**MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT**

**For the UNDP/GEF Project**

**“Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation”, GEF Project ID 4559**

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# Introduction

UNDP/GEF Project “Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil protected area system for conservation of biodiversity and mitigation of land degradation” (GEF Project ID 4559) in Eritrea is a seven-year (2013-2020) project that seeks to operationalize a National Protected Area Management System with an overall goal of conserving Eritrea’s diverse ecosystems and securing the viability of the nation’s globally significant biodiversity. The project specific Objective is to *create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system.* To achieve this objective, the project aims to develop necessary policy and institutional framework for the National PA system (Outcome 1), enhance PA management capacity (Outcome 2), and develop Sustainable Land Management/Sustainable Fishing Management (SLM/SFM) for local communities living in the PAs and surrounding areas (Outcome 3). One of the key project expected results is official establishment (gazettement) of the first three PAs in Eritrea (Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Islands, Semienawi/Debubawi Bahri (Green Belt), and Bara’soli) covering 1,009,100 ha of key terrestrial and marine ecosystems and habitat of endangered species in the country[[1]](#footnote-1).

The Ministry of Land, Water and Environment (MLWE) is the Implementing Partner for the project in collaboration with Responsible Parties – the Forestry and Wildlife Authority (FWA), Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR), and Administrations for North Red Sea, Maekel, Anseba, and Debub Zobas. At the project start the FWA played role of the project Executing Agency, however, in 2015 this role was transferred from the FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba (District) by the GoE. The project is financed by the GEF (US$ 5,878,000) with co-financing from UNDP (US$ 3,000,000) and indicated co-financing from the Government of Eritrea (GoE) (US$ 7,450,000). Thus, total project budget is US$ 16,328,000.

The project actually started in July 2014 but has been facing significant implementation delay right after its official start. In accordance with the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policyfor all GEF-financed full-sized projects, Mid-Term Review (MTR) for this project was originally scheduled for the last quarter of 2016. However, the MTR was shifted to August 2017 due to political issues, project delayed implementation and uncertainty with the project management. In 2017 UNDP-Eritrea reached agreement with the GoE to implement MTR of the project and contracted Mikhail Paltsyn, International Evaluation Consultant (Individual Contract IC/10/17 signed on July 25, 2017) to perform this project review in August-September 2017.

## Purpose of the MTR

The purpose of the MTR is to evaluate overall performance of the UNDP/GEF project, derive evidence-based conclusions about the project implementations and likelihood of achievements of expected project Outcomes and Objective, and provide objective and specific recommendations to improve the project implementation. The results of the MTR are intended for use by the Project Management Team, Government of Eritrea, UNDP, GEF, and other countries’ stakeholders to:

* receive objective information on actual performance of the project;
* recognize strengths and weaknesses of the project;
* improve project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

## Scope of the MTR

**Thematic scope** of this MTR was limited to four project design and implementation areas: (A) **Project Strategy**, (B) **Progress towards Results**, (C) **Implementation and Adaptive Management**, and (D) **Sustainability** in accordance with the UNDP guidance (UNDP-GEF Directorate, 2014). It included analysis of delivery of all 13 project Outputs and the level of achievement of all four project Outcomes and likelihood of achievement of the project Impacts (reduction of direct threats to biodiversity and positive changes in ecosystems, wildlife populations and livelihood of local communities.

**Geographic scope** of the MTR field visits was limited to Asmara, Massawa, and one of the project area - Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri (Green Belt) located in North Red Sea and Maekel Zobas. However, the mission tried to collect relevant documentary information for the project activities in two other project areas - Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Islands and Bara’soli.

## Methodology

The MTR was conducted using comprehensive evidence-based and participatory approach built in full accordance with the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Mid-Term Reviews[[2]](#footnote-2) and Results-Based Management (RBM) concept. The evaluation was based on analysis of four areas of the project design and implementation identified in the Scope section (Fig. 1):

**Inputs:**

***Activities,***

***Funding,***

***Partners***

**Outputs:**

***Project Products***

***and***

***Services***

**Outcomes:**

***Policy and Management Changes***

**Impacts:**

***Ecosystem and Community Improvements***

**What UNDP Project does:** **Results UNDP Project seeks:**

Figure 1. Four UNDP Project Mid-Term Review criteria (Project Design, Progress towards Results, Implementation and Adaptive Management, and Sustainability) linked to the elements of project logic (Inputs, Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts).

1. **Project Strategy**

**Analysis of the Project Design and Theory of Change**. Review the project preparation process and design was conducted based on the Project Results Framework, prodoc, and CEO ER using following criteria:

* incorporation of lessons learned from similar projects in the project design;
* relevance to country priorities and level of country ownership;
* stakeholder consultation and decision-making process, including involvement of vulnerable groups and relevant gender issues;
* realistic assessment of risks to the project sustainability;
* representativeness of the project Conservation Targets for the country;
* adequacy of Direct Threats addressed by the project to selected Conservation Targets
* correct identification of indirect treats (immediate and root causes) and barriers
* clarity of the project Theory of Change

All the criteria were rated using recommended 6 MTR ratings (UNDP-GEF directorate, 2014): Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), or Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

Theory of Change (TOC) analysis of the project logic was implemented using Miradi software[[3]](#footnote-3) <https://miradi.org/> and the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROTI) Practitioner’s Handbook[[4]](#footnote-4). First, the Project Situation Analysis was conducted to verify logical connections between identified problems and direct threats for conservation targets, their causes and effects, and opportunities for mitigation and solving of the problems. Following elements were verified:

* Conservation targets (species and ecosystems) targeted by the project;
* Direct Threats for the Conservation Targets;
* Indirect Threats (immediate and root causes) leading to the Direct Threats;
* Barriers on the way to eliminate or effectively decrease Direct and Indirect Threats.

Based on the situation analysis the MTR consultant reviewed and constructed the Project Result Chains (logical pathways between the Project expected Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts). Based on the Result Chain analysis the consultant checked SMARTness[[5]](#footnote-5) of the Project Objective and expected Outcomes and their Indicators. Some necessary corrections of the Objective and Outcome Indicators were made for the evaluation purposes, because some of them were not SMART (Annex 1. PRF Analysis). Project Outputs were slightly changed to provide more clear understanding of the project products and services for the management team. Based on the TOC analysis a Revised Logical Framework for the project with clear Outputs, Outcomes and Indicators was constructed (Annex 2. PRF revised for MTR purposes), used for the MTR, and suggested to guide further project implementation.

1. **Progress Toward Results**

The project progress to deliver planned Outputs and achieve desired Outcomes was implemented based on the original PRF and GEF Tracking Tools via desk analysis of the project reports (PIRs) and other documents provided by the GoE, interviews with key stakeholders, and field visit to one of the project areas (triangulation routine was performed to ensure credibility of the findings). As the first step of the process the consultant performed analysis of the Output delivery based on the above data sources - each Output was rated based on the level of its actual delivery by August 2017 (period of the MTR mission). Then ProgressTowards Results Matrix (recommended by UNDP 2014) was completed to evaluate achievement of the project Outcomes with assigning of relevant rating based on the revised by MTR Objective and Outcome Indicators (Achieved, On the target to be achieved, Not on target to be achieved).

As an additional and independent tool to analyze positive project impact we used MODIS Vegetation Continuous Fields Yearly L3 Global 250m (MOD44B) to calculate average percentage of tree cover (trees higher than 5 meters) data for 2008-2016 for the Green Belt area to analyze slopes of reforestation/deforestation trends in the area before and after 2014 (beginning of the project)[[6]](#footnote-6).

1. **Project Implementation and Adaptive Management**

This area was evaluated on the following criteria: management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications. Final ratings according each criterion was summarized in the summary table (UNDP 2014) with calculation of overall rating for this area.

Following points for each criterion were used for evaluation of the project implementation and adaptive management quality:

Management arrangements

* Comparison of existing project management structure with the structure suggested in the project documents;
* Level of support of project management team from UNDP CO;
* Level of support of the project management from Ministry of Land, Water and Environment and Executing Agency (Forestry and Wildlife Authority);
* Level of support of the project management from the Steering Committee;

Work planning

* Actual start of the project implementation and delay issues (reasons for the delay);
* Quality of the annual and quarterly work planning;
* Changes to the Project Results Framework as a part of Adaptive Management

Finance and Co-finance

* Quality of planning of the project annual budget;
* Level of financial management;
* Variance between planned and actual expenses by Outcomes and years;
* Actual project expenses to deliver the project Outputs;
* Presence of annual audit reports;
* Changes made in the project budget as a part of Adaptive Management;
* Planned and actual co-financing commitments

Monitoring and Evaluation System

* Planned and actual expenses for the project M&E;
* Quality of the project M&E plan and its relevance to the project Objective and Outcomes;
* Level of use of M&E framework for the project adaptive management;
* Level of stakeholder participation the project M&E, including gender disaggregation;
* Quality of management of environmental and social risks as identified through the UNDP Environmental and Social screening procedure.

Stakeholder Engagement

* Number and effectiveness of partnerships established by the project;
* Level of local and national government support to the project implementation;
* Level of participation of local communities and other groups in the project implementation;

Reporting

* Presence and quality of the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs);
* Presence and quality of the PMU quarterly and annual reports;
* Reporting of adaptive management changes;
* Mechanisms of sharing of the project reports with Steering Committee and stakeholders;
* Quality of documentation of lessons learned during the project implementation and mechanism of the lessons sharing with stakeholders and other projects.

Communication

* Mechanisms of the project communications with stakeholders;
* Mechanisms for receiving stakeholder feedback on the project implementation;
* Presence of outreach and awareness campaigns implemented by the project;

1. **Sustainability**

Under this area the consultant re-evaluated the project risks identified on the project development stage and checked if the risk rating by the project management were appropriate and up to date. Evaluation of Sustainability area was conducted according following criteria: financial risks to sustainability, socio-economic risks to sustainability, institutional and governance risks to sustainability, and environmental risks to sustainability. Overall project sustainability rating was assigned based on the UNDP recommendation to MTRs (UNDP 2014) using following points for each criterion:

Financial sustainability

* Likelihood that financial resources will be available to support the project Outcomes after its completion;
* Level of dependence of the Outcome sustainability on external financial sources;
* Presence of mechanism to ensure financial sustainability of the project Outcomes.

Socio-economic sustainability

* Presence of economic and social risks for the project Outcomes;
* Level of stakeholder ownership on the project Outcomes in terms of economic feasibility;
* Presence of partnerships and other mechanisms to sustain the project Outcomes

Institutional and governance sustainability

* Presence of appropriate policies, legislation, and governance structures to support project Outcomes;
* Capacity of institutional and governance structures to sustain the project Outcomes;
* Role of the project in establishment of appropriate policy, legislation and governance structures to sustain the project results

Environmental sustainability

* Presence and severity of environmental factors that can influence sustainability of the project Outcomes and Impacts.

**Data Collection Methods:**

Given limited time and urgency of the evaluation mission the evaluation consultant implemented **express-analysis of the project design and reporting documents** (Annex 4. List of documents reviewed) to assess its performance along four evaluation criteria mentioned above **right before the mission.** Based on preliminary findings and discussion with the UNDP and GoE, a **simple stakeholder analysis** was implemented to identify and prioritize relevant UNDP staff and the most critical project partners and stakeholders for interviews and focus groups taking in account gender issues. A detailed schedule of the evaluation field mission, interviews and focus groups was completed with a help of the UNDP Eritrea.

Based on preliminary evaluation findings and list of project stakeholders **project evaluative matrix** was developed (Annex 3. MTR Evaluative Matrix). The evaluation questions were discussed with the UNDP Eritrea and assigned in questionnaires designed for each category of the project stakeholders to collect primary data for correction of preliminary findings. To design interviews and collect data, the consultant used *semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups.* The consultant tried to have as many open questions as possible to allow respondents to express their opinion on the project performance. The interviews were conducted in Asmara, Massawa and Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri with UNDP Eritrea staff, representatives of the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment (MLWE), Forest and Wildlife Authority (FWA), Ministry of Marine Resources, North Red Sea and Asmara Zobas, PA rangers, local communities, key experts and consultants involved in the project development and implementation. In total **40 people** were interviewed, including only 3 women (from UNDP staff) (Annex 5. List of stakeholders consulted during the MTR).

To obtain additional evidences on the project implementation the consultant **visited one of the project areas** - Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri (Green Belt) to obtain additional evidences on the project performance. Along with interviewing additional data collection was performed to verify initial findings (reports of MLWE, FWA, NRS and Asmara Zobas prepared for this MTR mission (Annex 6. Actual schedule of the MTR mission). Thus, the evaluation approach allowed data collection from different sources (documents, interviews with stakeholders, and field visit) and **perform triangulation** of the data to support evaluation findings.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on evaluation findings and criteria the evaluation consultant generated a set of evidence-based conclusions regarding the project. Relevant experience from similar UNDP/GEF and other projects in Eritrea and Africa (Terminal Reports, Evaluation Reports, and publications) was analyzed before generating recommendations to the project. That allowed to make more relevant recommendations to the project team and stakeholders supported by lessons learned from other projects. Based on the evaluation conclusions and analysis of relevant experience the consultant developed a set of specific, targeted and time-bound recommendations according four Mid-Term Review area to support further performance of the project. Special discussions were conducted with the MLWE and FWA to improve the project implementation in accordance with the evaluation recommendations.

## Limitations of the MTR

The MTR has some limitations that have to be considered while using the review results:

* *Very limited time for preliminary analysis of the project document and preparation of the MTR Inception Report.* Due to urgency of the MTR mission (GoE agreed on the UNDP mission in the country only in July 2017) the Inception Report and the mission schedule were developed during first two days of the mission without detailed analysis of the project documents that was shifted on the after the mission period;
* *Practical absence of the PMU, functional PSC, and appropriate reporting on the project progress* due to lack of the structured project management in 2014-2017 required to collect information directly from MLWE, FWA, and NRS Zoba on the actual project activities in the framework of the project co-financing from the GoE;
* *Limited number of the project stakeholders available for interviewing*. Only 35 people were interviewed during the mission, represented mainly by government officials and UNDP staff (no NGOs are present in the country) with only 3 women involved in the consultation process;
* *Only one consultant, international MTR expert, was involved in the MTR process* (no National Consultant was hired due to requirements of the Government of Eritrea). This fact decreased effectiveness of the data collection process in the country;
* Due to limited timeframe of the MTR and waiting period to receive permission to start actual interviewing process from the GoE (3 days) *only one of three project areas was visited.*

# Project Description & Background Context

The UNDP/GEF Project “Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation” is a seven-year project implemented between October 2013 and October 2020. The project implementation started in July 2014 under UNDP National Execution (NEX) procedures. The Ministry of Land, Water and Environment (MLWE) is the Implementing Partner for the project in collaboration with Responsible Parties – the Ministry of Agriculture (MA), Forestry and Wildlife Authority (FWA), and the Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR)[[7]](#footnote-7). In 2014-2015 FWA played role of the project Executing Agency. However, in 2015 the role of the Executing Agency was transferred from the FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba (District) by the GoE. The project is financed by the GEF (US$ 5,878,000) with co-financing from UNDP (US$ 3,000,000) and indicated co-financing from the Government of Eritrea (GoE) (US$ 7,450,000). Thus, total project budget is US$ 16,328,000.

The project has been facing significant implementation delay right after its official start due to unclear management structure (no PMU has been established), absence of working Project Steering Committee, and transfer of the Executing Agency responsibilities from the FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba in 2015. By August 2017 only US$1,452,689 (29% of planned US$ 4,957,571 for the first four years of the project implementation) have been spent by the project, including US$1,148,309 from GEF funds and US$304,380 from UNDP TRAC resources. However, the MTR found out that quite a lot of activities directly related to the project were implemented in 2014-2017 in the project areas using co-financing from GoE of the total volume US$4,210,000 (57% of expected co-funding of the GoE to this project)[[8]](#footnote-8).

## Development Context

The project was designed to contribute to the GEF 5 Biodiversity Focal Area, **Objective BD-1** *Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems*, **Outcome 1.1** *Improved management effectiveness of existing and new protected areas* with an overall goal *to ensure the integrity of Eritrea’s diverse ecosystems in order to secure the viability of the nation’s globally significant biodiversity*. The project Objective *is to create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system*. The project Objective is relevant to the **UNDAF Outcome 7** *Increased sector capacity for sustainable resources management with the participation of primary resource users and* directly related to the UNDP’s **Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF) 2013-2016** particularly to Environmental Sustainability (MDG-7). Also, the project is aligned with **SPCF (2017-2021)** pillar 2 on Environmental Sustainability, Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction and contributes **Outcome 4** *“By 2021, environmental and natural resources management is gender responsive, and sustainable, negating the impacts of ecosystem degradation, climate change, and strengthening community resilience to disasters”.*

The project will directly contribute to the Eritrea’s National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (2014-2020), the National Tourism Development Plan (2000-2020), and to actual implementation of the Eritrean Environmental Protection, Management and Rehabilitation Framework (Proclamation #179/2017), Forestry and Wildlife Conservation and Development Proclamation (2006). The project Objective is in line with official strategies of the MLWE, FWA, MA, MMA, and MLD - the main players for the bulk of environmental and natural resource management in Eritrea.

## Problems that the project sought to address

The project aims to address following direct threats to the Eritrea’s ecosystem, wildlife, and local communities (reformulated by the MTR based on the results of field mission):

* *Unsustainable logging and firewood consumption*
* *Uncontrolled forest fires*
* *Unsustainable agriculture leading to land degradation*
* *Overgrazing*
* *Overfishing*
* *Unsustainable mining*
* *Climate Change (droughts)*

Following barriers on the way to reduce and mitigate the above threats in the country were indicated in the project document:

* *Barrier #1: Limited capacity to design and implement a regulatory framework to support establishment of a national system of conservation areas*. Eritrea does not currently have officially established Protected Areas (PAs). Both the MLWE and MMR have the authority through separate proclamations to establish protected areas. However, the proclamations do not provide a clear framework for how these protected areas are to be established. The institutional capacity required to design and implement the laws and policies required to support the establishment of a national PA system is lacking.
* *Barrier #2: Limited experience and capacity to successfully establish and manage conservation areas*. The country has no practical experience with the establishment and management of PAs due to the lack of officially gazetted ones. Thus, even the PAs are established national capacity to manage them is low. Nearly 40% of the proposed PAs (40,000 ha) are now under permanent enclosure by the MLWE. However, these areas are yet to be demarcated and officially gazetted as protected.
* *Barrier #3: Limited rural community capacity to maintain ecosystem services and conserve biodiversity.* Local communities are very dependent on natural resources, but many of them use the resources in unsustainable way leading to deforestation, pasture and land degradation.

## Project strategy, expected results, and target areas

The project **Objective** (*to create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system*) is going to be achieved via implementation of **three strategies** (Components):

1. *Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system* aims to development of necessary regulations for official establishment of PAs; establishment of the National PA Agency to develop and manage PA network in Eritrea; development of the National PA Strategy to guide development of the PA network and National Biodiversity Monitoring System for PAs; and implementation of conservation management training programme at the national universities and colleges.
2. *Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system* supports official establishment, staffing and capacity building for three first Eritrea’s PAs - Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Islands, Semienawi/Debubawi Bahri (Green Belt), and Bara’soli; and development and implementation of the PA Management Plan in cooperation with local communities.
3. *Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas* isoriented to support sustainable livelihood and capacity building of local communities to implement Sustainable Forest, Land and Fishing Management in target PAs and their buffer zones.

The expected project results (Outcomes) are the following (rephrased by the MTR for clarity):

* **Outcome 1.** Functional PA policy, legislation and institutional frameworks in Eritrea (including officially approved and implemented PA Proclamation and Standard Operating Procedures for establishment and management of PAs; officially established, staffed and funded National PA Agency; approved by GoE and implemented National PA Strategy and National Biodiversity Monitoring System for PAs; conservation management education programme integrated in the national college and university curriculums);
* **Outcome 2.** Three officially established and functional PAs covering 1,000,000 ha (including Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Islands, Semienawi/Debubawi Bahri (Green Belt), and Bara’soli having trained staff, administrative offices, equipment, governmental funding, and supported by PA Management Plans officially approved by the MLWE and implemented in collaboration with local communities);
* **Outcome 3.** Increased capacity of local communities to practice SLM, SFM, and sustainable fishing around PAs (including increased number of local people practicing sustainable agriculture, forestry, livestock management, having sustainable access to water and participating in ecosystem restoration activities).

