



Terminal Evaluation REPORT of the UNDP/GEF Project

"Improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements"

UNDP Project ID: 00081775

GEF Project ID: 4248

Evaluation period: September – November 2017

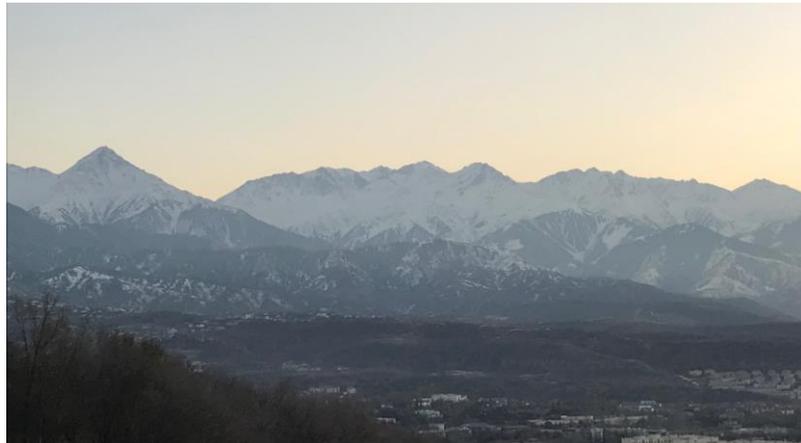
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Implementing Partner: UNDP

Executing Agency: Forestry and Wildlife Committee



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i. Executive Summary

a. Project Summary Table

Project Title: Improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements		
UNDP Project ID (PIMS#):	00081775	
GEF Project ID (PIMS #):	4248	
ATLAS Business Unit, Award # Project ID:	00090945	
Country(ies):	Kazakhstan	
Region:	Asia	
Focal Area:	Multi Focal Area	
GEF Focal Area Strategic Objective:	CD-2	
Trust Fund (GEF)	500,000 USD	
Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner	Forestry and Wildlife Committee	
Project Financing	at CEO endorsement (US\$)	at TE – Nov 2017 (US\$)
[1] GEF financing:	500,000	394,026.7
[2] UNDP contribution:	50,000	72,939
[3] Government:	600,000	692,573
[4] Other partners:	-	-
[5] Total co-financing [2+3+4]:	650,000	765,512
PROJET TOTAL COST [1+5]	1,150,000	1,232,477.7
Project Document Signature Date	12.09.2014	
closing date	Proposed September 2017	Actual 31.12.2017

b. Project Description

The project was considered strategic and timely– at the time of the project development - in that Parliament had approved a seven-year action plan for the country’s pursuit of a Green Economy, which is a top priority of the President. While natural resource valuation is not a new concept or approach, its application remains one that will be innovative and potentially transformative for Kazakhstan. Lessons learned and best practices from countries where natural resource valuation has been used, in particular in Europe, to significantly help reducing the learning curve in Kazakhstan and offer new models in the pursuit of a Green Economy.

The goal of the project was to put in place new approaches that will facilitate better development decisions for the global environment. The objective of this project was to develop technical and institutional capacities for undertaking an economic valuation of global environmental goods and services as potentially impacted by proposed development policies, programmes, plans and projects. This included strengthening the appropriate legal instruments to legitimize the long-term use of natural resource valuation.

To achieve the project’s goal and objective, the project included two components, two outcomes, and four outputs.

The **project’s components** are:

- **Component 1:** Development and application of natural resource valuation tools, and
- **Component 2:** Institutionalizing natural resource valuation tools.

The **Project outcomes** are:

- Outcome 1:** Decisions to protect the global environment are better enabled, and
- Outcome 2:** Technical and management staff sufficiently trained in the use and application of natural resource valuation tools, and decision-makers fully aware of natural resource valuation tools.

The main expected outcome of the project was the sensitization of decision-makers and the training of technical and management staff in the use of natural resource valuation tools. The project aimed to develop natural resource valuation tools for valuing global environmental benefits; provide training and learn-by-doing exercises on their use; and help institutionalize natural resource valuation.

c. Evaluation Ratings Table

The project has been able to achieve most of the planned activities and targets. Most significant achievements included an assessment on economic valuation of ecosystem services that confirmed the key role of natural capital in development of economic of two ecosystems.

Table 1: Rating Project Performance

Criteria	Rating
Monitoring and Evaluation: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S) Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	
Overall quality of M&E	HS
M&E design at project start up	HS
M&E Plan Implementation	HS
IA & EA Execution: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S) Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	
Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	HS
Implementing Agency Execution	HS
Executing Agency Execution	HS
Outcomes: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S) Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	
Overall Quality of Project Outcomes	HS
Relevance: relevant (R) or not relevant (NR)	R
Effectiveness	HS
Efficiency	HS
Sustainability: Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U).	
Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability:	L
Financial resources	L
Socio-economic	ML
Institutional framework and governance	L
Environmental	L
Impact: Significant (S), Minimal (M), Negligible (N)	
Environmental Status Improvement	S
Environmental Stress Reduction (rate 3 pt. scale)	3
Progress towards stress/status change (rate 3 pt. scale) Overall Project results	2
Overall Project Results	

d. Summary of Conclusions, Recommendations, and Lessons

The project has been very successful and achieved its objectives in terms of key targets, developing tools for assessing natural resources and training on the use of these tools to provide an enabling environment for improving planning and decision-making to achieve

global environmental problems, and institutionalizing natural resources valuation to ensure their long-term use. It was also very successful in leveraging co-financing from the government.

The amendments prepared to the Forestry, Wildlife, and Protected Areas Codes and relevant regulatory and legal acts in relation to environmental impacts assessment in the context of biodiversity conservation, land degradation and climate change as well as the recommendations on the improvement of the legislative framework related to natural resource valuation prepared and submitted by the project to the Parliament, once approved, will ensure the long-term sustainability of the project's deliverables. These will provide the legislative and institutional frameworks needed to ensure the mainstreaming of economic valuations of eco-systems in the Government's work.

The project management structure was a key factor contributing to the project success. The adapted management structure allows four UNDP projects' teams to work together more effectively and efficiently, not only at the technical level, but also at the financial and operational levels. The projects' teams' knowledge, technical expertise, enthusiasm, and the strong and continuous collaboration with the government key stakeholders and the Parliament have ensured the overall success and sustainability of the project.

Overall, the project was able to complete most of the planned activities within the planned period with only 3 months extension with no cost requested to finalize the project's activities in a quality manner. The project has even carried out additional essential activities such as the piloting of the economic valuation tool in two places instead of one pilot area.

The Project is highly received by the Government, and considered as the only national initiative that has contributed tremendously to institutionalize the work on economic valuation of eco-system services. As a direct result of the project implementation and support, the Government provided all needed co-financing that was committed during the project development with about USD 0.692 million co-financing were already utilized and USD 0.0729 million from the UNDP.

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: The project holds a final workshop of stakeholders (FWC, MoA, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Finance, local governments in piloting sites and UNDP) to map out the future of economic valuation tools.

