, stresses that capacities must be effective in contributing to the outcome.
Assumptions to achieve the long-term impact "Restoration of ecosystem service and protection of biodiversity"		
No assumption identified	SRM is technically well implemented; governance, technical and managerial capacities of herders are effective, and market (costs of inputs and produces) is not affected by significant variations; and capacity acquired, higher income and application of SRM practice (governance and field level) promote a self-sustaining virtuous circle able to adapt to changing circumstances.	The ProDoc did not identify any assumptions.
Assumptions to achieve reconstructed outcome C: Relevant organizations are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS Region		
No assumption identified.	A11: Knowledge material is effectively relevant for SRM, and used (read, transmitted) by targeted relevant entities at regional level. A12: Further awareness about benefits of SRM effectively increases the knowledge on SRM	The ProDoc did not identify any assumptions.
Assumptions to achieve Outcome 41: Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy-making, nationally, regionally and globally		
Countries are willing to prioritize SRM vis-à-vis other SDG investments	A13: National and/or international national funds are made available to implement SRM. A14: Proposals are relevant for SRM scaling up, approved by pertinent donors and implemented.	The focus is kept on the actual on SRM without any comparison with other development issues.
Drivers		

No drivers identified	D1: Understanding of the advantages of SRM (communities and partners) D2: Political willingness and financial capacities to engage with SRM (partners) D3: Political willingness and financial capacities to engage with SRM (relevant regional entities)	The ProDoc did not identify any drivers.
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5 EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.1 Strategic Relevance

5.1.1 Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities

99. The ProDoc was aligned with the Subprogram 3 “Ecosystem management” and its Expected Accomplishments “Use of the ecosystem approach in countries to maintain ecosystem services and sustainable productivity of terrestrial and aquatic systems is increased”, output 2 “Tools and technical support provided to countries and partnerships established to improve food security and sustainable productivity in multifunctional landscapes through the integration of the ecosystem approach” and expected result “Global, regional and national policy-making is facilitated by environmental information made available on open platforms” as per the UNEP POW 2016/2017.
100. In principle, the ProDoc was aligned with the Subprogram 3 “Healthy and productive ecosystem” and its Expected Accomplishment “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”, specifically to its output 1.i) “Increase in the number of countries and transboundary collaboration frameworks that have made progress to monitor and maintain the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems” as per the UNEP POW 2018/2019.

Rating for Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities: *Satisfactory*

5.1.2 Alignment to GEF Priorities

101. The ProDoc was aligned with the GEF priorities, specifically to its “Land Degradation focal area”, being its objective connected with the GEF long term objective “Land Degradation: Integrated natural resources management” and its strategic program “Scaling-up SLM through Landscape Approach”, although its strategy to contribute to the target of 500,000 ha under Sustainable Rangeland Management, included in the Tracking Tool, was not well defined in the design.

Rating for Alignment to GEF Priorities: *Moderately Satisfactory*

5.1.3 Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities

102. While the ProDoc had significant aspirations to contribute to global, regional and national priorities related to SRM, the actual implementation of activities and the results demonstrated that the actual contributions were much lower than the expectations: the alignment with the aspirations of SDG-15 “Life on Land” and its indicator 15.3.1 “Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area” was there, and at national level, in Egypt and Jordan, the work undoubtedly contributed to the promotion of SRM awareness, especially at local level; however, its ambition to contribute to the establishment of monitoring systems failed. The very same ambition did not materialize also at regional and global level. The expected alignment with SDG-17 “Partnerships for the goals” and its indicator 17.14.1 “Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development” remained largely an aspiration of the ProDoc not demonstrated by any accomplishments.

Rating for Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities: *Moderately Satisfactory*

5.1.4 Complementarity with Existing Interventions/ Coherence

103. The project document does list a number of projects with which collaboration was anticipated. According to responses gathered during the field visits, the project did not collaborate with any other complementary initiatives in the project areas as there were none ongoing. It built on previous experience of IUCN in the field of SRM.
104. Neither duplications nor complementarities of activities among the same target groups with other recent or ongoing or planned interventions by UNEP or other organisations working in the project areas in Egypt and Jordan were identified by the TE since no other interventions were being implemented.

Rating for Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence: Moderately Satisfactory

Rating for Strategic Relevance: Moderately Satisfactory

5.2 Quality of Project Design

105. This section presents a brief summary of the Project Design Quality. The full assessment was circulated as part of the Inception Report and is available from the UNEP Evaluation Office.
106. The operating context criterion is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The ProDoc is contradictory. It states that in the region there are increased natural disasters, including recurrent drought and sandstorms, but does not consider the likelihood of occurrence of these events as an element that may negatively affect the implementation.
107. The project preparation criterion is rated as Satisfactory. The problem and situation analyses are clear and adequate. The stakeholder analysis is adequate. It is also very ambitious as it includes a wide array of stakeholders from the global level to the very local level in both countries. The ProDoc does not describe the process of stakeholder consultation/participation. The participation in the process of local communities and the inclusion of their voice in the decision-making mechanism is highlighted. Considerations on gender issues are also included.
108. The strategic relevance criterion is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The Program of Work 2019/2020 (POW) is mentioned once on the cover page of the ProDoc. The POW is a subset of the Medium Term Strategy. UNEP priorities are not spelt out in any part of the ProDoc. The alignment with GEF priorities is, instead, mentioned. The ProDoc effectively documents the importance and relevance of the project to regional and national priorities, as well as how it aligns with them.
109. The intended results and causality criterion is rated as Highly Unsatisfactory. The project TOC, included in the 2017 project documentation, has significant areas for improvement in its formulation. The TOC presents two significant flaws: (1) the outcomes included in the Results Framework are represented as intermediate outcomes while the components of the project, as per their description in the narrative part of the ProDoc, are depicted as outcomes in the ToC, but this is not the case. On the contrary, components are instead to be meant as sets of activities that will lead to the delivery of the project outputs. The misinterpretations of what the components are, and their representation in the ToC diagram as outcomes represent a significant shortcoming in the ToC included in the ProDoc; (2) the intermediate outcomes (i.e. the outcome included in the logframe) are actually outputs since they represent the direct results of the implementation of the

activities with project stakeholders. Consequently, the TOC does not adequately represent the pathways from outputs through outcomes towards impacts. Drivers are not described for any pathway. Assumptions are briefly mentioned in regard to the pathways outputs/intermediate outcomes, but they are neither mentioned nor described in relation to the pathways outcomes/impact. The involvement of key stakeholders in the delivery of the majority of project outputs is not described.

110. The logical framework and monitoring criterion is rated as Highly Unsatisfactory. The Logical Framework does not have indicators explicitly formulated at output level. It is important to note, that the elements formulated as outputs are largely activities. There are indicators at outcome level. However, most of them are not SMART. It is important to note, that the elements formulated as outcomes are largely outputs. Baseline information at output level is not specified. Baseline information for outcome indicators is included but it is often organized in a confusing and incoherent way. Targets at output level are not specified, since there are no indicators. Targets at outcome level instead are specified. However, they are very confusing: some are not consistent with the indicators and sometimes there are more targets than indicators
111. The governance and supervision arrangements criterion is rated as Satisfactory. project governance and supervision model is comprehensive, clear and appropriate.
112. The partnerships criterion is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. Capacities of partners were not assessed. The roles and responsibilities of partners are listed in Table 2 of the project document.
113. The learning, communication and outreach criterion is rated as Satisfactory. The project has a clear and adequate knowledge management and communication approach.
114. The financial planning criterion is rated as Satisfactory. The budget was adequate at design stage. The co-financing contributions are, however, well identified and distributed throughout the different components of the project.
115. The efficiency criterion is rated as Highly Satisfactory. The ProDoc claims that the project is cost-effective because it promotes SRM. It also reports that either de-stocking of herds or in the sedenterisation of Bedouin tribes, as ways of alleviating pressure on rangelands were considered as alternatives to the project strategy with respect to the cost-effectiveness argument. The project builds upon previous experiences. HERD concept was conceived as a global initiative through the World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP), which was funded by GEF.
116. The risk identification and safeguards criterion is rated as Satisfactory. Risks are included in the Results Framework and in a risk matrix. The ProDoc does not mention any kind of mechanisms to reduce its negative environmental foot-print including in relation to project management and work implemented by UNEP partners.
117. The sustainability/replication and catalytic effects criterion is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The project's ambition is to represent a strategy to promote the scaling up and replication of SRM at field level and at policy level in two countries (Egypt and Jordan) and in the LAS region. Such ambition is, however, not reflected in the Results Framework and ToC.
118. The identified project design weaknesses/gaps criterion is rated as Satisfactory. Recommendations made by the PRC are adopted in the final project design. The Evaluation

Office notes that the PRC recommendations should have addressed the weaknesses in the Results Framework and TOC.

Rating for Quality Project Design: Moderately Satisfactory

5.3 Nature of the External Context

119. No modifications to the project design were required during implementation due to any external events. However, the management had to address challenges posed by the global outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The request for a no-cost extension to complete the project activities, aimed at overcoming the impact of COVID-19 – primarily related to restrictions on international travel and large gatherings – is considered an appropriate decision by the TE.

Rating for Nature of the External Context: Favourable

5.4 Effectiveness

5.4.1 Availability of Outputs

120. **Since the reconstructed TOC at evaluation, prepared during the evaluation inception phase was not mutually agreed upon by the evaluation team, the GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit in UNEP's Ecosystem Division at UNEP and the IUCN, the report includes both an assessment based on the original Results Framework (as per the ProDoc) and, thereafter, an assessment based on the reconstructed TOC at Evaluation.**
121. Using the original formulation of outputs from the ProDoc, the evaluation finds that **6 out of 15 outputs (40%) were delivered**; 5 out of 15 (33%) were partially delivered and 4 out of 15 (27%) were not delivered. Using the outputs in the reconstructed TOC, the evaluation finds that **7 out of 19 outputs (37%) were delivered**; 5 out of 19 (26%) were partially delivered and 7 out of 19 (37%) were not delivered. In both cases, the availability of Outputs is rated at the Unsatisfactory level.

5.4.1.1 Delivery of outputs as per original Results Framework

Table 8: Delivery of outputs as per original Results Framework (during an extended commenting process the Evaluation Office adjusted output 2.2.2 from partially delivered to delivered and outputs 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 from not delivered to partially delivered based on information provided during the draft report commenting phase).

Outputs	Delivered	Partially delivered	Not delivered
1.1.1. Rangeland landscape assessments conducted at local and national levels using agreed biophysical and socio-economic indicators and participatory approaches.	X		
1.1.2. Development of Prototype National platforms for information sharing and exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands.			X
1.2.1. Review of policies and laws, including relevant international agreements, related to sustainable rangeland management, identifying opportunities and barriers policy implementation.	X		
1.2.2. Cost-benefit analysis of sustainable rangeland management policies and practices using economic methodologies.			X
1.2.3. Good practices and policies in integrated rangeland management validated following agreed methodologies and indicators.	Not relevant		
2.1.1. Capacity/needs assessment of local organizations, including community groups and local public service providers.			X
2.1.2. Stronger organizational capacities through appropriate training, including training of partner institutions in Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning (PRMP).			X
2.2.1. PRMP implemented in all participating communities and updated annually.		X	

2.2.2. Documentation of existing community land use practices (rules and regulations over rangeland resource management: pasture, water, trees, wildlife, livestock corridors, etc.).	X		
2.2.3. Local agreements between communities and between communities and state institutions (Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws etc.) developed according to national legal opportunities.	X		
3.1.1. Training and awareness raising in rangeland restoration and management innovations and adapting services for sustainable rangeland management.		X	
3.1.2. PRMP based sustainable rangeland management systems are piloted.	X		
3.1.3. PRMP-based supporting activities are piloted.	X		
4.1.1. Lessons on the value of rangeland ecosystems and good practices in SRM are documented and communicated through a regional Communal Rangelands Leadership network of scientists, pastoralists and Civil Society Organizations for South-South learning and cooperation.		X	
4.1.2. Regional dialogue to influence the design and implementation of policies and investments for SRM, including coordinated influence of international agreements.		X	
4.1.3. Sustainable Rangeland Management initiatives are submitted (regionally and outside the region) for funding under the HERD umbrella, based on "bankable" investment options and innovative financing strategies.		X	
Number of outputs delivered: 6 out of 15 (40%)			
Number of outputs partially delivered: 5 out of 15 (33%)			
Number of outputs not delivered: 4 out of 15 (27%)			

122. Output 1.1.1. Rangeland landscape assessments conducted at local, and national levels using agreed biophysical and socio-economic indicators and participatory approaches.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc for its analysis.

Deliverable a: Rangeland assessment conducted through the PRAGA methodology per target landscape.

Deliverable b: Detailed studies of target landscapes, including drought monitoring, contour mapping, rangeland characteristics, livestock production data, socio-economic data, role of Gender in rangeland management and restoration.

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual formulation of rangeland landscape assessments is taken into consideration.

123. The assessments were carried out. The report - *Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment (PRAGA) for two HERD Project areas (El Ga'ween and Abou Mazhoud) in Matruh (Egypt) and the reports Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment (PRAGA) by HFDJB in Jordan and Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment (PRAGA) - Hima Bani Hashim site by RBG in Jordan* were delivered. The assessments were conducted by partners in collaboration with local stakeholders after they were trained on the PRAGA methodology.

124. In total 3 detailed *landscape* studies on target landscapes were carried out in Jordan and Egypt. In Jordan one study was conducted by HFDJB and one by RBG. DRC and CEDARE conducted an assessment in Egypt.

The TE considers that output 1.1.1. was delivered.

125. Output 1.1.2. Development of Prototype National platforms for information sharing and exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands.

The indicator is not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE extracts the indicator from the formulation of the output itself.

Deliverable: Two knowledge management portals developed (one per country)

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual development of a national management portal per country is taken into consideration.

126. The project made use of the existing Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) website of the Ministry of Environment in Jordan (<https://jo.chm-cbd.net/>). In Egypt no website was

developed or used for project purposes¹³. The PIR 2023 mentions only the Jordanian management portal.

127. The CHM website, however, did not include the data identified in the ProDoc. It is simply a repository of certain reports that are accessible to the public. It is not the deliverable expected by the ProDoc, from which it differed substantially.

The TE considers that output 1.1.2. was not delivered.

128. Output 1.2.1. Review of policies and laws, including relevant international agreements, related to sustainable rangeland management, identifying opportunities and barriers policy implementation.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable: A publication of recommendations on LDN policy implementation, policy reforms and policy contradictions made available to national partners and on the internet.

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual formulation of the relevant publications is taken into consideration.

129. A study titled "Review of Regional and Global Policies in Support of SRM, especially LDN and Opportunities for Leveraging Further Funds for SRM initiative in the Arab Region" was delivered by the Arab Organization of Agriculture Development (AOAD) in September 2020. AOAD was contracted by the project specifically to deliver the review.

The TE considers that output 1.2.1. was delivered.

130. Output 1.2.2. Cost-benefit analysis of sustainable rangeland management policies and practices using economic methodologies.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable: 2 economic valuation studies at the country level complete

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual formulation of the relevant studies is taken into consideration.

131. Two reports were delivered: The "Economic Valuation of Rangeland Ecosystem Services and the Total Economic Value of Pastoralism in Northwest Coast of Egypt" in February 2022, and the "Economic Evaluation of different geographical Rangelands sites in Jordan" as delivered in March 2023.
132. The two reports, however, are substantially different from what the ProDoc envisioned. The data used to inform the two reports does stem from project implementation as per the ProDoc.
133. The "Economic Evaluation of different geographical Rangelands sites in Jordan" report ends with seven recommendations to conserve and improve the rangeland ecosystem in Jordan: 1) encouraging sustainable rangeland management practices through the Hima system to ensure the long-term benefits of the ecosystem services provided by the

¹³ IUCN shared with the Evaluator only the link of the website of the Ministry of Environment of Jordan. During the commenting process another website for Egypt was provided (<https://drc.gov.eg/en/home>) Technical challenges with websites were reported by the project team. To fulfil its function the output needed to be available consistently.

rangelands, 2) designing action plans to promote sound rangeland restoration and conservation practices, 3) establishing national rangeland restoration fund and involving local communities in the restoration and management of rangelands, 4) additional economic benefits could be gained by local communities from additional investment in ecotourism and recreational activities that utilize the restored rangelands, 5) the need for the restoration of degraded rangelands with high potential for carbon sequestration, 6) increase the level of awareness among the local communities and the public in general about the importance of conserving and restoring the valuable rangelands of Jordan, and 7) conduct additional detailed research about estimating the economic values of all goods and services provided by the rangelands.

134. These recommendations mirror the reasons underpinning the basis on which the project was approved: The PIR 2023 states that the study's findings underscore the need for effective rangeland management and conservation practices to sustain the economic benefits and ecosystem services provided by these areas. These are well known elements around sustainable rangeland management in Jordan. The report, as envisaged in the ProDoc, should have drawn conclusions on the valuation of what emerged from the implementation of restoration activities demonstrating the value of the project itself and the importance of these activities to be scaled up by other actors in the country or elsewhere.
135. The "Economic Valuation of Rangeland Ecosystem Services and the Total Economic Value of Pastoralism in Northwest Coast of Egypt" is not based on project generated data. As such, it does not correspond to what envisaged by the ProDoc. It also includes recommendations broadly related to the promotion of sustainable rangeland management.
136. The TE considers that output 1.2.2. was not delivered. The ProDoc envisaged ex-post studies based on the results of project implementation at field level, i.e. economic valuation of restoration opportunities, whereas the project delivered ex-ante studies on rangeland ecosystem services and pastoralism. They are two different things.
137. Output 1.2.3. Good practices and policies in integrated rangeland management validated following agreed methodologies and indicators.
138. The ProDoc identified a set of activities and related deliverables, i.e. a project monitoring strategy with indicators for evaluation of good practices, mid-term and final evaluation reports. These activities belong to the realm of project M&E not to the implementation of project activities. They are not project outputs.

Output 1.2.3. is not considered in the assessment of availability of outputs.

139. Output 2.1.1. Capacity/needs assessment of local organizations, including community groups and local public service providers.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable: 2 detailed stakeholder analysis and baseline needs assessment (against key governance indicators) with strong emphasis on the capacities and needs of women and other marginalized groups.

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual formulation of capacity needs assessments is taken into consideration.

140. The PIR 2023 reported that *a detailed stakeholder analysis and a baseline needs assessment were developed in close consultation with the project's partners for both Jordan and Egypt.*

141. The TE exercise did not have access to any report focused on capacity needs assessment. Instead, the Evaluator received the following documents from IUCN to inform the analysis of the delivery of the output:
142. The "Stakeholder Analysis Report" is a document that displayed the main stakeholders active in the rangeland management field in the two countries, but it does not include any assessment of their capacities.
143. The "Stakeholder Analysis Report – Matrouh Governorate, Egypt" is a 12-page document, plus annexes. The report has an internal lack of coherence. It specifies that one of its purposes is to have a detailed stakeholder analysis (against key governance indicators) with strong emphasis on the capacities and needs of women and any social inclusion groups (vulnerable groups), but, in the body of the report, there are neither key indicators identified nor emphasis on capacities and needs women and/or any other groups.
144. The "Baseline study report on the socio-economic status of the local communities in Jordan's Badia" is a document exploring the socio-economic conditions in the Badia. It is not a capacity needs assessment.
145. The "Light Baseline Study in El-Gawan and Abu-Mazhoud" is a short document exploring socio-economic conditions. It is not a capacity needs assessment.

The TE considers that output 2.1.1. was not delivered.

146. Output 2.1.2. Stronger organizational capacities through appropriate training, including training of partner institutions in Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning (PRMP).

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc. the TE cannot consider the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc as indicators as they reflect completion of activities rather than changes in knowledge or understanding.

Deliverable a: Training module on SRM delivered.

Deliverable b: Training module on GIS, drought and land degradation modelling and mapping methods delivered.

Deliverable c: A brochure on SRM distributed to partners ad communities.

These deliverables neither measure nor prove the strengthening of capacities.

To assess whether the output was delivered, results from desk reviews, interviews and focus group discussion are taken into consideration.

147. According to the PIRs, the *multiple training sessions on Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) were organized in both countries, targeting local partners, Ministry of Agriculture officers, and local communities. These trainings have engaged a considerable number of participants, equipping them with knowledge and skills to implement SRM practices effectively.*
148. The evaluation exercise, through interviews and focus group discussions, found that capacities were not substantially developed. To back this statement, some pieces of evidence are listed below:
149. The first piece of evidence is a documentary, i.e. Report on "Sustainable Rangeland Management" training course in Amman, Jordan held by IUCN ROWA 23-24 November 2022. In the report, the trainer included three main comments that identified severe flaws that undermine the effectiveness of the training itself in terms of capacity development and sustainability. In fact, in one copy of the report he stated that:

- *The training for any project should be planned and delivered...before the onset of any technical intervention on ground. The training received coupled with actual working on the field will be more beneficial for the trainees...*
 - *It is well known that training should be gradual; tackling first simple concepts/issues such as the rangeland ecosystem and then moving to more complex issues such as sustainability and grazing management. This requires that Ministry of Agriculture and funding partners should plan for a long training that might last for months to build the capacity of the staff working.*
 - *The majority of trainees are old and most probably they will leave MoA soon; it is a waste of time and money. Training should focus in future on youth for better grasping of concepts and for more energetic staff working in the field.*
150. The report includes a short section as well with the feedback of trainees who lamented that the course was too short and lacked the practical dimension at field level. The course, indeed, had a total duration of two days for 8 hrs of effective teachings (i.e. excluding time reported for registration, ceremonies, self-evaluations and breaks).
151. Anecdotal evidence from Focus Group Discussions with project beneficiaries showed that some concepts around the Hima and Rangeland Restoration were positively grasped by herders. However, this was about some technical concepts, and not about organization of the work. The herders, both in Jordan and Egypt, do not work in collaboration with anybody. Their work with their flocks of sheep, is organized at individual level: each herder works on his own and makes decisions on his own. The way the sheep should graze is a decision that is not agreed either formally or informally with anyone. Briefly, participatory planning is not relevant to the way they manage grazing activities with their flocks.
152. According to the PIRs, training sessions on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing were conducted in Jordan and Egypt, focusing on local partners and relevant institutions aiming at enhancing capabilities in utilizing spatial data for better rangeland management. Focus Group Discussions with trainees on GIS reveal that a very heterogeneous public was targeted. Some interviewees stated that they do not work in the agricultural sector, others that they work in the agricultural sector, but do not use the GIS in their work. The targeting of the GIS training was revealed to be misplaced for the project purposes.
153. Finally, it is important to note that project partners, HFDJB, RBG, DRC, and CEDARE will not apply the tools learned through their participation in the project, i.e. the PRMP and the PRAGA methodologies, in their future activities in the field of rangeland management. During the interviews, it was clearly reported that each organization, since it has been engaging institutionally in the sector for a long time, has its own tools for the assessment and planning of rangeland activities. These methodologies were applied simply because the project was led by IUCN, who promoted them. They will keep using their own tools.
154. The TE also had access to a project brochure. The brochure is a straightforward overview of the project's scope and purpose, serving primarily as a visibility tool for the donor, UNEP, IUCN and national partners in Egypt. It does not delve into any technical concepts and provides no information of public interest beyond the project itself. It is not a didactic tool able to generate a learning process.

The TE considers that output 2.1.2. was not delivered.

155. Output 2.2.1. PRMP implemented in all participating communities and updated annually.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc. The TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable a: Training module on PRMP

Deliverable b: Publication on PRMP guidelines.

Deliverable c: PRMP methodology implemented.

Deliverable d: Two PRMP monitoring reports (repeated over three years)

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual delivery of all 4 deliverables is taken into consideration.

156. A Training of Trainers (ToTs) was conducted in both Jordan and in Egypt. The training targeted staff from IUCN and project partners, i.e. DRC, CEDARE, RBG and HFDJB.
157. According to the PIRs, PRMP guidelines were developed and localized to suit each country's context taking into account local needs and conditions. They were developed in English and Arabic. The evaluation exercise did not have at its disposal any guidelines. Instead, the Evaluator received a document from IUCN entitled "Participatory Rangeland Management Planning – a Field Guide". This document was presumably not developed during the implementation of the project, in fact in its front page, there is the mention of a different project named "Ecosystem Programme, Global Drylands Initiative" and it is authored by the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office of IUCN, who was not involved in the project under evaluation.
158. The PRMP methodology was implemented by the trained local partners to support the local communities in taking decisions and implementing the defined small projects. In Egypt, DRC and CEDARE organized a four-day long training. RBG, instead, organized PRMP training for the local communities in Jordan. The training in Egypt was attended by almost 50 participants and the training in Jordan by almost 2614.
159. An Annual Participatory Monitoring exercise of the PRMP activities was conducted with the local partners and the local communities in Jordan and Egypt to evaluate the progress of the implementation. The exercise was led by an expert and assessed the implementation of activities at field level in all project sites.
160. The TE considers that output 2.2.1. was partially delivered. Guidelines were not developed and only an annual monitoring exercise was conducted.
161. Output 2.2.2. Documentation of existing community land use practices (rules and regulations over rangeland resource management: pasture, water, trees, wildlife, livestock corridors, etc.).