**Three project areas** proposed by the project for official establishment of the PAs:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri** (129,000 ha)located in the central highlands of Eritrea, these areas house some of the last remaining tropical coniferous and broad-leaved forest along the Horn of Africa. Main tree species include *Juniperus procera* and *Olea africana*. There are also 20 mammal species, including greater kudu, klipspringer, bushbuck, Ethiopian and common genet, leopard, Hamadryas baboon, spotted and striped hyena. This is an important bird area harbouring 66 resident and migrant species. Bird species include the White-cheeked turaco, a beautiful and charismatic bird found only in forested highlands of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan. |  |
| **Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Islands** (terrestrial part - 514,000 ha) is ocated along the central coast, this pilot site includes the marine areas of Hawakil Bay and Dissei Island. The region represents one of Eritrea’s most important storehouses of biodiversity. The coastal area has significant mangrove forests, sea-grass, and coral. There are green and hawksbill turtles, Dugong, flamingo, and a host of other marine and avian species. The terrestrial area is defined by Acacia scrub. The area holds large mammals such as Sommering and Dorcas Gazelle, ostrich, hyena, and jackal. The vast and under populated Aoli plain provides habitat for the last viable population of the critically endangered and very reclusive African wild ass (*Equus africanus somaliensis*). |  |
| **Bara’soli** (terrestrial part - 6,100 ha) is located along the southern Red Sea coast, this coastal wetland provides habitat for tens of thousands of migratory and resident wading birds. During low water seasons, the increased surface of the intertidal areas expose vast mud flats and rock flats that support flamingo, crab plover, bridled tern white-eyed gull, brown noddy, lesser-crested tern and green-backed heron and brown booby. The bay likely has the potential to become Eritrea’s first internationally recognized “important bird area.” However, very little rigorous information is available precisely recording species numbers. |  |

## Project implementation arrangements

The project implementation arrangements were very different from the management structure described in the project document and unclear until August 2017. The project National Steering Committee (NSC) was established in 2014 but it was actually dysfunctional in 2014-2017. Partly functions of NSC have been implemented by the Technical Committee consisted from MLWE, FWA, and UNDP. Establishment of the Project Mangement Unit (PMU) started in 2014 at the base of the FWA, but it has never been established due to the GoE decision to transfer functions of the Executing Agency from FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba in 2015. However, the North Red Sea Zoba did not play PMU role for the entire project in 2015-2017, but implemented some activities related to the Outcome 3 inSemenawi and Debubawi Bahri project area.

The project management arrangements, however, were clarified during the MTR mission with the role of the MLWE (Department of Environment) as an actual Executive Agency and FWA, MMR, and Zoba Administrations (NRS, Maekel, Anseba and Debub) as Responsible Parties (or Key Actors following MLWE terminology) forming the project Steering Committee and representatives of relevant Zobas and Sub-Zobas forming the project Technical Committee. No traditional PMU is established due to lack of available staff to deal only with this project at the government agencies of Eritrea.

## Key partners and stakeholders involved in project implementation

Key project stakeholders are listed in the Table 1.

**Table 1.** Key stakeholders of the Eritrea’s PA project and their roles in the project implementation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stakeholder** | **Role in the project** |
| **Ministry of Land, Water and Environment** | Implementing Partner and Executive Agency for the project with the Department of Environment as the coordinating body for the project implementation. The Department also plays the key role in development of policy and regulatory framework for the PA establishment and organization of the National PA Agency (Outcome 1) |
| **Forest and Wildlife Authority** | Responsible Party for achievement of the project Outcomes 1 and 2, especially development of the National PA strategy and National Biodiversity Monitoring System for PAs, actual establishment, staffing and capacity building of the terrestrial PAs |
| **Ministry of Marine Resources** | Responsible Party for achievement of the project Outcomes 1 and 2, especially development of the National PA strategy and National Biodiversity Monitoring System for PAs, actual establishment, staffing and capacity building of the marine PAs |
| **Zoba Administrations (North Red Sea, Asmara, Makel, Anseba and Debub)** | Responsible Party for achievement of the project Outcome 3, including climate-smart agriculture and sustainable livestock grazing. Plays important role in actual establishment and management of target PAs under Outcome 2 at local level |
| **Local Communities living inside proposed PAs and around them** | Key project beneficiaries, playing important roles in achievement of the project Outcomes 2 and 3. Local communities participate in planning and management of the proposed PAs, and actual implementation of SLM and SFM activities, project monitoring and evaluation |

# Findings

## Project Strategy

Overall rating – **S (Satisfactory)**. The project is built on the lessons learned from other UNDP/GEF projects in Eritrea and highly relevant to the country development priorities. The project focuses on highly representative for the country conservation targets (species and ecosystems) and adequately address key direct threats for them. However, the MTR suggested more detailed classification of the direct threats for the project to allow more effective planning of conservation measures. The project adequately addresses key barriers on the way to establish functional PA system in Eritrea, however, does not provide clear explanation of the project Theory of Change. Project Outcomes and Outputs are appropriate to achieve the project Objective, but formulated differently and vary in number in the prodoc and CEO ER. This fact confuses clear understanding of the project expected results. Some of the Outputs, e.g. 1.1. and 3.1, are too general and do not provide clear explanation what exactly products and services need to be delivered in their frameworks. Some of the project Objective and Outcome Indicators are not SMART and needed some adjustment with the project Theory of Change and realities of Eritrea. Some of the project risks were underestimated given experience of other UNDP/GEF projects in Eritrea. The project was developed using participatory approach: more than 360 stakeholders were consulted during the project development, however, percentage of women among them was low (~6%) (see details in Table 2)

**Table 2.** Analysis of the project strategy

| **Evaluation criteria** | **Evaluation Score** | **Justification** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Incorporation of lessons learned from similar projects in the project design** | **HS** | The project incorporated lessons learned from the UNDP/GEF “Conservation Management of Eritrea’s Coastal, Marine and Island Biodiversity” project (ECMIB) completed in early 2008 and some experience from the “SIP SLM Pilot Project – Eritrea” that was under implementation in 2009-2016. One of the ECMIB project objectives was official establishment of 2 Marine PAs, however, that never happened due to delayed project implementation and lack of time. However, the project drafted National Coastal Policy and the Integrated Coastal Area management proclamation that are suggested as a basis for achievements of the Outcomes 1 and 2 in the framework of the PA project[[9]](#footnote-9). |
| **Project relevance to country priorities and level of country ownership** | **HS** | The project is in line with the Eritrea’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 2000), the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) of 2007, the Draft Eritrean environmental proclamation 2002 (provides basis for development of PA proclamation) and the National Environmental Management Plan 1996 (identifies Buri-Irrori, Semienawi and Debubawi Bahri and Bay of Bera’soli as national priorities for PA establishment), and draft of the Forest and Wildlife Policy 2005[[10]](#footnote-10) |
| **Level of stakeholder participation in the project development; Integration of stakeholders in the project implementation.** | **S** | 363 local people participated in the socio-economic assessment for this project in the project areas in 2013[[11]](#footnote-11). 62 local people listed as interviewees in the Protected Areas and Financing Assessment Report (4 of them, or 6% were women). 77 stakeholders participated in the project inception workshop on July 22 2014[[12]](#footnote-12). However, full list of stakeholders consulted is lacking. Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan is present and well developed with full range of key stakeholders present in the country. |
| **Involvement of vulnerable groups and women involved in the project development. Incorporation of gender issues in the project design** | **S** | It is not clear from the project document how many women were consulted during PPG phase. Given the data of the Protected Areas and Financing Assessment Report only 6% of interviewed stakeholders were women. The project was not designed to significantly impact gender equality and women empowerment[[13]](#footnote-13). However, the project mentions the National Union of Eritrean Women as one of stakeholders and incorporates gender issues in the implementation of Outcome 3 and project hiring practices[[14]](#footnote-14). Two Indicators for the project Outcome 3 are gender disaggregated. |
| Realistic assessment of risks to the project sustainability | **MS** | The prodoc has assessment of the risks impact and probability, however, risk rating (e.g., High, Moderate, Low) is lacking. Two of the project risks are obviously underestimated given experience of the ECMIB project: *Capacity is too low to implement project, the low absorptive capacity results in significant delays in implementation* and *The Government of Eritrea does not establish the three pilot sites as protected areas.* Probability of these two risks should be assigned as 4 or even 5, not 3 as in the prodoc, because proposed marine PAs have never been established in the ECMIB project. Risk associated with *Impact of Climate Change* is very general and does not provide information what consequences of the climate change are the most important for the project areas (e.g., increasing frequency of droughts, severity of flooding, increasing frequency of forest fires, or increase of the sea level, etc.) |
| **Representativeness of the project Conservation Targets** | **HS** | Selected project Conservation Targets (ecosystems and species) are highly representative for Eritrea and selected project areas:  - Highland Forests; - Mangroves; - Sea Grass; - Turtle nesting sites; - African wild ass habitat;  - African wild ass; - Dorcas Gazelle; - Soemmoring Gazelle |
| **Adequacy of Direct Threats addressed by the project to selected Conservation Targets** | **MS** | The project correctly identifies three general types of Direct Threats for the conservation targets in the project areas: *Habitat Loss and Competition, Overexploitation or “Direct Take”,* and *Climate Change.* Some threats *(e.g., Overexploitation* and *Climate Change)* are not quantified; thus, their severity is not clear. *Climate Change* threat does not describe what consequences of the climate change are the most critical for the project area. MTR review of the project Theory of Change suggests more detailed classification of Direct threats to allow their measurement and development of appropriate strategies to reduce them (Annex 3) |
| **Correct identification of indirect treats (immediate and root causes) and barriers** | **S** | No Problem Tree (or Conceptual Model) diagram was developed for this project (recommended by UNDP for all project[[15]](#footnote-15)). Immediate and root causes are not clearly outlined, however, many of them are mentioned in the Threats, Root Causes and Impacts section of the prodoc (e.g., growing human population, high demand for agricultural and livestock products, high dependence of local communities on firewood and charcoal, tourism development, etc.).  Barriers on the way to establish and manage National PA system in Eritrea are correctly identified and adequate to the current situation: (1) *Limited capacity to design and implement a regulatory framework to support establishment of a national system of conservation areas (*the actual barrier is the *Lack of regulatory framework to support establishment of a national system of conservation areas)*, (2) *Limited experience and capacity to successfully establish and manage conservation areas*, and (3) *Limited rural community capacity to maintain ecosystem services and conserve biodiversity* |
| **Clarity of the project Theory of Change** | **MS** | No Theory of Change diagram (recommended by UNDP and GEF) was used to describe the project theory of change and demonstrate clear links between project Outputs, Outcomes, Mid-Term Impacts (direct threat reduction) and Long-Term Impact, or GEBs (e.g., restoration of ecosystems and species). However, the project strategies were described in the Project Objective, Outcome and Output section of the prodoc. Key project assumptions on the pathways from Outputs to Outcomes were explained in the Project Result Framework section, however, some of the key assumptions are missing (e.g., alternative sources of income and livelihood provided to local communities will have similar or higher profitability than traditional unsustainable NRM practices; law enforcement in the PA will be sufficient enough to deter illegal activities; government will provide sufficient funding to support effective management of PAs; established PAs will be integrated in the country’s sustainable economic development plans). No assumptions are present to describe pathways from Outcomes to Mid-Term Impacts (reduction of Direct Threats) (e.g., local communities will decrease pressure on PA natural resources due to sufficient benefits provided by the project on the adjacent territories and mixed use zones, etc.). |
| **Formulation and clarity of the project Outputs and Outcomes** | **MS** | Project Outcomes and Outputs are appropriate to achieve the project Objective, but formulated differently and vary in number in the prodoc and CEO ER. This fact confuses clear understanding of the project results. E.g., in the prodoc Outcome 1 sounds like *Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system,* but in the CEO ER Outcome 1 is divided in three Outcomes: *Governance framework for the incorporation of PA and conservation into Eritrea’s development established,* *Institutional collaboration for effective management of PA increased*, *Human and financial resources provided to operationalize PA management.* Output 1.1. in the prodoc sounds like *Regulatory framework for protected areas management*, but in the CEO ER it is formulated as *National government law/proclamation legalizing the application of IUCN based designations for establishment of terrestrial and marine protected areas*. Or Output 2.2 in the prodoc is *Model training program implemented for protected area management and staff*, but in the CEO ER Output 2.2 sounds like *Physical delineation of the three PA done and core infrastructure put in place (border markings, administration centre, outposts)*. Similar inconsistencies are present for Outcomes 2 and 3 and all other Outputs in the prodoc and CEO ER. Moreover, Outcome 3 in the prodoc has only three Outputs, while in CEO ER it includes six Outputs. Some of the project Outputs in the prodoc are too general and need to be reformulated to make them more clear and specific and avoid ambiguity in understanding: e.g., *Output 1.1. Regulatory framework for protected areas management* does not provide clear guidance on what legislation documents have to be delivered to make establishment of official PAs possible. *Output 3.1 Farm/Fishing Field Schools established to build local SLM/SFM capacity* practically limits the project mechanisms for community capacity buildings to the Schools only without clear explanation of their structure, functional mechanism, and sustainability. Name of the Outcomes sound like activities or components but not results (e.g., *Outcome 1.* *Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system).* Analysis of the PRF, suggested changes and their justification are shown in the Annex 2. |
| SMARTness and relevance of Objective and Outcome indicators | **MU** | The project has 18 Objective and Outcome Indicators. Some of them are not SMART and need some adjustment (see Annex 1 for details) with the project Theory of Change. For example, Objective Indicator *Total hectares legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories* is actually Outcome 2 indicator (official establishment of target PAs). Objective indicator *Total hectares of critical habitat conserved within newly established national protected areas* should be accompanied with percentage of the entire habitat type area in the country that is more meaningful to measure the project impact at national scale. Three of the indicators of the Outcome 3 actually measure Impact of the entire project, but not achievement of the Outcome 3: *Total populations of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas* (Long-Term Impact, or GEB Indicator); *Total hectares of native forest cover within the Green Belt* (Long-Term Impact, or GEB Indicator); *Number of FFS participant households and women reporting increased levels of food security* (Objective Indicator). One of the Outcome indicators - *Number of wildlife monitoring surveys/studies conducted and reported annually by protected area administration for key species and habitats within national protected areas* is not appropriate as a measure of functional National Biodiversity Monitoring Programmed (wildlife and ecosystem surveys have been conducted in the project areas since 2013, but the Programme is still non-existent). One of the indicators for Outcome 3 *Surface water quality/quantity of main upland streams improved to more closely meet needs of natural ecosystem function* is not clear and unmeasurable. Some of the indicators have extremely high end of the project values (e.g., METT score for PA and total funding for National PA system) and need to be reduced by 30-50% given low national capacity and acute deficit of national budget. Other Outcome 3 indicators e.g., *Number of project area residents who are participating members of farm/fisheries field (FFS) schools and Number of farm and fishing field school participants adopting ecosystem conservation practices as detailed in the community ecosystem services conservation plans* limits all the measurements of the stakeholder involvement in the project and changes of their behavior to only one (FFS) of many possible mechanisms to build capacity. Moreover, the MTR found out that the project stakeholders do not have clear idea of the FFS and its functional model. Thus, if FFSs are never established, but trainings to the communities are delivered via other mechanisms these indicators can be useless. Also, not only FFS participants can start implement sustainable technologies as a result of the project, but also their neighbors and people who learned about the technologies from other means in the project frameworks. Thus, the Objective and Outcome indicators were adjusted by MTR (Annexes 1 and 2) for evaluation purposes and suggested for further use to guide project implementation. |
| **Averaged Score:** | **S** |  |

## Progress towards Results

Revised Project Results Framework (Annex 2) was used for evaluation of the project progress towards results. Overall rating for this MTR criterion is **MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory).**

None of the project Outputs has been fully delivered yet in accordance with implementation timelines in the project document. Overall Output delivery was assessed as **52% of expected** at the mid-term, or **MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory)** (see Table 3 for details). Delivery of all project Outputs, except Output 3.1 (it is on track largely due to the project activities implemented in the framework of the GoE co-financing in 2014-2017), is delayed, with four Outputs (1.2, 1.5, 2.4, and 3.2) without any progress in the implementation. Actual Output delivery for Outcome 1 is **45%**, Outcome 2 – **56%**, and Outcome 3 – **63%** of expected at the mid-term. Actual implementation of Outputs (3.1 and 3.3) for Outcome 3 actually started three years earlier than expected without appropriate development of the community management plans for sustainable NRM in the project areas (Output 3.2). Delivery of the project Outputs for Outcome 2 (law enforcement of protective regime, functional zoning and demarcation) was also supported by significant co-funding from the GoE and started before the official PA were established. **About 98%** of all project activities to deliver Outputs for Outcomes 2 and 3 were implemented only in one project area - Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri (Green Belt).

The project progress to achieve Outcomes and Objective was evaluated with the Progress Towards Results Matrix (Annex 7. Progress Towards Results Matrix) using revised project indicators (Annex 2). Currently out of 19 Objective and Outcome indicators, only **6** (32%) are on target to be achieved by the project, **11** (58%) are not on the target to be achieved, and 2 cannot be rated due to lack of data. Only Outcome 3 is likely be achieved by the project, meanwhile Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 are unlikely to be achieved given current level of the project management by 2020 and will need additional 1-3 years to materialize. The project progress to achieve the Objective was ranked as **MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory),** to achieve Outcome 1 **– U (Unsatisfactory),** Outcome 2 - **MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory)**, and Outcome 3 – **MS (Moderately Satisfactory)** (see Table 3 and Annex 7 for details).

The project progress towards Mid-Term (threat reduction) and Long-Term Impacts (improvement of ecosystem status) can only be fragmentally tracked for only one of the project areas - Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri (Fig. 1, see details in Tables 3-4, and Annex 7). We could not build reliable regressions between level of threat reduction (livestock grazing and firewood collection) and increase of reforestation rate in the area due to limited data, but it is very likely that decreasing threats (Fig. 1 A and B) positively contributed to significant increase of reforestation area after the project beginning (Fig. 1 C) given that correlations between annual rainfall and percentage of forest cover in the area in 2008-2016 was insignificant (R² = 0.008). These findings support a hypothesis that despite weak management (see Project Implementation and Adaptive Management section) the project has positive effect on improvement of forest ecosystem status at least in one project area.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outputs/Outcomes** | **Mid-Term Impacts** | **Long-Term Impacts** |
| Since 2014 the protective regime of the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area area has been enforced by 38 FWA rangers and by 54 village scouts;  Livestock grazing and firewood collection has been greatly limited in the area to the mixed-use and buffer zone of the proposed PA;  Sustainable agriculture and alternative income opportunities were provided to local communities inside the proposed PA and in surrounding areas. | **A.**Livestock number dynamic in two villages of Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area – Durfo (brown) and Shegrni Arberebue (blue) in 2014-2017  **B.**Number of households selling firewood in Durfo village in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area in 2014-2017 | **C.** Mean percentage of tree cover per one pixel of MOD44B imagery in the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area in 2008-2016 (no data for 2017 is available yet). Red line shows start of the project. Black lines show trends of reforestation rate before and after start of the project. Level of correlation of the % of tree cover and annual rainfall is insignificant (R² = 0.008)[[16]](#footnote-16). |

**Figure 1.** Likely Mid-Term and Long-Term Impact effects of the UNDP PA project in Eritrea (Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area) found by the MTR.