Recommendation 2: The PMU to finalize all project's deliverables and make them available for national stakeholders who are interested in economic valuations for ecosystem services. These deliverables can be made available online by developing a dedicated website for economic valuations of ecosystem services.

Recommendation 3: The PMU to prepare a summary booklet in English for the project's deliverables and disseminate that at global level. This could be done virtually by uploading the materials into the project's website, or through preparing a small booklet about the project, listing its main deliverables with one-two summary about each one of them. This will help in sharing lessons learned from the projects, and disseminates the results to other countries by overriding the language barrier.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that the few remaining project activities be completed as soon as possible, including the booklet for awareness campaign, the approval of the amendment to the EIA.

Recommendation 5: Economic valuation for ecosystem services capacity presently has limitations to meet the actual needs at the Country level. The FWC should fast-track the

upgrading of the national capacity in order not to meet the needed demand created under the project.

Recommendation 6: During the TE mission and meetings with project stakeholders, the need for clearly written guidelines and standards for economic valuations for different kind of ecosystems, including forest, wetlands, rangelands, rivers, etc., was strongly stated. While the guidelines developed by the project are prescribed for the protected areas and forest ecosystems, other critical ecosystems should be valued and assessed. It is therefore recommended that FWC considers introducing a system of listing all ecosystems that need to be valued, starting from vulnerable ecosystems first, then moving to the least vulnerable ones.

Recommendation 7: To ensure the availability of needed financial resources, it is recommended that all economic valuation and voluntary payments revenues be maintained at specific well-established funds like the Biodiversity funds.

Lessons Learned

The project demonstrated several good practices which resulted in the successful implementation of the project that may be adopted for the formulation of other projects. Some of the best practices are:

Lessons learned 1: Timely and well-developed adaptive management measures undertaken during project inception phase and implementation have helped the PMU to avoid project delay, and utilize whatever opportunities arising that led to improved cost-efficiency, and/or offers solutions to a problem.

Lessons learned 2: Stakeholder involvement including government, private sector, academia, and research institute as well as local and international non-governmental organizations are important tools for the mainstreaming of global environmental agreements at local level.

Lessons learned 3: Capacity development at the institutional, legislative, and individual levels are critical for achievement the project outcomes and to ensure their sustainability.

Lessons learned 4: The focus of the CB2 project on mainstreaming global environmental conventions and agreement in national planning, strategy and policy is very crucial, beneficial, and very much needed.

ii. Acronyms and abbreviations

APR	Annual Progress Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CB2	Capacity Building-2
CCCD	Cross-Cutting Capacity Development
CDRs	Combined delivery reports
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
EA	Executing Agency
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FWC	Forestry and Wildlife Committee
IA	Implementing Agency
IR	Inception Report
IW	Inception Workshop
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	German International Cooperation
LFA	Logical Framework
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MEWR	Ministry of Environment and Water Resources
MTR	Midterm Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
PMU	Project Management
ProDoc	Project Document
PB	Project Board
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP-GEF	United Nations Development Programme- Global Environment Facility
UNDP-CO	United Nations Development Programme- Country Office
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework

1. Introduction

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the UNDP supported GEF financed project “Improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements” was carried out in three phases: i) desk reviews, data collection, analysis and preparation of terminal evaluation inception report; ii) evaluation mission in Kazakhstan to meet with the project team, implementing and executing partners, and stakeholders; and iii) finalize the preparation of the Terminal Evaluation Report.

1.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

In line with the UNDP and the GEF evaluation policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP supported- GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. This report concerns the TE of the project “Improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements” (Project Number 4248) to assess project results achieved since its commencement, September 2014.

The TE is intended to provide evidence-based credible, useful, and reliable information. The evaluation used the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as defined, and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. The TE synthesizes lessons to help guide future design and implementation of GEF-funded UNDP activities, and contributes to the overall assessment of results in achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits.

1.2 Scope and Methodology

This TE has been conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects. It is founded on evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluation has followed a participatory and consultative approach and sought to ensure close engagement with key government counterparts, UNDP Country Office, project team, the UNDP GEF Regional Technical Adviser, and key project stakeholders. The evaluation included a field mission to Kazakhstan (Astana and Almaty cities). The TE was carried out in strict adherence to the Terms of Reference received (**Annex 1**), and included the following three stages:

- **Preparatory Evaluation Phase (Pre-mission):**

This initial stage involved extensive desk reviews of project-related documentation such as the project document, annual reports, project files, national strategic and policy documents, and any other materials (**Annex 2**) that the evaluators considered useful for an evidence-based evaluation assessment. The documents were mainly provided by the Project Management Unit (PMU) and partly obtained through research on internet.

As part of the preparatory phase, an Inception Report was prepared and submitted to PMU for approval; it included a preliminary itinerary for the field mission (**Annex 3**), a tentative list of interviewees selected to provide a broad sample of the achievements and influence of the project, and a general interview (questionnaire) format for project team, and stakeholders (**Annex 4, 5, and 6**).

- **Evaluation Mission to Astana and Almaty (7 to 11 November 2018)**

As per the TORs, an evaluation mission in Kazakhstan took place from 7 to 11 November 2017. Meetings were held with several key project stakeholders to brief on the purpose and methodology of the TE, to obtain latest update on the project, and to finalize the mission schedules and arrangements. Key participants included PMU, UNDP Country Office (UNDP CO), Implementing Agency (IA), Implementing Partner, Executing Agency (EA). Interviews were held with a sample of stakeholders (**Annex 4** for list of persons interviewed).

Semi-structured interviews and consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, using a set of questions in a conversational format. The questions aimed to provide answers to the points described in the following section. In general, the questions were arranged around the evaluation criteria. Findings were crosschecked during different interviews and with available evidence.

Direct observations based on the mission's interviews and meetings: the information collected, including documentary evidence, interviews, and observations, will be compiled, summarized, and organized according to the questions asked in the evaluation.

- **Preparation of the Terminal Evaluation Report**

Following the mission, the collected data, updates, and materials received during the mission were carefully reviewed and analyzed in accordance with UNDP Project Evaluation Methodology. All data was then consolidated, and based on accountable information and opinions of the stakeholders with all sources and assumptions given, a draft Terminal Evaluation Report was prepared and submitted to PMU and UNDP CO for review and feedback.

UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office shall subsequently circulate the report to key project partners for review. Consolidated questions and comments on the draft TE Report received from UNDP CO shall be reviewed, responded to and incorporated into the final Report.

1.3 Structure of the evaluation Report

The structure of this TE Report corresponds to the Evaluation Report Outline as documented within the TOR for the assignment.

This TE is based on a performance assessment approach guided by the principles of results-based management. The evaluation tracks impact per the project's Logical Framework. The contribution of project outputs and project management is evaluated with reference to the achievement of the project outcomes and overall objective. This TE reviews the implementation experience and achievement of the project results against the Project Document endorsed by the GEF CEO, including any changes made during implementation.