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc. The TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable: Two studies on local agreements

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual delivery of the two studies is taken into consideration.

162. A consultancy-led study was delivered through consultation with local stakeholders in Jordan. The study was named "Key Informant Interviews and Development Plan" and included recommendations to develop local agreements in Jordan. A similar study for Egypt, was not carried out.

¹⁴ The exact number of participants is not report neither in PIR 2023, nor in the training reports. The expressions "almost 50 participants" and "almost 26 participants" are those utilized in the PIR.

163. **The TE considers that output 2.2.2. was partially delivered** as a study was formulated only for Jordan, not for Egypt. The Evaluation Office notes that a study for Egypt was provided during an extended commenting process and this output is assessed as delivered.
164. Output 2.2.3. Local agreements between communities and between communities and state institutions (Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws etc.) developed according to national legal opportunities.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc. The TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc

Deliverable a: Workshop report on natural resource management agreements.

Deliverable b: Report on recommendations from government dialogue on adoption of local agreements.

The two deliverables are considered by the TE not adapted to measure the delivery of the output. To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual development of agreements is taken into consideration.

165. By reviewing the agreements available for the exercise, the TE concludes that the agreements were documents needed to implement project activities. Specifically, they were contractual documents identifying the role of stakeholders at field level to carry out activities related to rangeland management and to the establishment of the revolving funds. The agreements are preliminary conditions to implement activities related to outputs 3.1.2 "PRMP-based sustainable rangeland management systems are piloted" and 3.1.3 "PRMP-based supporting activities are piloted".

The TE considers that output 2.2.3. was delivered.

166. Output 3.1.1. Training and awareness raising in rangeland restoration and management innovations and adapting services for sustainable rangeland management.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable a: At least two of published technical briefs on community-based rangeland management

Deliverable b: Training manual on rangeland restoration techniques, natural regeneration, herd management and related practices.

Deliverable c: A report for each training workshops conducted (number of workshops is not defined)

Deliverable d: 2 of exchange visits and related reports

Deliverables e: news articles from the public communications and audio excerpts from radio broadcasts

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual delivery of all 5 deliverables is taken into consideration.

167. The TE had its disposal only one document, titled "Technical Brief: Sustainable Grazing Management for Rangeland Restoration." This 5-page document provides a brief overview of sustainable grazing management for rangeland restoration, explaining general concepts related to grazing and management. However, it contains general knowledge without any specific information pertaining to the project areas. How to apply such knowledge practically in the project areas, or in environments with similar ecological characteristics, is not explained.
168. A video was produced to cover the regional conference on sustainable rangeland management held in Jordan in March 2023. The video briefly describes the HERD project. It does not explain any technical concept. It is just a visibility tool.
169. Two exchange visits were conducted, one in Egypt and one in Jordan. The TE did not have any material at its disposal from the exchange visit in Jordan. The Evaluator was able to consult the Exchange Visit to Egypt Report (16 – 20 May 2021). This report does not include any detailed information to understand what was done during the 5 days in Egypt. One page

briefly lists the activities conducted and one page lists the names of participants. Visits to a fruit tree nursery and to an olive oil factory are included in the list of activities: their relevance to the project is doubtful, since the output formulation focused explicitly on Sustainable Rangeland Management.

170. In the PIR 2023, it is stated that several articles on HERD project activities and achievements were shared with local journals such as Ahram Gate in Egypt and Al-Gad in Jordan.
171. In 2023, a Communication Plan was developed. It is a 6-page document including 7 chapters: 1) introduction; 2) objective of the plan; 3) target audiences; 4) communication mix; 5) products; 6) events and activities, and 7) evaluation. The Evaluator did not have at his disposal most of the products included in the communication plan, although project reporting states that the project successfully developed and shared technical briefs on community-based rangelands with project partners. The communication plan was never evaluated although, according to the plan itself, an evaluation should have been conducted every six months¹⁵.

The TE considers that output 3.1.1. was partially delivered.

172. Output 3.1.2. PRMP-based sustainable rangeland management systems are piloted.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable a: Restoration actions to be implemented agreed on and documented.

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual implementation of restoration actions is taken into consideration, even if there are no specific targets. The achievement is assessed only from a qualitative point of view.

173. The following PRMP-based sustainable rangeland practices were piloted:
174. In Jordan, a total of 300 hectares of degraded rangeland has been restored, with 200 hectares restored by the Hashemite Fund for the Development of the Jordanian Badia (HFDJB) in the Surra and Al-Hazeem sites, and an additional 100 hectares restored by the Royal Botanic Garden (RBG) in Hima Bani-Hashem.
175. In Egypt, the Hima approach, which involves setting aside areas for conservation, has been successfully applied over 80 hectares, with 20,000 seedlings planted. Moreover, 37 new wells have been established, with a total storage capacity of 5,424 m³, and 3 old wells have been rehabilitated, providing an additional storage capacity of 2,000 m³ to support sustainable water management for livestock breeders.
176. Additionally, the Desert Research Center (DRC) in Egypt has restored 80 hectares of degraded rangelands in four plots of land of 20 hectares each.
177. 380 hectares of degraded rangelands in Jordan and Egypt were restored as pilot sites.

¹⁵ The section "Evaluation" of the Communication Plan reads as follow: *An analysis of results indicators will be done every 6 months. Potential results indicators include: Number of new partners; Number of eminent endorsers – political/industry leaders, media/entertainment; personalities/other celebrities; Media coverage of related events and releases; Pick-up of key messages; Web Statistics; Social media performance – number of followers, tweets/retweets, FB impressions; Participation in tactical social media campaigns, YouTube views of viral videos, etc; and Number of partners mobilized for communication and promotion support.*

The TE considers that output 3.1.2 was delivered.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Deliverable a: Supporting activities to be implemented agreed on and documented.

To assess whether the output was delivered, the actual implementation of supporting activities is taken into consideration, even if there are no specific targets. The achievement is assessed only from a qualitative point of view.

178. Output 3.1.3. PRMP-based supporting activities are piloted.
179. In Jordan, several grants and agreements were signed with local associations to establish income-generating projects with women's active involvement:
180. Hima Bani Hashim: A revolving fund was established to support local communities, benefiting up to 20 beneficiaries.
181. Sura: A Veterinary Clinic was established with an investment of 18,000 JOD, benefiting around 150 beneficiaries. Additionally, revolving fund was set up to support grazing practices, with an investment of 10,000 JOD.
182. Al Hazeem: A revolving fund was established to support the local community, along with income-generating projects specifically benefiting women. Around 33 women beneficiaries were supported with a total investment of 10,000 JOD.
183. Mansheya: A Veterinary Clinic was established to provide veterinary services for farmers, benefiting around 5,000 beneficiaries with an investment of 18,000 JOD. The vet clinic serves approximately 54,000 livestock owners, making a significant impact on the livestock sector.
184. In Egypt, the project focused on Abu Mazhud and Al Gawain sites, where the following projects were implemented:
185. Revolving Fund: A revolving fund was started with a total investment of 2 million Egyptian Pounds, with 1 million being the project's contribution and 1 million from the Matrouh governorate. The aim of this fund was to support the local community and initiate income-generating projects specifically targeting women. Around 165 beneficiaries received support through this initiative.
186. Rangelands Seedling Nursery: A rangelands seedling nursery was established, producing 20,000 seedlings per year, contributing to rangeland restoration and sustainable land management practices.
187. The exact number of grants disbursed both in Jordan and Egypt was not reported in any document shared with the Evaluator. The same applied to the exact number of grants disbursed to women as primary beneficiaries of them.

The TE considers that output 3.1.3 was delivered.

188. Output 4.1.1. Lessons on the value of rangeland ecosystems and good practices in SRM are documented and communicated through a regional Communal Rangelands Leadership network of scientists, pastoralists and Civil Society Organizations for South-South learning and cooperation.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the activities and deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Indicator 4.1.1.a: # of publications on validated good practices in the restoration and protection of communal rangelands in the Arab region and globally published and available online.

Target 4.1.1.a: a publication

Indicator 4.1.1.b: Presentation of experiences at academic and policy conferences.

Target 4.1.1.b: yes/no

Indicator 4.1.1.c: A conceptual Framework for an expanded global HERD initiative discussed (and agreed upon)

Target 4.1.1.c: yes/no

189. The PIRs reported that the project delivered the following:

- *A Sustainable Rangelands Management Practices Toolkit was developed and published.* The toolkit includes contributions from 16 authors from Jordan, USA, Kenya, Uzbekistan and Tunisia.

The toolkit is not aligned with what is specified in the ProDoc. It has a very specific focus on technical practices at field level. Good practices related to policies and strategies are not included.

- *Two meetings for the Arab Regional Pastoral Platform were held as part of the project activities, promoting collaboration and knowledge exchange among stakeholders in Jordan and Egypt.* The material available for the TE indicates that the second meetings was not about rangeland management. It was a much broader event that covered many other issues. The main topics addressed seem to focus on more general land management issues, such as management in times of crisis, land management reform, access to land for women and vulnerable groups, and other aspects of land governance and use. Terms related to pastoralism such as herders, sheep, pastures and rangelands are not explicitly mentioned.
- *The project took a significant step forward by developing an online platform for the Arab Regional Pastoral Platform.*

The link to the platform was not available for the TE exercise.

The material available for the TE, instead, suggested that the platform was not finalized. The report on the issue ended by highlighting that attendees would provide AOAD with significant suggestions for its development. These suggestions were not reported in any document available for the evaluation exercise.

- *The development of the conceptual framework and the regional consultation workshop held in Lebanon marked important progress in the project's planning phase. The framework provides a guiding structure for project activities, while the workshop encouraged partner engagement and alignment.*
 - The conceptual framework was not available for the TE exercise.
 - A regional rangeland situation analysis was published.
 - No presentation of experiences at academic and policy conferences was reported.

The TE considers that output 4.1.1. was partially delivered.

190. Output 4.1.2. Regional dialogue to influence the design and implementation of policies and investments for SRM, including coordinated influence of international agreements.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Indicator 4.1.2.a: # of regional policy forum on the challenges and opportunities to SRM, with support for regional decisions in favour of SRM/LDN.

Target 4.1.2.a: # 1 regional policy forum with at 50 mid-level policy makers from the LAS region and beyond

Indicator 4.1.2.b: # Publication on regional and global policies in support of SRM

Target 4.1.2.b: 1

Indicator 4.1.2.c: LAS regional rangeland situation analysis published (including an overview of the state of rangeland health and estimated cost benefit of restoration and protection).

Target: Yes

191. According to the PIR 2023, *a Regional Forum was held in Lebanon in June 2022 to review the study entitled "Policy and Technical Review to advance sustainable rangelands management in the Arab Region."* The report submitted by AOAD was discussed, published, and disseminated to local, regional experts, and project partners. Attendees of the workshop were 31 people. Many of them belonged to organizations that worked as partners in the project (13 individuals): IUCN (6), CEDARE (2), RBG (2), HFDJB (1), RSCN (1), and DRC (1). 2 participants belonged to AOAD and 1 to FAO. Other attendees belong to Ministries of Agriculture or Environment of Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt and other organizations¹⁶. Briefly, it was not a regional forum, it was a project meeting with few participants from Lebanon. In addition, the report "Policy and Technical Review to advance sustainable rangelands management in the Arab Region" is an exact copy of the report "Review of Regional and Global Policies in Support of SRM, especially LDN and Opportunities for Leveraging Further Funds for SRM initiative in the Arab Region", just with a different cover page.

192. The PIR 2023 also reports that a regional investment forum for SRM/LDN was held on the 1st and 2nd of March 2023 in Amman-Jordan with the project's partners and key stakeholders (from 60-70 participants from Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia).

193. Finally, a LAS regional LAS regional rangeland situation analysis published was not formulated. The "Review of Regional and Global Policies in Support of SRM, especially LDN and Opportunities for Leveraging Further Funds for SRM initiative in the Arab Region" cannot be considered, since it already informed the delivery of output 1.2.1.

194. The TE considers that output 4.1.2. not delivered. The Evaluation Office acknowledges evidence of some regional interaction but not of the nature or extent to qualify as delivering the output and considers the output 'partially delivered'. Para 134 and Table 8 have been adjusted accordingly.

195. Output 4.1.3. Sustainable Rangeland Management initiatives are submitted (regionally and outside the region) for funding under the HERD umbrella, based on "bankable" investment options and innovative financing strategies.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, the TE considers as indicators the deliverables described in the Appendix 6 "Key deliverables and benchmarks" of the ProDoc.

Indicator 4.1.3.a: # baseline studies for the target initiatives.

Target 4.1.3.a: 5

¹⁶ Since the list of attendees is compiled by hand, the Evaluator could not understand all the acronyms included in the list.

Indicator 4.1.3.b: # Proposals developed and submitted to potential donors.
Target 4.1.3.b: 5 (one proposal per baseline study)

The five baseline studies for the target initiatives were not available for the TE.

196. According to project reporting, 5 proposals were developed and submitted to various donors. The TE had at its disposal concept notes of these proposals all led by IUCN.
197. The concept note titled "Sustaining Food Systems: in Rangeland Restoration, linking a past and future through Regional Traditional Ecological Knowledge" does not mention either the PRAGA methodology or PRMP, which are the elements that characterized the HERD project. It is a SRM project, but the link with the HERD project is not evident. The concept note does include only IUCN as implementing partner, no other specific partners are identified. The project may be funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The proposal also identified the need to create a knowledge-sharing platform to elaborate on best practices that are exhibited within the country, culturally, socio-economic- specific and regional contexts at sites to inform future actions, which is a replication of what has been done/ was proposed under the HERD project.
198. The concept-note titled "Climate-Smart Forestry for Healthy Resilient Community in the Aley district-Lebanon" is about forestry. It is not a SRM project, there is a mention to shepherds that will be assigned zones and duration for livestock grazing in the forests. Being a proposal for the Green Climate Fund, the National Designated Authority is the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon, while the Accredited Entity and Executing Entity is IUCN.
199. The concept note titled "Lake Qaroun Ecosystem Restoration" is about wetland restoration and support to small holding farmers. It is not a SRM project. Being a proposal for the Green Climate Fund, the National Designated Authority is the Ministry of Environment of Egypt, while the Accredited Entity is Attijariwafa Bank (AWB) and Executing Entity is IUCN.
200. The IUCN technical proposal "Strategy and the Execution Plan of Ecosystem Restoration and Agroforestry for Al Ula" is not a project. It is a technical assignment commissioned by the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
201. The IUCN proposal for "Technical Study of Resource Requirements and impact of Initiatives" is also not a project. It is a technical assignment commissioned by the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the frame of the Middle East Green Initiative.
202. The TE considers that output 4.1.3. not delivered. 2 out of 5 concept notes are not about rangeland, 2 out of five are technical assignments, and the only concept note that is about SRM does not mention PRAGA and PSRMP that are the elements, that in principle make the HERD project different from any other SRM project. In addition, no baseline studies were conducted to inform the formulation of these concept notes. The Evaluation Office registers the sharing, during an extended commenting process, of two baseline studies covering 5 sites and considers the output 'partially delivered'. Para 134 and Table 8 have been adjusted accordingly.

Delivery of outputs as per reconstructed TOC at Evaluation

203. This section presents the analysis around the delivery of outputs as per the reconstructed TOC. It focuses on outputs whose delivery is not analysed in the previous section.

Table 9: Delivery of outputs as per reconstructed TOC at Evaluation (during an extended commenting process the Evaluation Office adjusted output 2.2.2 from partially delivered to delivered and outputs 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 from not delivered to partially delivered based on information provided during the draft report commenting phase).

Outputs	Delivered	Partially delivered	Not delivered	Note
1.1.1. Rangeland landscape assessments conducted at local and national levels using agreed biophysical and socio-economic indicators and participatory approaches.	X			Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
1.1.2. Development of Prototype National platforms for information sharing and exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands.			X	Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
Reconstructed output A. Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups			X	Analysis in this section
1.2.1. Review of policies and laws, including relevant international agreements, related to sustainable rangeland management, identifying opportunities and barriers policy implementation.	X			See section 5.4.1.1
1.2.2. Cost-benefit analysis of sustainable rangeland management policies and practices using economic methodologies.			X	Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
Reconstructed output B. Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.			X	Analysis in this section
2.1.1. Capacity/needs assessment of local organizations, including community groups and local public service providers.			X	Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
2.1.2. Stronger organizational capacities through appropriate training, including training of partner institutions in Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning (PRMP).			X	Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
Reconstructed output B: Local partners trained in PRMP	X			Analysis in this section
2.2.1. PRMP implemented in all participating communities and updated annually.		X		Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
2.2.2. Documentation of existing community land use practices (rules and regulations over rangeland resource management: pasture, water, trees, wildlife, livestock corridors, etc.).	X			Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
2.2.3. Local agreements between communities and between communities and state institutions (Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws etc.) developed according to national legal opportunities.	X			Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
Reconstructed output C: Participating communities use PRMP to guide the establishment of rules and regulations for improved rangelands management (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure).			X	Analysis in this section
3.1.1. Training and awareness raising in rangeland restoration and management innovations and adapting services for sustainable rangeland management.		X		Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
3.1.2. PRMP based sustainable rangeland management systems are piloted.	X			Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
3.1.3. PRMP-based supporting activities are piloted.	X			Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
4.1.1. Lessons on the value of rangeland ecosystems and good practices in SRM are documented and communicated through a regional Communal Rangelands Leadership network of scientists, pastoralists and Civil Society Organizations for South-South learning and cooperation.		X		Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
4.1.2. Regional dialogue to influence the design and implementation of policies and investments for SRM, including coordinated influence of international agreements.		X		Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
4.1.3. Sustainable Rangeland Management initiatives are submitted (regionally and outside the region) for funding under the HERD umbrella, based on "bankable" investment options and innovative financing strategies.		X		Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
Number of outputs delivered: 7 out of 19 (37%)				
Number of outputs partially delivered: 5 out of 19 (26%)				
Number of outputs not delivered: 7 out of 19 (37%)				

204. Reconstructed output A. Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, as this is a reconstructed output. The Terminal Evaluation uses the following indicator to carry out the analysis of the delivery of reconstructed output A.

Indicator: rangeland monitoring systems are developed at national and regional level
 Target: 1 monitoring system developed in Jordan, 1 in Egypt and 1 at regional level

205. The project did not deliver any rangeland monitoring system at national level (Egypt and Jordan), or at regional level. Actually, no scale-dependent indicators for different end user groups were defined.

The TE considers the reconstructed output A not delivered.

206. Reconstructed output B. Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, as this is a reconstructed output.

The Terminal Evaluation assesses the delivery of reconstructed output B taking into consideration the actual identification and prioritization of good practices and policies.

207. Good practices were not identified following the implementation of pilot project activities. The cost-benefit analysis of SRM policies and practices using economic methodologies was done as ex-ante studies on rangeland ecosystem services and pastoralism not on the actual pilot activities. Effective policies were also identified through a review of existing ones in the region. Instead, the ProDoc and the reconstructed TOC considers that these outputs should have followed the implementation of activities at field level, i.e. they should have been identified ex-post.

The TE considers the reconstructed output B not delivered.

208. Reconstructed output C: Local partners trained in PRMP

The indicators are not spelt out in the Results Framework of the ProDoc, as this is a reconstructed output.

The Terminal Evaluation uses the following indicator to carry out the analysis of the delivery of reconstructed output B.

Indicator: local partners are trained in PRMP

Target: All local partners are trained in PRMP

209. A Training of Trainers (ToTs) conducted in both Jordan and in Egypt. The training targeted staff from IUCN and project partners, i.e. DRC, CEDARE, RBG and HFDJB.

The TE considers the reconstructed output C delivered.

210. **Reconstructed output D: Participating communities use PRMP to guide the establishment of rules and regulations for improved rangelands management (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure).**

The indicators included in the Results Framework of the ProDoc in relation to outcome 2.2 that the evaluation exercise consider an output.

Therefore, the Terminal Evaluation uses the same indicator to carry out the analysis of the delivery of reconstructed output.

Indicator: number of local SRM agreements developed within communities and between communities and state institutions, based on PRMPs and in line with VGGT [E.g. Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws etc.]

Target: At least 5 SRM agreements developed across both countries

211. No evidence to support the existence of SRM agreements was made available to the TE, and therefore it is **concluded** that agreements that included rules and regulations for improved rangelands management were not developed.

The TE considers the reconstructed output D not delivered.

212. All reasons behind the overall delivery of outputs could not be identified by the evaluation exercise. However, it is evident that significant design flaws in the Results Framework severely undermined the implementation process, which was supposed to adhere to the Results Framework. The lack of collective reflections on project design also may have also played a role. The high turn-over of project managers at IUCN i.e. three throughout the implementation period, and the occurrence of the COVID-19 may have also played an important role.

Rating for Availability of Outputs: *Unsatisfactory*

213. The comparison between the project deliverables outlined in Appendix 6 of the ProDoc and the actual outputs delivered by the project and the reduced involvement from stakeholders from the LAS region, limited mainly to Jordan and Egypt and three other countries (Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria), leave no room for any higher rating. The rating applies indistinctly both for the analysis based on the original Results Framework (6 out of 15 outputs delivered) and on the reconstructed TOC at Evaluation (7 out of 19 outputs delivered).
214. Finally, the TE reports that CEDARE, as part of the project, engaged a consultant to assist in drafting Egypt's first national rangeland management law. At the time of writing, the draft law has been approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation and is awaiting approval from the Egyptian Parliament. Developed through an inclusive consultative process starting at project sites and extending nationally, the law introduces several key provisions.
215. These include the definition of rangelands through a comprehensive nationwide mapping initiative, the creation of a national authority dedicated to rangeland management, and the establishment of local committees to oversee rangelands. The law's objectives go beyond conservation, emphasizing the active participation of local communities in managing these resources. Additionally, the law outlines the establishment of a national fund for rangeland management, to be financed through state budget allocations, international cooperation, and specific taxes generated from rangeland use.
216. The TE recognizes the significance of drafting the law on rangeland management but emphasizes that this achievement does not compensate for the project's undelivered outputs. Certain deliverables could have served as foundational elements for implementing the law, pending its formal approval (which lies outside the scope of this evaluation).
217. Specifically, the delivery of output 1.1.2, "Development of Prototype National Platforms for Information Sharing and Exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands," and the reconstructed output A, "Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups," would have aligned with the provisions outlined in Article 7 of the law (referenced in Text Box 1). These outputs in fact would be integral to establishing the infrastructure and institutional mechanisms necessary for the effective application of the law.

Text box 1 – Article 7 of the Draft Law on Rangeland Management

Article 7 – Competences and Powers of the General Entity for Pasture Sustainability

The General Entity has the following competences:

- Organize grazing, develop the productive capacities of pasture resources, and limit their degradation.
- Promote sustainable management of pasture areas in collaboration with the Local Advisory Council.
- Plant forage shrubs using modern technologies and enhance vegetation diversity by introducing new forage species.
- Improve the socioeconomic conditions of livestock farmers and shepherds.
- Preserve natural pastures and protect them from overgrazing.
- Monitor environmental changes and combat desertification.
- Preserve biodiversity and genetic resources of both plants and animals, while expanding natural pasture reserves.
- Raise public awareness about proper behavior towards pastures.
- Develop the nomadic sector, with particular attention to women in Bedouin communities.
- Ensure consultations with stakeholders and encourage their participation in pasture resource conservation programs.
- Regulate and manage the use of water resources in collaboration with relevant authorities.
- Impose fees on the use of artificial pastures by shepherds from outside pasture areas, in collaboration with the Local Advisory Council.

5.4.2 Achievement of Project Outcomes

218. Since the reconstructed TOC at evaluation was not mutually agreed for the present evaluation exercise between the UNEP Evaluation Office, the GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit in UNEP's Ecosystem Division at UNEP and the IUCN, the present evaluation report includes two different sections on the achievement of outcomes: one based on the original Results Framework, i.e. as per the ProDoc, and one based on the reconstructed ToC at evaluation.
219. Using both the original formulation of outcomes from the ProDoc, and those in the reconstructed TOC, the evaluation finds that none of the outcomes were achieved and this criterion is rated at the Highly Unsatisfactory level.