**Table 3.** Delivery of the Project Outputs

Following score scale was used for evaluation of the project Output delivery in 2014-2017:

1 – the Output delivery has not been started;

2 – the Output has only minor progress in delivery (<=50%);

3 - the Output has sufficient progress in delivery (> 50%);

4 – the Output has been fully delivered (100%) in accordance with panned deadline and had good quality or sufficient quantity

| **Planned Outputs** | **What was actually done** | **Planned delivery[[17]](#footnote-17)** | **Actual Score:** from 1 to 4 | **Expected Score at the MTR:** 1-4 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 1:** Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system | | | | |
| **Output 1.1.** Regulatory framework for protected areas establishment is developed and implemented:  -Protected Area Act;  -Standard Operating Procedures for establishment of PAs in Eritrea | As the first step of establishment of regulatory framework for PA establishment and management the GoE approved **Proclamation # 179/2017** “The Eritrean Environmental Protection, Management, and Rehabilitation Framework” dated on January 26, 2016. This policy has Article 27 “Protection of Natural Heritage” that provides basis for establishment of national PAs and local natural enclosures[[18]](#footnote-18). Development of the Protected Area Act was started in 2017 by a team of national consultants[[19]](#footnote-19) | 2016 | **2** | **4** |
| **Output 1.2.** National PA administration is established and operationalized | No PA administration has been established so far. However, computer equipment for the administration has been procured. There is no agreement about institutional position of the PA administration yet, because MLWE is responsible for terrestrial PAs and MMR is responsible for marine PAs in Eritrea. | 2017 | **1** | **4** |
| **Output 1.3.** National PA biodiversity monitoring programme is developed and introduced to first three PAs | The PA biodiversity monitoring programme is still under development by national consultants[[20]](#footnote-20) | 2017 | **2** | **4** |
| **Output 1.4.** National strategy for PA network development and financing is developed and implemented | The National PA strategy is still under development by national consultants[[21]](#footnote-21) | 2018 | **2** | **3** |
| **Output 1.5.** National protected area regulatory implementation guidelines are developed and implemented:  -Special Operating Procedures for PA management | No progress so far on this Output | 2018 | **1** | **3** |
| **Output 1.6.** National biodiversity conservation training programme is developed and implemented at the Universities of Eritrea | The programme is still under development by national consultants. | 2017 | **2** | **4** |
| **Outcome 2.** Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system: 3 officially established and functional PAs covering 1,000,000 ha | | | | |
| **Output 2.1.** Three new protected areas officially recognized and launched:  -have management and ranger staff, and government funding | No progress so far on official establishment of the proposed PAs due to lack of the PA Act. However, in the framework of GoE co-financing to the project demarcation of proposed PA core zone and village management areas (11 settlements) in the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri Green Belt was done in 2016 as a part of the National Enclosure Assessment. The total area of the PA demarcated is **107,586 ha** in the Ghinda sub-zoba (includes 95% of the proposed PA)[[22]](#footnote-22). PA awareness campaign was conducted in 2016-2017 for 17 villages in the PA. The PA regime has been enforced by **38 FWA rangers** (control illegal tree cutting, livestock grazing, and charcoal transportation) and by **54 village scouts** (~3 scouts in each from 17 villages) recruited since 2014[[23]](#footnote-23). In the Buri-Irrori-Hawakil **4 FWA rangers** have been employed since 2015 to protect and conduct wildlife monitoring in the enclosure[[24]](#footnote-24). | 2017 | **2** | **4** |
| **Output 2.2.** Model training program implemented for protected area management and staff, including law enforcement, environmental education, and biodiversity monitoring | In the framework of GoE co-financing in 2014-2015 **two 10 day trainings** were provided to the FWA rangers in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori-Hawakil with participation of **28 and 30 rangers** in 2014 and 2015 respectively. The rangers were trained in structure and organization of forest and wildlife inspection; daily activities and responsibilities of rangers on check points and outside; forestry & wildlife conservation and development proclamation and related laws; control mechanism of illegal movement and trade of forest and wildlife products; and documentation and reporting; camera-trapping and wildlife monitoring [[25]](#footnote-25) | 2016-2020 | **2** | **3** |
| **Output 2.3.** Three model protected area management plans are developed and implemented in cooperation with local communities | No progress on the management plan development so far, however, zoning of the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri (envisioned by this Output) has been done in 2016 under GoE co-financing with delineation of three zones: Core (91,130 ha), Mixed Use (8,499 ha), and Bizen Monastery Zone (Cultural Heritage) (6,840 ha)[[26]](#footnote-26) | 2017-2018 | **2** | **3** |
| **Output 2.4.** Three model protected area business plans  are developed and implemented | No progress so far | 2017-2018 | **1** | **3** |
| **Output 2.5.** Integrated and inclusive management mechanisms established:  -at least 3 Community Councils in the target PAs for PA participatory management | No formal community committees have been established and no official agreement signed. However, Technical Committee (13 people) with participation of representatives of local communities was established in 2015 for zoning and demarcation of the proposed Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri PA. The Committee conducted awareness campaign and consultations among local communities and FWA and Zoba officials on the PA regime and zoning, land use in the mixed use zones to find support of local people to the PA regime. In total 9,397 people were involved in the consultation process in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori-Hawakil area in 2015-2016[[27]](#footnote-27). | 2017-2020 | **2** | **3** |
| **Outcome 3:** Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas | | | | |
| **Output 3.1.** Local communities are trained in SLM, SFM and sustainable fishing via Farm/Fishing Field Schools and other mechanisms | 3 sites for establishment of farmer schools have been identified in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri Green Belt. None of the FFS have been established yet due to unclear status and structure of such schools. However, in 2014-2017 in the framework of the project co-financing from the GoE **74 local people** in the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri Green Belt proposed PA were trained in the efficient milk production, agronomy, horticulture and bee-keeping and poultry farming production by the MA, and Ghinda and Asmara sub-zoba governments. **Three school Green Clubs** proposed under this Output has been established in Ghindae, Zagir, and Quazen villages (**550 members total**)[[28]](#footnote-28). | 2016-2017 | **2** | **3** |
| **Output 3.2.** Sustainable resource management plans for communities in the target PAs are developed and implemented | No progress so far | 2017-2018 | **1** | **3** |
| **Output 3.3.** Implementation of model ecosystem service conservation measures:  - pilot community projects on SLM, SFM and sustainable fishing are developed and implemented in collaboration with PAs | Many activities were implemented under this Output in 2014-2017 using GEF funding and GoE co-financing in the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri Green Belt project area:   * **1 Toyota Hilux Pick-Up**, **1500 shovels**, **1500 pick mattocks**, **1300 wheel-barrows, gabion cages, and 2 water pumps** were procured for implementation of ecosystem restoration and SLM activities in Ghinda sub-zoba (GEF funding of US$ 954,061); * **600 bee-hives** and **28 milk cows** were provided to **9 local communities** in Ghinda sub-zoba (GoE co-funding); * **96 ha** **of hill terraces** were made and planted with **159,000 tree seedlings** (*Terminalia brownii, Acacia laeta, and Eucalyptus rudis)* by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the proposed PA (Asmara and Ghinda sub-zoba) in 2014-2017 (GoE co-funding); * **28 check-dams and micro-dams** of **total volume 34,150 m³** were constructed in in the mixed use and buffer zones of the proposed PAs (Asmara and Ghinda sub-zobas) in 2014-2017 (GoE co-funding) to promote sustainable small-scale agriculture and adopt to climate change (increased frequency of droughts)[[29]](#footnote-29). | 2017-2020 | **2** | **2** |
| **Average score for actual Output delivery: 52%** of expected delivery rate at the Mid-Term = **MU[[30]](#footnote-30)** | | | **1.7** | **3.3** |

**Table 4.** Project progress to achieve Objective and Outcomes(see Annex 7 for details)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective/Outcome** | **Achievement rating** | **Justification** |
| **Project Objective:** Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system | **MU** | Given the data collected by the MTR, due to enforced PA regime of the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri number of households selling firewood in Durfo village decreased from 300 (2014) to 0 (2017); total number of livestock decreased from 8,890 (2014) to 5,920 (2017)[[31]](#footnote-31). In another village in the PA – Shegrni Arberibue – number of livestock decreased from 3,190 (2014) to 1,600 (2017)[[32]](#footnote-32). These facts demonstrate obvious threat reduction at least for one proposed PA (Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area).  Actual annual GoE funding to support national PA system (3 proposed PAs) was significantly below when expected at the mid-term (actual US$164,000 (2016) vs US$250,000 expected) and mainly provided to the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area (97%)[[33]](#footnote-33).  In result of check-dam constructions in Durfo catchment (a village in Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area) in the project framework in 2014-2015, 150 from 630 households (or 24%) reported 2 sustainable crops a year and 40% of income increase since 2015[[34]](#footnote-34). Similar check-dam and micro-dam constructions were implemented in Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area in 8 more villages[[35]](#footnote-35) contributing to sustainable agriculture, increasing production, and food security. No similar activities have been implemented in two other project areas. |
| **Outcome 1:** Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system | **U** | No legal and institutional framework for PA establishment and management have been developed, approved by the GoE and implemented. The progress to achieve this Outcome is very low due to insufficient project management and severe delay to deliver key Outputs for this Outcome to materialize. |
| **Outcome 2.** Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system: 3 officially established and functional PAs covering 1,000,000 ha | **MU** | Given significant delay with development of National Protected Area Act and establishment of National PA administration this Outcome is unlikely to be fully achieved. Current situation is similar to the ECMIB project issue when official establishment of 2 Marine PAs never happened due to delayed project implementation and lack of time. Despite lack of official PA status, the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri and Buri areas have been demarcated, zoned and protected by FWA rangers and village scouts since 2014 using funds of the GEF project and GoE[[36]](#footnote-36). METT score for the area increased from 29 to 44, however, decrease of the score for other two proposed PAs was insignificant[[37]](#footnote-37). Similar, significant GoE funding was mainly provided to the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area (97%), but not two other proposed PAs[[38]](#footnote-38). |
| **Outcome 3:** Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas | **MS** | 8,499 ha of mixed use zones were demarcated around 8 villages in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri for sustainable SLM, SFM and livestock grazing. Plus additional territory of the PA core zone can be used for beekeeping and NTFP collection by local communities. Due to the measures only in Durfo community about 97 ha of agricultural land were made available for SLM[[39]](#footnote-39).  At least 150 families in Durfo village switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and LE regime of the PAs[[40]](#footnote-40). Similar shifts to sustainable practices are likely for other 8 villages located in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area due to similar measures implemented in 2014-2017  96 ha of hill terraces were made and planted with 159,000 tree seedlings (*Terminalia brownii, Acacia laeta, and Eucalyptus rudis)* by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area (Asmara and Ghinda sub-zoba) in 2014-2017 (GoE co-funding)[[41]](#footnote-41). However, no sustainable NRM activities were implemented in other project areas. |

## Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Overall rating for the project implementation and adaptive management is **U (Unsatisfactory)** with following ratings for evaluation criteria used for the assessment: Management Arrangements - **U (Unsatisfactory),** Work Planning **- U (Unsatisfactory),** Finance and Co-finance **–** **MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory),** M&E system - **U (Unsatisfactory),** Stakeholder Engagement **– MS (Moderately Satisfactory),** Reporting - **U (Unsatisfactory),** and Communication - **MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory),** M&E system - **U (Unsatisfactory),** Stakeholder Engagement **– MS (Moderately Satisfactory)** (see Table 5 for details).

**Management Arrangements.** Current Project Management structure is very different from suggested in the prodoc and discussed at the project Inception Workshop in 2014. It was unclear and almost non-functional in 2014-2017, because no PMU with detached management staff has been established, Executing Agency responsibilities were transferred from the FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba in 2015 but never actually taken by the Zoba, no project manager has been hired or assigned by the MLWE for the project implementation. The project Steering and Technical Committees were established in 2014 in accordance with the project document but had only two meetings in 2014-2017 and are currently dysfunctional. UNDP was informally excluded from the project Steering Committee, despite its important role as a project supporter and co-financer. During the MTR mission the project management arrangement were partly clarified but still need further clarifications for effective management (Fig 2.). Thus, clarified management arrangements suggest project management without organization of actual PMU with detached management staff, do not provide any role to UNDP again as one of the key project partners and stakeholders, do not indicate responsible key actors (actually Responsible Parties) for achievement of each of the project Outcomes, and do not assign officials from MLWE, MMR, WFA, and Zoba Administrations to implement managing and coordinating roles in the project framework.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | **B** |

**Figure 2.** The project management arrangement outlined in the project document and agreed on the project Inception Workshop (A) and the project management structure clarified by MLWE during the MTR mission (B).

**Work planning.** The project was started in July 2014, however, since its beginning the project implementation have been significantly delayed due to slow progress to establish the PMU on the base of the FWA first, and then due to transferring of the project execution responsibilities to the North Red Sea Zoba. However, as was found by the MTR, project activities under Outputs 2.1 (zoning, demarcation and strengthened protection of the Green Belt and partly of the Buri-Irrori area) and Output 3.3 (SLM and SFM activities) started under the GoE co-funding before official PA establishment and development of appropriate PA and community management plans for sustainable use of natural resources. The Work Plan for the entire project lifetime was never developed in 2014-2017. However, the Work Plan for 2017-2020 was prepared by MLWE and FWA during the MTR mission in August-September 2017. The MTR found out that the Project annual plans 2104, 2015, 2016 and bi-annual plan for 2017-2018 were routinely prepared by the MLWE with technical support from UNDP by the end of December – middle of January, but they were endorsed by the MLWE only with 2-4 months of delay in March-May. Thus, actual implementation of the plans could start only in the middle of a year. The Workplans are general and often do not provide clear guidance for the activities to deliver the project Outputs, do not incorporate adaptive management, and do not indicate members of the project management team responsible for particular activities (see details in the Table 4). The planning was never discussed with the project SC in 2015-2017. The MTR did not find any quarterly workplan with more detailed planning of the project activities. No lessons learned have been documented by the project team and no obvious and necessary adjustments to the project Outputs and Indicators to clarify them and make realistic for achievement given the project delays and socio-economic situation in the country have been done.

**Finance and Co-finance**. Variance between planned and actual annual expenses was very significant (48%-95% of planned budget) due to lack of actual implementation of the project annual Work Plans (Fig. 3). Total project expenses for 2014-2017 are US$ 1,452,689 from GEF and UNDP funds, or 29% of planned US$ 4,957,571 for the first four years of the project implementation[[42]](#footnote-42). These facts indicate poor financial planning and management of the project.

**Figure 3.** Planned budget and actual expenses of the project in 2014-2017

At the same time, the MTR found out that that some of the project activities directly related to the project Outputs (for Outputs 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1 and 3.3) have been actually implemented in the project areas with co-financing from the GoE since 2014 (see Table 1 for details). Total GoE’ co-financing for the Outputs was estimated in US$4,210,000 (57% of expected total co-funding, or 104% expected in-cash co-financing of the GoE to this project). Thus, total project expenses for 2014-2017 were estimated in US$ 5,662,673 with GEF contributing 20.3%, UNDP – 5.4%, and GoE co-financing – 74.3% (Fig. 4 A). Distribution of the project funding by Outputs was out of balance: total funding for Output 3.3 from GEF and UNDP was estimated in US$ 1,024,239 (or 71% of total GEF and UNDP expenses for the project in 2014-2017), for Output 2.1 – US$ 50,148 (or 3.5%), for Project Management (including furniture, equipment, travel expenses, and salaries) – US$378,302 (or 25.5%) (Fig. 4 B). No expenses for other project Outputs from UNDP and GEF funds were found. Similar unbalanced funding was indicated for the GoE expenses in the co-financing framework: US$ 407,526 (or 10% of total GoE co-financing for 2014-2017) were spent for Outputs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.5; US$ 3,802,458 (or 90%) – for Outputs 3.1 and 3.3, and nothing – for other project Outputs (Fig. 4 C).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C |

**Figure 4.** Total project funding for 2014-2017 (A); Distribution of GEF and UNDP funding by Outputs in 2014-2017 (B); Distribution of GoE co-financing by Outputs in 2014-2017 (C).

**M&E System.** The MTR did not find any M&E plans developed for the project document or later during the project implementation to provide necessary control over implementation of the project or support corrective actions via Adaptive Management in 2014-2020. No evidences of use of the project M&E framework for adaptive management of the project were discovered. The MTR have not found any records about the project monitoring activities in 2014-2017 and stakeholder participation in these activities. However, it should be mentioned that MLWE, FWA, MA, North Red Sea Zoba and Ghindae and Asmara sub-zoba administrations actively participated in the MTR mission, organized necessary field visits, and provided a lot of additional information for the project review. The MTR has not found documentary evidences of reviewing and management of the level of risks identified in the project documents and UNDP SESP assessment. No Grievance Redress Mechanism has been established by the project to collect and analyze local communities’ concerns about the project implementation (see other details in the Table 5).

**Stakeholder Engagement.** Key project partners – MLWE, FWA, North Red Sea Zoba and Ghindae and Asmara sub-zoba administrations – have been most actively involved in the project implementation for delivery of the project Outputs 2.1 and 3.3 from the project start, despite their participation was often uncoordinated and results unreported due to lack of the clear project management. Several thousands local people were reached, informed and consulted to establish protective regime of the Green Belt Area. However, involvement of National Consultants in the project implementation started only in 2017 and none of the International Consultants was contracted to support delivery of the project Outputs (see other details in the Table 5).

**Reporting.** Two Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs) 2015 and 2016 completed by UNDP CO with input from the MLWE and FWA. However, many project activities implemented with the GoE co-financing have never been reported in the PIRs as well as adaptive management changes. No other annual and quarterly reports on the project progress prepared by MLWE, FWA, or the North Read Sea Zoba have been found. The PIRs have never been shared and discussed with SC, TC, and other stakeholders. No lessons learned through the project implementation have been documented (see other details in the Table 5).

**Communication.** The only effective mechanism of the project communication with stakeholders the MTR found was meetings and focus groups of MLWE, FWA, MA, and Zoba Administration with local communities on the zoning, demarcation, support of protective regime, reforestation and SLM activities of the Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori proposed PAs. No project web-site has been established and no annual information bulletin or any other publications on the project implementation have been published. Only 3 articles about the project were published in 2014 in the Eritrea’s mass media and internet. However, 9,397 local people were involved in the project awareness campaign during the demarcation and zoning process in the Green Belt area in 2015 and 2016 (see other details in the Table 5).