2. Project Description and Development Context

2.1 Project start and duration

The UNDP-supported GEF-financed project was signed by all parties by 16 September 2014 for a period of 3 years with a planned closure date of September 2017. A project management team was put in place immediately and was comprising of a project manager, a technical team leader, an administrative assistant, and procurement specialist, and a legal expert. It is worth mentioning that this team manages two projects therefore the cost is partially covered by the CB2 project. The first annual work plan was submitted in December 2014. The project

inception workshop took place in December 2014. The inception report was submitted January 2015, and in June 2017, the project was granted a no-cost extension to end of December 2017.

2.2 Problems that the project sought to address

Kazakhstan completed its National Capacity Self-Assessment in 2006. The purpose of this activity was to determine the country's priority capacity needs as well as key constraints limiting effective and efficient implementation of the Rio Conventions, and how to address these barriers moving forward. Because of this process, the NCSA produced thematic assessments, a cross-cutting analysis, a capacity development action plan, and a final synthesis report (UNDP, 2006).

As a result of the NCSA process, the final report identified multiple capacity problems facing the country and categorized them into four main cross-cutting constraints:

- a. Institutional arrangements to implement the Rio Conventions were deemed insufficient. This was due largely by the weak coverage of government mandates, undeveloped scientific methodologies, and ineffective cooperation and collaboration among state agencies to address Rio Conventions
- b. At the time of the NCSA, there were insufficient incentives or accountability to meet Rio Convention obligations. For example, legislative and economic incentives are at odds with Rio Conventions, and key government staff are not sufficiently on board
- c. Insufficient level of awareness and knowledge of Rio Conventions at multiple levels

Based on these challenges, the NCSA identified three strategic objectives that would form the basis of a capacity development action plan and help address the root causes of the above listed problems:

- Creation of the institutional conditions and mechanisms of cross-sectoral/interdepartmental coordination for achievement of the Conventions objectives;
- Improvement of the system on stimulating the activity of the government agencies and nature users for achievement of the Conventions objectives;
- Improvement of the level of awareness and knowledge of the problems and practical approach for achievement of the Conventions objectives among the persons responsible for decision making and activity arrangement.

This project specifically addresses one of the key recommendations that the NCSA proposed to *strengthen the use of economic incentives for meeting obligations under the Rio Conventions, among other multilateral environmental agreements and to rectify the associated key deficiencies in Kazakhstan's legal and regulatory framework*. That recommendation led to the Government's decision to develop and use innovative tools that could identify and measure environmental and economic costs and values for decision-making on development plans, programmes, and projects.

2.3 Immediate and development objectives of the project

This project was intended to *“develop technical and institutional capacities for undertaking an economic valuation of global environmental goods and services as potentially impacted by proposed development policies, programmes, plans and projects”* according to Project Document, Sub-Section C.2.b, Page 22. More specifically, the project document outlined the

main objective of the project as “to develop natural resource valuation tools for valuing global environmental benefits; provide training and learn-by-doing exercises on their use; and help institutionalize natural resource valuation”.

The achievement of the goal and objectives were organized around two interrelated components:

📌 **Component 1: Development and application of natural resource valuation**

Developing a set of natural resource valuation tools, those include an economic assessment of Kazakhstan’s ecosystem functions and services, natural resource commodities, as well as the opportunity cost of environmental damage arising from land degradation, among others. Developing the governments and concerned stakeholders’ capacity to utilize a variety of tools and methodologies to undertake valuation of natural resources, and strengthening national capacity to integrate natural resource valuation into government planning and development frameworks.

📌 **Component 2: Institutionalizing natural resource valuation**

Enhancing capacity through the learn-by-doing piloting of natural resource valuation within a specific high-value development project for a particular sector. In addition to engaging stakeholders in the sensitization and training activities and the learn-by-doing exercises, the institutionalization of natural resource valuation necessitated key legislative and institutional reforms. Supporting the legislative decision-making by drafting the necessary bills for parliamentary approval.

2.4 Baseline Indicators Established

In the baseline scenario, there were the following indicators:

- Requirements of the Rio Conventions are not adequately incorporated in development planning.
- Institutional capacities for managing the Rio Conventions is piecemeal and takes place through Rio Convention-specific projects, with development emphasizing socio-economic priorities.
- Planners and decision-makers, particularly at the local level do not fully appreciate the value of the Rio Conventions and the use of net present value to determine value leads to heavy discounting of the global environment.
- Planners and decision-makers do not incorporate full value of ecosystem goods and services.
- Evidence of public sector staff’s technical capacities related to the Rio Conventions is limited.
- Despite expressed government commitment to the global environment, several issues undermine policies and efforts.
- Lack of capacity among agency staff and less than optimal understanding of natural resource valuation.
- Natural resources valuation guidelines and tools are not widely known among planners and decision-makers.
- Shortage of technical capacity amongst planners at all levels to utilize information and knowledge related to the value of ecosystem goods and services, and to mainstream it into the planning processes.
- Civil society stakeholders have limited experience with participation in the economic arena, and few CSOs have the necessary technical and administrative capacities to operate effectively in Kazakhstan.
- Some political reforms are already on-going including a draft Law on Local Governance that is designed to strengthen capacities of local communities to monitor

local state budget spending, and encourage development of multi-stakeholder public and local community entities that can engage with the local and sub-regional authorities.

2.5 Main Stakeholders

The Forestry and Wildlife Committee (FWC) at the Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan executed the project with support of UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office under Country Office Support to National Implementation Modality (NIM).

The project was monitored by a Project Board (PB) which reviewed implementation progress, took strategic decisions, endorsed work plans, provided guidance, and assisted in the resolution of issues experienced during implementation. The Project Document required the project to set up a Steering Committee (ProDoc page 41) in order “*provide management oversight of project activities*”. At least eight separate set of organizations were listed as members of the Steering Committee.

The PB was chaired by the National Project Director (NPD), who is the Deputy Chairman of the FWC. It is also worth mentioning that the PB was serving four UNDP/FWC projects implemented under the UNDP Biodiversity Management Portfolio. Therefore, the PB was formulated in October 2013 (one year prior to this project commencement) to serve the following UNDP projects:

- Development and implementation of the information system for biodiversity monitoring in pilot PAs in the Republic of Kazakhstan.
- National Biodiversity Planning to Support the implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Republic of Kazakhstan.
- Assessment and mobilization of financial resources to achieve Aichi Targets and implement National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.
- Improving sustainability of the PA system in desert ecosystems through promotion of biodiversity-compatible livelihoods in and around PAs.

Once this project had started, the PB was already in place as well as the needed project governance structure.

2.6 Expected Results

This project was designed to develop natural resource valuation tools and develop the needed capacity at the national and local level on how to use these tools for improved planning and decisions to meet global environmental objectives. It also intended to institutionalize these newly developed natural resource valuation tools and procedures to ensure that they continue to be used over the long-term. Furthermore, the project aimed to test the use of natural resource valuation tools and facilitate the legislative and institutional reforms necessary for their long-term use.