5.4.2.1 Achievement of Project Outcomes as per original Results Framework

Table 10: Achievement of outcomes as per original Results Framework

Outcomes	Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved
1.1. Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups.			X
1.2. Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.			X
2.1. Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares.			X
2.2. Participating communities use PRMP to guide the establishment of rules and regulations for improved rangelands management (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure).			X
3.1. Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies.			X
4.1: Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy- making, nationally, regionally, and globally.			X
Number of outcomes achieved: 0 out of 6 (0%)			
Number of outcomes partially delivered: 0 out of 6 (0%)			
Number of outcomes not delivered: 6 out of 6 (100%)			

220. Outcome 1.1. Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups.

Indicator 1: number of institutional partners supporting rangeland monitoring system.

Target 1: not defined.

Indicator 2: number of institutional arrangements for rangeland monitoring.

Target 2: not defined

Note: The Results Framework included as indicator target for both indicators Jordan and 1 in Egypt. This indicator cannot be used in the analysis of achievement of outcomes because it already measures output 1.1.1. In fact, it measures an action put in place directly by project partners. It does not measure a change to which the project has contributed.

221. The PIRs 2023 informs indicator 1 with the following "...there are seven institutional partners actively supporting the rangeland monitoring system initiative. These partners play a crucial role in contributing resources, expertise, and collaboration to ensure the success and sustainability of the monitoring efforts. Their collective efforts are helping to institutionalize rangeland monitoring systems at both national and regional levels, leading to improved rangeland management and conservation..." The evaluation exercise did not receive any documentation in that regard, and did not identify any evidence during the data collection phase through interviews and focus group discussions. On the contrary, those who requested the establishment of a monitoring system, responded that such a system is not in place, there are neither systematic data collection activities to inform any indicators nor a data recording system in place.
222. Finally, indicators are not identified either at national level in Egypt and Jordan nor at regional level.
223. Indicator 2 is informed by the following "...there are four key institutional arrangements in place for rangeland monitoring. Two in Jordan and two in Egypt...". The evaluation exercise did not have at its disposal any documentation in this regard to support this statement.
224. Anecdotal evidence from focus group discussions with herders in Jordan highlighted that rangers from Ministry of Environment are in charge of the surveillance of the access to the project areas rangeland restored since the land is state-owned. Whereas, in Egypt Rangers are not active. In fact, the project rangeland belongs to the state but the access to individual plots is granted to individual herders, who are ultimately responsible for their use.
225. The Evaluation Office acknowledges the reference to the HERD project in Egypt's National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (2024-2030). On page 79 the following achievements are listed: establishment of the revolving fund; formulation of the law; establishment of 14 demonstration rangeland plots (50 Feddan¹⁷ each) and upgrading the skills of 15 government employees on GIS and remote sensing for M&E.

The TE considers that outcome 1.1 was not achieved.

226. Outcome 1.2. Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.

Indicator 1: number of good practices and SRM policies identified and approved by project stakeholders

Indicators 2: number of good practices that explicitly address the roles and responsibilities of women land users

In the Results Framework, three targets relate to two indicators:

¹⁷ 1 Feddan is equivalent to 0.42 hectares, giving 21 ha per demonstration plot and a total area of the demonstration sites in Egypt of 294 ha.

Target 1: At least one specific SRM practice (e.g. controlled grazing or reseeding) approved for implementation in each site with clear guidance over the role of women land managers.
 Target 2: Community based rangelands management is implemented in all project landscapes (192,621 ha in Jordan and 332,942 ha in Egypt).
 Target 3: Dialogue for improved policy for community rangeland management underway in Egypt

227. *Target 1 was not achieved. Decision-making over the utilization of rangelands is a task of men. This was a clear result of all focus group discussions held in the two project countries, Egypt and Jordan.*
228. *Target 2 was not achieved. Hima approach and restoration techniques have been implemented by the project, but community-based rangelands management was not applied in the project areas, which altogether sum up to 380 hectares, much less than the area specified in the formulation of the target.*
229. *In fact, during focus group discussions, herders clearly explained to the Evaluator that the SRM was implemented on rangeland plots managed by individual herders. These herders have access to the plots, but the state is the ultimate owner. These herders may permit other herders to use their land for grazing their flocks of sheep. Usually, family members are allowed to graze the plot of other members of the same family: the project supported 8 herders to have 8 plots of land restored (4 through Hima approach and 4 through direct restoration). In this regard, it is important to stress that herders identified direct support for fencing their plots of land as the main support they need. Finally, the fencing is important also to deal with a problem that was not addressed by the project: the dromedars in the project area are free ranging.*
230. *In Jordan, the project worked on state owned natural reserves. The Ministry of Agriculture is in charge to control the grazing in the areas.*
231. *Target 3 is a repetition of Output 4.1.2. Regional dialogue to influence the design and implementation of policies and investments for SRM, including coordinated influence of international agreements, since Egypt is part of the region.*

The TE considers that outcome 1.2 was not achieved.

232. *Outcome 2.1. Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares.*

Indicator 1: number of a) Rangeland User Associations or Hima Communities and b) Local government entities at governorate and/or district levels that participate in SRM planning
 Target 1a: 6 Hima Communities and 4 Rangeland User Associations participate in SRM planning
 Target 1b: 1 local government partner in Egypt and 3 in Jordan participate in SRM planning
 Indicator 2: number of women members of participating organisations
 Target 2: Women participate in all community based SRM planning, either through their membership of Hima Communities and rangeland User associations, or through membership of women's organisations

233. *The PIR 2023 informs indicator 1 with the following value ...a) At least 6 Hima Communities and 4 Rangeland User Associations actively participated in the SRM planning process. b) At least 1 local government partner in Egypt and 3 in Jordan joined in SRM planning... These pieces of information relate to the activities implemented to deliver Outputs 2.2.1 and 3.1.2 and 3.1.3. Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) do not cover an area of 500,000 ha. Reporting against this number is not done in any PIRs. According to anecdotal evidence collected throughout the evaluation mission in Egypt and*

Jordan, the focus of work of all stakeholders was on the location selected for the implementation of rangeland management practices.

The TE considers that outcome 2.1 was not achieved.

234. Outcome 2.2. Rules and regulations for improved rangelands management are established (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure) based on PRMPs in participating communities

Indicator: number of local SRM agreements developed within communities and between communities and state institutions, based on PRMPs and in line with VGGT [E.g. Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws etc.]
 Target: At least 5 SRM agreements developed across both countries

235. Local agreements were stipulated to implement activities to deliver output 2.2.3 and enable the implementation of activities related to outputs 3.1.2. and 3.1.3., i.e. the activities at field level in the project sites. Agreements that included rules and regulations for improved rangelands management are not there.

The TE considers that outcome 2.2 was not achieved.

236. Outcome 3.1. Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies.

Indicator 1: number of communities with improved income from sustainably managed rangelands obtained by local communities as a result of implementing SRM practices
 Target 1: At least 3 communities across both countries, report increased income (livestock and non-livestock) or production (i.e. subsistence) as a result of rangeland rehabilitation.
 Indicator 2: number of women participating in income generating activities related to SRM
 Target 2: At least one income generating activity targeting women rangeland users is implemented in each project site
 Indicator 3: number of new SRM practices implemented by communities of rangeland managers
 Target 3a: At least 3 SRM practices adopted across both countries
 Target 3b: New SRM practices adopted in at least 10 project sites across both countries

237. The increase of income should be considered as a consequence of the achievement of the outcome as per its formulation. It is actually written in the formulation as a result of implementing SRM practices. However, such an increase was not reported by IUCN in any PIRs and/or any technical report, and it has not been identified by the Evaluator during the focus group discussions conducted with the herders both in Egypt and in Jordan.
238. Targets 2, 3a, and 3b are about the same data already used to inform the delivery of outputs 3.1.2 and 3.1.3.
239. During all interviews with project partners and focus groups discussion with local communities and herders, the answers always highlighted the work at field level directly implemented through project activities. This is clearly a deliverable of the project, and as such, cannot be considered as an outcome.
240. The TE considers that outcome 3.1 was not achieved.
241. Outcome 4.1. Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy-making, nationally, regionally, and globally

Indicator 4.1. a: # new investments under development in the region or globally that draw on project lessons and partnerships

Target 4.1.a: 5

Indicator 4.1.b: # regional and national policy dialogues initiated or enhanced through project actions

Target 4.1. b: 5 policy dialogues towards community based SRM are influenced by project actions

242. As mentioned in the Assessment of Project Design Quality, most of indicators at outcome level are not SMART. The two indicators related to outcome 4.1 are not SMART¹⁸.
243. Project reporting mentions that only stakeholders from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria were targeted through project activities. In Egypt and Jordan, i.e. the project countries, the project involved mainly project partners. This involvement cannot be used to inform the indicators, it is self-evident that a dialogue between partners should occur during the implementation of any project. They are very limited in number and geographical scope: the LAS region extends from Mauritania to Iraq covering 22 countries.
244. The formulation of 5 concept proposals cannot be considered an outcome of the project for several reasons:
- *Replication*: the 5 proposals already inform an indicator at output level.
 - *Origin of Proposals*: The proposals were drafted by IUCN, an organization that, like many other NGOs worldwide, relies heavily on fundraising. Fundraising is central to their operations and survival as an international NGO.
 - *Fundraising Necessity*: Since IUCN's existence and operations depend on ongoing fundraising efforts, it is likely that they would have developed similar proposals regardless of the HERD project's funding and implementation.
 - *Relevance to Project Scope*: The nature of the proposals indicates that they are not closely related to the HERD project's focus on rangeland and pastoralism. This suggests that they may have been created independently of the project's objectives and may not reflect its specific outcomes.
 - *Network Reinforcement*: While any project might strengthen collaborative networks, this does not necessarily mean that all proposals resulting from such projects are direct outcomes of those projects.
245. The evaluation can conclude that the project's contribution to increasing support for investments benefiting pastoralism, both regionally and globally, falls significantly short of expectations. This shortfall is attributed to the poor quality of outputs and the very limited geographical scope of the project activities. Specifically, most of the interviewees reported to the evaluator that the project's focus was restricted to Jordan and Egypt, which constrained its broader impact at regional level.

The TE considers that outcome 4.1 was not achieved.

5.4.2.2 Achievement of Project Outcomes as per reconstructed TOC at Evaluation

246. **This section presents the analysis around the achievement of project outcomes as per the reconstructed TOC. It focuses on outcomes whose achievement is not analysed in in the previous section.**

¹⁸ Indicator 4.1.a corresponds to a deliverable of the project, whereas indicator 4.1.b is too vague, the identification of "regional and policy dialogue" is evidently an unfeasible exercise: the PIR 2023 does not even mention the indicator.

Table 11: Achievement of Project Outcomes as per reconstructed TOC at Evaluation

Outcomes	Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved	
Reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) demonstrated enhanced capacities for SRM			X	
3.1. Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies.			X	Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1
Reconstructed Outcome B: Increase in the income of herders			X	
Reconstructed outcome C: Relevant organizations are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS Region			X	
4.1: Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy- making, nationally, regionally, and globally.			X	Analysis included in section 5.4.1.1

247. Reconstructed outcome A: Local organizations (community and government) demonstrated enhanced capacities for SRM

Being a reconstructed outcome, there are no indicators to assess its achievement.
 The Terminal Evaluation uses evidence collected during the data collection phase to assess its achievement.

248. According to anecdotal evidence collected throughout the evaluation mission in Egypt and Jordan, the focus of work of all stakeholders was on the location selected for the implementation of rangeland management practices at pilot level. Local organizations (community and government) did not implement any activity on their own either in Jordan or in Egypt, although technical concepts related to SRM were understood by herders and reported to the Evaluator during the evaluation mission in the two countries.

249. Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) do not cover an area of 500,000 ha. There are no capacities in place to replicate the efforts of the project if no funds are brought in by an external organization to support the development of the project areas.

250. The TE considers that reconstructed outcome A was not achieved.

251. Reconstructed Outcome B: Increase in the income of herders

Being a reconstructed outcome, there are no indicators to assess its achievement.
 The Terminal Evaluation uses the relevant indicator of outcome 3.1. to inform the analysis of the achievement.
 Indicator: number of communities with improved income from sustainably managed rangelands obtained by local communities as a result of implementing SRM practices
 Target: At least 3 communities across both countries, report increased income (livestock and non-livestock) or production (i.e. subsistence) as a result of rangeland rehabilitation.

252. No increase in the income of herding communities was reported by IUCN in any PIRs and/or any technical report, and it has not been identified by the Evaluator during the focus group discussions conducted with the herders both in Egypt and in Jordan.

253. The TE considers that reconstructed outcome B was not achieved.

254. Reconstructed outcome C: Relevant organizations are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS Region

Being a reconstructed outcome, there are no indicators to assess its achievement.
 The Terminal Evaluation uses evidence collected through the documentation review and the data collection phase to assess its achievement.

255. Project reporting mentions that only stakeholders from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria were targeted through project activities. These were very limited in number and in geographical scope since the LAS region covers a vast area that goes from Mauritania to Iraq embracing 22 countries.

Rating for Achievement of Project Outcomes: *Highly Unsatisfactory*

5.4.3 Achievement of Likelihood of Impact

256. Since all project outcomes were not achieved¹⁹, the chances to achieve the project objective are clearly null at landscape level, i.e. covering a total area of 500,000 ha. The same consideration applied to the impact at regional level.
257. On the other hand, it is acknowledged that the rangeland conditions within the 380 ha restored by the project have improved. This can generate a local positive impact, which is, however, minimal in terms of the overall funds dedicated to the project and its ambitions.

Rating for Achievement of Likelihood of Impact: *Highly Unlikely*

Rating for Effectiveness: *Highly Unsatisfactory*

5.5 Financial Management

5.5.1 Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures

258. Quarterly financial reports were consistently produced, and a review of project documents and records indicated that expenditure reports were submitted on time, with expenses remaining within the approved budget lines.
259. The project underwent five independent financial audits in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. These audits confirmed that the financial reports accurately and fairly represented the financial position of the project's implementation, that proper book account was maintained and that all project expenditures were supported by relevant documentation.

Rating for Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures: *Satisfactory*

5.5.2 Completeness of Financial Information

260. The project's financial management is comprehensive. The expenditure followed the original budget with a small variation of USD 15'000 USD relative to the project extension requested in December 2022.

Table 12: Project expenditure (as per March 31, 2024)

Main budget lines	Estimated cost at design	Last budget revision (Dec. 2022)	Actual Cost/ expenditure (March 31, 2023)	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Personnel component	USD 731'993.02	USD 731'993.02	USD 730'408.43	99,78 %

¹⁹ This applies both by using the original Results Framework or the reconstructed TOC at evaluation as guiding tool for the analysis of achievement of project outcomes.

Sub-contract component	USD 1'534'269.68	USD 1'549'269.68	USD 1'544'135.03	99.66 %
Training component	USD 883'736.80	USD 883'736.80	USD 877'243.97	99.36 %
Equipment and premises component	USD 14'779.12	USD 14'779.12	USD 14'779.22	99,86%
Miscellaneous component	USD 351'203.04	USD 336'203.04	USD 217'135.51	64.58%
TOTAL	USD 3'515'982.66	USD 3'515'982.66	USD 3'383'702.16	96,23%

Table 13: Project co-financing (planned vs actual)

Co-financing Type/Source	IUCN		Min. Env. Jordan		CEDARE	
	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD
Cash	---	---	2,000,000	2,071,456	300,000	---
In-kind	300,000	1,717,174	---	---	---	277,733
Total	300,000	1,717,174	2,000,000	2,071,456	300,000	277,733
Co-financing Type/Source	DRC		HFDJB		GIZ	
	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD	Planned USD	Actual USD
Cash	6,527,000	---	1,900,000	1,554,490	100,000	80,000
In-kind	---	8'219'313	1,100,000	2,219,500	---	---
Total	6,527,000	8'219'313	3,000,000	3,773,990	100,000	80,000
Co-financing Type/Source	Project					
	Planned USD	Actual USD	% Actual/Planned			
Cash	10,827,000	3,705,946	34.23%			
In-kind	1,400,000	12,433,720	888,12%			
Total	12,227,000	16,139,666	132,00%			

261. The secured co-financing was less than the level of planned co-financing by 34%.

Rating for Completeness of Financial Information: Satisfactory

5.5.3 Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff

262. Communication between UNEP and IUCN was consistent, with mutual respect for each organization's roles. IUCN submitted financial reports and advance requests promptly, ensuring that activities were funded without any impediments.

Rating for Completeness of Financial Information: Satisfactory

Table 14: Financial Management Table

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures:		S	
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules		No	
2. Completeness of project financial information:			
Provision of key documents to the reviewer (based on the responses to A-H below)		S	
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	Both co-financing and project cost's tables reported 5 macro budget lines (components: staff, sub-contracting, training, equipment & premises, and miscellaneous). The project cost's table broken down into relevant lines.
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	Contract UNEP/IUCN provided; all contracts IUCN/Project partners provided
D.	Proof of fund transfers	No	

E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	No	
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	As per point A
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (where applicable)	Yes	
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	N/A	
3. Communication between finance and project management staff		S	
	Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.	S	No shortcomings identified
	Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.	S	No shortcomings identified
	Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.	S	No shortcomings identified
	Contact/communication between Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.	S	No shortcomings identified
	Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the review process	S	No shortcomings identified
Overall rating		S	

Rating for Financial Management: Satisfactory

5.6 Efficiency

263. As a main finding, the TE highlights that the several flaws identified in the project Results Framework included in the ProDoc, and the utilization of the very same framework as the main M&E tool during the implementation, were the main causes that negatively affected the efficiency of project implementation and its performance.
264. The MTR report is identified as a missed opportunity to increase efficiency: reviewing the project logic through the assessment of the project design and theory of change is the basis for any project evaluation/review. Furthermore, it is a standard element highlighted in the UNEP corporate guidance for reviews. The MTR report does not spell out in any of its parts the scope and the objective of the review itself and is a missed opportunity to reflect deeply on the problems that affected the effectiveness of the project.
265. Some project deliverables, as per the actual delivery in terms of quality, are considered as an element of inefficient use of the project financial resources:
- The targeting of the GIS training resulted to be highly irrelevant for the management of rangeland. Many trainees reported that they do not work in the field of agriculture.
 - The presentation of the Review of Regional and Global Policies in Support of SRM in Lebanon is considered an element of inefficiency. 31 individuals participated in the event. 13 were project partners, and others belong to FAO and to ministries of Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt: it is self-evident that project partners could have presented the report in each project country without the necessity to make Jordanian and Egyptian stakeholders travel to Lebanon.
 - The training on SRM held in Amman was considered by the trainer and the trainees to be not well planned and implemented. This was undoubtedly an element of inefficiency.
 - Although the work done through the establishment of the revolving funds in Egypt and Jordan was very much appreciated by beneficiaries and the associations in charge of

its management, it did not provide project management with any element to verify whether the loans produced any real effects on the livelihoods of beneficiaries since these effects were not monitored.

- The development of the five concept papers, all led by IUCN with the exception of one concept paper, they do not promote SRM, but other environmental thematics: they are out of the scope of the project. Moreover, the fact that all concept papers were formulated by IUCN represents an additional element of inefficient use of resources: the ProDoc does not mention clearly that the proposals should have submitted by different actors, but it is self-evident that, in-line with the project aspirations of scaling up the project approach, other entities should have submitted concept papers to different donors if interested in the methodology and results of the project through relevant and effective communication in the LAS region. From this perspective, the fact that the project contributed with its funds to the fund-raising activities of IUCN is an obvious element of inefficiency.

266. It is also recognized that the project failed to generate any lessons learned for future initiatives in either the same geographic areas or thematic fields. The significant flaws in the Results Framework and the project's monitoring, which focused solely on activities, prevented the identification of any lessons during the implementation period. Given that the project's stated objective was to *Strengthen restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands for the provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan and catalyzing scale up regionally and globally*, the lack of identification of well-supported lessons learned highlights a key factor contributing to the low efficiency of project implementation and management.
267. Notwithstanding the analysis above, the evaluation consultant takes note of the Evaluation Office guidance on assessing Efficiency. Given that there is no evidence that delays in project implementation had a negative impact on any stakeholders; that the sequencing of activities does not appear to be a factor in the delivery of outputs, but that the project had two no cost extensions and management structure does appear to have unnecessarily duplicative elements, the rating on Efficiency is established as Moderately Unsatisfactory.

Rating for Efficiency: Moderately Unsatisfactory

5.7 Monitoring and Reporting

5.7.1 Monitoring Design and Budgeting

268. The original Results Framework lacked the necessary components for effective project monitoring. Specifically, it did not include any output-level indicators, and the outcome-level indicators were not SMART. The chain of results within the Results Framework could have benefited from more careful formulation and clarity. Table 15 shows the TE considerations revealing very significant flaws in the formulation of the project outcomes.

Table 15: Flaws in the formulation of project outcomes and indicators

Outcomes as per their original formulation	TE considerations
Outcome 1.1. Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups	In principle, outcome 1.1 can be considered as an outcome. It can be assumed that due to the change (a strengthening in capacities of the targeted stakeholders, the stakeholders developed the system) monitoring systems are adopted and institutionalized. Usually, the setting up monitoring systems is an output since a project should use some of its resources to have it done. However, its indicators are not SMART because they do not identify the monitoring systems included in the formulation as the

Outcomes as per their original formulation	TE considerations
	actual indicators to measure project achievement. The target applied to outcome 1.1 relates to the implementation of a project activity, i.e. the use of PRAGA methodology. If the achievement of an outcome is judged by an indicator that is the completion of a project activity – the 'outcome' must be at output level.
Outcome 1.2. Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.	It identified a preliminary action, i.e. the identification of practices and policies that should be prioritized for implementation. It is not an outcome.
Outcome 2.1. Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares.	The participation and engagement of project stakeholders cannot be considered as an outcome. The engagement with project stakeholders and their participation in a project is a prerequisite for a project to be implemented.
Outcome 2.2. Rules and regulations for improved rangelands management are established (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure) based on PRMPs in participating communities.	Establishing rules is a preliminary activity needed to implement pilot activities at field level.
Outcome 3.1. Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies.	In principle, outcome 1.1 can be considered as an outcome if it refers to larger adoption of good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services beyond the simple implementation of pilot activities.
Outcome 4.1. Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy-making, nationally, regionally, and globally	In principle, outcome 4.1 can be considered as an outcome. However, the indicators chosen to measure it, turn it into an output rather than an outcome. For example, the indicator "number of new investments under development in the region or globally that draw on project lessons and partnerships" is equivalent to the indicator of output 4.1.3 "number of proposals developed and submitted to potential donors".

269. The design of the Results Framework, ultimately, suffered from a misunderstanding around what constitutes an outcome. Implementation challenges such as identification of suitable solutions for project activities (outcome 1.2), engagement with project stakeholders (outcome 2.1), and setting up rules for effective engagement and implementation of activities (outcome 2.2) were misinterpreted as project outcomes. It is important to note that the capacity to overcome these challenges relate to the relevance of the project activities, i.e. activities should be of interest for the targeted stakeholders, and to the technical and managerial capacities of those in charge of project implementation to make the job done.
270. By labelling these challenges as outcomes, the project design became tautologically redundant, meaning that simply implementing the activities would automatically overcome the challenges and, by extension, achieve the "outcomes."
271. The limitations of the Results Framework impeded a clear vision to guide the implementation of the project. The new conditions to which the project aimed to contribute were not spelled out clearly in any part of the Results Framework. In its essence, the project design was largely defined only by its activities and deliverables included in the "Appendix 6 - Key deliverables and benchmarks". No changes at higher level were defined, and this created serious problems for project monitoring and accountability.
272. Appendix 7 of the ProDoc outlined a costed M&E plan totalling USD 352,710, covering all activities related to the M&E work plan and key milestones, e.g. inception workshop, midterm and terminal evaluations, measurement of means of verification of project results, etc. From a budgeting perspective, the evaluation raises no concerns. However, it is surprising that Appendix 7 claims that the Results Framework includes performance and

impact indicators for project implementation, given that it only reports outcome indicators and lacks any performance indicators: there is no coherence between Appendix 7 and Appendix 4, i.e. the Results Framework. The Evaluation Office of UNEP notes the existence of additional M&E Plan, 2019, by IUCN, although it has similar weaknesses at is based on the results framework.