**Table 5.** Review of the project implementation and adaptive management

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation criteria** | **Evaluation Score** | **Justification** | | | |
| **Management arrangements** | | | **U** | | |
| Project Management Structure | **U** | Current Project Management structure is very different from suggested in the prodoc and discussed at the project Inception Workshop in 2014. In 2014 the MLWE started to establish PMU at the base of FWA: project office and office equipment and furniture were bought and technical staff was hired. However, the Project Manager had never been hired. In 2015 MLWE decided to move the project management to the NRS Zoba administration due to lack of management capacity at FWA. No PMU with detached management staff has been established so far. The project Steering and Technical Committees were established in 2014 (including MLWE, MMR, MA, MLG, FWA, and MF), but both committees had only 2 meetings in 2014-2017[[43]](#footnote-43). Thus, both SC an TC are currently dysfunctional. Instead of SC and TC meetings MLWE, FWA, and UNDP had a few meetings for the project annual planning and management structure issues in 2014-2017[[44]](#footnote-44) | | | |
| Level of support of project management team from UNDP CO | **MU** | UNDP Eritrea has been trying to provide any possible support to the MLWE and FWAfor the project implementation at all levels (support for annual planning, reporting and management), but the government of Eritrea seems to be unreceptive of the support so far due to political issues (the government has been unwilling to take any support from international organizations). Even UNDP has been informally excluded from the project Steering Committee, despite its important role as a project supporter and co-financer. | | | |
| Support of the project management from Ministry of Land, Water and Environment and Executing Agency (Forestry and Wildlife Authority) | **MU** | Formally MLWE, FWA and NRS Zoba have high interest in the project, provided significant government co-financing for the project implementation, and high-level support to the MTR mission. All these organizations express significant ownership for the project. However, lack of clear roles of different partners and almost absence of the project management make all that support only slightly effective. | | | |
| Level of support of the project management from the Steering Committee | **U** | As was already stated above the SC and TC have been practically dysfunctional since 2015 and could not provide support to the project. | | | |
| **Work planning** | | | | **U** | |
| Delays between start of the project and actual implementation | **U** | The project was started in July 2014, however, since its beginning the project implementation have been significantly delayed. Establishment of the PMU started at the FWA but it has never been finalized due to MLWE decision to transfer Executing Agency responsibilities to the North Red Sea Zoba in 2015 (the reason lack of institutional and management capacity at FWA and delay in actual project implementation[[45]](#footnote-45)). Almost all 2015-2016 project activities were delayed again due to implementation responsibility transfer from FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba. However, project activities under Outputs 2.1 (zoning, demarcation and strengthened protection of the Green Belt area) and Output 3.3 (SLM and SFM activities) started earlier than official PA have been established | | | |
| Work Plan for entire project lifetime | **U** | The Work Plan for the entire project was never developed in 2014-2017. However, the Work Plan for 2017-2020 was prepared by MLWE and FWA during the MTR mission in August-September 2017. | | | |
| Project annual and quarterly work plans | **MU** | The MTR found out that the Project annual plans 2104, 2015, 2016 and bi-annual plan for 2017-2018 were routinely prepared by the MLWE with technical support from UNDP by the end of December – middle of January, but they were actually endorsed by the MLWE only in March-May (with 2-4 months of delay). Thus, actual implementation of the plans could start only in the middle of a year. The drafted plans were discussed on the meetings between MLWE, FWA, and UNDP, but not on the meetings of the project SC and TC. Due to almost lack of the project implementation Work plans for 2015, 2016 and 2017 look very similar. No quarterly plans have been developed by the project management team.  Also, the Workplans are general and do not provide clear guidance for the project actual implementation. E.g., the Work plan for 2017-2018 does not provide clear guidance what exact legislation documents have to be delivered and submitted to the GoE for approval (It is just called “PA Legislation/Policy”[[46]](#footnote-46), however, it was clarified by the MTR that Protected Area Act and Standard Operating Procedures for establishment of PA should provide necessary legislation base for establishment of official PAs in Eritrea). The 2017-2018 plan does not envision any resources to facilitate official reviewing and approval process of developed PA legislation by the GoE; Output 1.2 does not have activities to develop TOR and budgeting for PA agency and facilitation of official establishment of the agency; Output 2.1 have demarcation process for the Green Belt area, however, this activity was completed in 2016-2017, etc. | | | |
| Project Adaptive Management | **U** | Project operational management has been never set up as required by the GEF for all projects. No lessons learned have been documented by the project team and no obvious and necessary adjustments to the project Outputs and Indicators to clarify them and make realistic for achievement given the project limited timeline and socio-economic situation in the country. MTR found out that clarification of the project Outputs and realistic adjustment of the Objective and Outcome indicators is the key thing to do to implement, monitor and evaluate the project. | | | |
| **Finance and Co-finance** | | | **MU** | | |
| Quality of planning of the project annual budget | **MU** | As we mentioned above, the project planning including the budget was done annually in time, but it was actually endorsed by the MLWE for implementation with 2-4 months of delay. The planning was never discussed with the project SC in 2015-2017. The planning was too general to figure out exact deliverables for many Outputs and their actual costs (see more details in the Work Planning section above). | | | |
| Project financial management | **U** | The financial planning was more or less satisfactory, but the planning was not actually implemented and a great part of funding was annually returned to UNDP as unspent (see next criterion for details). Given the fact the project financial management was poor. | | | |
| Variance between planned and actual expenses | **U** | Variance between planned and actual expenses was very significant due to lack of actual implementation of the project annual Work Plans. Thus, difference between planned and actual expenses in 2014 was US$ 557,692 (or 85% of planned budget); for 2015 – US$ 1,605,245 (or 95% of planned budget); for 2016 – US$ 1,120,688, or 48% of planned budget. Total project expenses for 2014-2017 are US$ 1,452,689 from GEF and UNDP funds, or 29% of planned US$ 4,957,571 for the first four years of the project implementation[[47]](#footnote-47) | | | |
| Project expenses to deliver Outputs | **U** | Great majority of the project expenses of GEF and UNDP funds in 2014-2016 were made to deliver the project Output 3.3 (US$1,024,239, or 71% of entire expenses in 2014-2017) and Output 2.1 (awareness campaign among local communities to demarcate and zone Green Belt PA area, salaries to WFA rangers and village scouts) - $US50,148, or 3.5% of total project expenses. All other expenses – 25% of the total were actually spent to equip the PMU office with furniture and computers, travel expenses and development of the project operational manual. Another US$ 85,786 were reserved for a national consultant team to deliver key deliverables for Outputs 1.1., 1.3, 1.5, and 1.6) in 2017. So, we can report obvious unbalance of the project expenses for Outputs until 2017 due to lack of effective project management. | | | |
| Annual project audit reports | **MU** | The project has only one Audit Report for 2016. The key conclusions of the report: “Government directives were followed in replacement of the prescribed UNDP regulations, rules and procedures” (delivery delays). Procurement need to be liaised with the relevant Government Authority to provide transparency and get goods on timely manner”[[48]](#footnote-48). Annual audit reports are expected for all UNDP/GEF projects. | | | |
| Changes made in the project budget as a part of Adaptive Management | **U** | No documented changes were suggested or made to the project budget due to low level of the project expenses and lack of effective project management. | | | |
| Difference between planned and actual co-financing commitments | **HS** | The MTR found out that some of the project activities directly related to the project Outputs (e.g., for Outputs 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1 and 3.3) have been actually implemented in the project areas with co-financing from the GoE since 2014 (please, see Output Delivery Table for details). Total GoE’ co-financing for the Outputs was estimated in US$4,210,000 (57% of expected total co-funding or 104% expected in-cash co-financing of the GoE to this project)[[49]](#footnote-49) | | | |
| **M&E System** | | | | **U** | |
| Quality of the project M&E plan and its relevance to the Objective and Outcomes | **U** | The MTR did not find any M&E plans developed for the project document or later during the project implementation to provide necessary control over implementation of the project or support corrective actions via Adaptive Management in 2014-2020. However, we found M&E Plan for the project in 2015 as a part of the Project Operational Manual developed in December 2014[[50]](#footnote-50). The M&E plan is designed to monitor delivery of the project activities and Outputs, but not assessment of the progress to the project Outcomes and Objective based on the indicators suggested by the PRF. | | | |
| Difference between planned and actual expenses for the project M&E | **U** | The project Work Plans 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017-2018 reserved US$ 8,000 annually for “monitoring visits” in the framework of the project M&E, but the MTR has not found any evidences that these visits were really implemented (lack of the visit monitoring reports). However, budget for the MTR was planned for 2017 in the Bi-annual project Work Plan 2017-2018 and it was spent in accordance to the planned amount (US$ 25,000) for the mission. Also, in the framework of M&E budget the project spent resources for the Inceptive Workshop, meetings of the project SC and TC in 2014 and project Audit in 2016 (~US$ 53,000 in total). Thus, total expenses for the project M&E is about US$78,000, or 27% of the amount planned in the project document. | | | |
| Use of M&E framework for the project adaptive management | **U** | The MTR has not found any evidences of use of the project M&E framework for adaptive management of the project. Reporting on the project Objective and Outcome Indicators have been done in PIRs 2015 and 2016, but the reports have not been used for the project adaptive management too. | | | |
| Stakeholder participation in the project M&E, including women | **MS** | The MTR have not found any records about the project monitoring activities in 2014-2017 and stakeholder participation in these activities. However, it should be mentioned that MLWE, FWA, MA, North Red Sea Zoba and Ghindae and Asmara sub-zoba administrations actively participated in the MTR mission, organized necessary field visits, and provided a lot of additional information for the project review. In total 40 people were interviewed during the MTR mission, including a few representatives of local communities (Filfil valley and Durfo village), and only 3 women. GEF TT (METT) 2017 for the project was completed during MTR mission by UNDP, FWA, and MLWE. | | | |
| Management of environmental and social risks as identified through the prodoc and UNDP SESP | **U** | The MTR has not found documentary evidences of reviewing and management of the level of risks identified in the project documents and UNDP SESP assessment. No Grievance Redress Mechanism has been established by the project to collect and analyze local communities’ concerns about the project implementation. For example, SLM activities in the Green Belt area obviously benefited local people who have land plots. However, due to enforced PA regime access to firewood for selling and livestock pastures has been greatly limited to local communities that can be negatively reflected in livelihood of local people who have no land.  Given the evaluation findings the MTR recommend to review the project risks and raise some of the risks rating to HIGH (e.g., for *Capacity is too low to implement project. The low absorptive capacity results in significant delays in implementation* and *The Government of Eritrea does not establish the three pilot sites as protected areas)* | | | |
| **Stakeholder Engagement** | | | | **MS** | |
| Partners and stakeholders directly involved in the project implementation, including women | **MS** | Key project partners – MLWE, FWA, North Red Sea Zoba and Ghindae and Asmara sub-zoba administrations – have been most actively involved in the project implementation for delivery of the project Outputs 2.1 and 3.3 from the project start, despite their participation was often uncoordinated and results unreported due to lack of the clear project management. Moreover, the MTR found out that 9,397 local people were involved in the project awareness campaign and consultations during the demarcation and zoning process in the Green Belt area in 2015 and 2016[[51]](#footnote-51). Several hundreds of local people were involved in the check and micro dam construction, terracing and tree planting in the Green Belt mixed-use and buffer zone under Output 3.3. 42 FWA rangers and 52 village scouts in Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori proposed PAs have been involved in the actual protection of the areas (Output 2.1) since 2014[[52]](#footnote-52). The project has collaborated and partnered with the National Union of Eritrean Women and the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (which are the key civil society organizations in Eritrea) to mobilize local communities at the grassroot level during the community awareness raising activities in 2014-2016[[53]](#footnote-53). Since 2017 the project has collaborated with the Eritrea Institute of Technology, Hemelmalo Agricultural College, and Eritrea School of Law on delivery of key Outputs for Outcome 1[[54]](#footnote-54). However, stakeholder involvement might be better if the project had an appropriate management structure. Also, none of International Consultants planned in the project document was involved in the project implementation, and National Consultants were involved only in 2017. MMR reported about very low involvement in the project implementation. | | | |
| Level of local and national government support to the project implementation | **S** | Despite poor project management the project have high level of support from National, Zoba, Sub-Zoba, and village government that is indicated by high level of GoE co-financing provided to the project in 2014-2016 - US$4,210,000 (57% of expected total co-funding, or 104% expected in-cash co-financing of the GoE to this project), provided mainly by the North Red Sea Zoba administration[[55]](#footnote-55). | | | |
| **Reporting** | | | | **U** | |
| Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), quarterly and annual reports | **MU** | The MTR found out presence of two PIRs 2015 and 2016 completed by UNDP CO with input from the MLWE and FWA. However, many project activities implemented with the GoE co-financing have never been reported in the PIRs. Also, we found one six-month project report dated on December 6 2014 and overall progress brief report (2014-2016) dated on June 6 2017 completed by the Inclusive and Sustainable Development Unit of the UNDP CO. The MTR did not found any annual and quarterly reports on the project progress prepared by MLWE, FWA, or the North Read Sea Zoba. However, in the framework of the MTR, the MLWE, FWA and North Red Sea Zoba prepared informative reports on the project activities implemented in the Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori proposed PAs in 2014-2017 in the framework of co-financing from GoE[[56]](#footnote-56). | | | |
| Reporting of adaptive management changes | **U** | No evidences of any adaptive management changes (with exclusion of the Executive Agency change from FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba) and reporting have been found by the MTR in the existing reports. However, some adaptive management changes of Outputs and Indicators have been done during the MTR mission in cooperation with MLWE, FWA and UNDP CO (see Annexes 1 and 2). | | | |
| Mechanisms of sharing of the project reports with Steering Committee and stakeholders | **U** | The MTR did not find any evidences of sharing of the project reports with the SC, TC, and stakeholders. No discussions of the PIRs with SC and TC have been officially done. | | | |
| Lessons learning and sharing mechanism | **U** | No documentation of lessons learned by the project has been implemented by the project management team. However, the MTR found out that some the project’s practical lessons and successful practices on collaboration with local communities to support PA regime, make zonation and demarcation of the boundaries, and implement sustainable land management projects (e.g., terrace and dam construction) deserve proper documentation and sharing. | | | |
| **Communication** | | | | | **MU** |
| Mechanisms of the project communication with stakeholders | **MU** | The only effective mechanism of the project communication with stakeholders the MTR found was meetings and focus groups of MLWE, FWA, MA, and Zoba Administration with local communities on the zoning, demarcation, support of protective regime, reforestation and SLM activities of the Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori proposed PAs. E.g., 9,397 local people were involved in the project awareness campaign and consultations during the demarcation and zoning process in the Green Belt area in 2015 and 2016[[57]](#footnote-57). No project web-site has been established and no annual information bulletin or any other publications on the project implementation have been published. | | | |
| Mechanisms for receiving stakeholder feedback on the project implementation | **U** | The only mechanism to receive stakeholder feedback to the project management team was meetings and focus groups of MLWE, FWA, MA, and Zoba Administration with local communities on the zoning, demarcation, support of protective regime, reforestation and SLM activities of the Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori proposed PAs described above. However, the MTR did not find any documentation and analysis of the stakeholders’ feedback on the project implementation. No Grievance Redress Mechanism has been established to monitor local communities’ concerns and suggestions. | | | |
| Functional outreach and awareness campaigns | **MS** | Only 3 articles about the project were published in 2014 in the Eritrea’s mass media and internet. However, 9,397 local people were involved in the project awareness campaign during the demarcation and zoning process in the Green Belt area in 2015 and 2016. Three school Green Clubs has been established in Ghindae, Zagir, and Quazen villages (550 members total) in the project framework[[58]](#footnote-58). No awareness campaign at the national level has been implemented by the project to promote public support to establishment of the PAs. | | | |

## Sustainability

Overall rating for the Sustainability is **ML (Moderately Likely)**. It was rather challenging to evaluate sustainability of the project given that none of the Outputs has been delivered completely and none of the Outcomes achieved. However, given the GoE’s commitments to support proposed PAs even they are not officially established yet it is likely that the Government will continue to support them with at least minimal funding required to provide their protection. Outcome 3 is likely to have long-term (10-15 years or more effect) and will not require significant annual investments as soon as necessary check dams and micro-dams are constructed, tree plantations established, and local communities are provided with SLM opportunities and other alternative incomes. The likelihood of financial support of the PA system from GoE is supported also by the fact that GDP of Eritrea is projected to increase from 2.2 (2016) to 3.4% in 2017 given expected increase of mining production in 2017. The project results will likely to contribute to economic sustainability of local communities in and around PAs via employment of rangers and scouts, improvement of sustainability and productivity of agriculture in the mixed use and buffer zones, development of alternative sources of income, and potential tourism development. Unfortunately, no legislation and governance structure has been established yet to support official establishment of the PAs, their appropriate staffing and management. The project has considerable delay to develop appropriate legislation and governance framework to support the project results. The project is likely to contribute to environmental sustainability of the project areas’ ecosystems and wildlife due to natural and assisted restoration of the habitat (see details in the Table 6).

**Table 6.** Assessment of the project sustainability

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation criteria** | **Evaluation Score** | **Justification** |
| **Financial sustainability** | | |
| Likelihood that financial resources will be available to support the project Outcomes after the project completion | **L** | It is rather challenging to evaluate financial sustainability of the project Outcomes given that none of them have been achieved yet. But if established, minimal annual funding (~$150,000) to support National PA Agency (5-7 of staff) is likely to be provided by the GoE after the project completion given its commitment to support national PA system. Simple and non-expensive Biodiversity monitoring programme can be implemented in three target PAs in the framework of the PA budgets from GoE. PA legislation framework if established will not require any funding from the government budget. Outcome 2 (officially established PAs) will likely to have annual minimal support given current investments of the GoE in the PA protection, zoning and demarcation ($164,000 for three proposed PAs in 2016). Even if the three PAs are not established officially the GoE is very likely to support their protection (rangers and scouts) with minimal budget. Outcome 3 is likely to have long-term (10-15 years or more effect) and will not require significant annual investments as soon as necessary check dams and micro-dams are constructed, tree plantations established, and local communities are provided with SLM opportunities and other alternative incomes. Routine maintenance of the Outcome 3 results can be done by local communities from funding from annual Zoba and sub-zoba budgets (e.g., US 3,812,000 were spent by Ghindae and Asmara Sub-zobas for dams and and afforestation in the Green Belt area in 2014-2017). |
| Dependence of the Outcome sustainability on external financial sources | Given political situation in Eritrea and current position of the GoE on any financial support from international donors dependence of the project Outcomes on the external funding sources will be very low. |
| Mechanisms to ensure financial sustainability of the Outcomes established by the project | Given lack of international NGOs in Eritrea, current low number of tourist, GoE reluctance to accept international donor support, the only likely mechanism to support financial sustainability of the project Outcomes is the GoE budget (minimal resources to support the system are likely). |
| **Socio-economic sustainability** | | |
| Significant economic and social risks for the project Outcomes | **L** | No significant risks to the project results sustainability (if achieved) have been found by the MTR. GDP of Eritrea is projected to increase from 2.2 (2016) to 3.4% in 2017 given likely increase of mining production in 2017[[59]](#footnote-59). Thus, it is likely that the GoE will have enough economic resources to support the National PA system (if established) in 2018-2023. The project results will likely to contribute to economic sustainability of local communities in and around PAs via employment of rangers and scouts, improvement of sustainability and productivity of agriculture in the mixed use and buffer zones, development of alternative sources of income, and potential tourism development. Local governments supports PA regime and see many benefits from them, including sustainable water supply, opportunities for tourism, restoration of degraded lands, and shift from migratory to settled life for local people[[60]](#footnote-60). However, some social risk may arise if interest of local people who do not own land will be neglected. |
| Mechanisms to sustain the project Outcomes via stakeholder ownership | The North Red Sea Zoba, Ghindae and Asmara sub-zoba administrations demonstrate high level of ownership for the PA proposed areas given of their support of rangers and scouts in the project areas, significant funding of the SLM activities, and active participation in the zoning and demarcation of the Green Belt Area. Local communities (at least land owners) also demonstrate high ownership of the project results in SLM and are ready to support them with their input (at least labor and time)[[61]](#footnote-61). Local pastoralist community in the Buri Irrori proposed PA is very supportive of the PA regime and wildlife conservation given their traditional conservation orientation[[62]](#footnote-62) |
| **Institutional and governance sustainability** | | |
| Presence of policies, legislation, and governance structures to support project Outcomes | **MU** | Unfortunately, no legislation and governance structure has been established yet to support official establishment of the PAs, their appropriate staffing and management. The project have considerable delay to develop appropriate legislation and governance framework to support the project results, however, it is still possible in the last 3-4 years of the project if its management will improve dramatically. |
| Capacity of institutional and governance structures to sustain the project Outcomes | Currently MLWE, FWA, and Zoba administrations have at least minimal capacity to support the PA regime even if the PAs are not officially established. However, this capacity is likely to increase if appropriate legislative and governance frameworks will be developed |
| Role of the project in establishment of appropriate policy, legislation and governance structures to sustain the project results | Currently the project role to establish appropriate governance and legislative framework to support National PA system is low: development of necessary documents started only in 2017. The role of the project is likely to increase if the project has appropriate management. |
| **Environmental sustainability** | | |
| Sever environmental factors that can influence sustainability of the project Outcomes and Impacts | **L** | The project is likely to contribute to environmental sustainability of the project areas’ ecosystems and wildlife due to natural and assisted restoration of the habitat. However, the ecosystems and local communities are very sensitive to the level of annual precipitations and frequency of droughts if the former increase with the climate change. |

## MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary

The MTR ratings and project achievement summary is shown in the Table 7.

**Table 7.** MTR Ratings and Achievement Summary

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MTR Criteria** | **MTR Rating** | **Comments** |
| **Project Strategy** | **S** | The project is built using participatory approach on the lessons learned from other UNDP/GEF projects in Eritrea, highly relevant to the country development priorities, focuses on highly representative for the country conservation targets and adequately addresses key threats and barriers on the way to establish functional PA system in Eritrea through three project strategies (Components 1-3). However, some of the project Outputs are too general and do not provide clear explanation what exactly products and services need to be delivered in their frameworks. Some of the project Objective and Outcome Indicators are not SMART and needed some adjustment with the project Theory of Change and realities of Eritrea. |
| **Progress towards Results:** | **MU** | None of the project Outputs has been fully delivered yet in accordance with implementation timelines in the project document. Overall Output delivery was assessed as 52% of expected at the mid-term. Currently out of 19 Objective and Outcome indicators, only 6 (32%) are on target to be achieved by the project. However, the project has positive effect on improvement of forest ecosystem and local community status at least in one project area - Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri. |
| Objective Achievement | **MU** | Due to enforced PA regime of the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri number of households selling firewood and grazing livestock in the proposed PA significantly decreased after the project start. However, GoE funding to support national PA system is still significantly below then expected at the mid-term and PA legal and institutional framework is still lacking. At the same time the project has positive impact on sustainability and food security of local communities as a result of SLM activities in the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri. However, no similar results have been achieved in two other project areas. |
| Outcome 1 Achievement | **U** | No legal and institutional framework for PA establishment and management have been developed, approved by the GoE and implemented. The progress to achieve this Outcome is very low due to insufficient project management and severe delay to deliver key Outputs for this Outcome to materialize. |
| Outcome 2 Achievement | **MU** | Given significant delay with development of National Protected Area Act and establishment of National PA administration this Outcome is unlikely to be fully achieved. Despite lack of official PA status, the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri and Buri areas have been demarcated, zoned and protected by FWA rangers and village scouts since 2014 using funds of the GEF project and GoE. METT score for the area increased from 29 to 44, however, decrease of the score for other two proposed PAs was insignificant. Similar, significant GoE funding was mainly provided to the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area (97%), but not to two other proposed PAs. |
| Outcome 3 Achievement | **MS** | 8,499 ha of mixed use zones were demarcated around 8 villages in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri for sustainable SLM, SFM and livestock grazing. Many families in the Green Belt switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and LE regime of the PAs. 96 ha of hill terraces were made and planted with 159,000 tree seedlings (*Terminalia brownii, Acacia laeta, and Eucalyptus rudis)* by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri. However, no sustainable NRM activities were implemented in other project areas. |
| **Project Implementation and Adaptive Management** | **U** | The project management structure was unclear and almost non-functional in 2014-2017, because no PMU with detached management staff has been established, Executing Agency responsibilities were transferred from the FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba in 2015 but never actually taken by the Zoba, no project manager has been hired or assigned by the MLWE for the project implementation. The project Steering and Technical Committees were established in 2014 in accordance with the project document but had only two meetings in 2014-2017 and are currently dysfunctional. UNDP was informally excluded from the project Steering Committee, despite its important role as a project supporter and co-financer. No effective planning, M&E, and reporting system has been established to guide the project implementation. However, many activities directly related to the project Outputs were implemented due to significant co-financing from the GoE |
| **Sustainability** | **ML** | This is likely that the Government will continue to support three proposed PAs with at least minimal funding required to provide their protection. The likelihood of financial support of the PA system from GoE is supported also by the fact that GDP of Eritrea is projected to increase in 2017. The project results will likely to contribute to economic sustainability of local communities in and around PAs. Unfortunately, no legislation and governance structure has been established yet to support official establishment of the PAs, their appropriate staffing and management. The project is likely to contribute to environmental sustainability of the project areas’ ecosystems and wildlife. |

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## 4.1. Project Strategy

**Conclusion 4.1.1.** **The project design suggests a sound and integrated approach to establish sustainable national PA system in Eritrea** that includes (1) development of institutional and legislation framework for PA establishment and management; (2) official organization of first three PAs in the country with a total area about 1,000,000 ha and capacity building for their effective management; (3) involvement of local communities in the PA management and development of sustainable livelihood for local people in the PAs. **However, some of the project Outputs (e.g., Outputs 1.1.-1.5) do not provide enough guidance to unexperienced in PA establishment and management country team in Eritrea on exactly deliverables that are needed** to start official establishment of PAs, organize National PA Agency, develop and launch working PA monitoring system, etc. Given obvious reluctance of the GoE to involve International Consultants (who can clarify the issues) in the project implementation, effective delivery of the Outputs is problematic and needs discussion and clarification between MLWE, FWA, MMR and other relevant government agencies in Eritrea to provide necessary deliverables and avoid potential institutional conflicts (e.g., a possible conflict between MLWE and MMR on establishment of the National PA Agency). **Some of the project Objective and Outcome Indicators are not SMART and need adjustment with the project Theory of Change and realities of Eritrea** to form effective and realistic M&E framework for the project.