3. Findings

3.1 Project Design/ Formulation

The project design and activities are regarded relevant to the GEF objectives and the Country development objectives. The project document was designed with clearly defined objectives, outputs, activities, and targets. The intended outputs were designed to be goal-oriented,

however, a few targets pertaining to the legislative reforms are difficult to achieve within the three-year implementation timeframe.

The Project Document (ProDoc) includes the required level of details concerning the project log-frame (LFA), components and outputs. It addresses barriers and opportunities for integrating economic valuation of ecosystems in the national planning and development strategies and policies and responds to the national requirements through an appropriate list of components and outputs. The project objective, the 2 components of the project, the 5 outputs as mentioned in the Project Document are clear and practical. However, the project's outcomes are mentioned once, then, components were listed as outcomes in the log-frame.

3.1.1 Analysis of LFA/Results Framework (Project logic/ Strategy, Indicators)

The GEF Project Results Framework is a key planning tool with detailed activities under the implementation framework that were defined in the Project Document. It is used as a basis for reporting on the progress towards achievement of objectives and implementation progress to the GEF in the middle of the calendar year in a combined Annual Project Review/Project Implementation Report (APR/PIR), together with the UNDP format for internal project management and reporting done on a quarterly basis. Hence, the logframe (LFA) shall serve to monitor & evaluate the overall project achievements – based on defined targets and indicators to measure these targets. Indicative activities are related to each output and output target.

During the project inception phase and workshop the LFA has been reviewed but no changes have been made and therefore, has not been updated. Outcomes are not well identified in the Project Document, with targets are specified at the output levels. In the inception workshop, the project management structure has been modified mainly the management arrangement and the composition and number of the technical working groups, however, no update/fine-tuning of the outputs, activities, targets, and sources of verification. With few exceptions, the targets achievement per the end of the project-as formulated during project development-are generally realistic. The project components are listed in the LFA as project's outcomes.

Table 1 provides an overview on the TE assessment of the project's LFA and how "SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound" the achievements are compared to the defined end-of-project targets.

Table 1. Overview on the Terminal Evaluation of the Project's Logframe

Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The LFA refers to specific future events and results, especially in relation to Expo 2017. ▪ The LFA relates to the 2 project components and defines corresponding outputs for each of them. ▪ Indicators are mostly specific and target oriented, with a few exceptions.
Measurable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The indicators are to great extend linked to measurable targets. ▪ For example, under outcome indicators, once indicator is <i>"Government staff have learned, applied, and tested best practice tools to integrate natural resource valuation into national decision-making processes for improved implementation of Rio Conventions"</i>. It is not clear how to measure this indicator!
Achievable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most of the indicators seems realistic to be achieved.

R elevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indicators are relevant since they address national development priorities
T ime-bound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators are linked to targets that are clearly linked to specific timeframes. All of them are linked to their achievements by specific date linked to the proposed month to achieve.

3.1.2 Assumptions and Risks

The project was designed to remove several capacity **barriers** hindering the implementation of Rio Conventions. Those include; at the **systemic level**, the inadequate incentives or mechanisms to enable or encourage progress on Rio Convention implementation. Scientific and technological methodologies for Rio Convention implementation remain outdated or ineffective, although work is on-going to develop these capacities. At the **institutional level**, the insufficient participation of civil public in the decision-making process for Rio Convention implementation as well as insufficient contribution of different socio-economic sectors that have an impact on the fulfillment of Rio Conventions obligations. At the **individual level**, there was insufficient awareness and knowledge among important social actors at multiple levels on the Rio Conventions obligations.

The project has effectively managed to address each of these three sets of barriers towards the effective integration and implementation of the Rio Conventions by improving the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of eco-systems services.

The project **strategy** focused on building upon the high-level commitment of the Government to pursue the country's seven-year action plan for a Green Economy. The barriers to good environmental governance for the global environment are fundamentally an issue of accessing good knowledge and having a good system by which to make best use of this knowledge. Through improved planning and decisions consistent with the principles of a Green Economy, sustainable development can increasingly take on a global environmental character.

The project identified **three risks** during the formulation stage (ProDoc, Subsection B.1., Page 6). These included political, regulatory, and technical risks. Risks were continuously analyzed and updated quarterly during the project implementation.

As mentioned above, the risks log has been updated quarterly, with a clear set of mitigation measures identified per risks. Therefore, overall, the project implementation faces currently a low risk that is related to implementation of the remaining activities before the project's colure, end of December 2017.

3.1.3 Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project design.

The UNDP Biodiversity Projects Portfolio are all hosted in one office. At the time of the CB2 Project formulation, this structure was already in place, with the needed local expertise, technical working groups, and projects' boards. Therefore, before the CB2 Project starts certain lessons were learned from the UNDP Biodiversity Projects' Portfolio.

The CB2 project was designed to complement what other projects are intended to achieve in order to eliminate any overlap and enhance the coordination and collaboration with existed projects. However, at the time of this project formulation, a few projects were going on in the region, and therefore no noticeable lessons from other projects were available and thus incorporated into the CB2 Project design.

3.1.4 Planned stakeholder participation

Due to the project's multi-sectoral nature, the ProDoc stated that the project would be working in a multi-stakeholder and multi-agency situation where numerous authorities and responsibilities are responsible to implement the Rio Conventions. Therefore, partnership strategies were critical for the success of the project.

The project has made great headway in developing partnerships at the local administrative level through the municipalities and with the Governorate in piloting sites (Ile-Balkhash, and Kansu area of Karakiya district of Mangistau region) where relationships appear to be cordial and there is considerable support. The project has also successfully managed to establish a great partnership with the Parliament. The project manager is in direct contact with the parliament to update them on the project's progress, and pave the way to get the needed endorsement of the developed codes and proposal to amend the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidelines. However, the basis of this support is principally verbal, and it remains to be seen how the project will embed economic valuation of eco-system services within the planning processes and procedures of local administrations.

The project was monitored by a PB which reviewed implementation progress, took strategic decisions, endorsed work plans, provided guidance, and assisted in the resolution of issues experienced during implementation.

Main project stakeholders (including ministries, private sectors, and development partners) identified in the project design (ProDoc, page 42) to be actively involved in project implementation include¹:

1. Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
2. UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Kazakhstan;
3. Biodiversity Conservation Association of Kazakhstan;
4. Unit for International Environmental Agreements of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
5. Department for Fish Resources Protection and Fishery Regulation under the Fishery Committee, Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
6. Water Resources Regulation, Use and Protection of the Committee for Water Resources, Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
7. Department of Animal Breeding of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
8. Industrial and Agricultural Development Unit of the Department for Development of Economic Sectors of the Ministry of Economic Development and Budget Planning of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
9. Kazakh Research Institute of Forestry, JSC "KazAgroInnovation";
10. Republican Collection of Microorganisms /the Committee of Science, Ministry of Education, and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
11. State Land Cadaster and Land Monitoring of the Agency of Land Resources Management of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

It should also be noted that the strategic decision of having one PB for four ongoing UNDP projects with the FWC made it very much effective, professional, well-structured, and organized.