Rating for Monitoring Design and Budgeting: *Highly Unsatisfactory*

5.7.2 Monitoring of Project Implementation

273. The monitoring of project implementation suffered from three flaws that the TE identified as very significant:
274. The first one relates to the project monitoring and evaluation plan²⁰, which is in its essence a copy and paste of the Results Framework included in the ProDoc, and as such it reflects fully all the shortcomings identified in the assessment of the Quality of Project Design²¹. An updated version of the file with the actual measurement of project progress was not available for the TE.
275. The second flaw concerns the content of the MTR report that lacks standard elements as per the UNEP templates and guidance, namely the assessment of Quality of Project Design and the reconstruction of the Theory of Change. Furthermore, at page 21, the MTR report contains a statement that is evidently wrong *"No Theory of Change (ToC) was prepared for the ProDoc. Given the demanding nature of TOC processes and the difficulty of attempting one using virtual meetings and processes, the evaluator felt it inappropriate to attempt to develop a ToC at review for the project"*. In fact, the project TOC is included in Appendix 4: Results Framework and Theory of Change Diagram. It is unfortunate that the MTR did not adequately highlight the project design and implementation shortcomings that most likely would have been apparent.
276. In the minutes of the PSC meetings, there are no references to any reflection on the project design. The quality of project design and the design itself was taken for granted and never questioned or reflected upon.
277. The above-mentioned flaws went unrecognized, as no corrective actions were taken during the period of project implementation. These flaws are considered highly significant, also in light of the information reported in Appendix 7: 1) ...the M&E plan for the project will be presented and finalized in an Inception report following a collective fine-tuning of indicators, means of verification, and the full definition of implementation arrangements related to executing partners and project staff... ; 2) ...Periodic monitoring of implementation progress will be undertaken by the Program Manager who will develop a monitoring tool to track activities and outputs. A Theory of Change will also be elaborated to track the link between outputs, outcomes and long-term impacts...

²⁰ The analysis refers to the file officially provided by IUCN to the Evaluator named "MONITORING & EVALUATION PLAN - Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD): sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices".

²¹ The file appears to be a direct copy of the Results Framework. In both documents, outputs 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 are missing and are instead replaced by repeated outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.2. This indicates a clear error made during project formulation that was not addressed when the M&E Plan was created.

278. The monitoring of project implementation also showed limitations, notably the scarcity of documentation regarding what had been implemented²². Information related to workshops, conferences, and events attended or organized by the project lack useful insights into what transpired during these occasions. Additionally, stakeholders' participation at all levels was not properly recorded in any well-organized tool or platform, such as a database of participants or beneficiaries. This oversight is particularly concerning, as tracking project outreach is crucial for promoting the scaling up of SRM. Furthermore, the absence of GIS maps for project sites is a surprising shortcoming, given the nature of the intervention itself.
279. Finally, the Evaluator did not receive all the documentation from IUCN to fully corroborate what is written in the PIRs. The difficulties in making that documentation available to the evaluation exercise evidently reflects an erratic way of monitoring the project implementation and organizing the sources and means of verification that, therefore, is considered severely inadequate.

Addressing GEF Portal question: *What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided)*

The retrospective achievement of the against Core Indicator Targets is very low if it is considered that at CEO Endorsement Stage a target of 500,000 ha under Sustainable Rangeland Management was set under the Corporate Result #2. Sustainable land management in production systems agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes.

Rating for Monitoring of Project Implementation: *Highly Unsatisfactory.*

5.7.3 Project Reporting

280. During project implementation six Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), based on UNEP templates were formulated. They were informed by two progress reports per year.
281. In the PIRs, the progress of project implementation is generally described against the project activities, outputs and outcomes (as per their original formulation). However, there was room for more details for the report readers to have a more comprehensive view on the project status: as a general feature of the report, the TE notes that numbers are very seldom presented and description of what was done and achieved is very limited. As a consequence, the PIRs do not provide solid information to track the progress of the project. To illustrate this feature, table 16 reports some examples from the PIR of year 2022:

Table 16: Considerations around the completeness of project reporting

Element under consideration	Progress	TE considerations
Activity 1: Implementation of the PRAGA Methodology.	Two trainings were conducted in Amman and Cairo in March 2019 on PRAGA methodology. The trainings targeted the field workers in partner institutions.	The reader remains unaware many elements of interest, e.g. how many field workers per each partner institutions were targeted, how many women and men were trained, who conducted the training and many other aspects of relevance.
Activity 13: Training on remote sensing, GIS, drought and land	The training was done in Jordan and Egypt.	The reader remains unaware of all details related to the training.

²²The statement refers to the material made available for the evaluation exercise, which is assumed to be the same available at IUCN.

Element under consideration	Progress	TE considerations
degradation modelling and mapping methods.		
Activity 22: Technical briefs published on community-based rangelands management in local language targeting local and national level public servants.	In progress	A description of what is being done is possible if something is being implemented. The formulation "in progress" does not provide any information, and as such useless for keeping track of the progress.
Activity 29: Presentation of experiences at academic and policy conferences and events regionally and globally and publication in peer reviewed journals	Presentation of the project at different regional and international fora.	The different regional and international fora should be at least listed. What kind of experiences were presented is also an important piece of information. In absence of any data, the information provided is irrelevant for understanding the progress.
Activity 30: Annual meetings of the Arab Regional Pastoral Network (3 meetings)	The first annual meeting of the Arab Pastoral Communities Network was conducted in April 2019.	The reader does not know why the meeting was important.
Outcome 1.2: To strengthen restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands for the provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan and catalysing scale up regionally and globally.	At least two SRM practices were identified and approved for implementation.	There is no mention of what SRM practices were identified and approved. The reasons behind this identification and approval are also not mentioned.
Outcome 2.1: Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares	The Regional Forum on SRM and LDN was held in Lebanon in June 2022.	The reader does not know what the Regional Forum was about and who attended it. There is not any description of the themes discussed in the Forum and no mention to any participants. In addition, and more importantly, the information provided does not measure the indicators as per the project Results Framework: the information related to a regional forum, while the outcome refer to local organizations in Egypt and Jordan.
Outcome 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies	Two new SRM practices were identified during the PRMP and adopted in the 6 project sites across both countries	There is not even mention about what SRM practices were identified and adopted. The adoption process is neither described. The reading does not provide a full picture to understand the progress.
Outcome 4.1: Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy- making,	At least 4 concept notes were submitted under Herd umbrella in the region	The information is very partial. Who submitted the concept notes, what "under the Herd umbrella" means, who are the stakeholders involved in the 4 concept notes, what are the thematic areas of each concept notes and what is their relationship with the project.

282. The evaluation exercise also identified a duplication of information reported under different outputs in the PIR 2023 as per table 17.

Table 17: Duplication of information reported under different outputs (PIR 2023)

Identification encountered in reporting	TE comments
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Output 1.2.1 as reported in PIR 2023 In June 2022, a workshop was organized in Lebanon to present the key findings of the regional study on the Review of Regional Policies and Strategies supporting Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN). The objective of the workshop was to identify legislative gaps and opportunities related to LDN and SRM. Approximately 30 participants actively joined the regional policy forum, contributing to fruitful discussions and insights on improving rangeland management policies and strategies. Output 4.1.2 as reported in PIR 2023 Regional Forum on Sustainable Rangelands Management Policy: A Regional Forum was held in Lebanon in June 2022 to review the study entitled "Policy and Technical Review to advance sustainable rangelands management in the Arab Region." The report submitted by AOAD was discussed, published, and disseminated to local, regional experts, and project partners. This valuable report has provided insights and recommendations for policy improvements to promote sustainable rangeland management and land degradation neutrality in the region.	The information related to output 1.2.1 and 4.1.2 is the same. It is a duplication. The reports "Review of regional policies and Strategies supporting Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)" and "Policy and Technical Review to advance sustainable rangelands management in the Arab Region" are identical. The cover page is different²³. In addition, what was reported for output 4.1.2 does not fully correspond to what really happened. By utilizing the term "forum", the reader is likely to understand that many people attended the event. Instead, it was a workshop attended by mainly project partners from Jordan and Egypt and a few people from Lebanon.
Output 2.1.1 as reported in PIR 2023 A Detailed Stakeholder Analysis and a baseline needs assessment were developed in close consultation with the project's partners for both Jordan and Egypt...The baseline needs assessment, on the other hand, provides a comprehensive understanding of the existing conditions and challenges related to sustainable rangeland management in the project's targeted areas... This assessment helps in establishing a starting point for project interventions and measuring progress and impact over time. Output 4.1.3 as reported in PIR 2023 Five baseline studies developed and conducted stakeholder consultations, created a solid foundation for informed decision-making, strategic planning, and effective implementation of future initiatives. The information and perspectives gathered through this process guided the project's actions in promoting rangeland health, safeguarding pastoral rights, identifying good practices, and engaging with key actors in a meaningful way.	The same information is provided.

283. The last PIR 2023 presents also very scarce data to described project achievements at outcome level. To illustrate this feature, table 18 reports some examples from it:

Table 18: Reporting, examples of scarce data

Outcomes and indicators as per original Results Framework	Progress reported	TE consideration
Outcome 1.2: To strengthen restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands for the provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan and catalyzing scale up regionally and globally.	As of the current date, the project stakeholders have identified and approved two good practices and sustainable rangeland management (SRM) policies. These practices and policies have been acknowledged for their effectiveness in promoting sustainable rangeland use and conservation.	There is no mention of what SRM practices and policies were identified and approved. The number of policies approved is not mentioned. The reasons behind this identification and approval are also not mentioned. In addition, there seems to be an assumption that the good practices and policies will be effective promoting sustainable rangeland use and conservation without mention of any evidence.
Outcome 2.1: Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved	As of June 2022, the following participation and activities have been observed in the Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) planning in Jordan and Egypt:	The information informs the indicator included in the original Results Framework), but is very poor and, as such, does not allow a full understanding of the achievement.

²³ This statement refers to the documents made available to the Evaluator and the Evaluation Office.

Outcomes and indicators as per original Results Framework	Progress reported	TE consideration
rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares	Participation: a) At least 6 Hima Communities and 4 Rangeland User Associations actively participated in the SRM planning process. b) At least 1 local government partner in Egypt and 3 in Jordan joined in SRM planning. management strategies.	The names of the stakeholders are not spelt-out. It is followed by other information that is a list of the activities conducted under component 2: this kind of information is irrelevant for the measurement of the achievement.
Outcome 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies	As of the current date, the implementation of Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) practices has resulted in improved income for local communities in a significant number of communities in both Jordan and Egypt. The specific number of communities benefiting from increased income due to SRM practices is being continuously monitored and evaluated	The information provided is very poor: the communities are not identified, the increase in income is as well not specified. Finally, the way the communities benefiting from increased income due to SRM practices is continuously monitored and evaluated is not specified.
Outcome 4.1: Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy- making.	...the project has successfully developed and submitted a total of five fundraising proposals to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Royal Commission for Al Ula of Saudi Arabia (RCU) as well as three proposals to the National Center for vegetation development. These proposals aim to secure new investments in the region or globally, drawing on the valuable lessons and partnerships established through the project.	The information is very partial: who submitted the concept notes and when; what are the title of these concept notes and what are the thematic areas addressed in each concept notes are not included. It is written that these are IUCN proposals.

284. The shortcomings in project reporting are considered to be very serious by the evaluation exercise for two main reasons: they do not allow readers to have a clear understanding of the progress of the project implementation, and they do not provide any information that allows readers to appreciate the size, and the efforts put in place to implement the project.
285. In addition, much information reported in the PIRs could not be triangulated with any other documentation available for the evaluation. This represents a significant flaw in terms of accountability of project management. Here below in table 19, some relevant examples:

Table 19: Examples of reported information that could not be triangulated with project documentation

Element under consideration	Progress	TE considerations
Activity 5: Activity 5: Support to national partners to establish a knowledge management portal and information database for target landscapes	A knowledge management portal was developed with the support of the Ministry of Environment Jordan through the CHM. And, several studies have been shared with the Ministry of Environment to upload and disseminate the key results.	The knowledge management portal is not an actual portal. It is an addition to an existing website managed by the Ministry of Environment in Jordan and, in its essence, it is a repository of a few reports accessible to the public.
Output 1.2.3: Good practices and policies in integrated rangeland management validated following agreed methodologies and indicators	The project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy was initially developed and validated during the national inception workshops. Subsequently, it was further revised and updated by the end of 2019 to ensure its	The M&E strategy is a sort of copy and paste of the Results Framework and has never been updated in the course of project implementation

	effectiveness in assessing project progress and outcomes accurately.	
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286. All reasons behind the overall quality of project reporting could not be identified by the evaluation exercise. However, it is evident that significant design flaws in the Results Framework severely undermined the reporting process, which was supposed to adhere to the Results Framework. Presumably a lack of control / attention at various stages further contributed to the poor reporting.

Rating for Project Reporting: *Highly Unsatisfactory*

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting: *Highly Unsatisfactory*

5.8 Sustainability

5.8.1 Socio-political Sustainability

287. The results, as they actually materialized, are not likely to bear any benefits even in the short term. Project outcomes were not achieved, and the objective is therefore unlikely to be achieved, too.
288. Capacities built with the public sector in Jordan and Egypt at all levels are not sufficient to allow building up on what delivered by the project: monitoring systems were not developed, neither were the platforms for knowledge management. Project efforts focused on creating conditions to implement project activities, not at establishing tools for effective management of rangeland.
289. The interest of herding communities in Jordan focuses on the accomplishment of the project on the ground. They rely on the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture to allow the grazing of project sites in an optimal manner to have healthy rangelands. The project, in fact, targeted state-owned land. However, in Egypt, restoration activities, through Hima approach and direct restoration, targeted individuals' herders are likely to manage their restored land in a proper way. They developed capacities to do that.
290. The socio-political sustainability of the project at regional level is null, since the project failed to deliver at regional level.

Rating for Socio-political Sustainability: *Highly Unlikely*

5.8.2 Financial Sustainability

291. The revolving funds in the project areas are likely to be sustained at least for the near future. All beneficiaries are paying back regularly their loan to the local associations in charge of the management of the funds. In Egypt some concerns related to the high inflation that may make the fund smaller in course of time.
292. Other activities and actual achievements, for their nature, do not need any financial support to continue to generate benefits. In addition, these achievements were very much below the project expectations. In fact, the project fell short of its full potential. By the project's conclusion, rangeland monitoring systems should have been established at both national and regional levels, and knowledge management platforms should have been utilized by a diverse range of stakeholders within the LAS region. Given that these systems and platforms are not currently in place, continued funding for them is unnecessary.

Rating for Financial Sustainability: *Highly Unlikely*

5.8.3 Institutional Sustainability

- 293. The project did not put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure.
- 294. At institutional level, the project had some aspirations that were not met: (1) Contributing to the institutionalization of rangeland monitoring systems at national and regional level, as per the original project outcome 1.1; (2) Creating two knowledge management portals, in Egypt and Jordan, did not materialize, as per the original project outcome 1.2; and (4) Promoting investments to support for sustainable pastoralism, as per the original outcome 4.1.
- 295. The institutional dimension of the project was overlooked during the implementation of the project and as such the institutional sustainability of the project was assessed as very unlikely.
- 296. At project sites, the local agreements developed by the project were essentially tools necessary to guide the implementation of activities. Local associations may continue and are expected to manage and operate the revolving funds. They have the necessary skills to keep the revolving funds functioning from the technical point of view. From this very specific institutional standpoint, project achievements at pilot site field level seem to be sustainable.
- 297. The project promoted gender targeted actions, mainly related to the management of the revolving funds and the prioritization of women as direct beneficiaries. No gender responsive or transformative actions were promoted by the project. As a matter of fact, in the PIRs this kind of approach was made clear. From a gender-targeted perspective, the project was inclusive. It is considered, based on anecdotal evidence from focus group discussions, that the approach to managing revolving funds will not change and that the management of rangelands will continue to be a prerogative of men.

Rating for Institutional Sustainability: *Highly Unlikely*

Rating for Sustainability (Likelihood): *Highly Unlikely*

5.9 Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

5.9.1 Preparation and Readiness

- 298. The formal approval of the project by the governments of Egypt and Jordan took longer than expected and induced delays for the start of project activities.
- 299. No measures were taken to implement PRC recommendations or respond to contextual changes that took place during the inception/mobilisation period since there were no relevant contextual changes that applied to the project.
- 300. No measures were taken to address the weaknesses that the TE identified in the in the project design between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. As already noted in this report, reflections on the quality of project design never happened (or at least are not reported in any available documentation) throughout the project

implementation period; notably during the Inception Workshop and the MTR exercise discussion around the design of the project did not occur.

301. The project did not face any problem in relation to the timely establishment of Project Steering Committee, Staffing Mobilisation, and local agreements with partners.

Rating for Preparation and Readiness: *Moderately Satisfactory*

5.9.2 Quality of Project Management and Supervision

5.9.2.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:

302. UNEP supported the IUCN mainly through the revision of the narrative and financial reports that allowed the disbursement of instalments for project implementation. Documentation available for the evaluation does not report any specific problems of communication between UNEP and IUCN, which was also confirmed in evaluation interviews.
303. UNEP received the GEF grant and supervised IUCN, who in turn sub-granted 4 organizations to implement project activities. The flow of information and of funds reflected these work arrangements: funds flowed from UNEP to the sub-grantees through IUCN project information (through reports) flowed the opposite way all the way up from sub-grantees to UNEP through IUCN. It is noted that UNEP and IUCN were playing substantially similar roles in the project implementation, which represents a duplication of efforts and consequent inefficiency in the overall management of project resources.
304. According to the ProDoc, UNEP was tasked to provide quality assurance, oversight and support to the Executing Agency. A mission per year was, in addition, identified as a supervision task to track project progress. Despite some visits to the field by the Task Manager and one other UNEP colleague the low level of project delivery and achievements and the quality of documentation of project activities, monitoring and reporting (refer to section 5.7 Monitoring and Reporting for details) suggests that UNEP did not fully fulfil its tasks of supervising, monitoring and ensuring that the project was well implemented and monitored.
305. Finally, the TE, through the revision of the relevant minutes, acknowledges that UNEP, through its ROWA Office, participated only in the first PSC meeting out of the four that were conducted.

Quality of the project management and supervision / IA: *Highly Unsatisfactory*

5.9.2.2 Partners/Executing Agency:

306. During the implementation of the project, led by IUCN and supported by the PSC, no changes were made to the original Results Framework. In other words, project aspirations in terms of delivery and achievement remained constant quality and quantity wise. No major adaptive measures were taken. The only significant decision made related to the no-cost extension.
307. The TE acknowledges that the high turn-over of project managers with IUCN may have played a role in the low performance of the EA. IUCN, in fact, employed three different project managers throughout the course of the implementation.
308. The low level of project delivery and achievements and the lack of supporting documentation to support them, and the very poor and confusing reporting are the elements that have characterized the work of IUCN as project lead.

Quality of the project management and supervision / EA: **Highly Unsatisfactory**

Rating for Quality of Project Management and Supervision: **Highly Unsatisfactory**

5.9.3 Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation

309. The project delivered its outputs through the work of its partners. They worked in collaboration with the local stakeholders in the communities. The work at field level was governed by local agreements aiming at supporting the smooth implementation of project activities. Collaboration with project partners was well appreciated by all stakeholders met during the data collection phase. However, the work done at field level did not promote the scaling up of SRM practices.
310. At regional level the delivery of outputs was very poor. There is no evidence that project targeted relevant stakeholders to promote scaling up of SRM in other countries of the LAS region.

Addressing GEF portal question: *What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR?*

The MTR report highlights that the buy-in of stakeholders was reflected in their active engagement in project activities. Such a statement is confirmed by the Terminal Evaluation. In fact, the project was implemented in close collaboration with communities and local stakeholders in Jordan and Egypt. However, at the regional level, engagement with relevant stakeholders was notably limited. As a result, the project's results remained strictly limited to the activities delivered by field-level partners.

Rating for Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation: **Moderately Satisfactory**

5.9.4 Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

311. The project's design, implementation and results were gender targeted. The project did not have, from its conception, the intent to promote any gender responsiveness actions aiming at addressing the differential need of men and women with a focus on the equitable distribution of benefits, resources, status, etc²⁴. The project, instead, aimed at providing feasible solutions for men and women taking into consideration their role in the targeted communities. The establishment of the revolving fund, under this perspective, proved to be a tool able to promote womens' participation.
312. Although a specific human rights-based approach²⁵ was not pursued formally either in the project intentions and aspirations, or in its implementation methods and results, the TE acknowledges that some elements that characterized the human rights-based approach within the UN system were applied during project design, implementation and results: 1) herding communities were recognized as key actors in their own development; 2) participation was at the core of the project; 3) analysis includes all stakeholders involved

²⁴ The TE make use of the terminology "gender targeted" and "gender responsive" in accordance with the definitions provided by different UN agencies, e.g. United Nations Development Programme - the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES): A Methodology Guidance Note. The terminology is also aligned with the Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF projects and programmes (GEF, 2018)

²⁵ The TE refer to the United Nations Development Group publication "The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation Towards a Common Understanding Among UN Agencies" (2003) for its assessment.

in project activities; 4) the development process was meant to be locally owned, and 5) top-down and bottom-up approached were used in synergy.

313. Other elements applied did not really materialize at any stage of project cycle: 1) both outcomes and processes were not monitored and evaluated; 2) there was no focus on marginalized, disadvantaged, and excluded groups; and 3) the project did not aim at reducing disparity.

Addressing GEF Portal question: *What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas?*

Gender-responsive measures and related indicators were not included at the CEO Endorsement/Approval phase. Its section B. Project Description Summary is the same as the Results Framework of the project, which did not foresee any specific gender responsive activities and results.

314. **Rating for Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality: Moderately Satisfactory**

5.9.5 Environmental and Social Safeguards

315. The project adhered to the environmental and social safeguards laid out in UNEP policy.

Addressing GEF Portal question: *What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval?*

The safeguards plan did not entail any major measures since no major concerns were identified. Due to the nature of the project, the TE agrees that there was no need for any major measures.

Rating for Environmental and Social Safeguards: Satisfactory

5.9.6 Country Ownership and Driven-ness

316. The ownership of project achievements is low because the project neither delivered the expected outputs satisfactorily nor achieved its outcomes. The guidance of the Project Steering Committee focused on the delivery of pilot activities in Jordan and Egypt while scaling up strategies both at national and regional level were not envisioned. The draft of the law on rangeland management represents a buy in of the project of the Egyptian government. However, that law and, consequently, its financing mechanisms are not yet approved.

317. **Rating for Country Ownership and Driven-ness: Moderately Satisfactory**

5.9.7 Communication and Public Awareness

318. The project was implemented in close consultation with the communities and local authorities in Jordan and Egypt. At regional level the consultation with relevant stakeholders was very weak. Project results remained confined to what was actually delivered by project partners working at field level. The technical knowledge that was transmitted through trainings and consultation to local communities, authorities and

regional stakeholders did not produce any scaling up effects either at national or at regional level.

Addressing GEF Portal Question: *What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions?*

The project did not deliver its outputs related to knowledge management, specifically National platforms for information sharing and exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands were not delivered. Component 4, which should have focused on knowledge management, particularly to promote the development of an enabling environment for regional scale up of sustainable rangeland management did not succeed: any output was delivered, one was partially delivered and two were not delivered.