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| **Recommendation 4.1.1.** By October 30, the project management team should critically review and clarify activities and deliverables for each of the project Outputs. For example, Output 1.1 was partly clarified during the MTR mission: the Protected Areas Act is the key legislation to start official establishment, staffing and management of the National PA network in Eritrea. It is likely the Act should be accompanied by Standard Operating Procedures for PA establishment in the country. Output 1.2. for the National PA Agency, for example, should have activities devoted to development of the ToRs for the Agency and its staff, estimation of the Agency budget in the form appropriate for consideration and approval by the GoE. Outputs 1.1-1.5 should include some activities to promote official approval of the developed documents by the GoE (e.g., meetings and consultations with the GoE). It is recommended to change Output 3.1 to include other mechanisms of capacity building for local communities on SLM, SFM, and sustainable fishery rather than Farming/Fishing Schools only (a FFS has unclear structure and implementation mechanism). Suggestions for the Output revision are provided in the Annexes 3 and 4. | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.1.2.** By October 30, the project management team should review and update Indicators in the Project Results to coincide with the project Theory of Change, SMART principles, and realities of the country. Suggested revision of the Project Results Framework is provided in the Annexes 3 and 4. | **High Priority** |

## 4.2. Progress towards Results

**Conclusion 4.2.1. Delivery of the project Outputs to achieve the expected Outcomes and Objective is significantly delayed, unsystematic and non-effective:** none of the project Outputs has been delivered completely yet and overall rate of the Output delivery is only 52% of expected at the mid-term. The project has significant risk not to achieve expected Outcomes by the end of the project (2020): currently only 6 (32%) out of 19 Objective and Outcome Indicator values are on the target to be achieved by the project. Outcome 1 (legislation and institutional framework for establishment and management of the National PA system) is under high risk of failure due to almost lack of progress on delivery of necessary Outputs and low capacity of the National Consultant team to deliver them (no national experience on the PA legislative and institutional framework development exists and lack of experienced International Consultants in the team). Outcome 2 (official establishment and capacity building of three target PAs) is likely to be only partly achieved at the current level of the project management due to its high dependence on the Outcome 1 achievement. However, despite lack of official establishment of the PAs, **the GoE since 2014 has provided significant resources to organize appropriate protection and management for at least one of the proposed PAs - Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri**, that is partly functioning as an official PA (has rangers and scouts, protective regime, demarcation of boundaries, and zoning). Outcome 3 (capacity building for local communities on the sustainable NRM) is likely to be fully achieved at least in one of the project areas (Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri again) **due to massive GoE co-funding to invest in sustainable development of local communities and provide them with alternative sources of income** since 2014. Remarkable GoE’s co-financing played critical role in the project progress to achieve (at least partly) Outcomes 2 and 3 and resulted in obvious decrease of key threats for the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area (unsustainable livestock grazing and commercial firewood collection) and likely increase of reforestation rate in 2014-2016 detected by spatial analysis of MODIS imageries.

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| **Recommendation 4.2.1.** It is highly recommended to the project management team to involve experienced International Consultants to work with National Consultants on delivery of Outputs 1.1-1.5 for Outcome 1 due to insufficient capacity and lack of experience on development of PA legislative and institutional framework in Eritrea. Such involvement of international experience will give the project tremendous advantage to build on the best world experience and avoid costly mistakes that may result in failure to achieve the Outcome. This is the key Outcome to provide very necessary institutional sustainability to all other project Outcomes. Also, this is highly desirable to involve International Consultants in the development of management plans for target PAs and local communities (Outputs 2.3, 2.4, and 3.2) to make them implementable and useful in accordance with the Results-Based Mangement concept. UNDP, IUCN, WBG and other international organizations have rosters of International Consultants with appropriate experience that can be used by the project management team in Eritrea to select the consultants. Also, International Consultants may be useful for delivery of Output 2.2 (capacity building for the PA staff). | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.2.2.** It is highly recommended to the project management team to start delivery of the project Outputs 2.1 (at least support protective regime, make demarcation and zoning of the proposed PAs), 3.1 (trainings for local communities on SLM and CBNRM), and 3.3 (pilot projects on SLM and CBNRM) in two other project areas - Buri-Irrori-Hawakil and Bara’soli - by the end of 2017-beginning 2018 using positive experience of Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri. Implementation of the activities in all project areas will provide necessary territorial balance to the project and will increase its positive impact on ecosystems, wildlife populations, and local communities. For delivery of Output 3.1 it is highly recommended to use all available mechanisms (not only Farm/Fishery Schools) for capacity building of local communities on SLM and CBNRM, including separate trainings provided by different government agencies, specially developed training programmes (repetitive trainings), exchange visits, and demonstration projects. Special attention should be devoted to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities to the local people who has no land for agriculture and lost their traditional income due to enforcement of PA regime. | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.2.3.** Given delayed project implementation it is recommended to the project management team to start active delivery of Outputs 2.2 (capacity building for the PA staff), 2.3 (Management Plans for the PAs), 2.5 (involvement of local communities in the PA management), and 3.2 (sustainable NRM plans for local communities) at the end of 2017 – beginning of 2018 even official PAs are not established yet. For example, in the framework of Output 2.2 trainings and equipment can be delivered to the area managers, rangers and scouts that are already present in the project areas and likely to be included in the staff of officially established PAs. Output 2.3 may focus on development of the so-called ecosystem management plans that includes area of proposed PAs and surrounding communities as elements of the entire landscape. In this case developed plans can be agreed with local communities and Zoba administrations, and finally approved by the MLWE, and then passed to the PAs for implementation after their official establishment. Output 3.2 can be delivered in strong collaboration with delivery of the Outputs 2.3 and 2.5 as a part of the ecosystem management planning. | **Medium Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.2.4.** While working on theOutputs 2.3 and 3.2 (management plans for PAs and local communities) the project management team should use following principles to make the plans useful, measurable, and implementable:  **●** A MP has to be based on the Result-Based Management concept with clear identification of the plan Goal (desired and achievable status of Conservation Targets - endangered wildlife populations and area of key ecosystems) and Objectives (aimed to reduction of direct threats for the Conservation Targets) and clear links between the plan expected results of different level: Outputs (products and services of the MP implementing team), Outcomes (increased capacity of PA management), Mid-Term Impacts (reduction of direct threats for PA’s biodiversity), Long-Term Impacts (improvement of status of key wildlife species and ecosystems). Results of all levels should be measurable and need to have clear Indicators. For each MP clear Theory of Change should be developed and clarified with key stakeholders based on existing approaches of IUCN First Line of Defense, or WWF’s Open Standards for Conservation Planning, or UNDP’s Management for Development Results, or other models based on the RBM;  ● A MP should be based on detailed ecosystem and habitat map for the area (e.g., interpretation of Landsat 7 and 8 imageries);  ● A MP has to be designed for no more than 5-10 year period and include budgeted M&E plan to allow lessons learning and Adaptive Management;  ● A MP must have clear Operational Plan (2-3 years) with timelines to deliver Outputs, responsible persons, required budgets and indicated sources of the budgets;  ● A MP has to be in agreement with MLWE, FWA, and Zoba’s plans and programmes and has to be officially approved by the MLWE;  ● A MP has to be developed in fully participatory approach and involve all key stakeholders in the planning process, including surrounding communities;  ● A MP has to have clear mechanism for implementation with involvement of communities and private sector to facilitate and control the process of MP implementation. | **Medium Priority** |

## 4.3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

**Conclusion 4.3.1. The most critical project issue is an ineffective project management** due to unclear management structure, lack of functional Steering and Technical Committees, lack of a PMU with detached or at least assigned project manager and management staff, and transferring of the Executing Agency responsibilities from the FWA to the North Red Sea Zoba in 2015. To make things worse, **the UNDP for unclear reasons is not considered by the GoE as a member of the Steering Committee**, despite its important role as the project supporter and co-financer. During the MTR mission the project management arrangement were partly clarified but still need further clarifications for effective project management (Fig 2.). The project has ineffective planning and communication and has no M&E, reporting, and lessons learning systems to guide adaptive management. No International Consultants and only few National Consultants have been involved in delivery of the project Outputs. However, despite all that things, **actual commitments of the GoE to establish functional PA system in the country remain high that has been reflected by quite remarkable government co-financing to the project and significant improvement of protection of** **Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri:** 104% of expected in-cash co-financing of the GoE and likely increase of reforestation rate in the area detected by remote sensing analysis.

Given previous experience, **implementation delay is a common “disease” of other UNDP/GEF projects in Eritrea:** e.g., ECMIB[[63]](#footnote-63) and SLM[[64]](#footnote-64) projects experienced very similar implementation delays, and ECMIB project was even recommended to close at the mid-term. The reasons for other project delays are also very similar to the PA project: unclear management structure, lack of PMUs with fully detached staff, transfer of Executing Agency Responsibilities from one government agency to another, and very slow process to officially approve and start implement Annual Work Plans. **All these issues demonstrate insufficient capacity of the GoE for effective management of GEF projects with strong environmental component.** Because of the delays the projects could not achieve completely all expected Outcomes. Given insufficient management this scenario is likely fortune of the PA project too. However, **full consideration of the ECMIB and SLM stories demonstrate that the GoE can mobilize necessary management resources and complete projects with more or less satisfactory results**: effectiveness and achievement of the project Outcomes were rated as Satisfactory for both projects.

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| **Recommendation 4.3.1.** By October 30 the project management team should fully clarify the project management arrangements that were shaped during the MTR mission (Fig. 2 B) with MLWE as Implementing Partner and Executing Agency and MMR, FWA, and Zoba Administrations as Key Actors (or Responsible Parties). Each Key Actor should have clear responsibility for particular project Outcome (e.g., MLWE Department of Environment can be directly responsible for delivery of the Outcome 1 (institutional and legislative framework for PA establishment), MMR and FWA can share responsibility for establishment and management of marine and terrestrial PAs (Outcome 2), and Zoba Administrations – for achievement of the Outcome 3 (capacity building of local community on SLM and CBNRM). Remember, please, “When everyone is responsible, no one is responsible”[[65]](#footnote-65). Also, role of UNDP in the project management arrangements should be clarified given its tremendous importance to assure the project funding and support of the project implementation (now UNDP is not even a member of the Project Steering Committee and do not present on the last project management diagram developed by MLWE). If GoE can see no possibility to include UNDP in the Project Steering Committee other mechanisms of UNDP involvement in the management arrangement should be clarified (e.g., regular technical sessions between UNDP, MLWE, MMR, and FWA). **Implementation of this recommendations should be one of the conditions to continue the project funding by UNDP and GEF.** | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.2.** By October 30, right after project management arrangements are clarified, the MLWE as Executing Agency should establish official Project Mangement Unit (PMU). It is highly recommended to have **classical PMU** used by great majority UNDP/GEF NIM projects - with **detached project management staff**: at least the Project Manager and 3 Coordinators responsible for delivery of each of the project Outcomes and involved in the project management full time. If due to limited capacity issue the classical PMU is not possible, another option is so-called **distributed PMU:** when experts from different government agencies are assigned to implement project management functions: e.g., one official from MLWE’s Department of Environment can be assigned on the role of the project manager, and relevant staff from MMR, FWA and Zoba Administrations can play roles of Coordinators to ensure achievement of the project Outcomes. Officials assigned to the distributed PMU have to be involved in the project management **at least 20 hours a week** and ideally should receive financial bonuses for implementation of their management functions to keep their motivation high. The members of the PMU should implement full set of management functions including planning, implementation, monitoring, and communication. **Implementation of this recommendations should be one of the conditions to continue the project funding by UNDP and GEF.** | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.3.** By December 15, when the PMU is officially established, UNDP CO should provide 3-5 day training to the PMU staff on the Results-Based Mangement (RBM) and UNDP/GEF requirements for project planning, management, reporting and communication. Each member of the PMU should clearly understand his/her role and responsibilities in the project implementation including all functions mentioned above. | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.4.** It is highly recommended to the Project Manager to consider monthly and quarterly planning and reporting as obligatory function for all PMU staff responsible for achievement of particular project Outcomes. It will help easily monitor progress on delivery of particular project Outputs and implement adaptive management of the project. | **Medium Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.5.** By December 30, it is highly recommended to the PMU to critically review all project Outputs and activities that are necessary to deliver the Outputs based on the Project Work Plan 2017-2020 and recommendations of the MTR (Annexes 3 and 4), and identify key partners for delivery of each Output, especially International and National Consultants. UNDP can provide tremendous support on selection of appropriate International Consultants to bring the best world experience in Eritrea to avoid costly mistakes and build the project implementation on the best practices. The sport champions hire the best international coaches and the most progressive governments have the best international advisors. Why Eritrea should be different and do not use this brilliant resource for the country development? | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.6.** By December 30, it is highly recommended to the PMU to develop the project M&E plan based on the MTR recommendations on the Indicators (Annex 4). The information indicators need to be updated annually (with exclusion of such costly indicators as highland forest cover and wildlife populations). Monitoring of particular indicators should be assigned to each member of the PMU. In 2018 baseline population surveys should be organized for African wild ass, Dorcas Gazelle, and Soemmoring Gazelle and then repeated in 2020-2021 at the project completion. This Impact indicator is very important to demonstrate the project impact on populations of endangered wildlife in the project area. | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.7.** By December 30, it is highly recommended to the PMU to establish **Grievance Redress Mechanism** (GRM) as a part of the project M&E plan to monitor project impact on the local communities, especially women, youth and vulnerable groups that do not own a land. Strengthening of the law enforcement in the proposed PAs can significantly limit access of local communities to pastures and firewood – traditional sources of local income and potentially negatively affect their livelihood. Local people without land should be particular concern of the PMU as a high-risk group in the PAs. GRM in UNDP/GEF project should comply with the following requirements:  a) Uptake. The GRM will have multiple uptake locations and channels. Local people in the project areas will be able to submit complaints or suggestions to PMU or members of SC in person, via mail, email, via special page of the Project web-site, and phone. These channels will be locally-appropriate, widely accessible and publicized in written and verbal forms on all project communication materials, and in public locations in the project areas.  b) Sort & process. All grievances will be registered by PMU. All complaints submitted to PMU or members of SC will be registered by the PMU and the complaint will be assigned a unique tracking number upon its submission. PMU will maintain a database with full information on all submitted complaints and responses taken. These data are important to assess trends and patterns of grievances across the Project regions and for monitoring & evaluation purposes.  c) Investigate & act. Strict complaint resolution procedures will be developed and observed, and personnel at the PMU will be assigned to handle the grievances. PMU will develop clear and strict grievance redress procedures, and assign responsibilities. To the extent possible, complaints will be handled at the level of PMU, as close as possible to the complainant. Difficult situations and conflicts will be brought to the attention of SC and UNDP CO if PMU is unable to find appropriate solution. Complaints that are beyond the Project scope will be conveyed by PMU to relevant local or regional authorities in the project areas.  d) Provide feedback. Feedback will be provided in response to all registered grievances. PMU will provide feedback by contacting the complainant directly (if his/her identity is known), by reporting on actions taken in community consultations and/or by publishing the results of the complaints on the Project web-site, local newspapers and as part of project materials.  e) Enable appeals. Complainants will be notified of their right to appeal the decision taken by the PMU. If complainants are not satisfied with PMU response to their grievance, they will be able to appeal the PMU decision to members of SC and UNDP CO via mail, e-mail or the Project web-site.  f) Monitor & Evaluate. The performance of the GRM will be regularly monitored. As all information about the grievances and their resolution will be recorded and monitored. This data will be used to conduct in-depth analyses of complaint trends and patterns, identify potential weaknesses in the Project implementation, and consider improvements. Environmental and social grievances will be reported to the GEF in the annual PIR. |  |
| **Recommendation 4.3.8.** ByDecember 30,it ishighly recommended to the MLWEas the project Executing Agencyto revive the project Steering and Technical Committees and organize their annual meeting to discuss the results of the MTR and the project Workplan for 2017-2018. Steering Committee meetings should be held at least once in a year to guide the project implementation. | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.9.** It is recommended to the MLWE as the project Executing Agency and the PMU to continue the practice of bi-annual Work Plans to ensure smooth and uninterrupted implementation of the project. Bi-annual plans should increase the project implementation effectiveness by at least 25% (saving 4-6 months required for the Work Plan approval by the GoE every two years). Another measure to decrease implementation delay can be drafting of the Work Plans in October (not in December) and submitting them earlier to the MLWE for official approval. | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.10.** MLWEas the project Implementing Partnershould apply for a no-cost extension of the project at least for one yearto increase the probability ofachievement of expected project Outcomes | **Medium Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.3.11.** The PMU after establishment should develop mechanisms of appropriate communication on the project issues with key stakeholders, including international expert community (e.g, project web-site, annual bulletin, publications in local media, regular meetings with local communities, publication of the best project practices, etc.). Currently the project visibility in the country is almost non-existent and needs dramatic improvement. | **Medium Priority** |

## 4.4. Sustainability

**Conclusion 4.4.1.** Given experience of other UNDP/GEF projects in Eritrea and high commitment of the GoE to the environmental protection issues and support of PAs, **the project results (when achieved completely) will be rather sustainable in social, economic, environmental, and financial aspects.** **Institutional sustainability is questionable due to unsatisfactory project progress to achieve Outcome 1** (institutional and legislative framework for PA establishment) and negative experience of ECMIB project (target marine PAs have never been established).