¹ Order No. 298, dated 18.10.2903. Confirmation of the members designated for the project Board for the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan/ The Forestry and Wildlife Committee and UNDP Projects Portfolio.

In the project quality assessment exercise, 2016, the project was rated as partially focused on vulnerable and marginalized groups of people. The issue of project's relevance and stakeholders' engagement were addressed in the implementation of a pilot project on economic valuation of changes in ecosystem services at *Kansu site* in the context of equitable access of local people to ecosystem services that are damaged as a result of the investment project implementation. The target groups are involved through workshops and meetings.

Concerned NGOs were heavily involved in the piloting exercises. During the TE mission, the consultant had the chance to meet with key members of the NGOs and individual consultants who were involved in commissioning different components, however, the TE consultant did not visit any of the piloting sites during the mission, and therefore, there was no way to meet with the local communities and get their opinion concerning the projects activities and results.

The project has managed to establish a good network and has benefited from the knowledge and experience sharing in the framework of the international conference "*Integration of ecosystem services in Green Economy*". This conference was held in cooperation with Germany Society of international Cooperation as well as experts from Mongolia, Vietnam, Russia, France, and Kyrgyzstan.

3.1.5 Replication approach

The replicability of this project was inherited in its design. Given the learn-by-doing approach to the development and institutionalization of natural resource valuation tools and their application through a pilot project, the replication value of the project is high. The project main outcome was to develop a complete set of assessment tools and design of development and conservation interventions that better mainstream Rio Conventions obligations and that also highlight good practices of a Green Economy.

The developed tools and methodologies can be used in any other ecosystem and other biogeographic zones. Furthermore, updating the needed legislation concerning forestry, wildlife, and protected areas codes as well as the amendment to EIA guidelines would provide the legal coverage and support to replicate the developed methodologies and guidelines in other places. The piloting of the developed tools in two different sites provided learn-by-doing opportunities, and helped in building the capacity at national and local levels.

3.1.6 UNDP comparative advantage

CB2 projects are complex due to their multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholders' nature. In general, UNDP comparative advantage lies in its experience in integrated policy in different national processes, policies, and frameworks. UNDP's assistance in designing and implementing activities is consistent with both the GEF mandate and national sustainable development plans.

UNDP at global level has been involved in designing and implementing around 60 projects under this focal area, many of these projects are being implemented in Central and Eastern Europe and in the CIS region including Central Asia. The project team is in direct contact with other PMUs in the region and had the chance to host a global meeting in Astana in 2016 to facilitate networking, and sharing of experience and lessons learned.

3.1.7 Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

As mentioned earlier, the CB2 project effectively collaborated with other projects and activities funded by UNDP/GEF, EU, GIZ, and the Government of Kazakhstan (GK).

Furthermore, the project was implemented under the UNDP Biodiversity Projects Portfolio Unit which is also directly responsible for implementing another 3 ongoing UNDP-supported projects:

- GEF/UNDP/GK Project entitled “Improving sustainability of the PA system in desert ecosystems through promotion of biodiversity-compatible livelihoods in and around PAs”
- GK/UNDP Project “Improving of the national policy on natural resources management, monitoring, conservation and sustainable use in the context of transition of Kazakhstan to green economy”
- Global EU/UNDP/GK project “Building Transformative Policy and Financing Frameworks to Increase Investment in Biodiversity Management (BIOFIN)”.

It was evident that the hosting of all 4 UNDP Biodiversity Portfolio’s projects in one place facilitates project’s implementation, coordination, and management of activities. It further facilitates synergies with other project’s partners and initiatives which would ensure project’s outcomes continuation beyond the lifetimes of the project.

3.1.8 Management arrangement

At the project design stage, the arrangements were prescribed for implementation of the project under the NIM execution modality, with the Forestry and Wildlife Committee/ Ministry of Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) as the Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner and UNDP as the Implementing Agency. The Ministry was to appoint a National Project Director (NPD) to assume overall responsibility for project implementation, ensure the delivery of project outputs and the judicious use of project resources. The National Project Director was to be assisted by a Project Management Unit headed by a part-time Project Manager (PM), responsible for overall project coordination and implementation, consolidation of work plans and project papers, preparation of quarterly progress reports, reporting to the project supervisory bodies, and supervising the work of the project experts and other project staff. The PM is to be supported by a part-time assistant.

A Project Board was to provide strategic decisions and management guidance to implement the project. The PB was to be made up of representatives of relevant ministries and government departments, and UNDP, and to be chaired by the NPD. A number of national and international consultants to be hired to support the implementation of the technical components of the project.

Prior to project commencement, the MEWR has been demolished and its responsibilities were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Energy and Energy and Mineral Resources. The FWC has been transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture, and therefore, the project was officially moved to the Ministry of Agriculture as the new implementing agency.

Owing to the existed project management structure, the part-time project manager and project team leader were able to start working on this Project immediate after the signature of the project document last September 2014. The first work plan was prepared for the 4th quarter of 2014 in October. In December, the project managed to organize its Inception Workshop (IW). The inception report was prepared and submitted January 2015.

The Deputy Chairman of the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture was appointed as the NPD, and the chair of the project board. The project management was modified to suit the project implementation as following:

- Part-time project manager was assigned to oversight the overall management of the project implementation.

- Part time project team leader, who is also a national expert on financial tools, was assigned to lead the day-to-day management of project’s activities.
- A part-time project Resource Mobilization Expert for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation.
- A part-time Capacity development and logistics Specialist.
- A part-time Procurement Specialist.

The project is managed very well, and PMU is considered as the central hub of technical, managerial and policy competencies for issues dealing with biodiversity and land management. An external and isolated PMU for CB-2 project apart from the rest of the project would not necessarily have this level of expertise and experience, as well as authority and political influence. The Project Manager works very closely with the Parliament, and had the chance to present the project’s deliverables to facilitate the approval legal process.

The Project Management arrangement can be summarized as follows:

- The Project Implementation Agency is UNDP.
- The FWC is appointed to serve as Executing Agency.
- A Project Manager is responsible for daily management and actual implementation and monitoring of the project and is accountable to the UNDP Sustainable Development and Urban Expansion Team Leader.
- The project team has its project office in the premises of the UNDP Project Management Portfolio Hub.
- The overall responsibility over the project is with a Project Board where ministries are represented.
- UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office is offering full support to project implementation, including administrative support as well as high level support by participation of the UNDP Country Director in the Project Board.

A team of 20 experts was established to ensure proper implementation of the project activities and delivery of the expected outputs. The team was composed of national (13 experts) and international (5 experts), and (2 national companies) Table 2. The expert team was mobilized to implement project activities in line with the Project LFA. The LFA and Project Quality Assessment summarizing achieved progress and pending tasks as of November 2017.