Rating for Communication and Public Awareness: *Unsatisfactory*

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues: Moderately *Unsatisfactory*

6 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

6.1 Conclusions

319. The Results Framework and the original project TOC were characterized by multiple and significant flaws. The most important, which made the monitoring of the project ineffective and severely affected the achievements of stated outcomes, were two: 1) The Results Framework design suffered from a misunderstanding of what constitutes an outcome. Challenges such as finding solutions for project activities were incorrectly identified as outcomes. By mislabelling these challenges as outcomes, the design became over-optimistic, implying that merely implementing the activities would resolve the challenges and achieve the "outcomes"; and 2) There were no indicators at output level, and most of those at outcome level were not SMART.
320. The flaws of the project design were not identified by UNEP at project approval, by UNEP project staff, or by IUCN. From this perspective, all meetings of the Project Steering Committee, the Inception Workshop and the MTR exercise represented missed opportunities to make concrete suggestions to improve the project.
321. The poor availability of means and sources of verification and the lack of a functioning and updated monitoring system during the implementation of the project were significant flaws and the project did not satisfactorily deliver its outputs, which, in turn, negatively affected the achievement of project outcomes and its objective that fell far short of expectations. The following evidence support this conclusion:
- The project had a focus on direct support to herders to implement Sustainable Rangeland Management practices at pilot level.
 - Rangeland monitoring systems were neither developed nor institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups.
 - The work did not focus on community-based management or on 500,000 ha of rangeland as expected by the ProDoc (and by the tracking tool). In Egypt the support was directed to individual herders who have their direct control over a plot of land owned by the state. The actual access to their plots of land was limited to members of their family. In Jordan, the focus was on natural reserves, i.e. land belonging to the state where herders can graze their sheep.
322. The Sustainable Rangeland Practices piloting activities and the establishment of revolving funds were successful. This success is fully acknowledged by the TE. However, an important consideration around it is necessary: the piloting activities did not have any targets: Sustainable Rangeland Practices happened to cover a cumulative area of 380 hectares, but the area could have been larger or smaller, and the piloting exercise would have been equally acknowledged as successful. From the accountability point of view, the project was not required to work on any particular area of land, it enjoyed a great level of freedom in delivering piloting activities. The TE acknowledges this success only from a qualitative standpoint: work in the field was technically well-executed and local stakeholders and herding communities reported being satisfied with it.
323. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the technical knowledge of herders improved as a result of the project and the technical information it provided. However, these improvements are limited to a better understanding of how rangelands should be grazed at individual level.

The ability to manage rangelands collectively is still lacking. In Egypt, there are still no established rules for grazing rangelands, allowing each herder to use their land, i.e. the plot assigned to them by the state, as they see fit. In Jordan, where the restored land is state-owned, the Ministry of Agriculture has the authority to decide when grazing can occur. It is also important to note that the free roaming of dromedaries, a common practice in their rearing in Egypt, was not addressed by any project activities; as a result, dromedaries continue to roam and graze freely in the project areas.

324. The project did not realize its aspirations as outlined in Component 4 on knowledge management, which aimed at creating an enabling environment for the regional scale-up of Sustainable Rangeland Management to have a broad influence at the regional and global levels. Its influence was very limited, primarily confined to knowledge around Sustainable Rangeland Practices that was specifically developed by the project, i.e. the toolkit on sustainable rangeland practices and the review of regional and global policies in support of SRM. However, the two deliverables are collections of existing knowledge, they do not bring in any substantial novelties. Additionally, the work done at regional level was poorly reported and documented.
325. The work done by project partners, i.e. HFDJB, RBG, CEDARE and DRC, at field level was the main positive element that the TE has identified. The work was technically well-executed and project stakeholders expressed throughout the evaluation mission in the project sites a great level of enthusiasm around the implementation of Sustainable Rangeland practices and the revolving funds.
326. The importance of drafting the law on rangeland management for Egypt is acknowledged by the evaluation. At the same time, this delivery does not compensate for the project's undelivered outputs. Certain expected outputs, that were not delivered (such as the National Platforms for Information Sharing and Exchange and the monitoring systems at national level for rangeland management) could have served as foundational elements for implementing the law, pending its formal approval by the Egyptian Parliament.
327. Project reporting was limited, imprecise, lacked information to understand the project history, delivery and achievements, and included assumptions unsubstantiated by any evidence. The level of detail was very low. In addition, not all factual information that had been reported in the PIRs could be substantiated by relevant means of verification. Finally, no discrepancies between the actual project deliveries and the expectations of the ProDoc are reported. Such reporting could not play any role to inform the implementation of project activities through adaptive management: it simply fulfilled a mandatory requirement.
328. The available funds were not effectively translated into outputs, both qualitatively and quantitatively, and did not significantly contribute to the project's main objective – strengthening the restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands to enhance ecosystem services and protect biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan, while also promoting regional and global scaling. The efficiency of project implementation was very low. By the end of the project, the tangible results were limited to field-level efforts in sustainable rangeland practices and trainings. However, the ProDoc had envisioned the institutionalization of national and regional rangeland monitoring systems based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators for different end-user groups, along with the GEF Tracking Tool's target of bringing 500,000 hectares of rangeland under sustainable land management. ProDoc expectations were not fulfilled.

6.2 Key strategic questions

329. Table 20 provides answers to each key strategic questions included in the terms of reference of the evaluation.

Table 20: TE’s answers to key strategic questions

Strategic question 1: <i>What measures have been taken to enhance rangeland governance and restoration, and what degree of improvement has been achieved in this regard, with consideration for local farmers and pastoralists?</i>
TE’s answer: The measures taken related exclusively to the implementation of the pilot activities. In Jordan these measures are relevant to improve the rangeland governance since they are about regulating the access to restored state-owned rangeland areas, whereas in Egypt the work has been done on individual land plots granted to individual herders and no changes in the governance structure materialized. The overall extension of the restored rangeland is, however, very limited in both countries.
Strategic question 2: <i>To what degree of success, and with what observable changes, has the project contributed to the institutionalisation of Rangeland monitoring systems that are conducive to evidence-based sustainable land management (SLM)?</i>
TE’s answer: Rangeland monitoring systems were not developed and consequently not institutionalized
Strategic question 3: <i>To what extent has consensus been built regarding the identification and implementation of policies in sustainable rangeland management, considering the needs and interests of local farmers and pastoralists?</i>
TE’s answer: No policies were identified and implemented in sustainable rangeland management.
Strategic question 4: <i>In what ways has the project impacted awareness raising and resource mobilization for sustainable pastoralism on both a regional and global scale?</i>
TE’s answer: 1. No impact on awareness raising and resource mobilization for sustainable pastoralism on both a regional and global scale has been identified by the Terminal Evaluation.

6.3 Summary of the findings and ratings

330. The table 21 provides a summary of the findings and ratings discussed in Chapter 5. Overall, the project demonstrates a rating of Unsatisfactory as assessed by the evaluation consultant. The Independent Evaluation Office validates some of the criteria and sub-categories at an adjusted level to be consistent with its Criteria Ratings Matrix and due to the provision of additional data during the commenting and review phase of the evaluation process. The Evaluation Office validates the overall project performance at the ‘Unsatisfactory’ level.

Table 21: Summary of project findings and ratings

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Office Final Rating
Strategic Relevance		Moderately Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Satisfactory
1. Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities	The project design was aligned to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities	Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Satisfactory
2. Alignment to GEF strategic priorities	The ProDoc was aligned with the GEF priorities, specifically to its "Land Degradation focal area" although its strategy to contribute to the target of 500,000 ha under Sustainable Rangeland Management, included in the Tracking Tool, was not well defined in the design.	Moderately Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Satisfactory
3. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	The ProDoc aimed to address global, regional, and national priorities in Sustainable Rangeland Management, but the implemented activities and results fell short of expectations.	Moderately Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Satisfactory
4. Complementarity with existing interventions/ Coherence	Neither duplications nor complementarities of activities among the same target groups with other interventions.	Moderately Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Satisfactory
Quality of Project Design	Several elements of the project design are well articulated such as the problem and situation analyses, the arrangements for project governance, the knowledge management approach and the identification of risk and safeguards. The budget was as well adequate. On the other hand, the project TOC is very poorly formulated, and the Results Framework included various flaws such as lack of indicators at output level, indicators that were not SMART at outcome level. In addition, elements formulated as outcomes, as a matter of fact, are outputs.	Moderately Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Satisfactory

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Office Final Rating
Nature of External Context	No modifications to the project design were required during implementation in response to external events. The request for a no-cost extension to complete the project activities, aimed at overcoming the impact of COVID-19 is considered an appropriate decision by the TE.	Favourable	The Evaluation Office notes that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic was affecting access during project implementation. However, as the project did carry out in person meetings and travel, the context is assessed as being MU.	Moderately Unfavourable
Effectiveness		Highly Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Highly Unsatisfactory
1. Availability of outputs	The comparison between the project deliverables outlined in Appendix 6 of the ProDoc and the actual outputs delivered by the project and the reduced involvement from stakeholders from the LAS region, limited mainly to project Jordan and Egypt and other three countries (Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria) leave no room for any higher rating. The rating applies indistinctly both for the analysis based on the original Results Framework (6 out of 15 outputs delivered) and on the reconstructed TOC at Evaluation (6 out of 19 outputs delivered).	Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Unsatisfactory
2. Achievement of project outcomes	No project outcome was achieved.	Highly Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Highly Unsatisfactory
3. Likelihood of impact	Since all project outcomes were not achieved, the chances to achieve the project objective are clearly null at landscape level, i.e. covering a total area of 500,000 ha. The same consideration applied to the impact at regional level.	Highly Unlikely	<i>Rating validated</i>	Highly Unlikely
Financial Management		Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Satisfactory
1. Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures	Quarterly financial reports were consistently produced, and a review of project documents and records indicated that expenditure reports were submitted on time, with expenses remaining within the approved budget lines. Five independent financial audits in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 confirmed that the financial reports accurately and fairly represented the financial position of the project's implementation	Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Satisfactory

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Rating	Office	Final
2. Completeness of project financial information	The project's financial management is comprehensive.	Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Satisfactory		
3. Communication between finance and project management staff	Communication between UNEP and IUCN was consistent, with mutual respect for each organization's roles. IUCN submitted financial reports and advance requests promptly, ensuring that activities were funded without any impediments.	Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Satisfactory		
Efficiency	The low level of project delivery at output level reflects a low level of efficiency in the implementation of the project, which should not be attributed to ambitious targets at output level, but to significant flaws related to project implementation, monitoring and evaluation and overall management.	Moderately Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Unsatisfactory		
Monitoring and Reporting		Highly Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Highly Unsatisfactory		
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	The original Results Framework lacked the necessary components for effective project monitoring. The design suffered from a misunderstanding around what is an outcome. Implementation challenges such as identification of suitable solutions for project activities were misinterpreted as project outcomes. The original TOC was poorly elaborated.	Highly Unsatisfactory	The evaluation team assessed the M&E planning based on the Project Document and its appendices. During commenting, the Executing Agency provided an explicit M&E Plan dated 2019. While similar weaknesses were observed in this plan, its existence warrants a rating one step higher than Highly Unsatisfactory.	Unsatisfactory		
2. Monitoring of project implementation	The quality of project design was taken for granted and never questioned or reflected upon. The Inception Workshop, the MTR, and all Steering Committee meetings fail to represent an occasion to reflect upon project possibilities and ambitions.	Highly Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Highly Unsatisfactory		

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Office Rating	Final
3. Project reporting	Reporting was poor and lacked details to understand the actual progress of project implementation. It was also redundant and included some factual mistakes. It did not allow a proper follow up of the progress and did not identify discrepancies against the expectations on the ProDoc.	Highly Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Highly Unsatisfactory	
Sustainability		Highly Unlikely	<i>Rating validated (dimensions of sustainability are considered self-limiting and the aggregate rating is set at the lowest level assigned)</i>	Highly Unlikely	
1. Socio-political sustainability	In Egypt and Jordan, project efforts focused on creating conditions to implement project activities, not at establishing tools for effective management of rangeland. The interest of herding communities in Jordan focuses on the accomplishment of the project on the ground, whereas the socio-political sustainability of the project at regional level is null, since the project failed to deliver at regional level.	Highly Unlikely	During the commenting process the Evaluation Office was made directly aware of the strong support at the level of the two implementing countries for this work.	Likely	
2. Financial sustainability	By the project's conclusion, rangeland monitoring systems should have been established at both national and regional levels, and knowledge management platforms should have been utilized by a diverse range of stakeholders within the LAS region. Given that these systems and platforms are not currently in place, continued funding for them is unnecessary.	Highly Unlikely	During the commenting process the Evaluation Office was made aware that a subsequent phase of the project had been proposed for funding. This increases the likelihood of financial sustainability in the sense that initiated actions are more likely to be continued.	Moderately Likely	
3. Institutional sustainability	The project did not put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure.	Highly Unlikely	<i>Rating validated</i>	Highly Unlikely	
Factors Affecting Performance		Moderately Unsatisfactory	<i>Aggregated from the sub-categories below.</i>	Moderately Satisfactory	

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP-GEF Project
 "Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD): sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices"

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Office Rating	Final
1. Preparation and readiness	The formal approval of the project by the governments of Egypt and Jordan took longer than expected and induced delays for the start of project activities. No measures were taken to address the several weaknesses that the TE identified in the in the project design between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. The project did not face any problem in relation to the timely establishment of Project Steering Committee, Staffing Mobilisation, and local agreements with partners.	Moderately Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Satisfactory	
2. Quality of project management and supervision	Neither project management nor supervision were able to adjust the project's performance in delivering the expected results.	Highly Unsatisfactory	<i>Aggregated from the two sub-categories below.</i>	Unsatisfactory	
2.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:	UNEP was tasked to provide quality assurance, oversight and support to the Executing Agency. The low level of project delivery and achievements, and the quality of documentation of project activities, monitoring and reporting suggests that UNEP was not fulfilling these tasks. It is also acknowledged that UNEP participated only in the first PSC meeting out of the four that were conducted.	Highly Unsatisfactory	The Evaluation Office notes that appropriate supervisions were set up (e.g. Inception Workshop, Project Steering Committee etc), However, the oversight (e.g. field visits, review of PIRs, MTR etc) was not able to direct the project towards the intended outcomes.	Unsatisfactory	

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Rating	Office	Final
2.2 Partners/Executing Agency:	The low level of project delivery and achievements and the lack of supporting documentation to verify them, and the very poor and confusing reporting are three elements that have characterized the work of IUCN as project lead.	Highly Unsatisfactory	The Evaluation Office notes that, notwithstanding the weaknesses identified by the evaluation consultant, a Project Steering Committee was convened and did meet; teams did deliver work within the pilot sites/at field level; the relationship between the project manager, task manager and partners is reported to be good, sufficient technical capacity was available and project management was appropriately located. Partnerships with RGB, HFDJB, CEDARE and DRC were effective. Staff handovers were not adequately managed, which may have been a negative effect from COVID-19.	Moderately Unsatisfactory		
3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation	The project's results remained strictly limited to the activities delivered by field-level partners.	Moderately Satisfactory	Rating validated	Moderately Satisfactory		

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Office Rating	Final
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality	The project in its design, implementation and results was gender targeted. From its conception, there was little intent to promote any gender responsiveness actions. Some elements that characterized the human rights-based approach were applied during project design, implementation and results: 1) beneficiaries as key actors of their own development; 2) participation was at the core of the project; 3) analysis includes all stakeholders involved in project activities; 4) the development process was meant to be locally owned, and 5) top-down and bottom-up approached were used in synergy. Finally, outcomes and processes were neither monitored nor evaluated; there was no focus on marginalized, disadvantaged, and excluded groups; and the project was not meant to reduce disparities.	Moderately Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Moderately Satisfactory	
5. Environmental and social safeguards	The safeguards plan did not entail any major measures since no major concerns were identified. Due to the nature of the project, there was no need for any major measures.	Satisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Satisfactory	
6. Country ownership and driven-ness	The ownership of project achievements is low because the project neither delivered the expected outputs satisfactorily nor achieved its outcomes. The guidance of the Project Steering Committee focused on the delivery of pilot activities in Jordan and Egypt while scaling up strategies both at national and regional level were not envisioned. The draft of the law on rangeland management represents a buy in of the project of the Egyptian government. However, that law, and consequently its financing mechanisms, are not yet approved.	Moderately Satisfactory	During the commenting process the Evaluation Office was made directly aware of the strong ownership of the project's achievements by Egypt.	Satisfactory	

Criterion	Summary assessment	Evaluation Team Rating	Evaluation Office Validation	Evaluation Rating	Office	Final
7. Communication and public awareness	The project was implemented in close consultation with the communities and local authorities in Jordan and Egypt. Instead, at regional level the consultation with relevant stakeholders was very weak. Project results remained confined to what actually was delivered by project partners working at field level. The technical knowledge that was transmitted through trainings and consultation to local communities, authorities and regional stakeholders did not produce any scaling up effects both at national and regional level.	Unsatisfactory	During the commenting process the Evaluation Office reviewed communications material provided and found them to be consistent with a Moderately Unsatisfactory rating. They, largely, describe the project and are neither well-targeted nor monitored for their effects.	Moderately	Unsatisfactory	
Overall Project Performance Rating		Unsatisfactory	<i>Rating validated</i>	Unsatisfactory		

6.4 Lessons learned

Lesson Learned #1: <i>Reflection on Results Framework and TOC.</i>	Project documents always include a Results Framework and a Theory of Change (TOC), along with three key milestones for monitoring and evaluation: the Inception Workshop, Mid-Term Review, and Terminal Evaluation. They also call for the establishment of a Project Steering Committee meetings and regular project reporting. These elements are not merely formalities of project implementation; they should serve as opportunities for reflection on the project, its goals, and the challenges it faces. Regular collective analysis of the project design and its robustness in relation to its objectives is essential for progress and increasing the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes. This reflection should cover all aspects of the project, from the formulation of the TOC to defining achievable results through rigorous outcome and output statements with SMART indicators. A clear understanding of the change from the baseline to the project's final status is crucial. Without consistent and ongoing reflection throughout implementation, the likelihood of achieving positive results diminishes drastically as proved by the HERD project.
Context/comment:	This lesson applies to any project implemented by UNEP. It arises from the observation that there was no significant reflection on the project's design throughout the implementation period. Key milestones such as the Inception Workshop, Mid-Term Review, and Project Steering Committee failed to foster any meaningful discussion about the project's structure. This lack of reflection is surprising, given that the project design had serious and obvious flaws, the most significant being a misinterpretation of what an outcome is. In the original Results Framework, three outcomes were preconditions for implementing project activities – challenges that the project implementer needed to address to move forward with implementation. In addition, most of outcomes' indicators were not SMART and there were no output indicators.
Lesson Learned #2: <i>UNEP monitoring and supervision</i>	UNEP project monitoring and supervision cannot rely solely on reviewing progress reports. Active participation in Project Steering Committee meetings should be the rule. UNEP supervising role must focus on promoting effective implementation of project activities in line with the pursue of realistic project outcomes and objective. The supervision should ensure that all project deliverables are aligned with the specifications included in the ProDoc in qualitative and quantitative terms. Therefore, it is crucial to thoroughly review all project deliverables and compare the quality of outputs with the expected standards set in the original document. While deviations from the ProDoc may happen – and sometimes should – they must be well-justified and based on adaptive responses to changes in the project's implementation context. Quality concerns about the work done by project partners and around project deliverables should be clearly communicate to them and remedial actions or justification requested. Finally, UNEP monitoring and supervision should be based on a solid and realistic Results Framework and TOC.
Context/comment:	This lesson applies to any project implemented by UNEP. It stems from the fact the UNEP participated only in a Project Steering Committee (according to the documentation available to the evaluation exercise) and that project deliverables do not match the specifications included in the ProDoc
Lesson Learned #3: <i>Reporting is part of project management and supervision</i>	Accurate project reporting is an essential requisite for good project management aiming at achieving project results and comply with high standards of accountability. Executing agencies, working in partnership with UNEP, must submit progress reports that are comprehensive and exhaustive. All deliverables should be described so to understand whether they comply with expectations of the ProDoc (if there are discrepancies between the delivery and expectations, such discrepancies should be spelt out and well explained and justified) and have the progress status described against SMMART indicators. As part of the supervision role of UNEP, progress reports from project partners should be accepted only when they comply to certain quality standards. When reporting is confusing, the likelihood to deliver and contribute to achieve expected results diminished drastically.
Context/comment:	This lesson applies to any project implemented by UNEP. It stems from the very poor- and low-quality project reporting related to the Project.

331. The three lessons learned identified by the TE are closely connected. More timely and precise supervision of project implementation (Lesson Learned 2) could have detected

shortcomings in the project deliverables. Additionally, a more thorough review of project reporting by UNEP (Lesson Learned 3) might have uncovered the redundancies and inaccuracies highlighted in this evaluation. The combined effect of both could have prompted a reflection on the Results Framework and TOC (Lesson Learned 1), which, if addressed promptly, might have resulted in improved deliverables and potentially led to a revision of the Results Framework.

6.5 Recommendations

332. The UNEP Evaluation Office makes two critical recommendations.

Recommendation #1:	That UNEP undertakes a technical review of its project work on sustainable land management projects (ongoing and in development) where commitments have/are being made to bring large areas of land under some form of sustainable management or governance. In particular, the results strategies and supervision/management of projects with designs that are based on implementing land management approaches in pilot areas, with a view to scaling up to much larger areas, need to be reviewed and action taken to ensure that either the results are achieved or the intended results are formally revised.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	This is the second UNEP sustainable land management project that has performed within the 'unsatisfactory' range and the Evaluation Office highlights commonalities in design and supervision that need to be addressed for this to not be repeated. In both cases the project design commits to bring large areas of land under sustainable management/governance. In both cases the strategy is to pilot or demonstrate approaches in smaller, identified areas and then 'scale up' the effects to larger areas (nationally, regionally and/or globally). However, the larger effects were not realised and the projects' achievements were limited to the land and farmers/communities engaged in the pilot/demonstration activities. The intervention strategies, management and supervision mechanisms to realise the 'scaling up' designs were either not evident or too weak to be effective.
Priority Level:	Critical
Type of Recommendation	Project Level
Responsibility:	Head of Branch, Biodiversity and Land/Deputy Division Director, Ecosystems Division
Proposed implementation time-frame:	By end 2025

Recommendation #2:	That UNEP carries out a participatory workshop with its Task/Project Managers to share experience on designing and implementing projects effectively when they have a pilot-to-scale design.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Terminal Evaluation reports frequently reveal a weak articulation of cause-and-effect pathways that underpin the effectiveness of pilot-to-scale project designs. This leads to a situation where outcome level results are over-committed with unrealistic hopes of them being

	achieved and inadequate supervision and/or monitoring plans to ensure the pilot outputs are translated into project outcomes.
Priority Level:	Important
Type of Recommendation	Project Level
Responsibility:	Head of Branch, Biodiversity and Land/Deputy Division Director, Ecosystems Division
Proposed implementation time-frame:	By end 2025

ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the evaluator, where appropriate.

The Evaluation Office records the fact that an unusually large number of comments on the evaluation process and findings were submitted and, for the sake of both brevity and transparency, they are recorded here in summary form, along with responses from the evaluation team. The full set of responses were shared with the relevant respondents.

Place in text	Comment	Evaluation Team Response
	PARTNER ENDORSEMENT	
	Delivering against all six results-oriented outcomes, HERD has demonstrably strengthened the restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands, enhanced ecosystem-service provision, and contributed to biodiversity conservation nationwide. We are grateful for IUCN's diligent execution and for UNEP's strong guidance and leadership throughout implementation. Project progress was shared with us in a timely manner from kick-off onward, the MoE can confirm that implementation remained on schedule and met our expectations.	The Evaluation Office appreciates that the work of UNEP and IUCN is valued by its partners. The function of a terminal evaluation is to assess whether the results that were agreed to in the funding agreement (i.e. with the GEF) a) were achieved and b) were the result, to the expected extent, of the project's efforts. The achievement of outcome level results is heavily weighted, along with the likelihood that the benefits from those outcomes will endure (i.e. sustained benefits). The project had the following 6 extremely ambitious and specific outcomes, none of which were found to have been achieved: <i>OUTCOME 1.1: Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups.</i> <i>OUTCOME 1.2: Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation.</i> <i>OUTCOME 2.1: Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares.</i> <i>OUTCOME 2.2: Participating communities use PRMP to guide the establishment of rules and regulations for improved rangelands management (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure).</i> <i>OUTCOME 3.1: Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies.</i>

		<i>OUTCOME 4.1: Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy- making, nationally, regionally and globally.</i>
	Like other partners interviewed, we are concerned that parts of the field information may have been misinterpreted, and we would be pleased to clarify any outstanding points.	An evaluation considers all the forms of evidence available to it. This evaluation included site visits, observation and beneficiary interviews. Consistent information from multiple sources is needed to substantiate claims that a project has caused an intended result.
	Additionally, we noted that certain project deliverables—particularly national documents and guides—were issued without the logos of the GEF or the IA/EA. This was done in consideration of government clearance procedures, which often require such documents to omit the logos of international organizations or donors.	In some cases, national documents are issued without the logos of funding or other partners. In such cases, if a project is claiming to have influenced the content of that document, we look for evidence within the report that the project made a substantive or significant contribution to it. In other cases, where funding or other partners are listed, we do expect to find at least one relevant partner logo. Where the relevant logos are absent, it is difficult to prove a substantive link between a project's work and the intended/stated result.
	EVALUATION PROCESS	
	Two UNEP project team members note that, although they are listed as having been interviewed in Annex II, their interaction with the evaluation consultant was only at Inception Phase.	Annex II lists the respondents as having been 'consulted on-line'. The two respondents mentioned here were engaged in extensive discussions about the project during the evaluation launch and in hybrid meetings about the project's TOC and design following the circulation of the inception report. However, they were not interviewed again during the data collection phase. This is not typical of an evaluation process. The Evaluation Office mitigated this deviation from its norm by holding a substantive meeting with one of the key respondents, who represented both of the two project team members. This was done during the draft report commenting phase and large amounts of information provided by both the UNEP project team members and a member of the Executing Agency project team were reviewed before finalising the evaluation report. Minor adjustments were made as a result.
	UNEP project team members reported not having received a final version of the inception report after commenting.	The first version of the inception report was shared with UNEP project team members on 1 st July 2024. Substantial discussions were thereafter held as in person meetings and the focus was on the reconstructed TOC and assessment of project design. The inception report was shared again on 6 th Jan 2025.