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| **Recommendation 4.4.1.** It is highly recommended to the MLWE and PMU to put achievement of the Outcome 1 as a number one priority for the project to ensure necessary institutional sustainability of the project results (establishment of National PA Agency and official PAs). To ensure achievement of the Outcome involvement of experienced International Consultants is highly recommended (see Recommendation 4.2.1) | **High Priority** |
| **Recommendation 4.4.2.** While delivery of the project Outputs 3.1-3.3 the PMU should pay significant attention on providing CBNRM and alternative income opportunities to local people who do not have land in their possession and can be extremely vulnerable to increased level of law enforcement in the proposed PAs. Sustainable livelihood opportunities for these groups are highly important for the project social sustainability. | **High Priority** |

# Annexes

## Annex 1. Analysis of the Project Results Framework

**Objective, Outcome, and Outputs**

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| **Original Objective/Outcome/Output** | **Revised Outcome/Output** | **Justification** |
| **Project Objective:** Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system | No changes |  |
| **Outcome 1.** Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system | No changes | Original Outcome 1 sounds like Activity (process), not a result. But it is better to leave it as it is to avoid confusion and reformulation of all the logical framework. |
| **Output 1.1** Regulatory framework for protected areas management | **Output 1.1.** Regulatory framework for protected areas establishment is developed and implemented:   * Protected Area Act; * Standard Operating Procedures for establishment of PAs in Eritrea | The revised Output clarifies that the regulatory framework has to be drafted, approved by GoE and actually implemented. Also revised Output indicate two necessary documents for official establishment of PAs in Eritrea |
| **Output 1.2.** National administration for protected areas management | **Output 1.2.** National PA administration is established and operationalized | The revised Output clarifies that the administration need to be not only established but made functional (has staff and funding). Also, it would be useful to specify what Ministry will incorporate the PA administration. |
| **Output 1.3.** National biodiversity conservation monitoring program | **Output 1.3.** National PA biodiversity monitoring programme is developed and introduced to the first three PAs | The revised Output focuses on the biodiversity monitoring programme for PA only as more realistic for establishment in the project framework than national biodiversity monitoring system. And it stresses that the programme has to be introduced to the target PAs for implementation |
| **Output 1.4.** National strategy for protected area conservation and financing | **Output 1.4.** National strategy for PA network development and financing is developed and implemented | Original Output aims at the strategy for PA conservation that is confusing (a PA is a tool for biodiversity conservation). Usually National PA strategy aims at PA network development: (a) extension of national PA system and (b) increasing capacity of the PA system to protect biodiversity, including sustainable funding. Thus, revised Output stress the PA system development in the country. |
| **Output 1.5.** National protected area regulatory implementation guidelines | **Output 1.5.** National protected area regulatory implementation guidelines are developed and implemented:   * Special Operating Procedures for PA management | The revised Output clarifies that the regulatory guidelines has to be drafted, approved by GoE and actually implemented. Also revised Output indicate a necessary document for PA management in Eritrea |
| **Output 1.6.** National biodiversity conservation training program | **Output 1.6.** National biodiversity conservation training programme is developed and implemented at the Universities of Eritrea | Revised Output clarifies that the programme needs to be developed and implemented |
| **Outcome 2.** Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system | **Outcome 2.** Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system:   * 3 officially established and functional PAs covering 1,000,000 ha | Original Outcome 2 sounds like Activity (process) not a result. The revised Outcome clarifies specific result – establishment and operationalization of the first three PAs in the country |
| **Output 2.1.** Three new protected areas officially recognized and launched | **Output 2.1.** Three new protected areas officially recognized and launched:   * have management and ranger staff and government funding | It is not clear what “launched” means in the original Output. Usually it means that PAs has necessary staff and funding for functioning: necessary clarification is added |
| **Output 2.2.** Model training program implemented for protected area management and staff | **Output 2.2.** Model training program implemented for protected area management and staff, including law enforcement, environmental education, and biodiversity monitoring | Revised Output specify key functions of a PA where trainings are needed |
| **Output** **2.3.** Three model protected area management plans | **Output 2.3.** Three model protected area management plans are developed and implemented in cooperation with local communities | Revised Output 2.3 stress the need for the management plans to be developed, officially approved by National PA agency, and implemented. Also revised Output suggest participatory development and implementation of the PA plans including adjacent local communities. Participatory PA management planning and implementation will be more sustainable and provide mutual benefits to PAs and communities. |
| **Output** **2.4**. Three model protected area business plans | **Output** **2.4**. Three model protected area business plans  are developed and implemented | Usually business plan is a part of PA Management Plan. Revised Output 2.4 the need for the business plans to be developed, officially approved by National PA agency, and implemented. |
| **Output** **2.5**. Integrated and inclusive management mechanisms established | **Output** **2.5**. Integrated and inclusive management mechanisms established:   * at least 3 Community Councils in the target PAs for PA participatory management | Revised Output 2.5 specifies “inclusive management mechanism” as a community council established at each PA to take active part in the participatory PA management (often community councils are used by different PAs to involve local communities in the NRM inside PAs) |
| **Outcome 3:** Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas | **No changes** | Original Outcome 3 sounds like Activity (process) not a result. But it is better to leave it as it is to avoid confusion and reformulation of all the logical framework. |
| **Output 3.1.** Farm/Fishing Field Schools established to build local SLM/SFM capacity | **Output 3.1.** Local communities are trained in SLM, SFM and sustainable fishing via Farm/Fishing Field Schools and other mechanisms | Original Output greatly limit the range of available tools to build community capacity in SLM/SFM to the Farm/Fishing Schools only. At the same time, no one stakeholder the MTR consulted had a clear idea of functional structure of a Fish/Farming School, its sustainability and funding. The revised Output specifies final result of original Output 3.1 and add additional flexibility on the capacity building mechanisms that may include many other tools along with FFS. Thus, now there is no need to establish FFS for the project to start training programmes for local communities |
| **Output 3.2.** Sustainable resource management plans | **Output 3.2.** Sustainable resource management plans for communities in the target PAs are developed and implemented | Revised Output specifies implementation of the management plans by communities (nobody needs “paper” plans for a shelf). Thus, clear mechanism of the plans implementation has to be established. |
| **Output 3.3.** Implementation of model ecosystem service conservation measures | **Output 3.3.** Implementation of model ecosystem service conservation measures:   * pilot community projects on SLM, SFM and sustainable fishing are developed and implemented in collaboration with PAs | Revised Output specifies community based “conservation measures” and underlines importance of their implementation in cooperation with PAs |

**Revision of Objective and Outcome Indicators for MTR purposes (can be used for the project implementation)**

| **Original Indicator** | **Revised Indicator** | **Justification** |
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| **Project Objective:** Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system | | |
| Total annual government financing for management and conservation of national protected area system, US$:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the Project:* 1,000,000 | Total annual government financing for management and conservation of national protected area system, US$:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the Project:* 500,000 | End of the project value for the indicator is not realistic and not achievable in the project timeline, given acute national deficit of the government funding in Eritrea. The value was decreased by 50% after consultations with MLWE, FWA, and MMR. |
| Total hectares legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories | Deleted from Objective Indicators | This is actually Outcome 2 Indicator to measure the coverage of officially established PAs. The Indicator was moved to Outcome 2 indicators. |
| Total hectares of critical habitat conserved within newly established national protected areas:  *Baseline:*  Native highland forest: 0  Native mangrove: 0  African wild ass habitat: 0  Turtle nesting sites: 0  Sea grass: 0  *End of the Project:*  Native highland forest: 55,000  Native mangrove: 12,000  African wild ass habitat: 80,000  Turtle nesting sites: 1300  Sea grass: 2,300 | Total hectares (and percentage) of critical habitat in the country conserved within newly established national protected areas:  *Baseline:*  Native highland forest: 0  Native mangrove: 0  African wild ass habitat: 0  Turtle nesting sites: 0  Sea grass: 0  *End of the Project:*  Native highland forest: 23,000 (23%)  Native mangrove: 7,000 (100% in the PA?)  African wild ass habitat: 80,000  Turtle nesting sites: 1300  Sea grass: 2,300 | Percentage of ecosystem within PAs will be more meaningful to measure the project impact at national scale. Total area of native highland forest (mainly *Juniperus procera* and *Olea africana*) in the Green Belt was ~23,000 ha given results of the MLWE assessment in 2014[[66]](#footnote-66). Also, total area of mangroves in the country was estimated in 7,000 ha only. Thus, these indicator values have been corrected. |
| N/A | Total populations of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas:  *Baseline:*  African wild ass: ≈ 200  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD  End of the Project:  African wild ass: ≈ 250  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | The indicator was moved to Objective indicators from Outcome 3. This is an Impact indicator (status of conservation target) that can be achieved via achievement of all project Outcomes (official establishment of PAs, targeted law enforcement, and sustainable use of the species habitat by local communities. |
|  | Total hectares of highland forest cover (mainly *Juniperus procera* and *Olea africana*) within the Green Belt:  Baseline: 23,000  End of the Project: 23,000 | This is an Impact indicator (status of conservation target) that can be achieved via achievement of all project Outcomes. Thus, the Outcome was brought to Objective Indicators from Outcome 3. The name of the indicator was changed from “native forest cover” to “highland forest cover” (area covered by *Juniperus procera* and *Olea africana*), because it was unclear what the PPG team meant under the “native forest cover” and how it was measured (no explanations of the methodology were provided). The baseline value of the original indicator was 31,680 ha and it was expected to increase up to 55,000 ha (73%!) by the end of the project. It was unclear how it was going to happen given only 7 years of the project. After consultations with the MLWE the indicator was changed to highland forest cover that occupies about 23,000 ha of the Green Belt[[67]](#footnote-67) and unlikely to increase significantly after 7 years of the project given slow regeneration rate of *Juniperus procera.* This area can decrease if proper conservation measures are not established in the area |
| N/A | Percentage of households and women reporting increased levels of food security in the target PAs as a result of the project:  *Baseline:* 0% households/0% women  *End of the project value:* >= 20% of households/ >= 20% of women | This is Objective indicator that can be achieved via achievement of Outcomes 3 (increased capacity of local community for SLM, SFM, and sustainable fishing). It was moved to the Objective Indicators from Outcome 3 to show contribution of the Outcome to achievement of the project Objective. However, original indicator has been changed from “Total number of FFS participant households and women…” to the “Percentage of households and women… in the target PAs”, because many more people (not only participants of the FFS, but participants of other trainings provided in the project framework, as well as their neighbors starting to apply new technology seeing positive results of other families) can report increasing food security as a result of the project. Moreover, given unclear idea of the FFS, they can never be actually established in the project frameworks, but many other tools (trainings, exchange visits, demonstration projects, etc.) can be used to increase capacity of local communities. The indicator can be measured via interviewing of local communities in the project area each year with a simple questionnaire in the framework of the project M&E. We suggested 20% of local people as the end of the project value, given positive results of the project SLM interventions in Durfo village in the Green Belt area in 2014-2017: 150 households from 630 (24%) were reported to increase agricultural production after check-dam construction in 2014-2015[[68]](#footnote-68) |
| **Outcome 1.** Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system | | |
| National government law/proclamation legalizing the application of IUCN based designations for establishment of terrestrial and marine protected areas:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the project:* 1 | National PA institutional and legislation framework:  *Baseline:*   * Protected Area Act: no any * SOP for establishment of PAs; no any * National PA Administration: no any * National PA Strategy: no any * PA Biodiversity Monitoring Programme: no any   *End of the project:*   * Protected Area Act: approved/implemented * SOP for establishment of PAs: approved/implemented * National PA Administration: established/functional * National PA Strategy: approved/implemented * PA Biodiversity Monitoring Programme: approved/implemented | The revised Indicator reflects a whole complex of regulatory and functional documents and structures necessary for establishment and functioning of PA system in Eritrea, not only legal part of the framework. |
| Number of wildlife monitoring surveys/studies conducted and reported annually by protected area administration for key species and habitats within national protected areas | Deleted | Not clear how all these surveys relates to the PA biodiversity monitoring programme that should be officially established. They can be done without any connections to the PA monitoring programme and do not reflect existing and functional monitoring system in the PAs. |
| Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government as part of the protected areas administration to manage the national protected area system:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the project:* 10 | No changes to the original indicator |  |
| Number of national protected area conservation strategies and annual reports completed and updated by the national protected area administration(s):  *Baseline:*  Strategies: 0  Annual status reports: 0  *End of the project:*  Strategies: 2  Annual status reports: 4 | Deleted | Usually one National PA Strategy is quite enough for 5-10 years. The indicator was included in the *National PA institutional and legislation framework* indicator above |
| Number of Eritreans annually enrolled in national university accredited biodiversity conservation training course:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the project:* 30 | No changes to the original indicator |  |
| **Outcome 2.** Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system:   * 3 officially established and functional PAs covering 1,000,000 ha | | |
| N/A | Total hectares legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories:  *Baseline:*  Terrestrial: 0  Marine: 0  *End of the project:*  Terrestrial: 649,100  Marine: 360,000 | Added from Objective Indicators as a relevant Indicator for Outcome 2. No changes has been made to the indicator values. |
| METT scores for at least three marine/terrestrial protected areas increase by 25%:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 29  Buri: 32  Bera’sole Bay: 22  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 80  Buri: 82  Bera’sole Bay: 71 | METT scores for three marine/terrestrial protected areas increase by 100%:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 29  Buri: 32  Bera’sole Bay: 22  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 60  Buri: 64  Bera’sole Bay: 44 | Original Indicator suggests increase of the METT score for each target PA by 25%, but actually end of the project values show 276% of increase! Such METT values as 71-80 are possible only for highly developed PA with good funding and excellent management. They are not realistic for the first PAs established in the country just after few years of the management. Thus, the target METT values were decreased by the MTR to realistic 100% of effectiveness increase. |
| Number of protected area management and business plans operational, assessed and updated by each protected area administration:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 3  Buri: 3  Bera’sole Bay: 3 | Number of protected area management and business plans operational, assessed and updated by each protected area administration:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 2  Buri: 2  Bera’sole Bay: 2 | One management plan and one business plan is quite enough for each PA for 5-10 years of management. Thus, target values were adjusted by the MTR to two plans per target PA. |
| Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government to manage individual protected areas:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 10  Buri: 15  Bera’sole Bay: 5 | Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government to manage individual protected areas:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 10  Buri: 10  Bera’sole Bay: 2 | Number of management position for tree target PAs by the end of the project was decreased for Buri and Bera’sole areas after consultations with the MLWE. It is very unlikely that GoE will support more positions for the target PAs. |
| Individual protected areas receive annual financial support adequate to implement PA management plan priorities and conserve globally significant species, US$:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 250,000  Buri: 300,000  Bera’sole Bay: 100,000 | Individual protected areas receive annual financial support adequate to implement PA management plan priorities and conserve globally significant species, US$:  *Baseline:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0  *End of the project:*  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 150,000  Buri: 150,000  Bera’sole Bay: 50,000 | Given the Government budget will be the only likely recourse for the established PAs (low number of tourist and absence of international NGOs that can support PAs), it is not realistic to expect the PA budgets more than $150,000/year for each PA right after the project. Thus, the target PA budgets were adjusted to more realistic values by the MTR after consultation with the MLWE. |
| **Outcome 3.** Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas | | |
| Number of project area residents who are participating members of farm/fisheries field (FFS) schools: | Deleted | This project Output Indicator (actually, number of people trained by the project), not Outcome Indicator. Also, this indicator focuses only on FFS as a form of capacity building, but not multiple other forms that can be used to train local communities in sustainable techniques (e.g., individual trainings provided by MA or other agencies, repetitive training programmes on particular successful techniques, exchange visits, demonstration projects, etc.). MTR could not receive clear idea of FFS structure, functions, and sustainability from interviewed stakeholders. |
| Number of FFS participant households and women reporting increased levels of food security. | Deleted from Outcome 3, adjusted and moved to Objective indicator | This is clear Objective indicator to measure the impact of the Outcome 3 on achievement of the project Objective. Not only participants of the FFS can report increase level of food security, but also other local people within PAs who use solutions suggested by the project seeing positive experience of their neighbors. |
| Number of farm and fishing field school participants adopting ecosystem conservation practices as detailed in the community ecosystem services conservation plans:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the project:* 1000 | Number of local people (females/males) adopting SLM, SFM, and sustainable fishing practices in the project area:  *Baseline:* F 0/M 0  *End of the project:* at least F 1000/M 1000 | Not only participants of the FFS can adopt sustainable NRM practices, but also other local people within PAs who participate in other training programmes suggested by the project (including by GoE) and/or use solutions suggested by the project seeing positive experience of their neighbors. The indicator value has been gender disaggregated and increased, given positive experience of Durfo village (one settlement in the project area). |
| Total hectares of native forest cover within the Green Belt | Deleted from Outcome 3, adjusted and moved to Objective indicator | This is clear Impact indicator which demonstrate effect of all project Outcomes on the status of the ecosystem (native forest cover) |
| Surface water quality/quantity of main upland streams improved to more closely meet needs of natural ecosystem function | Deleted | The indicator is unclear for practical implementation and has no baseline and target values. |
| Total number of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas | Deleted from Outcome 3 and moved to Objective indicators | This is clear Impact indicator which demonstrate effect of all project Outcomes on the status of the conservation targets (wildlife populations in the PAs) |
| N/A | Total area under sustainable community-based NRM and SLM practices in the project areas established in the project framework, ha:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the Project:* >= 60,000 | Added to demonstrate extent of the area of SLM, SFM and sustainable fishery under community-based activities in the PAs after start of the project. Given experience of the Green Belt area the MTR assumed that at least 10% of the PA area will be designated as mixed use and buffer zones were sustainable forms of FM, LM and fishery will be developed by local communities |
| N/A | Total area reforested by local communities in the project areas after the projects start, ha:  *Baseline:* 0  *End of the Project:* >= 800 | Reforestation by local community of the project areas (Green Belt) is significant part of sustainable livelihood and need to be measured in the M&E framework. The target indicator value has been established based on the results of the UNDP SLM project (more than 900 ha were reforested by local communities). |

## Annex 2. Revised Project Results Framework used for the MTR

**A close up of a map

Description generated with high confidence**

Figure 1. Reconstructed Theory of Change Diagram for the PA project

**Revised Project Results Framework used by the MTR and suggested to guide further project implementation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective and Outcomes** | **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **End of Project target** | **Source of Information** | **Assumptions** |
| **Project Objective:** Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system | 1.Total area (and % of total ecosystem area in the country) of critical habitat conserved within newly established national protected areas | Native highland forest: 0  Native mangrove: 0  African wild ass habitat: 0  Turtle nesting sites: 0  Sea grass: 0 | Native highland forest: 23,000 (23%)  Native mangrove: 7,000 (100%?)  African wild ass habitat: 80,000 (??%)  Turtle nesting sites: 1,300 (??%)  Sea grass: 2,300 (??%) | Annual national protected area management reports;  Results of national PA biodiversity monitoring program;  Analysis of remote sensing data | National support for establishment of international standard protected areas to conserve globally significant biodiversity will remain steadfast; |
| 2.Populations of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas | African wild ass: ≈ 200  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | African wild ass: ≈ 250  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | Results of annual Eritrea/IUCN supported surveys;  Results of national PA biodiversity monitoring program |
| 3.Total annual government financing for management and conservation of national protected area system, US$) | 0 | >=500,000/year | National government budget reports; Annual national protected area management reports. |
| 4.Total area of highland forest cover within (mainly *Juniperus procera*) the Green Belt, ha | 23,000 | 23,000 | Annual national protected area management reports;  Results of national PA biodiversity monitoring program;  Analysis of remote sensing data;  Special on-the-ground surveys |
| 5.Percentage of households and women reporting increased levels of food security in the PAs | Households: 0%  Women: 0% | >=20%  >=20% | Annual random interviews of local communities in the project areas |
| **Outcome 1.** Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system | 1.1.National PA institutional and legislation framework:  -Protected Area Act:  -SOP for establishment of PAs  -National PA Administration  -National PA Strategy  PA Biodiversity Monitoring Programme | -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist; | -implemented[[69]](#footnote-69);  - implemented;  - operational[[70]](#footnote-70);  - implemented;  - implemented; | National law register  Government order to establish and staff National PA agency  Officially approved PA strategy and monitoring programme | National support for establishment of international standard protected areas to conserve globally significant biodiversity will remain steadfast.  Human resource capacity and interest remains high in order to fill required positions.  Key government ministries and agencies are able to agree to form and function of protected area administration (e.g., division of responsibilities between terrestrial and marine protected areas). This agreement provides for efficient and effective management without undue duplication of effort. |
| 1.2.Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government as part of the protected areas administration to manage the national protected area system. | Baseline: 0 | Target: 10\*  \* Terrestrial and Marine PA’s | Staffing records of the National PA Agency.  Physical verification.  Reviews of staffing plan and recruitment. |
| 1.3.Number of Eritreans annually enrolled in national university accredited biodiversity conservation training course. | Baseline: 0 | Target: 30 | Enrollment records of Eritrean Universities with introduced conservation management programme |
| **Outputs:**  **Output 1.1.** Regulatory framework for protected areas establishment is developed and implemented: Protected Area Act and Standard Operating Procedures for establishment of PAs in Eritrea;  **Output 1.2.** National PA administration is established and operationalized;  **Output 1.3.** National PA biodiversity monitoring programme is developed and introduced to the first three PAs;  **Output 1.4.** National strategy for PA network development and financing is developed and implemented;  **Output 1.5.** National protected area regulatory implementation guidelines are developed and implemented: Special Operating Procedures for PA management;  **Output 1.6.** National biodiversity conservation training programme is developed and implemented at the Universities of Eritrea | | | | | |
| **Outcome 2.** Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system:  -3 officially established and functional PAs covering 1,000,000 ha | 2.1.Total area of legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories | Terrestrial: 0  Marine: 0 | Terrestrial: 649,100 ha  Marine: 360,000 ha | Laws proclaiming protected area establishment. Annual national protected area management reports. | Protected areas will be officially designated in a timely manner.  Best possible international/national staff will be recruited for implementation and Government will support international staff with permits required to completed necessary fieldwork. |
| 2.2.METT scores for three marine/terrestrial protected areas increase by 100%: | METT Scores:  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 29  Buri: 32  Bera’sole Bay: 22 | METT Scores:  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 60  Buri: 64  Bera’sole Bay: 44 | METT scores will be tabulated Independent experts at mid-term and final. |
| 2.3.Number of protected area management and business plans operational[[71]](#footnote-71) | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 2 (1 MP and 1 BP)  Buri: 2 (1 MP and 1 BP)  Bera’sole Bay: 2 (1 MP and 1 BP) | Project reports. Physical verification of plan completion. |
| 2.4.Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government to manage individual protected areas | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 10  Buri: 10  Bera’sole Bay: 2 | Project reports. Physical verification of staffing plan and recruitment for the PAs |
| 2.5.National funding available for the target PA management | Total annual government PA budget:  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | Total annual government PA budget:  Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: US$ 150,000  Buri: US$ 150,000  Bera’sole Bay: US$ 50,000 | Annual financing and expenditure records of the PAs |
| **Outputs:**  **Output 2.1.** Three new protected areas officially recognized and launched: have management and ranger staff, and government funding;  **Output 2.2.** Model training program implemented for protected area management and staff, including law enforcement, environmental education, and biodiversity monitoring;  **Output 2.3.** Three model protected area management plans are developed and implemented in cooperation with local communities;  **Output 2.4.** Three model protected area business plans are developed and implemented;  **Output** **2.5**. Integrated and inclusive management mechanisms established: at least 3 Community Councils in the target PAs for PA participatory management; | | | | | |
| **Outcome 3:** Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas | 3.1. Total area under sustainable community-based NRM and SLM practices in the project areas, ha | 0 | >= 60,000 | Implementation reports on community-based NRM and SLM projects | Community level support and enthusiasm for improved livelihoods coupled with conservation of critical ecosystem services will be maintained. |
| 3.2. Number of local people (females/males) adopting SLM, SFM, and sustainable fishing practices in the project area | F 0/M 0 | at least F 1000/M 1000 | Implementation reports on community-based NRM and SLM projects  Annual questionnaires of local people in the project areas |
| 3.3. Total area reforested by local communities in the project areas after the projects start, ha | 0 | >= 800 |  |
| **Outputs:**  **Output 3.1.** Local communities are trained in SLM, SFM and sustainable fishing via Farm/Fishing Field Schools and other mechanisms**;**  **Output 3.2.** Sustainable resource management plans for communities in the target PAs are developed and implemented;  **Output 3.3.** Implementation of model ecosystem service conservation measures: pilot community projects on SLM, SFM and sustainable fishing are developed and implemented in collaboration with the PAs | | | | | |