Table 2. The list of national and international experts who were involved in the CB2 Project in Kazakhstan

No.	Tasks	Year
1.	1 International expert Determination of methods for economic assessment of biological resources to be implemented in Kazakhstan	2015
2.	1 national expert Determination of methods for economic assessment of biological resources to be implemented in Kazakhstan	2015
3.	National expert on identification of global best practices in valuation of natural resources	2015
4.	International consultant on assessment and improvement of legislation for introducing payments for ecosystem services	2015
5.	International Forest and Pasture expert	2016
6.	International expert on EIA	2016
7.	National nature resource assessment expert on EIA	2016
8.	National company	2016-17
9.	National expert on PA management and biodiversity	2016-17

10.	National expert on legal issues	2016-17
11.	National company	2017
12.	Economist (national)	2017
13.	Botanist (national)	2017
14.	soil expert (national)	2017
15.	Expert on ungulates (national)	2017
16.	Fishery expert (national)	2017
17.	Wildlife expert (national)	2017
18.	National expert in assessment of harm caused to forest ecosystems	2017
19.	Forestry expert (national)	2017
20.	International Expert in the Resource Mobilization	2017

3.2 Project Implementation

The TE Consultant has reviewed the project implementation and its adaptive management. The following aspects of project implementation have been assessed:

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country)
- Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management
- Project finance,
- Monitoring and evaluation; design at entry and implementation
- UNDP and Implementation Partner Implementation/ execution coordination, and operational issues.

Achievements of project implementation and adaptive management have been rated in terms of the criteria above at a six-level scale as follows (TE's TOR): Highly satisfactory (HS) - the project has no shortcomings; Satisfactory (S) - minor shortcomings; Moderately satisfactory (MS) - moderate shortcomings; Moderately unsatisfactory (MU) - significant shortcomings; Unsatisfactory (U)- major shortcomings; and Highly unsatisfactory (HU) - severe shortcomings.

The results of the review and justification for the rating provided is described in the following paragraphs. The selected rating and a description/explanation of that rating is included in the FE Ratings & Achievements Summary table 1, Page 5.

3.2.1 **Adaptive Management**

The project was CEO endorsed in July 2014, whereas the inception workshop took place in December 2014. The PMU has prepared annual work plans (AWP), based on which the activities and outputs are related to proposed project components and outcomes. The progress on the work plan is very much in line with the initial plan.

Project management must constantly keep referring to the goal and objectives and critically assessing how the activities are contributing to the outputs and how those outputs are leading to the objective. Four adaptatively management measures were taken by CB2 Project:

- Move the project to Ministry of Agriculture.
- Re-structure the project management.
- Implement the piloting in two places.
- One technical working group instead of 3

The project did not witness any major change that required major adaptive management measures to be taken during project implementation. The following are the main changes:

Firstly, early 2014, the MEWR has been demolished (the project executing partner), however, as the FWC was moved to MoA, it was decided that the responsibilities to implement the project should be delegated to MoA, which had signed the project document in September 2014.

Second, the project document lacks the details concerning the project management, it was necessary to review and revise the proposed management structure and define the needed details during the project inception. The LFA, including indicators, targets and outputs were not revised.

Third, an effective adaptive management measures applied included the piloting of the economic-valuation tools in two places instead of one. The second pilot area was selected as it is located close to an oil and gas industrial area, therefore, the aim was to test the tools in a complex environment where the private sector is playing a role in environmental conservation.

Finally, during the IW, it was decided to utilize the already established technical working group to replace the proposed 3 TWGs. This ensures the continuity of the work as this TWG is established to oversee the technical progress of all UNDP/FWC.

The changes to the project were duly approved by the PB. The introduced adaptive management enabled the project to achieve and exceed its global targets.

3.2.2 Partnership arrangements

As the UNDP Biodiversity Project Management Unit has managed to be a central hub for technical, management and political issues concerning biodiversity and land management, the Project was able to coordinate the involvement of international donors (including the EU, UNDP, GEF, and GIZ), the government counterparts and the private sector participants. Through the promotion of activities and coordination of key stakeholders including government bodies, private sector, NGOs, CBOs, and other international organizations active in the country, the Project was able to efficiently augment the impact and results of the project and to avoid overlapping of efforts. The efforts done by the project were very much appreciated by the Government officials interviewed during the FE mission. It was also noted that the Project has managed to create an exceptional partnership with the Parliament. The project manager had the chance to present the project's findings and was given the time to explain the technical terms pertaining to the project's deliverables. This has tremendously helped in securing the needed approval to the project's legislative components.

The Project Document required the project to set up Technical Working Groups in order to *"discuss and deliberate various technical and specialized issues. They will also contribute to the peer-reviewing of draft technical analyses,"* (Project Document, Section E.2, Page 42)". The existed technical working group, which is serving the Biodiversity Projects' Portfolio was also assigned to undertake the needed technical review and support. This was very efficient as members of the committees were very much familiar with different technical issues pertaining to the 3 Rio Conventions.

The project has managed to include relevant partners and stakeholders. Among key organizations; the Kazakh National Agrarian University, Department of Natural Resources and Nature Use of the Mangystau region, and the Government of the Balkhash district in Almaty.

Based on the results of the projects, training modules on economic valuation of ecosystem services and calculation were developed for different target groups such as university professors, experts, and women organizations and individuals involved in eco-tourism business. The training modules are in the process to be integrated in educational programmes of Kazakhstan Agrarian University. Thus, there will be an opportunity to enhance gender

equity among students. Tested methods of economic valuation of biological resources in two pilot areas.

A round table has been organized with the participation of the NCE “Atameken”, the government of Mangystau region, the project team and LLP “KMG-ansu Operating”. The relevance of conduction of economic valuation has been discussed to make efficient management decisions such as offset measures for the biodiversity loss by the example of the Kansu gas field exploration and development.

Overall conclusion is that the project management has achieved high appropriate partnerships with relevant national stakeholders. The participation of the national stakeholders was remarkable and visible throughout the whole project.

3.2.3 Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management

The project was implemented effectively during the past 3 years. The changes proposed during the inception workshop contributed tremendously to set up the correct management structure for effective project implementation. The inception report was well written and captured all necessary adaptive management measurements including the formulation of the project’s technical working groups, the project management structure, and the first-year work plan. As a medium-sized project, it is not required to undergo a Mid-Term Evaluation.

The Project regularly used feedback from M&E to address appropriately and adequately any new challenges and thereby ensure the achievement of established targets. The M&E plan was regularly updated. Risks and issues are quarterly updated. The LF and the Inception Report and thus changes in the LF after the Inception phase were used as a basis for adaptive management.

Furthermore, annually, quarterly, and day-to-day M&E instruments such as the Annual and Quarterly Progress Reports were carefully reviewed, discussed and acted upon at the Project Board meetings. According to the project document, the PB is to meet twice a year with a total 6 meetings during the project lifetime, which has happened as the PB met 6 times till November 2017, once every six months as follows: January 2015, July 2015, January 2016, July 2016, January 2017, and July 2017.