		The reconstruction of the TOC was hotly contested throughout this evaluation process. This was founded on a rejection of the evaluator's assessment of the quality of the project design, especially its Results Framework and TOC.
	UNEP project team members did not support the reconstruction of the TOC, which the evaluator found necessary to adequately assess the performance of the project against the criteria required by the UNEP Independent Evaluation Office.	As noted in para 38, the reconstruction of the TOC was a point of contention throughout this evaluation. The evaluator's initial reconstruction was rejected by the UNEP project team. The Head of Evaluation at that time took on the task and modified the initial reconstruction such that the original project intentions remained clearly traceable. Given the continued resistance to accepting the reconstruction efforts, the impasse was mitigated by having the evaluator assess the Effectiveness (section 5.4, para 134) of the project's performance twice, with similar findings: Performance at Output Level (original Results Framework): para 133 – 228. Table 8 summarizes 5 out of 15 outputs (33%) delivered. Performance at Output Level (reconstructed TOC): para 229 -243. Table 9 summarizes 6 out of 19 outputs (32%) delivered. Performance at Outcome Level (original Results Framework): para 250 – 281. Table 10 summarizes. No outcomes achieved. Performance at Outcome Level (reconstructed TOC): para 282 – 292. Table 11 summarizes. No outcomes achieved.
	UNEP project team members assert that the report erroneously claims that the project was not visited by the Task Manager and that this is incorrect.	Para 351, which refers to the requirement for an annual mission, does not say that the project was <i>not visited</i> by the Task Manager. It deduces that the supervision was insufficient to ensure strong project performance. It reads: <i>'A mission per year was, in addition, identified as a supervision task to track project progress. The low level of project delivery and achievements and the quality of documentation of project activities, monitoring and reporting (refer to section 5.7 Monitoring and Reporting for details) suggests that UNEP did not fully fulfil its tasks of supervising, monitoring and ensuring that the project was well implemented and monitored.'</i> <i>The paragraph has been extended to read: 'Despite some visits to the field by the Task Manager and one other UNEP colleague, the low level....'</i>

		The Evaluation Office notes that the Task Manager was on sabbatical leave at some point during the project implementation. A footnote has been added to record that the Task Manager visited the project four times and attended one Project Steering Committee meeting online.
	ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN	
	One UNEP project team member was highly critical of the assessment of the quality of the project design and questioned the application of the UNEP Independent Evaluation Office's assessment template, finding the evaluator's ratings inconsistent with the Y/N responses provided against questions on whether items were present in the project document.	The Evaluation Office clarifies that: Under each assessment section consultant's are prompted to check whether specific items are included in the project design document. This serves to confirm if they are <u>present</u> in the design document. The rating is set against the question (stated in the template): <i>In the project design documents or formal revisions², how satisfactorily is the criterion addressed?</i> As <u>presence</u> is a necessary but <u>insufficient</u> condition for effectiveness, having all the items in a section ticked as 'yes' but not having a Highly Satisfactory rating for that section, is entirely possible.
	The same UNEP project team member was highly critical of the evaluator's assessment of the project's design rating under 'Intended Results and Causality' and 'Logical Framework and Monitoring'	The Evaluation Office applies UNEP's results-based management principles and its Results Definitions. The Evaluation Office concurs with the evaluator's assessment of the weaknesses in the logical framework and TOC at design. It notes that no opportunities to revise and/or improve the logical framework or TOC were taken up during the project's implementation, including as a result of its Mid Term Review.
	COMMENTS ON OTHER PERFORMANCE RATINGS	
	Strategic Relevance The project team asserted that the evaluator was not applying the Evaluation Office's guidance and that the ratings should be higher.	The consultant has followed UNEP's Criterion Ratings Description Matrix. This indicates that what is being assessed is the 'project's implementation strategies and delivered contributions'. This indicates that strategic relevance is more than the alignment of text. The ratings given to Strategic Relevance sub-categories are: 1. Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities - <i>Satisfactory (not HS because not anticipated to have an identified contribution to EA/Direct Outcomes of POW)</i> 2. Alignment to GEF strategic priorities - <i>Moderately Satisfactory (limited by its contribution to GEF results indicators – 380 ha)</i> 3. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities - <i>Moderately Satisfactory (limited by its contribution to GEF results indicators: 380 ha)</i>

		4. Complementarity with existing interventions/Coherence - <i>Moderately Satisfactory (limited by not offering any benefits from collaboration with other organisations working on the project area etc)</i>
	Delivery of Outputs The project team challenged the evaluator's assessment of the delivery of outputs.	UNEP Evaluation Office provides a Matrix to guide the assignment of performance ratings under each criterion. Under the provision of outputs the Evaluation Office asks consultants to consider: the proportion of intended outputs that are effectively made available; the significance of the delivered outputs in relation to the achievement of outcomes; the timeliness of the outputs; their quality or utility, as perceived by the intended users and the levels of ownership over outputs. Against these considerations, the evaluation finds that 5 out of 15 outputs (33%) were delivered; 6 out of 15 (40%) were partially delivered and 4 out of 15 (27%) were not delivered. The analysis is clearly set out in section 5.4.1 Links to output level deliverables were provided by respondents and reviewed. The performance rating for 'availability of outputs' was increased from Highly Unsatisfactory to Unsatisfactory in accordance with the Evaluation Office's Ratings Matrix.
	Achievement of Outcomes The project team challenged the evaluator's assessment of the achievement of outcomes on the basis that some outputs were delivered or partially delivered	UNEP defines an outcome as the 'use of outputs (uptake, adoption or application)' and asks consultants to consider the level of achievement with consideration of which outcomes are most important to move towards the intended project objective and/or impact. Consultants are also asked to consider the level to which contributing conditions (Assumptions and Drivers) have been seen to have held as expected during the project life. In all assessments of results, performance against indicators and targets is a necessary condition for 'satisfactory' ratings, but they are not always sufficient to demonstrate that the expected result has been achieved. Performance against indicators and targets are considered along with other supporting evidence, such as observations in a field visit and/or interviews with beneficiaries. Against these considerations, no intended outcomes were found to have been achieved. The analysis is clearly set out in section 5.4.2

	Recommendations: The draft evaluation fails to offer actionable recommendations beyond generic lessons learned. UNEP's Evaluation Policy emphasizes evaluations as tools for decision-making and learning. The lack of practical guidance limits the evaluation's utility for improving future project designs.	Not every evaluation report gives rise to recommendations. The report offers 3 lessons, which is appropriate. The lesson can be used to improve future project designs. The Evaluation Office has provided two recommendations to be taken up at the UNEP Branch level.
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ANNEX II. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE EVALUATION

People consulted during the Evaluation on-line

Organisation	Position	Role in the project	Gender
Ministry of Environment - Jordan	Director of the Nature Protection Directorate and UNCCD Focal Point	Member of the Project Steering Committee	Male
CEDARE	Project Manager	Coordination of activities	Male
CEDARE	Field Coordinator	Field work with CEDARE	Male
Ministry of Environment - Egypt	Head of the GEF UNIT	Member of the Project Steering Committee	Female
RBG	Director of Programs	Coordination of activities	Male
IUCN – ROWA	Coordinator - Drylands, Livelihoods and Gender programme	Project Coordination	Male
AOAD	Consultant	Consultant – SRM policies	Male
IUCN – ROWA	Deputy Regional Finance Manager	Finance	Male
RBG	Field Coordinator	Field work with RBG	Male
UNEP (at Inception)	Senior Programme Officer	Portfolio Manager, Biodiversity & Land Degradation	Male
UNEP (at Inception and during commenting)	Programme Management Officer	Task Manager	Male
UNEP	Fund Management Officer	Fund Management Officer	Male

People consulted during the Evaluation in Jordan

Organisation	Position	Role in the project	Gender
IUCN – ROWA	Regional Director	Regional Director	Male

Project beneficiaries and local stakeholders

Project site	Women	Men	Stakeholders
Hiba Bani Hasheem	5	6	Members of the association that manages the revolving fund (6 men and 5 women)
Al-Surra	9	14	Beneficiaries of training courses and revolving fund (9 women) and herders (14 men)
Al-Mansheh	5	8	A representative from the Ministry of Social Development, a representative from the Ministry of Agriculture and a member of the association that manages the revolving fund (3 women). Two project beneficiaries (2 woman), one who received a grant from the revolving fund and one who received training on GIS, and 8 herders (8 men).
Al-Hazeem	4	9	A representative from the Ministry of Interior, a women representative of the local community, and a representative of a local association (3 women). A representative from the Ministry of Environment, a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, a representative from Azraq Municipality (3 men). 3 herders, 3 farmers and a woman: a herder, a farmer and the woman were also beneficiaries of the revolving fund (6 men and 1 woman)
TOTAL	23	37	

People consulted during the Evaluation in Egypt

Project beneficiaries and local stakeholders

Project site	Women	Men	Stakeholders
Marsa Matrouh	3	13	Members of the board that manages the revolving fund (8 men). Beneficiaries of GIS trainings (3 women and 5 men)
Gaawen	0	14	Herders (14 men)
Sidy Brani	0	9	Herders (9 men)
TOTAL	3	36	

ANNEX III. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Project planning and reporting documents:

- HERD Inception Workshop
- Minutes of the Project Steering Committee Meeting
 - First, second, third, and fourth meeting
- Minutes of the Advisory Committee meetings
 - First, second, and third meeting
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs)
 - 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023

Project overall:

- Agreements between IUCN and project partners (CEDARE, DRC, HFDJB, RBG)
- Audit reports
 - 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
- Cofinance commitment letters of project partners (CEDARE, DRC, HFDJB, RBG)
- Cofinance reports of project partners (CEDARE, DRC, HFDJB, RBG)
- Extension request
- Financial reports

Project outputs work package 1: Technical assistance for adaptive management and learning (evidence- based decision- making).

- Power Point presentation: Participatory rangeland and grassland assessment methodology
- Report on PRAGA Training in Egypt
- Report on PRAGA Training in Jordan
- Report - Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment (PRAGA) for two HERD Project areas (El Ga'ween and Abou Mazhoud) in Matruh (Egypt)
- Report - Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment (PRAGA) by HFDJB in Jordan
- Report - Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment (PRAGA) - Him Bani Hashim site by RBG in Jordan
- Economic Valuation of Rangeland Ecosystem Services and the Total Economic Value of Pastoralism in Northwest Coast of Egypt
- Economic Evaluation of different geographical Rangelands sites in Jordan
- Review of Regional and Global Policies in Support of SRM, especially LDN and Opportunities for Leveraging Further Funds for SRM initiative in the Arab Region

Project outputs work package 2: Stronger institutions for rangeland governance.

- Annual Participatory Monitoring of PRMP

333. GIS WORKSHOP for the communities in the three sites directed by the HFJBD

- Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD) Participatory Rangeland Management Planning for Al Gaween and Abu Mazhoud Report
- HERD brochure

- Key Informant Interviews and Development Plan (Final report)
- Local agreements
- Participatory Rangeland management Planning – A Field Guide
- Report on "Sustainable Rangeland Management" training course in Amman, Jordan held by IUCN ROWA
- Report of the advanced GIS training workshop
- Stakeholder Analysis Report (Jordan and Egypt)
- Stakeholder Analysis Report – Matrouh Governorate, Egypt

Project outputs work package 3: Identifying and up-scaling good practices in Sustainable Rangeland Management, based on Rangeland Management Planning.

- Exchange Visit to Egypt Report (16 – 20 May 2021).
- HERD brochure
- HERD Documentary Storyline
- HERD Documentary (video)
- Links to various post Links to Articles and Social Media Posts
- Revolving funds – description of duties and regulations
- Technical brief: Sustainable Grazing Management for Rangeland Restoration
- Training of Community Beneficiaries in Rangeland Restoration Techniques, Natural Regeneration, Herd management Strategies and Related Practices – Final Report

Project outputs work package 4: Knowledge management to promote an enabling environment for regional scale-up of Sustainable Rangeland Management.

- Attendance list – Regional Policy Forum held in June 2022 in Lebanon
- Brief document on the discussion on the Arab Pastoral Communities
- Proposals (concept notes):
 - Climate-Smart Forestry for Healthy Resilient Community in the Aley district-Lebanon
 - Lake Qaroun ecosystem restoration (LQER)
 - Technical Study of Resource Requirements and impact of Initiatives
 - Strategy and the Execution Plan of Ecosystem Restoration and Agroforestry for Al Ula
 - Sustaining Food Systems: In Rangeland Restoration, Linking A Past and Future through Regional Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- Sustainable Rangelands management and LDN supported policies and strategies in Lebanon – Power Point presentation
- Sustainable Rangeland Management Toolkit for Resilient Pastoral Systems
- Draft Law on Rangeland Management (Egypt)

Previous evaluations

- Mid Term Review Report

Reference documents

- Project Document (ProDoc) and its appendices
- Project identification form

ANNEX IV. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Source of Data	Methods
Criterion A: Strategic Relevance			
A.1. Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities			
1. To what extent the project was aligned to the MTS and POW under which it was approved?	Extent to which the project was aligned to the MTS and POW of the relevant period of time.	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP policies, UNEP staff	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
2. To what extent the project was aligned to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building?	Extent to which the project was aligned to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
3. To what extent the project was aligned to the UNEP Strategy for South-South and Triangular Cooperation?	Extent to which the project was aligned to the UNEP Strategy for South-South and Triangular Cooperation	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
A.2. Alignment to GEF Priorities			
4. To what extent was the project suited to, or responding to, donor priorities?	Extent to which the project was suited to, or responding to, the priorities of the GEF6.	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, GEF6 programming priorities	Desk review Triangulation
A.3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities			
5. To what extent is the project aligned with the global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030?	Extent to which the project was aligned to the SDGs and Agenda 2030.	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, National policies and programmes, SDGs and Agenda 2030, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
6. To what extent is the project suited, or responding to the environmental concerns and needs of project countries and LAS Region?	Extent the project is suited, or responding to, the environmental concerns and needs of Egypt and Jordan and to the LAS region.	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, National policies and programmes, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
A.4. Complementarity with existing interventions			
7. To what extent has the project explored and built complementarity with other existing initiatives that address similar needs of the same target groups and are implemented by UNEP, national entities or other organizations?	Evidence and extent of complementarities	ProDoc, Progress Reports, Inception Report, MTR Report, PIRs, Global / Regional / National policies and programmes, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
Criterion B. Quality of Project Design			
See quality of design matrix in the Inception Report (available from UNEP Evaluation Office)			
Criterion C: Nature of External Context			
8. Was the implementation of the project responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country occurred during its implementation period? (The question includes also the COVID-19 implications on the project)	Identification of political, legal, economic, institutional changes in the country and extent to which the project was appropriately responsive to them	ProDoc, Progress Reports, Inception Report, MTR Report, PIRs, National policies and programmes, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
Criterion D: Effectiveness			
D1. Availability of Outputs			
9. Was the project successful in delivering its outputs as per its Results Framework included in the ProDoc?	Identification of the actual delivery of the deliverables as per the Appendix 6 of the ProDoc and delivery of outputs as per the re-constructed ToC.	ProDoc, Progress Reports, MTR Report, PIRs, source of verification (such as technical reports, training attendance sheets, meeting notes and other) public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
10. Did the outputs delivered met expected quality standards?	Level of adherence of project outputs and deliverables to what specified in the ProDoc, and level of satisfaction of stakeholders involved in the delivery of outputs (including end-users of project outputs).	ProDoc, Progress Reports, MTR Report, PIRs, source of verification (such as technical reports, training attendance sheets, meeting notes and other) public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
11. How successful was the project in delivering the planned outputs and in a timely manner? In case of delays, what were the reasons behind?	Identification of delays and reasons behind them	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Source of Data	Methods
12. What were the reasons behind any failures/successes of the project in delivering its outputs?	Identification of reasons for failures/successes and reasons behind them	ProDoc, Progress Reports, MTR Report, PIRs, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
13. Were stakeholders appropriately involved in delivering programmed outputs?	Extent of stakeholders' participation and identification of their role for project deliveries	ProDoc, Progress Reports, Inception Report, MTR Report, PIRs, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
D2. Achievement of Project Outcomes			
14. To what extent have the targets of outcome indicators been achieved?	There are no targets that are relevant for the assessment of the achievement of project outcomes. Considerations around the achievements of the projects will be based on the ToC, opinions of those interviews, the actual field work, and the project ambitions included in the ProDoc.	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
15. Are there evidence that there is an increase in the income of herders?	Identification of evidence	Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, project staff, herders	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
16. Are there evidence that local organizations (community and government) have enhanced capacities for SRM?	Identification of evidence	Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, project staff, herders	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
17. Are there evidence that relevant organizations are more aware of the benefits of SRM and have enhanced capacities for SRM in the LAS Region?	Identification of evidence	Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, project staff, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
18. What are the areas in which the project had the greatest and fewest achievements? And what were the contributing/hindering factors?	Identification of contributing and hindering factors per identified area of achievement	ProDoc, Progress Reports, PIRs, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, herders, organizations operating in the LAS region.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions - Field visits Triangulation
D3. Likelihood of impact			
19. Are there evidence that ecosystem services are restored (at project sites)?	Identification of evidence	Progress Reports, PIRs, technical reports, UNEP staff, project staff, herders	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
20. Are there evidence that biodiversity is protected (at project sites)?	Identification of evidence	Progress Reports, PIRs, technical reports, UNEP staff, project staff, herders	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
21. Are there evidence that SRM are being scaled up in the LAS region?	Identification of evidence	Progress Reports, PIRs, technical reports, UNEP staff, project staff, herders	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
Criterion E: Financial Management			
E.1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures			
22. How did the financial reporting and management adhere to the policies and procedures of UNEP?	Extent of adherence of financial reporting and management adhere to the policies and procedures of UNEP	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
E.2. Completeness of financial information			
23. What is the level of completeness of financial information?	Level of completeness of financial information	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Source of Data	Methods
24. How sound was the budget planning and execution? Did expenditures match the approved budget / work-plan? What were the reasons for under/overspent budget, if any?	Identification of difference between planned and executed budget and identification of reasons behind	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
25. To what extent did the financial management issues affect the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance?	Identification of elements of financial management issues that affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
26. What levels of co-financing did the project obtain (percent of planned)? Were the co-financing commitments made available timely?	Evidence of co-financing and identification of reasons behind discrepancies obtained vs planned	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
E.3. Communication between financial and project management staff			
27. To what extent did the communication issues between financial and project management staff affect the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance?	Identification of elements of communication issues that affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance (including issues related to adaptive management)	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
Criterion F: Efficiency			
28. Was the use of financial and human resources and strategic allocation of resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) to achieve outcomes of efficient and economical?	Extent to which there was an efficient and economical use of financial and human resources and strategic allocation of resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) to achieve outcomes	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
29. Was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?	Extent to which the project management structure as outlined in the project document was efficient in generating the expected results	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
30. Were project funds and activities delivered in a timely manner?	Extent to which project funds and activities were delivered in a timely manner	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, and herders	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
31. Were there any cost-effectiveness strategies in place to deliver project funds and activities?	Identification of cost-effectiveness strategies	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
32. Was the project extension necessary?	Extent to which a project extension could have been avoided (if any was approved) and identification of reason supporting the need for extensions.	Contracts, financial reports, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
Criterion G: Monitoring and Reporting			
G.1. Monitoring Design and Budgeting			
33. Was an M&E system in place for project monitoring?	Identification of M&E tools and procedures and assessment of their appropriateness	M&E system, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
34. Were M&E activities organized and budgeted in a conducive way to achieve project's results?	Extent to which the organization and the budgeting of monitoring activities were conducive to achieve project's results and identification of budget gaps	M&E system, Financial Reports, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, and project partners.	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
G.2. Monitoring of Project Implementation			
35. Was the M&E system effectively used to guide project implementation?	Identification of evidence	M&E system, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Source of Data	Methods
36. Was the M&E budget spent in accordance with M&E needs?	Identification of evidence	M&E system, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
37. What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided). <i>GEF Portal Input</i>	Core Indicator Targets identified retrospectively	M&E system, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
G.3. Project reporting			
38. To what extent UNEP and GEF reporting commitments have been fulfilled?	Extent to which both UNEP and GEF reporting commitments have been fulfilled	M&E system, financial reports, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, IUCN staff	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
39. To what extent reporting reflected project implementation as it happened and highlight discrepancies with ProDoc and explained adaptive management measures?	Extent to which reporting reflected project implementation as it happened and highlight discrepancies with ProDoc and explained adaptive management measures.	M&E system, financial reports, Progress Reports, PIRs, UNEP staff, IUCN staff	Desk review Interviews
Criterion H: Sustainability			
H.1. Socio-political sustainability			
40. Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impact?	Identification of social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impact	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
41. What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership and capacities? Will it be sufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained?	Identification of the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership and capacities will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
42. Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow?	Identification of stakeholders' interest and perception of it.	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
43. Is there sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?	Extent to which public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project exist	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
H.2. Financial sustainability			
44. To what extent project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained?	Extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
45. What is the likelihood that financial resources will be available once the GEF assistance ends to support the continuation of benefits?	Evidence of the likelihood that financial resources will be available once the GEF assistance ends to support the continuation of benefits	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
H.3. Institutional sustainability			
46. To what extent has the project put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure?	Extent to which project put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Source of Data	Methods
47. To what extent has the project developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?	Extent to which project developed appropriate institutional capacity that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
48. Has the project achieved stakeholders' (including government stakeholders') consensus regarding courses of action on project activities after the project's closure date?	Identification of defined courses of action on project activities after the project's closure date	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
49. What is the likelihood that gender and human rights issues promoted by the project will be supported after the project's closure date? Was the project implementation inclusive?	Identification of gender and human rights issues promoted by the project and identification of evidence of likelihood of support after project's closure date	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
I. Factors Affecting Project Performance (x-cutting)			
I.1. Preparation and readiness (included in design)			
50. Were 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?	Evidence of appropriate measures taken to address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
51. What was the extent and quality of engagement of the project team with all the relevant stakeholder groups?	Quality and extent to which project team engage effectively with all relevant stakeholder groups	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
I.2. Quality of Project Management and Supervision			
52. To which extent the flow of information within UNEP staff, IUCN staff, PSC, and beneficiaries conducive to achieve project results?	Extent to which the flow of information within UNEP staff, IUCN staff, PSC, and beneficiaries conducive to achieve project results	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
53. Did PSC provide effective leadership to achieve project results?	Evidence of PSC leadership	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
54. Were adaptive management measures necessary and appropriate to achieve project results?	Identification of adaptive management measures and their appropriateness	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
55. To which extent was the management response appropriate to respond to MTR recommendations?	Extent to which the management response was appropriate to respond to MTR recommendations	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
I.3. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation			
56. To which extent the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with stakeholders to achieve project results?	Extent to which the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with stakeholders to achieve project results	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
57. To which extent the project developed local and national government stakeholders supported the objectives of the project?	Extent to which the project developed local and national government stakeholders supported the objectives of the project.	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Source of Data	Methods
58. What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? (This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval) <i>GEF Portal Input</i>	Identification of progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR	Progress Reports, PIRs, MTR and Management Response public officers, UNEP staff, project staff	Desk review Interviews Triangulation
I.4. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity			
59. To which extent cross cutting issues including human rights and gender equality were adequately considered in project design and implementation?	Extent to which cross cutting issues including human rights and gender equality were adequately considered in project design and implementation	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
60. Were specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups taken in consideration during the implementation of the project	Identification of vulnerability and evidence of how they were considered/addressed during project implementation	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
61. What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent) <i>GEF Portal Input</i>	Identification of gender-responsive measures and gender result areas	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
I.5. Environmental and social safeguards			
62. To what extent did the project adhere to the environmental and social safeguards laid out in UNEP policy?	Extent to which project adhered to the environmental and social safeguards laid out in UNEP policy	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
63. What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. (Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal) <i>GEF Portal Input</i>	Identification of measures implemented against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval.	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
I.6. Country ownership and drivenness/championship			
64. Have project partners and/or other relevant parties been building on project achievements?	Evidence of activities that build on project achievement	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
65. Has the project identified and involved champions who promoted the achievement and sustainability of project results?	Identification of champions	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
I.7. Communication and Public Awareness			
66. Where project communication and public awareness tools relevant and effective to support the achievement of project results?	Evidence of relevance and effectiveness of project communication and public awareness tools	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Source of Data	Methods
67. To what extent did the communication and public awareness affect project delivery or the quality of its performance?	Extent to which the communication and public awareness affected project delivery or the quality of its performance	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation
68. What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? (This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval). GEF Portal Input	Identification of challenges and outcomes	PIRs, Inception Report, MTR Report, public officers, UNEP staff, IUCN staff, project partners, public officers, organizations operating in the LAS region and herders.	Desk review Interviews Focus group discussions Triangulation