## Annex 3. Mid-Term Review Evaluative Matrix

| **Evaluative questions** | **Indicators** | **Sources** | **Methodology** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results** | | | |
| **Project Design and Theory of Change** | | | |
| Does the project incorporate lessons learned from similar projects in the project design? | Yes/No | Prodoc and CEO ER  PPG Team | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Is the project relevant to country priorities and level of country ownership? | Yes/No | Prodoc and CEO ER, National Development Agenda  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| How many stakeholders were involved in the project development? | Number of people consulted | List of stakeholders consulted during PPG phase  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Were vulnerable groups and women involved in the project development? | Yes/No  Number of women participated in the project development | List of stakeholders consulted during PPG phase  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Was the project based on adequate assessment of risks to the project sustainability? | Yes/No | Prodoc and CEO ER  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Is a set of project Conservation Targets representative for the country? | Yes/No | Prodoc and CEO ER, Eritrea Biodiversity Assessment  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Are Direct Threats addressed by the project adequate for selected Conservation Targets? | Yes/No | Prodoc and CEO ER, Eritrea Biodiversity Assessment  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Are Indirect Threats and Barriers correctly identified? | Yes/No | Prodoc and CEO ER, Eritrea Biodiversity Assessment, Socio-Economic Baseline Survey  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Does the project has clearly articulated and logical Theory of Change? | Yes/No | Project Result Framework  Stakeholders | Theory of Change Analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Do the project Objective and Outcome Indicators adequate and SMART? | Yes/No | Project Result Framework  Stakeholders | Theory of Change Analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| 1. **Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?** | | | |
| What Outputs were delivered by the project so far? | Number of Outputs (%) totally delivered by the project | PRF, GEF TT, Project Implementation Reports, actual project products and services (government documents, publications, equipment, infrastructure, etc.)  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews  Visits of the project sites |
| What is the project progress to achieve expected Outcomes? | Outcome and Objective Indicators  UNDP Ratings on Outcome Achievement | PRF, GEF TT, Project Implementation Reports, Government Documents, Survey Reports,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews  Visits of the project sites |
| 1. **Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project’s implementation?** | | | |
| **Management arrangements** | | | |
| Is existing project management structure the same as the structure suggested in the project documents? | Yes/No | Prodoc and CEO ER, PIRs  Project Management Team | Comparative analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Does existing project management structure allows effective project implementation? | Yes/No | PIRs, Quarterly and Annual Report of the PMU  Project Management Team | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| What is level of support of project management team from UNDP CO? | Adequate/Non-adequate | PIRs, Quarterly and Annual Report of the PMU, Steering Committee meeting minutes  Project Management Team | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| What is level of support of the project management from Ministry of Land, Water and Environment and Executing Partner (Forestry and Wildlife Authority)? | Adequate/Non-adequate | PIRs, Quarterly and Annual Report of the PMU, Steering Committee meeting minutes  Project Management Team  Members of the project Steering Committee  UNDP CO staff | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| What is level of support of the project management from the Steering Committee? | Adequate/Non-adequate | PIRs, Quarterly and Annual Report of the PMU, Steering Committee meeting minutes  Project Management Team  UNDP CO staff | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Work planning** | | | |
| Any delays between start of the project and actual implementation?  Reasons for delay? | Yes/No | Project Inception Report, PIRs  Project Management Team  UNDP CO staff | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Does project have a Work Plan for entire project lifetime? | Yes/No | Prodoc, Project Inception Report, PMU planning documents | Content analysis |
| Are project annual and quarterly work plan present? | Yes/No | PMU planning documents | Content analysis |
| Is quality of the annual and quarterly work plans adequate? | Yes/No | PMU planning documents | Content analysis |
| Does the project practice Adaptive Management? | Yes/No | PMU planning documents, Annual and quarterly reports, PIRs  PMU staff | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Finance and Co-finance** | | | |
| Is quality of planning of the project annual budget adequate? | Yes/No | Project annual budget plans | Content analysis |
| Is level of the project financial management adequate to UNDP standards? | Yes/No | Project annual budget plans, Annual project expenditures reports | Content analysis |
| What is variance between planned and actual expenses by Outcomes and years? | Variance of the project expenditures (US$, % of the planned expenditures) | Prodoc, Annual project expenditures reports | Content analysis |
| Are project expenses to deliver project Outputs adequate? | Yes/No | Annual project expenditures reports | Content analysis |
| Are annual project audit reports present? | Yes/No | Annual project audit reports | Content analysis |
| Are changes made in the project budget as a part of Adaptive Management adequate? | Yes/No | Project annual budget plans, Annual project expenditures reports, PIRs | Content analysis |
| What is difference between planned and actual co-financing commitments? | Variance in planed and actual co-financing delivery (US$, % of the planned co-financing) | Prodoc, CEO ER, Co-financing commitments reports | Content analysis  Co-financing table |
| **M&E System** | | | |
| Is the project M&E plan clear and relevant to the project Objective and Outcomes? | Yes/No | Prodoc, project M&E plan | Content analysis |
| What is the difference between planned and actual expenses for the project M&E? | Variance in planed and actual expenses on M&E (US$, % of the planned expenses) | Prodoc, Annual project expenditures reports, PIRs | Comparative analysis |
| Was M&E framework used for the project adaptive management? | Yes/No | Project M&E Plan, PIRs  PMU staff | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| What number of stakeholder are participating in the project M&E so far?  How many of them are women? | Number of stakeholders participating in the project M&E  Number of women (% of total stakeholder number) | PIRs  PMU staff  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Is management of environmental and social risks as identified through the UNDP Environmental and Social screening procedure regularly implemented? | Yes/No | PIRs  PMU staff  UNDP CO | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Stakeholder Engagement** | | | |
| How many partners are involved in the project implementation so far?  How many of them are women? | Number of organizations/experts/community members involved  Number of women (% of total stakeholder number) | PIRs  PMU staff  Partners (organizations, experts, communities) | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| What is level of local and national government support to the project implementation? | Low/Medium/High | PIRs  PMU staff  UNDP CO  National and local government | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Reporting** | | | |
| Is quality of the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) adequate to UNDP standards? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports by PMU  UNDP CO staff | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Are adaptive management changes adequately reported? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports by PMU  UNDP CO staff | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Are mechanisms of sharing of the project reports with Steering Committee and stakeholders established? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports by PMU, Project Publications, Project web-site  PMU Staff,  UNDP CO staff,  Members of Steering Committee | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Are lessons learned during the project implementation properly documented and shared with stakeholders and other projects? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports by PMU, Project Publications, Project web-site  PMU Staff,  UNDP CO staff,  Members of Steering Committee | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Communication** | | | |
| Are mechanisms of the project communication with stakeholders established and functional? | Yes/No  Number of mechanisms | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports by PMU, Project Publications, Project web-site  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Are mechanisms for receiving stakeholder feedback on the project implementation established and functional? | Yes/No  Number of mechanisms | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports by PMU, Project Publications, Project web-site  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Does the project have functional outreach and awareness campaigns? | Yes/No  Number of campaigns | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports by PMU, Project Publications, Project web-site  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| 1. **Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?** | | | |
| **Financial risks to sustainability** | | | |
| What is likelihood that financial resources will be available to support the project Outcomes after its completion? | Low/Medium/High | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, partnership agreements, government documents  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| What is level of dependence of the Outcome sustainability on external financial sources? | Low/Medium/High | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, Final Reports and Terminal Evaluation Reports from other projects  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Does the project establish mechanisms to ensure financial sustainability of the project Outcomes? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, partnership agreements, government documents  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Socio-economic risks to sustainability** | | | |
| Are significant economic and social risks for the project Outcomes present? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, socio-economic reports, SESP assessment  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Are mechanisms to sustain the project Outcomes via stakeholder ownership present? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, socio-economic reports, SESP assessment  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Institutional and governance risks to sustainability** | | | |
| Are appropriate policies, legislation, and governance structures present to support project Outcomes? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, government documents  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| Is capacity of institutional and governance structures to sustain the project Outcomes is sufficient? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, UNDP Capacity Scorecard  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| What is role of the project in establishment of appropriate policy, legislation and governance structures to sustain the project results? | Low/Medium/High  Number of people trained  Number of policy and legislation documents prepared for official approval | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, UNDP Capacity Scorecard, training reports  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Environmental risks to sustainability** | | | |
| Are there sever environmental factors that can influence sustainability of the project Outcomes and Impacts? | Yes/No | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, Environment assessment reports  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Semi-structured interviews |
| **Recommendations: what lessons have been learned by the project so far? What can be done to improve project performance in all project areas?** | | | |
| What successful practices project developed so far? | | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, Monitoring reports, Project publications  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Meta-modeling interviews |
| What are factors for the project success/failure? | | PIRs, Annual and quarterly reports, Monitoring reports, Project publications  PMU Staff,  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Meta-modeling interviews |
| What lessons and practices from other projects can be implemented to improve the project performance? | | Analysis of other project Terminal Reports, publications, Evaluations  Stakeholders | Content analysis  Meta-modeling interviews |

## Annex 4. List of documents for desktop review

Following list of documents has been selected for desktop analysis of the project performance:

* PIF
* UNDP/GEF Project Document
* UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
* Project Inception Report
* Two Project Implementation Reports (PIRs): 2015 and 2016
* Funding Authorization and Certification of Expenditure notes
* Annual work plans for the project 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017
* Audit report 2016
* Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm (2017)
* Other progress reports on the project prepared by the UNDP CO
* Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team
* Project operational guidelines and manual developed in 2014-2015
* Minutes of the Project Steering Committee Meetings and other meetings between UNDP CO, MLWE, and FWA related to the project implementation
* Project site location maps
* Special reports developed for the MTR by the North Red Sea Zoba, Asmara sub-zoba, MLWE and FWA
* Terminal Evaluation Reports for the ECMIB (2007) and SLM (2017) projects in Eritrea

## Annex 5. List of stakeholders consulted during MTR mission

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Organization** | **Interviewee** | **Role in the project** |
| **UNDP Eritrea** | Rose K. Ssebatindira, Deputy Resident Representative | Support of the project development (PIF and PPG stages)  Supervision and assistance for the project implementation regarding GEF standards |
| Adam Habteab, Programme Specialist |
| Solomon Gebreyohannes, Programme Analyst |
| Yoseph Admekom, former Head of UNDP Eritrea Inclusive and Sustainable Development Unit | Supervision of the project development and implementation |
| Veronica Muthui, Regional Technical Advisor for UNDP Eritrea | Supervision of the PIF and prodoc development |
| **National Consultant** | Yohannes Debretsion, Yohannes Debretsion Consultancy Firm | Developer of Biophysical Assessment Report for the project document |
| **Ministry of Land, Water, and Environment** | Tesfai Gebresellasie, Minister of Land, Water, and Environment | Implementing and Executing Partner for the project  Project Management Team |
| Mogos Wolde-Yohannes, Director General, Department of Environment, Political and Operational GEF Focal Point |
| Estifanos Bein, Biodiversity Technical Advisor, Department of Environment |
| Tedros Kibron, Office of the Minister of Land, Water and Environment |
| **Forestry and Wildlife Authority (FWA)** | Futsum Hagos, Director of Wildlife | Former Executing Agency for the project  Member of the Project Management Team |
| **Ministry of Marine Resources** | Seid Mohammed Abrar, Director office of Minister | Member of the Project Management Team  Member of the Project Steering Committee |
| Sami Mohammed, Advisor to the Minister |
| **North Red Sea Zoba Government** | Kubrom Andemichael, Acting Governor | Proposed Executing Agency for the Project  Member of the Project Management Team (delivery of Outputs for Outcomes 2 and 3 in the Green Belt area) |
| Tekeste Tsegay, Director General Agriculture and Land Resources |
| Huruy Yohannes, Head of Soil and Water Conservation |
| Osman Siraj, Agro-engineer |
| **Ghinda Sub-Zoba Government** | Yehiya Hajo, Head of Sub-zoba Administration | Member of the Project Management Team (delivery of Outputs for Outcomes 2 and 3 in the Green Belt area) |
| Kidane Yehidego, Head of Ministry of Agriculture Branch Office for Sub-zoba Ghinda |
| Amanuel Kidane, Forest and Wildlife Expert of Sub-zoba Ghinda |
| Hagos Ghebremichael, Head of Development Affairs of Sub-zoba Ghinda |
| Tesfalem Mihreteab, Forest and wildlife Inspector |
| Mahmud Omer, Forest and wildlife Inspector |  |
| Salih Adem; Forest and wildlife Inspector  + 5 local people working at Ghidae tree nursery and 7 local people working at Filfil tree nursery |
| **Asmara Sub-Zoba Government** | Michael Abraham, Head of Brunch of Agriculture | Member of the Project Management Team (delivery of Outputs for 3 in the Green Belt area) |
| **Maekel Zoba Government** | Abraham Daniel, Director of Agricultural Infrastructure Department |
| **Eritrea Institute of Technology** | Ghebrehiwet Medhanie, Academic Vice-President | National Consultants hired by the project to deliver Outputs 1.1-1.6 |
| **Hemelmalo Agricultural College** | Woldeselassie Ogbazghi, Associate Dean |
| **Eritrea School of Law** | Mengsteab Negash, Head of the School |
| **Local Communities** | Omer Ibrahim Jebib, Durfo village governor  + 5 local people | Project beneficiaries and partners to deliver Output 3.3 in the Green Belt area |

## Annex 6. Schedule of the MTR Mission in Eritrea

| **Date** | **Activity** | **Whom to meet, Location** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sunday, July 30** | **19:40** - M. Paltsyn arrived to Asmara, Eritrea | Crystal Hotel, Asmara |
| **Monday, July 31** | **9:00-11:00** – Introductory meeting with UNDP Eritrea, discussion of the general project context and current implementation issues | Adam Habteab, UNDP office |
| **11:00-14:30** – Preliminary design of the evaluation mission | Adam Habteab, UNDP office |
| **15:00– 17:00** – Preparation of the MTR Inception Report | UNDP office |
| **Tuesday, August 1** | **9:00-12:00** – Completion of the MTR Inception Report, discussion of the report with UNDP CO | Adam Habteab, UNDP office |
| **13:30-14:30 –** Interview with UNDP Eritrea Deputy Resident Representatives on the challenges faced by the project | Rose K. Ssebatindira, UNDP office |
| **15:00-16:00** – interview with the UNDP Programme Analyst supervising the project | Solomon Gebreyohannes, UNDP office |
| **16:00-18:00** – desktop analysis of the project documents | UNDP office |
| **Wednesday, August 2** | **9:00-12:00 -** desktop analysis of the project documents | UNDP office |
| **12:30 – 13:30 –** interviewwith the former Head of the Inclusive and Sustainable Development Unit of UNDP Eritrea on the project development and implementation | Yoseph Admekom, UNDP office |
| **14:00-15:00** – briefing on the strategy for the project MTR with UNDP CO | Adam Habteab, Rose K. Ssebatindira, Phemo Karen Kgomotso, Veronica Muthui, Solomon Gebreyohannes, UNDP office |
| **15:30-18:00 -** desktop analysis of the project documents | UNDP office |
| **Thursday, August 3** | **9:00-14:00 -** desktop analysis of the project documents | UNDP office |
| **14:30 – 16:00** – focus group with representativesof theMLWE and FWAon the project implementation arrangements and progress towards results | Mogos Woldeyohannes, Estifanos Bein, Tedros Kibron, Futsum Hagos, MLWE office |
| **16:30 – 17:30** – preparation for the field trip to visit one of the project areas and North Red Sea Zoba administration | UNDP office |
| **Friday, August 4** | **9:00 – 13:30** – Visiting one of the project area Semenawi and Debubawi Green Belt (proposed official PA). Interview with manager of a tree nursery in Filfil valley (4 ha, produces 150,000 seedlings annually). Drive to Massawa | 7 workers of the Filfil nursery, Mogos Woldeyohannes, Estifanos Bein, Tedros Kibron, Futsum Hagos |
| **14:00-15:30** – meeting with NRS Zoba administration, discussion of the project progress and activities implemented with government co-funding, and planned project implementation in 2017-2018. | Kubrom Andemichael, Tekeste Tsegay, Huruy Yohannes, Osman Siraj, Mogos Woldeyohannes, Estifanos Bein, Tedros Kibron, Futsum Hagos |
| **Saturday, August 5** | **06:00 – 15:00** – Visiting of southern part of the Semenawi and Debubawi Green Belt and adjacent area (Ghinda sub-zoba of NRS Zonba): small dam construction site to start irrigation of the valley and attract people to settle outside of the PA area; demarcation of the PA zones; tree nursery (0.5 ha, produces 100,000-150,000 seedlings annually, 5 permanent workers); visit of naturally restored sites in the PA after agriculture and grazing activities were stopped; store house with equipment for ecosystem restoration bought with GEF money; ranger post on the road in the PA to prevent illegal transportation of firewood and charcoal to Asmara. Focus group with Ghinda sub-zoba administration and PA rangers in Ghinda town. | Yehiya Hajo, Kidane Yehidego, Amanuel Kidane, Hagos Ghebremichael, Tesfalem Mihreteab, Mahmud Omer, Salih Adem  + 5 local people working at Ghidae tree nursery  Mogos Woldeyohannes, Estifanos Bein, Tedros Kibron, Futsum Hagos |
| **Sunday, August 6** | **09:00 – 17:00** – analysis of the field trip records, desktop review of the project documents | Asmara |
| **Monday, August 7** | **8:00 – 18:00 –** field trip to Asmara sub-zoba of Maekel Zoba (includes 0.41% of the Semenawi and Debubawi Green Belt proposed PA): Mayoksana, Shegrini, May-Hnzi, and Durfo-Endabaghereweldi catchments: visiting check-dams and micro-dams sites constructed in 2014-2016, Asmara tree nursery, small-scale agriculture areas, woodland restoration site at Adineta and Akbate Asmara villages, meeting with Durfo village administration. | Michael Abraham, Abraham Daniel, Omer Ibrahim Jebib, Estifanos Bein, Tedros Kibron, Futsum Hagos  +5 local people from Durfo village |
| **Tuesday, August 8** | **09:30 – 10:30** – meeting with National Consultant involved in the project development | Yohannes Debretsion, Yohannes Debretsion Consulting Firm, Asmara |
| **11:30 – 12:30 –** meeting with the Ministry of Marine Resources | Seid Mohammed Abrar, Sami Mohammed, Asmara |
| **13:30 – 18:00** – desktop analysis of the project documents | UNDP office |
| **Wednesday,**  **August 9** | **9:00 – 10:00 –** Meeting with the Minister of Land, Water and Environment | Tesfai Gebresellasie, Tedros Kibron, Adam Habteab, Asmara |
| **10:30 – 15:30** – desktop analysis of the project documents | UNDP office |
| **16:00 – 17:30** – focus group with National Consultants involved in delivery of Outputs for Outcome 1. Follow-up discussion with the Minister of Land, Water and Environment and Forestry and Wildlife Authority further steps of the MTR process and additional information needs. | Ghebrehiwet Medhanie, Woldeselassie Ogbazghi, Mengsteab Negash, Mogos Woldeyohannes, Estifanos Bein, Tedros Kibron, Futsum Hagos, Adam Habteab, MLWE office |
| **Thursday, August 10** | M. Paltsyn departs Asmara |  |
|  | | |