The changes in the management structure and the M&E plan during the inception workshop are already discussed in the Chapter 3.2.1: Adaptive Management.

3.2.4 Project Finance

The actual expenditure and the leveraged co-financing have been assessed during the TE mission. The differences between planned and actual expenditures per components per year have been assessed and presented in Table 3. **Project Budget and Expenditures (US\$)** The table provides an overview of the budgeted expenditures of the GEF Project of US\$ 1.15 million. As of November 2017, US\$ 394,027, or about 78.8% of the project total budget, has been expended. Thus, about US\$ 105,973 remain in the Project budget for technical assistance, implementation public awareness activities and capacity development activities.

The largest share of budget has been spent within component 2 reallocations between the project components (less than 1 %) have been foreseen at the TE stage Thus, the spending of the budget is pretty much in plan but is not in line with the period of implementation, as are also the results of the project delivered so far.

The project budget includes US\$ 600 thousands from the Government of Kazakhstan and US\$ 50 thousands from UNDP (all in-kind), which makes the whole planned co-financing contribution – according to the project document- US\$ 0.65 million over the project period.

As of November 2017, the confirmed Project co-financing has amounted to an estimated US\$ 765,512 or 130.65% following the actual project implementation status, with details from project partners provided in Table 4.

3.2.5 Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation (*)

The FE considers that the UNDP project assurance role has been appropriately applied to this project, due to the following evidences:

- There have been a significant number of monitoring and review exercises conducted by the UNDP Country Office including field monitoring visits, participation in the project board meetings, preparation of the project annual reports, and production of the Combined Delivery Reports.
- The UNDP Country Office has also been active in reviewing and following up on the project's quarterly progress reports, financial reports, and project work plans.
- The UNDP/GEF Regional Unit and UNDP Kazakhstan's provisions of financial resources have also been in accordance with project norms and in a timeframe, which is supportive of covering the costs of project activities. The FE notes that the role of the project board have been used to greater effect to drive the process of project implementation.
- The Project's staff and consultants were contracted according to the established Rules and Regulations of the United Nations and the financial transactions and procurement activities similarly followed due process and the same Rules and Regulations.
- The project's monitoring and evaluation activities were conducted in accordance with established UNDP and GEF procedures.
- The project team and the UNDP Country Office undertake monitoring and evaluation activities, with support from UNDP/GEF.

Table 3. Project Budget and Expenditures (US\$)

Project Component	Budget Approved	Disbursed by year						Total (US\$)		Difference between planned and actual
	(US\$)	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total spent	% of budget spent	Committed 2017		(US\$)
Component 1	207,479	4,331.40	67,490.11	38,527.49	53,337.91	163,686.91	0.79	43,792.00	207,478.91	(0.09)
Component 2	251,521	-	32,898.25	85,494.84	83,108.14	201,501.23	0.80	50,020.00	251,521.23	0.23
Project Management	41,000	177.21	9,548.91	2,750.29	16,362.15	28,838.56	0.70	12,161.00	40,999.56	(0.44)
TOTAL GEF	500,000	4,509.00	109,937.00	126,772.62	152,808.20	394,026.70	0.79	105,973.00	499,999.70	(0.30)

Table 4. Co-financing of Project Partner (US\$)

Source of co-financing	Name of Co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed at the CEO endorsement (US\$)	Actual amount contributed at the stage of TE (US\$)	Actual % of Expected Amount
UNDP	UNDP	In-kind	50,000	72,939	145.88%
Government of Kazakhstan	FWC	In-kind	600,000	692,573	115.43%
Total			650,000	765,512	131%

Monitoring of the project by the Implementing Agency has been highly satisfactory with assisting in the preparation of the Annual Project Review and subsequent Board Review, coordination of the Combined Deliver Report and reviewing and following up the project's quarterly progress reports, financial reports, and work plans.

The Project has implemented the project's components very well to achieve the Objective. This might be due to several reasons: the PMU has a sufficiently developed adaptive management framework, and they fully understand the project's strategy.

The following elements are identified in the project document as the principal components of monitoring and evaluation:

1. A project inception workshop to introduce an understanding and ownership of the project's goals and objectives among the project stakeholder groups. The Project Manager has joined the project in September 2014, the Inception Workshop was held on the December 2015, the final draft of the Inception Report was submitted January 2015.

The inception phase was utilized is an opportunity to refine the project log frame, put in place the necessary logistics, and develop the first Annual Work Plan (AWP). The major output of the inception phase was the Inception Report (IR)² and the first AWP, which, on agreement with the Project Board, UNDP CO and GEF, will form a necessary flexible basis for implementation.

During the inception workshop, the management structure was modified, no changes were made to the project LF, discussion was done on the project's annual work plan. The TE considers that the Inception Phase and corresponding Report represent considerable strength in the project cycle.

2. Annual Progress Reports APR are prepared and submitted to UNDP. So far, 3 annual progress reports (2015, 2016 and 2017), have been delivered.
3. Annual Project Board meeting. This is the highest policy-level meeting of the parties directly involved in the implementation of a project. The project is subject to Project Board meetings at least twice per year as per the project document.

Board meetings and meetings of Technical Group are supposed to be used to monitor and present progress to and receive additional inputs and recommendations from stakeholders. Six Board Meeting (two per year, in January and July each year) were organized and a number of technical group meetings, and meeting minutes including discussion points were developed.

The TE considers that the UNDP project assurance role has been correctly applied to this project. There have been a number of monitoring and review exercises conducted by the UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office including participation in the Project Board, and preparation of the Annual Project Review. The UNDP has also been active in reviewing and following up on the project's quarterly progress reports, financial reports, and project work plans. The UNDP Office provision of financial resources has also been in accordance with project norms and in a timeframe, that is supportive of covering the costs of project activities.

² Under the Result-Based Management System a LFM, whether there have been revisions or not, should be included in the Inception Report and should be considered a contractual document upon which future evaluations will take place.

4. Quarterly Progress Monitoring; progress made is monitored in the UNDP Enhanced Results Based Management Platform. It includes updated risk log in ATLAS. Risks become critical when the impact and probability are high. The project has managed to submit all needed QPRs with the updated risks logs.
5. Day-to-day monitoring of implementation progress is the responsibility of the Project Manager based on the project's Annual Work Plan and its indicators. The TE consultant reviewed a few reports prepared by the project teams about their site visits and meetings.
6. Final Evaluation in accordance with UNDP and GEF requirements.
7. Project Terminal Report. The PMU will prepare a comprehensive report will summarize all activities, achievements and outputs of the project, lessons learned, the extent to which objectives have been met, structures and mechanisms implemented, capacities developed, among others.
8. Terminal review meeting. Held by the project board, with invitation to other relevant Government and municipal stakeholders as necessary, in the last month of project operations. The terminal review meeting should refer to the independent final evaluation report, conclusions, and recommendations as appropriate.