ANNEX V. EVALUATION ITINERARY

Sun. 28 July 2024	Arrival of the Evaluator in Amman, Jordan
Mon. 29 July 2024	Amman: - interview with Mr. Hany El Shaer, IUCN ROWA Regional Director
Tue. 30 July 2024	Hiba Bani Hashim (project site 1): - Focus Group Discussion with members of the association that manages the revolving fund (5 women) - Focus Group Discussion with members of the association that manages the revolving fund (6 men) - Site visit Al Surra (project site 2): - Focus Group Discussion with beneficiaries of training courses and revolving fund (9 women) - Focus Group Discussion with herders (14 men) - Site visit
Wed. 31 July 2024	Al Mansheh (project site 3): - Focus Group Discussion with a representative from the Ministry of Social Development, a representative from the Ministry of Agriculture and a member of the association that manages the revolving fund (3 women) - Interview with two project beneficiaries (2 woman), one who received a grant from the revolving fund and one who received training on GIS - Focus Group Discussion with herders (8 men) - Site visit
Thu. 1 August 2024	Al Hazeem (project site 4): - Interview with a representative from the Ministry of Interior, a women representative of the local community and a representative of a local association (3 women) - Interview with a representative from the Ministry of Environment, a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture and a representative from Azraq Municipality (3 men) - Focus Group Discussion with 3 herders, 3 farmers and a woman. A herder, a farmer and the woman were also beneficiaries of the revolving fund (6 men and 1 woman) - Site visit
Fri. 2 August 2024	No work
Sat. 3 August 2024	Arrival of the Evaluator in Marsa Matrouh, Egypt
Sun. 4 August 2024	Marsa Matrouh - Focus Group with members of the board that manages the revolving fund (8 men) - Focus Group Discussion with beneficiaries of GIS trainings (3 women and 5 men) Gaawen area (project site 5): - Focus group with herders (14 men) - Site visit
Mon. 5 August 2024	Sidy Brani (project site 6): - Focus group with herders (9 men)
Tue. 6 August	End of the mission – Departure from Cairo, Egypt

ANNEX VI. BRIEF CV OF THE EVALUATOR

Name	Giacomo Morelli
Profession	Independent Consultant (Evaluator)
Nationality	Italian and Swiss
Country experience	- Europe: Italy, Moldova, Switzerland and Ukraine - Africa: Algeria, Chad, Egypt Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe - America: Argentina, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay - Asia: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Georgia, Indonesia, Laos, Lebanon, Jordan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Palestine
Education	- MSc in Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture (University of Florence, Italy) - Certificate of Advanced Studies in Evaluation (University of Bern, Italy)

Short biography

Mr. Giacomo Morelli is a professional with proven experience in the development sector in the thematic areas of agriculture, biodiversity, climate change, environment, food security, livelihoods, natural resource management, rural development and resilience. He, holding an MSc in Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture and Certificate of Advanced Studies in Evaluation, has vast experience in evaluation, which he has accrued first-hand by conducting more than 30 evaluation assignments and by attending formal trainings. Since 2012, he has been engaging mainly with evaluations and had the opportunity to carry out evaluations for United Nations entities and international NGOs. He has a broad experience in evaluating GEF and EU funded projects. Prior to his work as Evaluator, work as consultant for a broad spectrum of organizations such as UN agencies, private companies, research institutes and international NGOs.

Key specialties and capabilities cover:

Results-oriented Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation Expert with 20+ years' experience providing data driven solutions driving agriculture, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable land and water management, biodiversity conservation, natural resources management, sustainable value chain development, and rural development initiatives for key donor institutions and non-profit organizations globally. Highly regarded for analytical, problem-solving and interpersonal skills with ability to effectively engage with, communicate, and motivate donors, governments, stakeholders, clients, and communities.

Selected assignments and experiences

1. JUNE / OCTOBER 2024 – UNCCD - INTERNATIONAL LEAD EVALUATOR
Terminal evaluation. Project: "Strengthening Coordination and Implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative". Donor: Austrian Development Agency
2. APRIL / OCTOBER 2023 – UNEP - INTERNATIONAL PROJECT REVIEWER
Terminal review in Ghana. Project "Strengthening Ghana's national capacity for transparency and ambitious climate reporting". Donor: GEF/CBIT
3. OCTOBER 2022/MARCH 2023 – UNDP - INTERNATIONAL LEAD EVALUATOR
Mid-term review in South Africa. Project "Development of Value Chains for Products derived from Genetic Resources in Compliance with the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing and the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy". Donor: GEF
4. JANUARY/MARCH 2022 - UNOPS - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Terminal evaluation of a UNDP/UNOPS project in Mexico. Project: "the Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Mexico". Donor: GEF.

5. AUGUST/NOVEMBER 2021 – UNDP - INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Terminal evaluation in South Africa. Project: "Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Land Use Regulation and Management at the Municipal Scale". Donor: GEF.
6. MAY/AUGUST 2021 – UNDP - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
MTR in Colombia. Project: "Connectivity and Biodiversity Conservation in the Colombian Amazon". Donor: GEF
7. APRIL/JUNE 2021 – UNDP - INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Terminal Evaluation in Uruguay. Project: "The integration of the adaptation approach in cities, infrastructure and local planning in Uruguay". Donor: GCF.
8. APRIL/JUNE 2021 – UNDP - INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Terminal Evaluation in Lebanon. Project: "Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment, Lebanon". Donor: GEF.
9. OCTOBER/DECEMBER 2020 – UNDP - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Final evaluation in Paraguay. Project: "Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Land Management into Production Practices in all Bioregions and Biomes"). Donor: GEF.
10. JULY/NOVEMBER 2020 – UNDP - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Final evaluation in Mexico. Project: "Strengthening Management Effectiveness and Resilience of Protected Areas to Safeguard Biodiversity Threatened by Climate Change". Donor: GEF.
11. DECEMBER 2019/MARCH 2020 – UNDP - INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Mid-term review in South Africa. Project: "Securing Multiple Ecosystems Benefit through Sustainable Land Management in the Productive but Degraded Landscapes of South Africa"). Donor: GEF
12. NOVEMBER 2019/MARCH 2020 – UNDP - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Terminal evaluation in Colombia. Project: "Vulnerability and Risk Reduction towards Climate Change in the Momposina Depression in Colombia") Donor: AF.
13. JULY/OCTOBER 2019 – UNDP - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
MTR in Indonesia. Project: "Capacity Development for Implementing Rio Conventions through Enhancing Incentive Mechanism for Sustainable Watershed/ Land Management". Donor: GEF.
14. APRIL/MAY 2019 – Action Against Hunger - EVALUATOR
Final evaluation in Jordan. "Improvement of Solid Waste Management for host communities and Syrian Refugees in Azraq Town, Zarqa Governorate, Jordan". Donor: Taiwan ICDF
15. AUGUST/OCTOBER 2018 – Movimento Africa 70 - EVALUATOR
Mid-term evaluation in Algeria (Saharawi camps). Project: "Food and Work: Self-production with Dignity. Donor: Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.
16. MARCH/APRIL 2018 – UNDP - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Mid-term review in Argentina. Project: "Sustainable land use management in the drylands of North-west of Argentina". Donor: GEF
17. MAY/JULY 2017 – The Brooke - EVALUATOR
Final evaluation in Jordan. Project "the Brooke Jordan programme" Donor: the Brooke (self-financed).
18. MAY/SEPTEMBER 2016 – UNCCD Secretariat - LEAD INTERNATIONAL EVALUATOR
Final evaluation of multi-country project implemented in Ecuador, Guatemala, Laos, Mozambique, Niger, Palestine, Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania. Project: "Integrating Climate Change Finance into Sustainable Land Management Investment Strategies". Donor: EU.
19. NOVEMBER 2015 /JANUARY 2016 – Blue Ventures - EVALUATOR
Final evaluation in Madagascar. Project: "Improving the profitability and ecological sustainability of octopus fisheries in southwest Madagascar"). Donor: DFID.
20. AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2013 – Secours Catholique/Caritas France - EVALUATOR
Final evaluation in Mongolia. Project "Food Security and Sustainable Farming Approaches in Mongolia". Donor: EU.
21. OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2012 - Oxfam Solidarité - EVALUATION TEAM LEADER
Final evaluation in Palestine. Project: "Improving livelihoods of vulnerable populations through rehabilitation of factors of production in Gaza Strip and West Bank" Donor: Government of Belgium.

ANNEX VII. EVALUATION TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project

Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD): sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices

GEF ID:9407

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Project summary:

GEF Project ID:	GEF ID.: 9407		
Implementing Agency:	UNEP Ecosystems Division GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit Biodiversity and Land Branch	Executing Agency:	International Union for Conservation of Nature, Regional Office for West Asia (IUCN- ROWA)
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area 17.14.1 Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development		
GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-7²⁶)	n/a.		
Sub-programme:	Subprogramme 3: Ecosystem Management	Expected Accomplishment(s):	EA(a) Use of the ecosystem approach in countries to maintain ecosystem services and sustainable productivity of terrestrial and aquatic systems is increased
UNEP approval date:	10 January 2018	Programme of Work Output(s):	i) Increase in the number of countries and transboundary collaboration frameworks that have made progress to monitor and maintain the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems
GEF approval date:	6 November 2017	Project type:	Full-Size Project
GEF Operational Programme #:	GEF 6	Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation: Integrated natural resources management
		GEF Strategic Priority:	LD1-Prog.1: Agro-ecological intensification (Outcome 1.1); LD3-Progr.4: Scaling-up SLM through Landscape Approach (Outcome 3.2)
Expected start date:	15 October 2017	Actual start date:	1 February 2018
Planned operational completion date:	February 2022	Actual operational completion date:	December 2022
Planned project budget at approval:	US\$ 15,742,982	Actual total expenditures reported as of 30 June 2022:	USD 2,342,172
GEF grant allocation:	US\$ 3,515,982	GEF grant expenditures reported as of [date]:	
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	USD 136,986	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	
Expected Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co- financing:	USD 12,227,000	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	
Date of first disbursement:	March 28, 2018	Planned date of financial closure:	June 2023

²⁶ This does not apply for Enabling Activities

No. of formal project revisions:	1	Date of last approved project revision:	15 December 2021 (No cost extension 1 countersignature date)	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:		Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last:	Next:
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	September 2020	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	March 2021	
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	December 2022	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	August 2023	
Coverage - Country(ies):	Jordan and Egypt	Coverage - Region(s):	West Asia	
Dates of previous project phases:	N/a	Status of future project phases:	n/a	

2. Project Rationale

Land degradation is one of the world's most pressing environmental challenges, although estimates of its global extent vary considerably. A recent analysis of long-term trends in land degradation, with a scope of 25 year and using an inter-annual vegetation index as an indicator of biomass production, found that land degradation hotspots covered about 29% of global land area and occurred in all agro-ecologies and land cover types. While it is widely accepted that rangelands are susceptible to land degradation, the global extent of this degradation is contested. Le et al. (2014) found "Land degradation is especially massive in grasslands", whereas Bai et al. (2008) found that only 20-25% of degrading land is rangeland, and of the 16% of land that was improving globally, 43% was rangeland.

Rangelands have been characterized in the literature as a one of the most degraded biomes in the world, with one author mentioning that 73% of world's rangelands are degraded, which represents almost 20% of global pasture. Grazing biomes are especially important for the world's livestock production and their degradation causes a serious threat to the global livestock productivity. Pastoralism plays a key role in preserving the livelihoods of poor, rural households, therefore livestock has not only economic, but also social functions.

In this light, addressing barriers to sustainable rangeland management (SRM) linked land use governance mechanisms, which both influenced the prevailing land stewardship practices and shaped land users' response to edaphoclimatic conditions, was the core focus of the project.

HERD stands for Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development. Rangeland health has been linked to the persistence of ecosystem function and, in general terms, healthy rangelands were those where their ecosystem services continued to produce the optimal range of benefits to society. However, it was recognized that different parties may value ecosystem services differently and the optimal use of rangelands had been something that needed ongoing negotiation. For this reason, governance was at the heart of this initiative.

The project rationale had been well aligned with the GEF Land Degradation (LD) Focal Area Strategy. The goal of the land degradation focal area had been to contribute to arresting and reversing the then-current global trends in land degradation, specifically desertification and deforestation. This has been accomplished by promoting and supporting effective policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, capable institutions, knowledge sharing, and monitoring mechanisms, together with good practices conducive to sustainable land management (SLM) and capable of generating global environmental benefits while supporting local and national social and economic development. The LD strategy aimed to promote system-wide changes necessary to control the increasing severity and extent of land degradation. Investing in sustainable land management (SLM) to control and prevent land degradation in the wider landscape has been an essential and cost-effective way to deliver multiple global environmental benefits and national socio-economic benefits.

The proposed project had been slated to serve as a 'catalyst' for scaling-up the HERD Concept, both regionally and globally. HERD had built on the sustainable management of pastoral rangelands for the provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity. Rangelands that had been subject to land degradation had been the object of management interventions under that project, which had approached it both from ecological and socio-economic points of view. Rangelands had occupied land that had not been suitable for cropping because the climate had been either too dry or too cold, or the land had not been cultivable. Yet, at the global level, they had covered an estimated 50% of the total land area of the world and between two-thirds and three-quarters of all drylands.

Jordan and Egypt, the two participating countries in that project, had ratified the UNCCD and had been committed to implementing strategies that would arrest land degradation. Both countries had chosen to address that issue by focusing on the management of rangelands and had been ready to adhere to the HERD Concept, with combined interventions pertaining to policies, institutions, practices, and knowledge management, which had respectively been the four strategic pillars of the HERD Project, duly reflected in its components

3. Project Results Framework

The project's goal was in line with LD Strategic Objective LD-1: Agriculture and Rangeland Systems: Maintaining or improving the flow of agro-ecosystem services that sustained the livelihoods of local communities, and LD-3:

Integrated Landscapes: Reducing pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape. In particular, the project contributed to the following GEF6 LD Outcomes:

1.1 Improving agricultural, rangeland, and pastoral management, and

3.2 Applying integrated natural resource management (INRM) practices in wider landscapes.

The project's objective was to strengthen restoration and sustainable management of pastoral rangelands to provide ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity in Egypt and Jordan and catalyze scale up regionally and globally.

Specifically, the project supported capacity building for rangeland stakeholders in the two participating countries (Jordan and Egypt) and beyond, using the catalytic outreach of IUCN ROWA and its partners in West Asia, North Africa, and other parts of the world.

The following four project components were foreseen and described below:

- **Component 1:** Technical assistance for adaptive management and learning (evidence-based decision-making)
- **Component 2:** Stronger institutions for rangeland governance
- **Component 3:** Identifying and upscaling good practices in Sustainable Rangeland Management, based on Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning (PRMP)
- **Component 4:** Knowledge management to promote an enabling environment for the regional scale-up of sustainable rangeland management.

Component	Outcomes	Outputs
Component 1: Technical assistance for adaptive management and learning (evidence-based decision-making)	Outcome 1.1 Rangeland monitoring systems institutionalized nationally and regionally based on commonly agreed scale-dependent indicators appropriate for different end-user groups	1.1.1 Rangeland landscape assessments conducted at local, and national levels using agreed biophysical and socio-economic indicators and participatory approaches where applicable 1.1.2 Development of Prototype National platforms for information sharing and exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands
	Outcome 1.2 Good practices and effective policies in sustainable rangeland management and rangeland rehabilitation identified and prioritized for implementation	1.2.1 Review of policies and laws, including relevant international agreements, related to sustainable rangeland management, identifying opportunities and barriers to policy implementation 1.2.2 Cost-benefit analysis of sustainable rangeland management policies and practices using economic methodologies 1.2.3 Good practices and policies in integrated rangeland management validated following agreed methodologies and indicators
Component 2: Stronger institutions for rangeland governance	Outcome 2.1 Local organizations for rangeland management (community and government) engage in more inclusive dialogue for improved rangeland governance covering approximately 500,000 hectares	2.1.1 Capacity/needs assessment of local organizations, including community groups and local public service providers 2.1.2 Stronger organizational capacities through appropriate training, including training of partner institutions in Participatory Sustainable Rangeland Management Planning (PRMP)
	Outcome 2.2 Participating communities use PRMP to guide the establishment of rules and regulations for improved rangelands management (in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure)	2.2.1 PRMP implemented in all participating communities and updated annually 2.2.2 Documentation of existing community land use practices (rules and regulations over rangeland resource management; pasture, water, trees, wildlife, livestock corridors, etc.) 2.2.3 Local arrangements between communities and state institutions (Hima agreements, local conventions, bylaws, etc.) developed according to national legal opportunities
Component 3: Identifying and up-scaling good practices in Sustainable Rangeland Management, based on PRMPs	Outcome 3.1 Local farmers / pastoralists adopt good practices in rangeland restoration and management and supporting services with support from local government agencies	3.1.1 Training and awareness raising in rangeland restoration and management innovations and adapting services for sustainable rangeland management 3.1.2 PRMP based sustainable rangeland management systems are piloted Activities are indicative and will be more closely determined according to results of the PRMPs and through partnership 3.1.3 PRMP-based supporting activities are piloted. Activities are indicative and will be more closely determined according to results of the PRMPs
Component 4: Knowledge management to promote an enabling environment for regional scale-up of sustainable rangeland management	Outcome 4.1 Increased support for sustainable pastoralism in investments and public decision/policy-making, nationally, regionally and globally.	4.1.1 Lessons on the value of rangeland ecosystems and good practices in SRM are documented and communicated through a regional Communal Rangelands Leadership network (of scientists, pastoralists and Civil Society Organizations for South-South learning and cooperation)

Component	Outcomes	Outputs
		4.1.2 Regional dialogue to influence the design and implementation of policies and investments for SRM, including coordinated influence of international agreements 4.1.3 Sustainable Rangeland Management initiatives are submitted (regionally and outside the region) for funding under the HERD umbrella, based on "bankable" investment options and innovative financing strategies

4. Executing Arrangements

UNEP had acted as the GEF Implementing Agency, which entailed oversight of project execution to ensure that the project was being carried out in accordance with agreed standards and requirements. UNEP had been responsible for project cycle management services. These services comprised project approval and start-up, risk management and mitigation, project supervision and oversight, and project completion and evaluation. The UNEP Regional Office for West Asia had been the project partner for component four, Knowledge management to promote an enabling environment for regional scale-up of Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM). UNEP-ROWA had been IUCN-ROWA's partner in a number of regional environmental programs and had been a member of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) with LAS/CAMRE. UNEP-ROWA hosted a global and regional knowledge base of regional mechanisms, policies, and networks to foster dialogue, capacity development, partnerships, and promote SLM synergies with MEAs and SDGs.

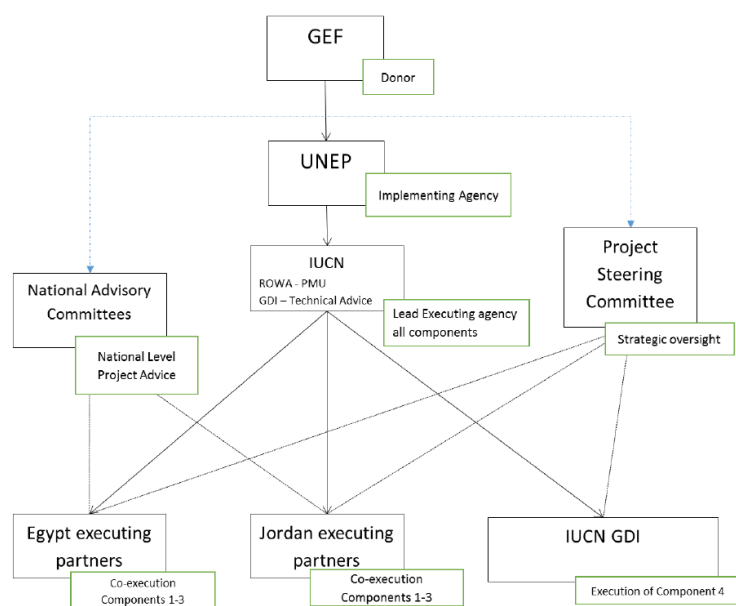
The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), through its Regional Office in West Asia (IUCN-ROWA), had acted as the Executing Agency for the overall project, with all associated responsibilities. IUCN-ROWA had been responsible for providing technical support and overseeing country-level work. As the executing agency, IUCN-ROWA managed and administered day-to-day project activities, ensured the delivery of project outputs, and was accountable for fund use, procurement, and timely delivery of inputs and outputs, following project requirements and UNEP agreements.

IUCN had concluded sub-grant agreements with implementing partners in each of the participating countries. These had been:

- The Hashemite Fund for Development of the Jordan Baadia (HFDB: Jordan);
- The Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG: Jordan)
- The Desert Research Centre (DRC: Egypt)
- The Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE: Egypt/Regional)

The two country implementing partners (HFDB and DRC) worked with IUCN-ROWA to identify a suitable institutional focal point for the project in their respective entities, with the main role of coordinating with IUCN the conduct of assessments, participatory planning processes and the provision of technical services within the mandate of the two country implementing partners.

The project's institutional framework is illustrated in the following organigram.



IUCN had appointed a Regional Program Manager, with an adequate level of seniority and international exposure, to be based in Amman, working out of IUCN-ROWA. The Regional Program Manager was responsible for ensuring the effective, efficient, and timely implementation of project activities and for leading the implementation of agreed actions. IUCN had also assigned one or more part-time senior technical experts either at its headquarters or based out of its Outposted Global program in Nairobi, who had worked closely with the Regional Program Manager on relevant project activities. The current list of Project Steering Committee (PSC) members included: IUCN, UNEP, HFDB, DRC-Egypt, RBG, and CEDARE, in addition to one representative from the focal Ministry in each Country. The PSC had been relatively small since the National Committee had been engaged more deeply in country-level guidance. The PSC had reserved the option of inviting additional experts into the group as required. Country representatives from Jordan and Egypt had chaired the PSC on a rotation basis.

5. Project Cost and Financing

The total estimated project cost at design was **USD 15 million** of which USD 3.5 million was requested from GEF, and USD 12.2 million was to be leveraged from co-finance, both cash and in-kind from HFDJB, GIZ, CEDARE, DRC Egypt, Ministry of Environment, Jordan and IUCN.

The table below shows the budget of the project broken down by GEF, co-finance and component: The figure includes both in-kind and cash contributions.

Project Component	GEF Project Financing (USD)	Confirmed Co-financing (USD)
Component 1: Technical assistance for adaptive management and learning (evidence-based decision-making)	776,041	2,949,166
Component 2: Stronger institutions for rangeland governance	554,194	1,849,167
Component 3: Identifying and up- scaling good practices in Sustainable rangeland Management, based on PRMPs	1,069,310	5,366,167
Component 4: Knowledge management to promote an enabling environment for regional scale up of sustainable rangeland management	786,300	1,912,500
Monitoring and Evaluation	162,710	0
Total	3,348,555	12,077,000

6. Implementation Issues

Based on the Mid-Term Review, certain challenges for the project were identified:

1. Project management had inadequately addressed a one-year operational delay, resulting in disruption to the integration of project components.
2. Delays in key field-based activities raised concerns about the sustainability of community-based rangeland management organizations and natural resource-based community enterprises.
3. Communication efforts regarding Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) had been insufficient, with a lack of attention to designing communication materials for various audiences, including pastoralist and farming communities, as well as government decision-makers.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

7. Objective of the Evaluation

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy²⁷ and the UNEP Programme Manual²⁸, 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 IUCN. 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

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.