## Annex 7. Progress Towards Results Matrix

| **Indicators** | **Baseline** | **1st PIR level** | **Mid-Term Target[[72]](#footnote-72)** | **EOP Target** | **MT actual** | **Achievement Rating** | **Justification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Objective:** Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system | | | | | | | |
| 1. Total hectares (and %) of critical habitat conserved within newly established national protected areas | Native highland forest: 0  Native mangrove: 0  African wild ass habitat: 0  Turtle nesting sites: 0  Sea grass: 0 | Native highland forest: 0  Native mangrove: 0  African wild ass habitat: 0  Turtle nesting sites: 0  Sea grass: 0 | Native highland forest: 23,000  Native mangrove: 12,000  African wild ass habitat: 80,000  Turtle nesting sites: 1300  Sea grass: 2,300[[73]](#footnote-73) | Native highland forest: 23,000 (23%)  Native mangrove: 7,000 (100%?)  African wild ass habitat: 80,000  Turtle nesting sites: 1300  Sea grass: 2,300 | At least 23,000 (baseline value) (23%) ha of highland forests in Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area.  At least 80,000 ha of wild ass and gazelle habitat in Buri. | **On target to be achieved** | Despite lack of official PA status, the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area has been demarcated, zoned and protected by FWA rangers and village scouts since 2014 using funds of the GEF project and GoE[[74]](#footnote-74). Given the data collected by the MTR, due to enforced PA regime number of households selling firewood in Durfo village decreased from 300 (2014) to 0 (2017); total number of livestock decreased from 8,890 (2014) to 5,920 (2017)[[75]](#footnote-75). In another village in the PA – Shegrni Arberibue – number of livestock decreased from 3,190 (2014) to 1,600 (2017)[[76]](#footnote-76). These facts demonstrate obvious threat reduction to the PA ecosystems.    Despite lack of official PA status, the Buri area (includes key wild ass and gazelles’ habitat) has been protected by FWA rangers and established regime since 2014[[77]](#footnote-77). |
| 2.Populations of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas | African wild ass: ≈ 200  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | No data | African wild ass: ≈ 220  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | African wild ass: ≈ 250  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | No data | **Not rated** | Achievement of this important target could not be assessed by the MTR due to lack of survey data for target species. However, FWA reports 2014-2017 based on the data collected by the PA rangers indicate increase of the average size of the animal groups (proxy for population number) last four years:  Greater kudu - from 5-6 animals (2014) to 15-30 animals in 2017;  Gazelles – from 40-100 animals (2014) to 100-150 animals (2017);  Average group size for wild ass remains stable of 7-5 animals per group[[78]](#footnote-78) |
| 3.Total annual government financing for management and conservation of national protected area system (US$) | 0 | 150,000 | 250,000[[79]](#footnote-79) | 500,000[[80]](#footnote-80) | 164,000[[81]](#footnote-81) | **Not on target to be achieved** | Since 2014 GoE provides salaries to 42 FWA rangers and 52 village scouts in Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori proposed PAs. Also, government invested in the zoning and demarcation of the Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri in 2016.  Given significant delay with establishment of the National PA Agency and official gazettement of three target PAs this target is unlikely to be achieved. However, the project team still can achieve the target with 2-3 years of delay if the project management is improved dramatically |
| 4.Total area of highland forest cover within (mainly *Juniperus procera*) the Green Belt, ha | 23,000 | No data | 23,000 | 23,000 | No data | **Not rated** | This target could not be assessed given lack of assessments in 2016-2017 |
| 5.Percentage of households and women reporting increased levels of food security in the PAs | Households: 0  Women:0 | No data | >=5%  >=5%[[82]](#footnote-82) | >=20%  >=20% | At least 150 (24%) households from 630 only in one from 9 villages of the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area  About 600 household will benefit from increased yield sustainability as a result check-dams and micro-dams constructed in 2015 in Mayoksana catchment (buffer zone of the Green Belt)[[83]](#footnote-83) | **On target to be achieved** | In result of check-dam constructions in Durfo catchment (a village in Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area) in 2014-2015, 96.8 ha of available agricultural land were provided with sustainable watering, benefiting to **150 small farms** (150 from 630 households, or 24%) in the area that indicated 2 sustainable crops a year and 40% of income increase for farmers since 2015[[84]](#footnote-84). Similar check-dam and micro-dam constructions were implemented in Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area in 8 more villages[[85]](#footnote-85) contributing to sustainable agriculture, increasing production, and food security. However, the MTR could not assess the whole positive impact in the area. |
| **Outcome 1.** Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system | | | | | | | |
| * 1. National PA institutional and legislation framework: * Protected Area Act; * PA Management Guidance; * PA Administration * PA Development Strategy * PA Biodiversity Monitoring Programme | -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist; | -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -does not exist; | -approved by GoE;  -approved by GoE;  -established;  -fully drafted;  - approved by GoE; | -implemented;  - implemented;  - operational[[86]](#footnote-86);  - implemented;  - implemented; | -under development;  -does not exist;  -does not exist;  -under development;  -under development | **Not on target to be achieved** | Given significant delay with the development of necessary PA legislative and institutional framework and insufficient current level of the project management the end of the project target is unlikely to be achieved. However, the project team still can achieve the target with 2-3 years of delay if the project management is improved dramatically |
| * 1. Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government as part of the protected areas administration to manage the national protected area system | 0 | 3 | 5[[87]](#footnote-87) | 10 | 0 | **Not on target to be achieved** | No PA Agency has been established yet and no relevant staff hired. 3 officers indicated in the PIR 2015 report actually turned out to be local PA managers for Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri, Buri-Irrori-Hawakil, and Bera’sole (Indicator 2.4) employed by FWA in the North Red Sea Zoba[[88]](#footnote-88)  However, the project team still can achieve the target with 2-3 years of delay if the project management is improved dramatically |
| * 1. Number of Eritreans annually enrolled in national university accredited biodiversity conservation training course | 0 | 0 | At least 5[[89]](#footnote-89) | 30 | 0 | **Not on target to be achieved** | Given significant delay with development of conservation management programme for national colleges and Universities (the programme is still under development) this target is unlikely to be achieved at the current level of the project management. However, the project team still can achieve the target with 2-3 years of delay if the project management is improved dramatically |
| **Outcome 2.** Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system | | | | | | | |
| * 1. Total hectares legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories | Terrestrial: 0  Marine: 0 | 0  0 | 649,100  0 | 649,100  360,000 | 0  0 | **Not on target to be achieved** | Given significant delay with development of National Protected Area Act and establishment of National PA administration this target is unlikely to be achieved. Current situation is similar to the ECMIB project issue when establishment of 2 Marine PAs never happened due to delayed project implementation and lack of time. However, the project team still can achieve the target with 2-3 years of delay if the project management is improved dramatically |
| 2.2. METT scores for target marine/terrestrial protected areas increase by 100% | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 29  Buri: 32  Bera’sole Bay: 22 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 29  Buri: 32  Bera’sole Bay: 22 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 44  Buri: 47  Bera’sole Bay: 33[[90]](#footnote-90) | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 60  Buri: 64  Bera’sole Bay: 44[[91]](#footnote-91) | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 48  Buri: 38  Bera’sole Bay: 27[[92]](#footnote-92) | **Not on target to be achieved** | Despite 3 target PAs have not been officially designated yet, since 2014 they are protected by **38 FWA rangers** and **54 village scouts** (control illegal tree cutting, livestock grazing, and charcoal transportation) and have specific protection regime and initial wildlife monitoring. PA awareness campaign was conducted local communities in 2016-2017 in Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori-Hawakil[[93]](#footnote-93). Demarcation and zoning of the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri Green Belt was done in 2016 as a part of the National Enclosure Assessment. The total area of the PA demarcated is **107,586 ha** in the Ghinda sub-zoba (includes 95% of the proposed PA)[[94]](#footnote-94). Expected increase of the METT score was detected only for Green Belt area, with two other proposed PA below expected METT value. To keep the target on track the project have to invest more resources in the Buri-Irrori-Hawakil and Bera’sole areas. |
| * 1. Number of protected area management and business plans operational[[95]](#footnote-95) | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | Development of 3 PA MPs started | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 1  Buri: 1  Bera’sole Bay: 1 | No development of MPs has been initiated yet | **Not on target to be achieved** | No development of the PA management plans has been started yet. Thus, this target is unlikely to be achieved given low level of the current project management. However, it can be achieved if the management planning process will start in parallel with development of legal and institutional base for the National PA system |
| * 1. Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government to manage individual protected areas | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 1  Buri: 2  Bera’sole Bay: 1 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 3  Buri: 3  Bera’sole Bay: 1[[96]](#footnote-96) | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 10  Buri: 10  Bera’sole Bay: 2 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 2  Buri: 2  Bera’sole Bay: 1 | **On target to be achieved** | 5 junior experts were employed by the FWA since 2015 as managers of target PAs in the North Red Sea Zoba[[97]](#footnote-97). This indicator is almost on target to be achieved. |
| * 1. National funding available for the target PA management, US$ | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 90,000  Buri: 50,000 Berasole Bay: 10,000 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 90,000  Buri: 90,000 Berasole Bay: 25,000 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 150,000  Buri: 150,000  Bera’sole Bay: 50,000 | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 159,200  Buri: 4,800 Berasole Bay: 0 | **Not on target to be achieved** | Total funding spent for 3 target PA in 2016 is US$ 164,000 (80% of expected at the mid-term)[[98]](#footnote-98). The indicator value was higher than expected for the Green Belt area, but much lower than expected for two other PAs. Given GoE plans to invest in demarcation, zoning and protection of Buri and Bera’sole areas in 2018-2020 the target still can be achieved, but improved project management is badly needed. |
| **Outcome 3.** Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas | | | | | | | |
| 3.1. Total area under sustainable community-based NRM and SLM practices in the project areas, ha | 0 | No data | At least 10,000[[99]](#footnote-99) | At least 60,000[[100]](#footnote-100) | At least 8,499 | **On target to be achieved** | 8,499 ha of mixed use zones were demarcated around 8 villages in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri for sustainable SLM, SFM and livestock grazing. Plus additional territory of the PA core zone can be used for beekeeping and NTFP collection by local communities. Since 2014 check-dam and micro-dam construction started in all the areas to establish good conditions for sustainable agriculture and provide local community with alternative way to earn income rather than firewood selling and livestock grazing. Due to the measures only in Durfo community about 97 ha of agricultural land were provided with sustainable water supply and number of households selling firewood decreased from 300 (2014) to 0 (2017); total number of livestock decreased from 8,890 (2014) to 5,920 (2017)[[101]](#footnote-101). In another village in the PA – Shegrni Arberibue – number of livestock decreased from 3,190 (2014) to 1,600 (2017) because of provided new opportunities for sustainable agriculture and LE[[102]](#footnote-102). |
| * 1. Number of local people (females/males) adopting SLM, SFM, and sustainable fishing practices in the project areas | 0 | No data | At least 300 females and 300 males[[103]](#footnote-103) | At least 1,000 females and 1,000 males | At least 150 households (~150 males and 150 female) only in one from 9 villages of the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area | **On target to be achieved** | At least 150 families in Durfo village switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and LE regime of the PAs[[104]](#footnote-104). Similar shifts to sustainable practices are likely for other 8 villages located in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area due to similar measures, but MTR does not have full statistics. |
| * 1. Total area reforested by local communities in the project areas after start of the project, ha | 0 | No data | At least 50[[105]](#footnote-105) | At least 800 | 96 | **On target to be achieved** | 96 ha of hill terraces were made and planted with 159,000 tree seedlings (*Terminalia brownii, Acacia laeta, and Eucalyptus rudis)* by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area (Asmara and Ghinda sub-zoba) in 2014-2017 (GoE co-funding)[[106]](#footnote-106) All necessary equipment and tools were procured using GEF funds in 2016-2017 to use for reforestation projects in Semenawi&Debubawi Bahri area in 2017-2020 |

1. UNDP/GEF Project Document “Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil protected area system for conservation of biodiversity and mitigation of land degradation” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UNDP-GEF Directorate 2014. Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Kozlova, S., Paltsyn, M., Mathiason, J. 2016. Tools for Theory of Change Analysis of Environmental Programs. International Conference Evaluation 2016, October 24-29, Atlanta, GA, USA. <http://comm.eval.org/viewdocument/tools-for-theory-of-change-analysis> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/M2\_ROtI%20Handbook.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Spatial analysis of the remote sensing data was performed by Liza Iegorova, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. UNDP/GEF Project Document “Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil protected area system for conservation of biodiversity and mitigation of land degradation” [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. UNDP/GEF Project Document “Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation” [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Socio-Economic Baseline Survey for the project [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Project Inception Report [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Prodoc’s Annex F. Environmental and Social Screening Checklist [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Issues of Gender section of the Prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. UNDP 2009. Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Spatial analysis of MODIS data was performed by Liza Iegorova, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. As planed in the project document [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Article 27: Protection of Natural Heritage: (1) The appropriate authority may designate by regulation any area as a national protected area for the purpose of better management of one or more natural resources and their ecosystems; (2) Zoba Administrations and councils of village communities may designate enclosures for purposes of protecting degradation of land and marine resources, preserving vegetation cover for sustainable use of the same. P. 32 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Confirmed by the focus group with the national consultants on August 9 2017, Revised ToR for Establishment of PA policy and Institutional Framework to Operationalize National Protected Area System, and Contract Agreement between MLWE and the team of consultants signed in February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to demarcation sites; and Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba Administration and rangers; interviews with FWA; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Confirmed by interview with FWA and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Confirmed by interviews with FWA and the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba Administration and rangers [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to demarcation sites; and Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to demarcation sites; and Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Confirmed by focus groups with Ghinda and Asmara sub-zoba representatives and Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba and Asmara Sub-ZobaAdministrations and rangers; interviews with FWA; field visits to the project sites; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. 0-20% - HU, 20-40% – U, 40-60% - MU, 60-80% - MS, and 80-99% - S,>=100% - HS [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Confirmed by the focus group with local government and people Durfo village [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Interview with Asmara sub-Zoba Department of Agriculture [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Confirmed by the focus group with local government and people Durfo village [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba Administration and rangers; interviews with FWA; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba Administration and rangers; interviews with FWA; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Project GEF Tracking Tool – METT - 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to the project sites; meeting with local government and people of Ghinda and Durfo villages; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Total Budget and Work Plan of the prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Six-month progress report 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Minutes of the Meetings of MLWE, FWA and UNDP on March 23 2015, May 11 2015, September 7 2015, September 14 2015, October 2 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Minutes of the Meeting between MLWE and UNDP. September 7 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. BI-annual Work Plan for the UNDP PA Project 2017-2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Total Budget and Work Plan of the prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Audit Report and Financial Statement 2016 for the UNDP/GEF PA project in Eritrea [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Establishment of the National Protected Area System Document: Organizational Set Up and Job Descriptions, Work Plan 2015, Financial Procedures and Templates, Monitoring and Evaluation Schedule. December 27, 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba and Asmara Sub-ZobaAdministrations and rangers; interviews with FWA; field visits to the project sites; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba and Asmara Sub-ZobaAdministrations and rangers; interviews with FWA; field visits to the project sites; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. PIR 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Focus group with the organization at the MLWE; [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)”; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba and Asmara Sub-ZobaAdministrations and rangers; interviews with FWA; field visits to the project sites; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba and Asmara Sub-ZobaAdministrations and rangers; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. <http://www.coface.com/Economic-Studies-and-Country-Risks/Eritrea> [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Focus groups with Ghindae and Asmara sub-zoba administrations [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Focus group with Durfo village government and local people. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Interview with FWA staff [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Terminal Evaluation Report for ECMIB Project 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Terminal Evaluation Report for SLM Project 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. <http://www.philippepaquet.com/2008/10/21/when-everyone-is-responsible-no-one-is-responsible/> [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. MLWE 2014. THE 5th NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCBD [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. MLWE 2014. THE 5th NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCBD [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Interview with Durfo governor and local people [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Officially approved by the Government, has action plan and regular reporting [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Officially established, have office, staff, funding, planning and reporting lines [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Officially approved by National PA Agency, budgeted, with regular reporting on the plan implementation [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. All the Mid-Term Indicator values were established by the MTR, because no mid-term values have been found in the PRF [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Assumption of MTR based on the description of the project Outputs in the prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba Administration and rangers; interviews with FWA; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Confirmed by the focus group with local government and people Durfo village [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Interview with Asmara sub-Zoba Department of Agriculture [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Confirmed by interview with FWA and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Data provided by FWA during MTR mission based on the ranger records in the proposed PAs in 2014-2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Suggested by the MTR [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. More realistic target suggested by the MTR [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. GoE funding for ranger and scout salaries in Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori proposed PAs in 2016, and zoning and demarcation of Semienawi&Debubawi Bahri. Source of data: MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Assumption of the MTR based on the prodoc (sustainable livelihood activities were planned to start only in 2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Interview with Department of Agriculture of Asmara sub-zoba [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Confirmed by the focus group with local government and people Durfo village [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Confirmed by the focus group with the Ghindae Sub-Zoba Administration and rangers; interviews with FWA; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Officially established, have office, staff, funding, planning and reporting lines [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Assumption of the MTR based on description of the project outputs in the prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Data provided by FWA to the MTR mission [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Assumption of the MTR based on description of the project outputs in the prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Assumption of the MTR based on description of the project outputs in the prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. The values were adjusted by the MTR to the realistic increase of the METT score by 25-30% in the project framework [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. The values were adjusted by the MTR to the realistic increase of the METT score by 25-30% in the project framework [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Confirmed by interview with FWA and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to demarcation sites; and Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Officially approved by National PA Agency, budgeted, with regular reporting on the plan implementation [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Assumption of the MTR based on the prodoc (PA were planned for official establishment and staffing only in 2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Interview with FWA staff [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. FWA and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Assumption of the MTR based on the prodoc (start of the Output 3.3 activities is planned for 2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Approximate area of the PAs (10%) that will be designated as mixed use zones for sustainable NRM, SFM, and agriculture [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to the project sites; meeting with local government and people of Ghinda and Durfo villages; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Interview with Asmara sub-Zoba Department of Agriculture [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Assumption of the MTR based on the prodoc (start of the Output 3.3 activities is planned for 2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to the project sites; meeting with local government and people of Ghinda and Durfo villages; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Assumption of the MTR based on the prodoc (start of the Output 3.3 activities is planned for 2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Confirmed by the focus group with North Red Sea Zoba Administration; field visit to the project sites; meeting with local government and people of Ghinda and Durfo villages; Tsegay, K. 2017. Report on Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri PA. Department of Land and Agriculture, North Red Sea Zoba; and MLWE 2017. Technical Report “2014-2016 Co-financing by the Government of Eritrea presented to the Mid-Term Review Mission UNDP-GEF (August 2017)” [↑](#footnote-ref-106)