²⁷ <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

²⁸ <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

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.

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.

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

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. Also included are five questions that are required when reporting in the GEF Portal and these must be addressed in the TE.

Q1: What measures have been taken to enhance rangeland governance and restoration, and what degree of improvement has been achieved in this regard, with consideration for local farmers and pastoralists?

Q2: To what degree of success, and with what observable changes, has the project contributed to the institutionalisation of Rangeland monitoring systems that are conducive to evidence-based sustainable land management (SLM)

Q3: To what extent has consensus been built regarding the identification and implementation of policies in sustainable rangeland management, considering the needs and interests of local farmers and pastoralists?

Q4: In what ways has the project impacted awareness raising and resource mobilization for sustainable pastoralism on both a regional and global scale?

Address the questions required for the GEF Portal in the appropriate parts of the report and provide a **summary of the findings in the Conclusions section of the report:**

a) *Under Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation:*

Q5: What was the performance at the project’s completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided²⁹).

b) *Under Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation:*

Q6: What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? (This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)

²⁹ This is not applicable for Enabling Activities

c) *Under Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality:*

Q7: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)

d) *Under Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards:*

Q8: What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. (Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)

e) *Under Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness:*

Q9: What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. portal/database development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? (This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)

10. Evaluation Criteria

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

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 Strategy³⁰ (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities*

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 Building³¹ (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/GEF/Partner Strategic Priorities*

Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies. 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*

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

³⁰ 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>

³¹ <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented will be considered. Examples may include: UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), 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/Coherence³²

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization³³, 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 rating³⁴ 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

At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval³⁵). 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 Outputs³⁶

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

³² This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.

³³ 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.

³⁴ 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.

³⁵ 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.

³⁶ 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)

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 supervision³⁷

ii. *Achievement of Project Outcomes*³⁸

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed³⁹ 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*

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 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.

The Evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role⁴⁰ or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a demonstration

³⁷ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

³⁸ 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)

³⁹ All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. 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.

⁴⁰ 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,

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.

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

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/Task 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

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.

Focusing 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.

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 complementarities⁴¹ with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

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)

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.

⁴¹ Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

Quality of project management and supervision

Stakeholders participation and cooperation

G. Monitoring and Reporting

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

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART⁴² 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

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.

The performance at project completion against Core Indicator Targets should be reviewed. For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided.

iii. Project Reporting

UNEP has a centralised project information management system (Anubis) 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 (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). 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

Sustainability⁴³ 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

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

⁴² SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

⁴³ 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)

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

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

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

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

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, specifically for GEF funded projects⁴⁴, it may refer to the project management performance of the executing agency 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/Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-category established as a simple average of the two.

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

⁴⁴ For GEF funded projects, a rating will be provided for the Project Management and Supervision of each of the Implementing and Executing Agencies. The two ratings will be aggregated to provided an overall rating for Quality of Project Management and Supervision

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 Executing Agency. 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.

The progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program occurring since the MTR should be reviewed. *(This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval).*

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

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 Environment⁴⁵.

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.

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.

The completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas should be reviewed. (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent).

v. Environmental and Social Safeguards

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 requirements⁴⁶ 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).

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

Implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval should be reviewed, the risk classifications verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant should be shared with the Task Manager.

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

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

⁴⁵The 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

⁴⁶ 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 designs since 2011.

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 gendered and marginalised groups.

vii. Communication and Public Awareness

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.

The project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

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:

- Relevant background documentation, inter alia; UNEP MTS, Programmes of Work, GEF Policies etc
- 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 and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc.;
- Project deliverables including but not limited to technical reports, and reports, articles and publications, survey reports
- Mid-Term Review or Mid-Term Evaluation of the project;
- Evaluations/reviews of similar projects.

Interviews (individual or in group) with:

- UNEP Task Manager (TM);
- Project management team, including the Project Manager within the Executing Agency, where appropriate;
- UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
- Portfolio Manager and Sub-Programme Coordinator, where appropriate;
- Project partners, including; Jordanian Ministry of Environment; The Hashemite Fund for Development of Jordan Badia (HFDJB), The Royal Botanic Garden (RBG) in Jordan; Desert Research Centre (DRC) Egypt; Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) Egypt
- Relevant resource persons;
- Representatives from civil society and specialist groups Surveys [provide details, where appropriate]

Field visits

Other data collection tools

11. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

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 Note: 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.

An **Evaluation Brief**, (a 2-page overview of the evaluand and key 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.

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 Task Manager and Project Manager, 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.

Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the Evaluation Consultants and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final 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.

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.

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 Task 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

For this Evaluation, the Evaluation Team will consist of an Evaluation Consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager, Fund Management Officer, and the Sub-programme Coordinators of the Ecosystem Management Sub-programmes. The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Evaluation, including travel. It is, however, each consultant's 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 Task 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.

The Evaluation Consultant will be hired over a period of 8 months November 2023 to June 2024 and should have the following:

an undergraduate 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 7 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 sustainable land management is required and a focus on rangelands and drylands would be an advantage.

Country experience of Jordan and Egypt is desirable.

For this consultancy fluency in oral and written English is a requirement and proficiency in Arabic is highly desirable. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with possible field visits.

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 Evaluation Consultant will make substantive and high- quality contributions to the evaluation process and outputs. The consultant will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

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/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 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

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Evaluation.

Tentative schedule for the Evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	Nov 2023
Inception Report	Nov 2023
Evaluation Mission	Dec 2024
E-based interviews, surveys etc.	Dec – Jan 2024
PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	Feb 2023
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	March 2024
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	April 2024
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	May 2024
Final Report	June 2024

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Final Report shared with all respondents	June 2024

14. Contractual Arrangements

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.

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

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 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.

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.

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.

ANNEX VIII. GEF PORTAL INPUTS

The following table contains text to be uploaded to the GEF Portal. **It will be drawn from the Evaluation Report, either as copied or summarised text.** In each case, references should be provided for the paragraphs and pages of the report from which the responses have been copied or summarised.

Table X: GEF portal inputs

Question: What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided).
Response: The retrospective achievement of the against Core Indicator Targets is very low if it is considered that at CEO Endorsement Stage a target of 500,000 ha under Sustainable Rangeland Management was set under the Corporate Result #2. Sustainable land management in production systems agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes.
Question: What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? <i>(This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)</i>
Response: The MTR report highlights that the buy-in of stakeholders was reflected in their active engagement in project activities. Such a statement is confirmed by the Terminal Evaluation. In fact, the project was implemented in close collaboration with communities and local stakeholders in Jordan and Egypt. However, at the regional level, engagement with relevant stakeholders was notably limited. As a result, the project's results remained strictly limited to the activities delivered by field-level partners.
Question: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? <i>(This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)</i>
Response: Gender-responsive measures and related indicators were not included at the CEO Endorsement/Approval phase. Its section B. Project Description Summary is the same as the Results Framework of the project, which did not foresee any specific gender responsive activities and results.
Question: What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. <i>(Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)</i>
Response: The safeguards plan did not entail any major measures since no major concerns were identified. Due to the nature of the project, the TE agrees that there was no need for any major measures.
Question: What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? <i>(This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)</i>
Response: The project did not deliver its outputs related to knowledge management, specifically National platforms for information sharing and exchange, including data on land degradation and good practices in Sustainable Rangelands were not delivered. Component 4, which should have focused on knowledge management, particularly to promote the development of an enabling environment for regional scale up of sustainable rangeland management did not succeed: any output was delivered, one was partially delivered and two were not delivered.

Question: What are the main findings of the evaluation?

Response:

The design of the project was characterized by significant flaws. The Results Framework did not have indicators at output level, and indicators at outcome level were not SMART. In addition, elements formulated as outcomes, as a matter of fact, were outputs. The TOC included in the ProDoc was as well poorly formulated.

The project demonstrated relevance to both GEF and UNEP, albeit less than originally envisioned in the ProDoc. Its design was consistent with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW), and Strategic Priorities, as well as GEF's "Land Degradation focal area" priorities. However, the approach to achieving the target of 500,000 hectares under Sustainable Rangeland Management, as specified in the Tracking Tool, lacked clarity in the project design.

The project did not deliver satisfactory its expected outputs as per the results framework. Only 6 out of 15 outputs were delivered. As a consequence, no project outcome was achieved.

Significant design flaws in the Results Framework severely undermined the implementation process, which was supposed to adhere to the Results Framework. The lack of collective reflections on project design also may have played a role. The high turn-over of project managers at IUCN i.e. three throughout the implementation period, and the occurrence of the COVID-19 may have also played an important role.

It is noteworthy to mention that the project delivered the draft law on rangeland management in Egypt. The importance of drafting that law is acknowledged by the evaluation. At the same time, this delivery does not compensate for the project's undelivered outputs. Certain expected outputs, that were not delivered (such as the National Platforms for Information Sharing and Exchange and the monitoring systems at national level for rangeland management) could have served as foundational elements for implementing the law, pending its formal approval by the Egyptian Parliament.

Project reporting was inadequate, lacking detail to accurately track progress, and was often redundant, containing factual errors. This hindered proper follow-up, obscured progress, and failed to identify discrepancies with the expectations set in the ProDoc.

Neither project management nor supervision were able to ensure the project's deliveries. The low level of project delivery and achievements and the lack of supporting documentation to prove them, and the very poor and confusing reporting are three elements that have characterized the work of IUCN as project lead. The same elements suggest UNEP did not fulfil adequately its role for quality assurance and oversight.

The ownership of project achievements is low because the project neither delivered the expected outputs satisfactorily nor achieved its outcomes.

The project delivered outputs through partner collaboration with local stakeholders. Local agreements supported smooth implementation of activities, and partners were well-regarded by stakeholders. However, the fieldwork did not promote the scaling up of Sustainable Rangeland Management (SRM) practices. At the regional level, output delivery was poor, with no evidence of efforts to engage relevant stakeholders for scaling SRM in other Arab countries as per ProDoc's expectations.

ANNEX IX. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

Evaluand Title:

Terminal Evaluation: "Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD): sustainable rangeland management strategies and practices" GEF ID Number: 9407
 Evaluation Consultant: Giacomo Morelli

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report) and is dependent on more than just the consultant's efforts and skills.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
Quality of the Executive Summary Purpose: acts as a stand alone and accurate <u>summary</u> of the main evaluation product, especially for senior management. To include: • concise overview of the evaluation object • clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope • overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria • reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report • summary response to key strategic evaluation questions • summary of the main findings of the exercise/synthesis of main conclusions • summary of lessons learned and recommendations.	Final report: The Executive Summary presents the key findings of the evaluation. It does not provide a summary of the strategic questions, which appear in the Conclusions section as Table 20. A summary of the performance ratings is also not provided here and appears as Table 21.	4
Quality of the 'Introduction' Section Purpose: introduces/ <u>situates</u> the evaluand in its institutional context, establishes its main parameters (time, value, results, geography) and the purpose of the evaluation itself. To include: • institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, Branch etc) • date of PRC approval, project duration and start/end dates • number of project phases (where appropriate) • results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. POW Direct Outcome) • coverage of the evaluation (regions/countries where implemented) • implementing and funding partners • total secured budget • whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, external agency etc.) • concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings.	Final report: In this concise section, all elements are covered.	6
Quality of the 'Evaluation Methods' Section Purpose: provides reader with clear and comprehensive description of evaluation methods, demonstrates the <u>credibility</u> of the findings and performance ratings. To include: • description of evaluation data collection methods and information sources • justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative; electronic/face-to-face) • number and type of respondents (<i>see table template</i>) • selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited	Final report: This section presents the evaluation methods used and sets out the sample of respondents interviewed. As all project areas were visited there was no need to describe the selection criteria. However, more detail on how actual field site respondents were selected would have added depth to an understanding of the representation of the evaluation.	5

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
• strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation • methods to include the voices/experiences of different and potentially excluded groups (e.g. vulnerable, gender, marginalised etc) • details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.) • methods used to analyse data (scoring, coding, thematic analysis etc) • evaluation limitations (e.g. low/ imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; language barriers etc) • ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected. Is there an ethics statement? E.g. <i>'Throughout the evaluation process and in the compilation of the Final Evaluation Report efforts have been made to represent the views of both mainstream and more marginalised groups. All efforts to provide respondents with anonymity have been made.'</i>	It is noted that the reconstruction of the TOC was rejected by the project team and performance ratings are provided, within the report, against both the original set of results and those reformulated as part of the reconstructed TOC. Both approaches led to the same overall performance rating.	
Quality of the 'Project' Section <u>Purpose:</u> describes and <u>verifies</u> key dimensions of the evaluation relevant to assessing its performance. To include: • <i>Context:</i> overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses) • <i>Results framework:</i> summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders:</i> description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners:</i> description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • <i>Changes in design during implementation:</i> any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing:</i> completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing	Final report: All elements are effectively covered.	6
Quality of the Theory of Change <u>Purpose:</u> to set out the TOC at Evaluation in diagrammatic and narrative forms to support consistent project performance; to articulate the causal pathways with drivers and assumptions and justify any reconstruction necessary to assess the project's performance. To include: • description of how the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>⁴⁷ was designed (who was involved etc) • confirmation/reconstruction of results in accordance with UNEP definitions	Final report: This section reflects the effort that was put into reconstructing a TOC for this project, both at country and regional levels. The causal thinking behind the scaling up of an effective demonstrated approach still did not emerge clearly.	4

⁴⁷ During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Evaluation Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
• articulation of causal pathways • identification of drivers and assumptions • identification of key actors in the change process • summary of the reconstruction/results re-formulation in tabular form. <i>The two results hierarchies (original/formal revision and reconstructed) should be presented as a two-column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results ‘goal posts’ have not been ‘moved’.</i> This table may have initially been presented in the Inception Report and should appear somewhere in the Main Evaluation report.		
Quality of Key Findings within the Report <u>Presentation of evidence:</u> nature of evidence should be clear (interview, document, survey, observation, online resources etc) and evidence should be explicitly triangulated unless noted as having a single source. <u>Consistency within the report:</u> all parts of the report should form consistent support for findings and performance ratings, which should be in line with UNEP’s Criteria Ratings Matrix. <u>Findings Statements (where applicable):</u> The frame of reference for a finding should be an individual evaluation criterion or a strategic question from the TOR. A finding should go beyond description and uses analysis to provide insights that aid learning specific to the evaluand. In some cases a findings statement may articulate a key element that has determined the performance rating of a criterion. Findings will frequently provide insight into ‘how’ and/or ‘why’ questions.	Final report: Sources of evidence are made clear and the thinking behind the performance assessments and ratings is made explicit. There is consistency throughout the report. However, specific findings are not stated, the findings remain within the text.	5
Quality of ‘Strategic Relevance’ Section <u>Purpose:</u> to present evidence and analysis of project strategic relevance with respect to UNEP, partner and geographic policies and strategies at the time of project approval. To include: Assessment of the evaluand’s relevance vis-à-vis: • Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities • Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities • Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities • Complementarity with Existing Interventions: complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation⁴⁸), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups.	Final report: As per UNEP guidance, both alignment with, and contribution to, strategic priorities and policies are assessed.	5
Quality of the ‘Quality of Project Design’ Section <u>Purpose:</u> to present a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the project design, on the basis that the detailed assessment was presented in the Inception Report.	Final report: The description of the assessment of the quality of the project design is detailed and supports the rating.	5
Quality of the ‘Nature of the External Context’ Section <u>Purpose:</u> to describe and recognise, when appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project’s implementing context that	Final report: The COVID-19 pandemic is noted.	6

⁴⁸ 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.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval⁴⁹), and how they affected performance. While additional details of the implementing context may be informative, this section should clearly record whether or not a major and unexpected disrupting event took place during the project's life in the implementing sites.		
Quality of 'Effectiveness' Section (i) Availability of Outputs: <u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the outputs made available to the intended beneficiaries. To include: • a convincing, evidence-supported and clear presentation of the outputs made available by the project compared to its approved plans and budget • assessment of the nature and scale of outputs versus the project indicators and targets • assessment of the timeliness, quality and utility of outputs to intended beneficiaries • identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).	Final report: The analysis in this section is supported by an assessment of performance against indicator targets as well as an analysis of the qualitative dimensions needed to drive a change process. The assessment is presented for both the original and reconstructed results statements.	6
(ii) Achievement of Project Outcomes: <u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the uptake, adoption and/or implementation of outputs by the intended beneficiaries. This may include behaviour changes at an individual or collective level. To include: • a convincing and evidence-supported analysis of the uptake of outputs by intended beneficiaries • assessment of the nature, depth and scale of outcomes versus the project indicators and targets • discussion of the contribution, credible association and/or attribution of outcome level changes to the work of the project itself • any constraints to attributing effects to the projects' work • identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).	Final report: The analysis in this section is supported by an assessment of performance against indicator targets as well as an analysis of the qualitative dimensions needed to drive a change process. The assessment is presented for both the original and reconstructed results statements.	6
(iii) Likelihood of Impact: <u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact, including an assessment of the extent to which drivers and assumptions necessary for change to happen, were seen to be holding. To include: • an explanation of how causal pathways emerged and change processes can be shown • an explanation of the roles played by key actors and change agents	Final report: Given the low performance at outcome level, any substantive analysis in this section was undermined. The status of assumptions and drivers could have been assessed and/or confirmed here.	3

⁴⁹ 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 of the project team.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
• explicit discussion of how drivers and assumptions played out • identification of any unintended negative effects of the project, especially on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).		
Quality of 'Financial Management' Section Purpose: to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table (may be annexed). Consider how well the report addresses the following: • adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures • completeness of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • communication between financial and project management staff	Final report: All elements are addressed in this section.	5
Quality of 'Efficiency' Section Purpose: to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under efficiency (i.e. the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness). To include: • time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe • discussion of making use, during project implementation, of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. • implications of any delays and no cost extensions • the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.	Final report: A detailed analysis is presented in this section, although it goes beyond UNEP's guidance.	4
Quality of 'Monitoring and Reporting' Section Purpose: to present well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the evaluand's monitoring and reporting. Consider how well the report addresses the following: • quality of the monitoring design and budgeting (including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.) • quality of monitoring of project implementation (including use of monitoring data for adaptive management) • quality of project reporting (e.g. PIMS and donor reports) \	Final report: Considerable, substantive material is presented in this section to justify the performance ratings. This forms the basis for learning.	6
Quality of 'Sustainability' Section Purpose: to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under sustainability (i.e. the endurance of benefits achieved at outcome level). Consider how well the report addresses the following: • socio-political sustainability • financial sustainability • institutional sustainability	Final report: All three sub-categories are assessed and discussed adequately.	4
Quality of Factors Affecting Performance Section Purpose: These factors are not always discussed in stand-alone sections and may be integrated in the other performance criteria as appropriate. However, if not addressed substantively in this section, a cross reference must be given to where the topic is addressed and that entry must be sufficient to justify the performance rating for these factors.	Final report: All three sub-categories are assessed and discussed adequately.	5

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
Consider how well the evaluation report, either in this section or in cross-referenced sections, covers the following cross-cutting themes: • preparation and readiness • quality of project management and supervision⁵⁰ • stakeholder participation and co-operation • responsiveness to human rights and gender equality • environmental and social safeguards • country ownership and driven-ness • communication and public awareness		
Quality of the Conclusions Section (i) Conclusions Narrative: <u>Purpose:</u> to present summative statements reflecting on prominent aspects of the <u>performance of the evaluand as a whole</u>, they should be derived from the synthesized analysis of evidence gathered during the evaluation process. To include: • compelling narrative providing an integrated summary of the strengths and weakness in overall performance (achievements and limitations) of the project • clear and succinct response to the key strategic questions • human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention should be discussed explicitly (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on)	Final report: The Conclusions section is drawn from a synthesized analysis of the evidence and findings.	4
ii) Utility of the Lessons: <u>Purpose:</u> to present both positive and negative lessons that have potential for wider application and use (replication and generalization) Consider how well the lessons achieve the following: • are rooted in real project experiences (i.e. derived from explicit evaluation findings or from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future) • briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful • do not duplicate recommendations	Final report: The lessons have the potential to inform future designs.	4
(iii) Utility and Actionability of the Recommendations: <u>Purpose:</u> to present proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results. Consider how well the lessons achieve the following: • are feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when • include at least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions	Final report: Recommendations are made to UNEP in order to strengthen this kind of up-scaling work in the future.	4

⁵⁰ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP. This includes providing the answers to the questions on Core Indicator Targets, stakeholder engagement, gender responsiveness, safeguards and knowledge management, required for the GEF portal.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations. NOTES: (i) In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance. (ii) Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.		
Quality of Report Structure and Presentation (i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?	Final report: The report is clear and follows UNEP's guidance. All annexes are complete.	6
(ii) Writing and formatting: Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information?	Final report: The writing is of good quality.	6
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		5

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.

At the end of the evaluation, compliance of the evaluation process against the agreed standard procedures is assessed, based on the table below. *All questions with negative compliance must be explained further in the table below.*

Evaluation Process Quality Criteria	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Independence:		
1. Were the Terms of Reference drafted and finalised by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
2. Were possible conflicts of interest of proposed Evaluation Consultant(s) appraised and addressed in the final selection?	Y	
3. Was the final selection of the Evaluation Consultant(s) made by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
4. Was the evaluator contracted directly by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
5. Was the Evaluation Consultant given direct access to identified external stakeholders in order to adequately present and discuss the findings, as appropriate?	Y	
6. Did the Evaluation Consultant raise any concerns about being unable to work freely and without interference or undue pressure from project staff or the Evaluation Office?	Y	
7. If Yes to Q6: Were these concerns resolved to the mutual satisfaction of both the Evaluation Consultant and the Evaluation Manager?		N
Financial Management:		
8. Was the evaluation budget approved at project design available for the evaluation?	Y	
9. Was the final evaluation budget agreed and approved by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
10. Were the agreed evaluation funds readily available to support the payment of the evaluation contract throughout the payment process?	Y	
Timeliness:		
11. If a Terminal Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within the period of six months before or after project operational completion? Or, if a Mid Term Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within a six-month period prior to the project's mid-point?		N
12. Were all deadlines set in the Terms of Reference respected, as far as unforeseen circumstances allowed?	Y	
13. Was the inception report delivered and reviewed/approved prior to commencing any travel?	Y	
Project's engagement and support:		
14. Were the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and identified project stakeholders given an opportunity to provide comments on the evaluation Terms of Reference?	Y	
15. Did the project make available all required/requested documents?	Y	
16. Did the project make all financial information (and audit reports if applicable) available in a timely manner and to an acceptable level of completeness?	Y	
17. Was adequate support provided by the project to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Y	
18. Was close communication between the Evaluation Consultant, Evaluation Office and project team maintained throughout the evaluation?		N
19. Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately discussed with the project team for ownership to be established?		N
20. Were the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and any identified project stakeholders given an opportunity to provide comments on the draft evaluation report?	Y	
Quality assurance:		
21. Were the evaluation Terms of Reference, including the key evaluation questions, peer-reviewed?	Y	
22. Was the TOC in the inception report peer-reviewed?	Y	
23. Was the quality of the draft/cleared report checked by the Evaluation Manager and Peer Reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments?	Y	
24. Did the Evaluation Office complete an assessment of the quality of both the draft and final reports?	Y	
Transparency:		
25. Was the draft evaluation report sent directly by the Evaluation Consultant to the Evaluation Office?	Y	
26. Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) of the cleared draft report to the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and other key internal personnel (including the Reference Group where appropriate) to solicit formal comments?	Y	
27. Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) appropriate drafts of the report to identified external stakeholders, including key partners and funders, to solicit formal comments?	Y	
28. Were all stakeholder comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the	Y	

Evaluation Process Quality Criteria	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Evaluation Office		
29. Did the Evaluation Consultant(s) respond adequately to all factual corrections and comments?	Y	
30. Did the Evaluation Office share substantive comments and Evaluation Consultant responses with those who commented, as appropriate?	Y	

Provide comments / explanations / mitigating circumstances below for any non-compliant process issues.

<u>Process Criterion Number</u>	<u>Evaluation Office Comments</u>
2 AND 3	The project team were not in favour of the evaluation consultant but provided no grounds for them not to be contracted. The Evaluation Office had no concerns over the recruitment of this experienced evaluator.
6 AND 7	This evaluation did not take place within an atmosphere of constructive learning and the findings gave rise to a great deal of contestation. This continued into the commenting stage and significantly prolonged the evaluation process.
18 AND 19	Tensions in the relationship between the project team and the evaluation consultant hindered constructive communication.