Based on the above, the Monitoring & Evaluation is rated:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
HS					

3.2.6 UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution coordination, and operational issues (*)

UNDP (Implementing Agency) implementation

The key aspects of the UNDP implementation are as follows:

- UNDP was permanently looking whether the CB2 Project is being implemented based on the Results Based Management with appropriate focus on established targets.
- The UNDP support to the Executing Agency is rated as appropriate and adequate.
- The UNDP support to the project team is regarded as adequate and timely:
 - ✓ The management structure of the Project has been modified during the project inception report (Part-time Project Manager, and Part-time team leader)
 - ✓ Facilitate the recruitment and engagement of several International consultants in the implementation.
 - ✓ Providing necessary guidance for and approval of AWP's and their revisions.
 - ✓ Encouraging application of the adaptive management.

UNDP successfully implemented risk mitigation measures mainly that the risks log has been updated quarterly. The Project is well managed by the project team and the UNDP country team. Both are applying necessary procedures to ensure that the project implementation is operationally effective. For that purpose, a system for tracking procurement, recruitment, logistical, financial and other administrative activities was in place to provide regular weekly updates for every single activity and identify critical issues.

The UNDP Country Director, and the Sustainable Development and Urban Expansion Analyst maintain contacts on a higher political level, such as to Ministries, which greatly contributed to the smooth implementation of the project's activities. Project Manager maintains a good communication basis and exchange with the Parliament, Project Partners, and external stakeholders as well as local government in piloting sites.

Rating for UNDP implementation:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
HS					

Forestry and Wildlife Committee (Executing Agency) execution

The Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture is effectively implementing the project's activities, providing management oversight, and mobilizing the needed high-level support.

The FWC has also provided the project with the needed co-financing, and has contributed significantly to support the project's activities in the Parliament. This demonstrated significant commitment by FWC and the Government to enhance awareness and rational use of economic valuation of ecosystem services as well as the voluntary contribution to support biodiversity.

The FWC chairs the project board and actively cooperated with UNDP and the project's partners to resolve any issues hindering the project's implementation.

Rating for FWC execution:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
HS					

3.3 Project Results

3.3.1 Overall Results (attainment of objectives) (*)

The achievements of expected results were evaluated in terms of attainment of overall objective as well as identified outcomes and outputs. For this the performance by components is analyzed by looking at: (i) general progress towards the established baseline level of the indicators; (ii) actual values of indicators by the end of the CB2 Project vs. designed ones; (iii) evidences of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the results as well as how these evidences were documented.

Overall results of the EERB Project are rated as

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
HS					

The summary of evaluation of attainment of Objective and Outcomes of the Project are presented in Table 5.

The TE Consultant has rated the project's progress towards its objective and components. The assessment of progress is based on data provided in the annual reports, technical reports

reviewed, the findings and observations of the TE mission, and interviews with the project stakeholders.

The below key is used for indicator assessment (Color Coding):

Green = completed, indicator shows successful achievement
Yellow = On target to be achieved by the end of the project
Red = Not on target to be achieved by project closure

Table 5: Matrix for rating the Achievement of Outcomes

Project Name						
Goal/Objective/Outcome	Performance Indicator	2014 Baseline	2017 End of Project Target	2017 End of Project Status	TE comments	Rating
<p>To develop technical and institutional capacities for undertaking an economic valuation of global environmental goods and services as potentially impacted by proposed development policies, programmes, plans and projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decisions to protect the global environment are better enabled ▪ Technical and management staff sufficiently trained in the use and application of natural resource valuation tools, and decision-makers fully aware of natural resource valuation tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is high-level support and parliamentary approval for the Green Economy concept in Kazakhstan ▪ Requirements of the Rio Conventions are not adequately incorporated in development planning ▪ Institutional capacities for managing the Rio Conventions is piecemeal and takes place through Rio Convention-specific projects, with development emphasizing socio-economic priorities ▪ Planners and decision-makers, particularly at the local level do not fully appreciate the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government staff have learned, applied, and tested best practice tools to integrate natural resource valuation into national decision-making processes for improved implementation of Rio Conventions 	Government staff in cooperation with other stakeholders received the needed training, and have applied and tested the developed tools in two piloting sites.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Future planning and development will account for the true value of environmental goods and services 	Amendments concerning the law to approve allocations for the establishment of protected areas, on 2018 budget, will be approved December 2017. This budget will cover works to be done pertaining to eco-system services, and the creation of new reserves where the economic valuation of eco-system services was conducted.	Target achieved on time	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased capacity within relevant stakeholder groups to address Rio Convention obligations. 	The project has developed and implemented the needed training programmes.	Targets achieved	HS

		value of the Rio Conventions and the use of net present value to determine value leads to heavy discounting of the global environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender equality targets per UNDP 2013-2017 Strategic Plan are met 	Females represent around 35% of the total number of participants. The project staff is almost gender balanced.	Targets achieved	HS
Output 1.1 Development of natural resource valuation tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on natural resource valuation Natural resource valuation tools Expert working group meetings Integration of valuation tools into decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planners and decision-makers do not incorporate full value of ecosystem goods and services Evidence of public sector staff's technical capacities related to the Rio Conventions is limited Despite expressed government commitment to the global environment, several issues undermine policies and efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural resource valuation report drafted by month 4 and peer-reviewed, finalized and presented by month 5 	The valuation report was prepared in May 2015, peer-reviewed, finalized, and presented in June 2015.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valuation tools developed and peer-reviewed by month 7, endorsed by Government by month 9, and revised during piloting phase in year 2, and finalized by month 30 	EIA guidelines were reviewed, and changes/amendments were proposed. Inventory documents were prepared November 2015 (forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries). These documents were developed based on the pilot site, after conducting an evaluation of the situation. Reviewed and finalized in August 2017, by month 32. The final version was submitted in September 2017.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert working group convened by month 3 	The expert working group convened in January 2015, immediately after the inception workshop (December 2014).	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An agreement to utilize natural resource valuation tools in decision-making signed by month 12 	The project was involved in discussing these amendments with the legislative body in the government, and the project manager presented the amendments to the parliament.	Targets achieved	HS

Output 1.2: Training of technical capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRV training materials and curriculum ▪ Sensitization workshops on NRV for government decision-makers, private sector, and NGOs ▪ NRV training courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a lack of capacity among agency staff and less than optimal understanding of natural resource valuation ▪ NRV guidelines and tools are not widely known among planners and decision-makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Materials and curriculum developed and peer-reviewed by month 12, revised following piloting by month 24, and again by month 30 after NRV mainstreaming and reforms 	The materials were developed in November 2015, then piloted first time in December 2015, and then after making changes it was piloted again in 2016 over the whole year. It was finalized early 2017.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least six workshops convened, the first by month 9 and the last by month 30 	By the end of 2015 all six workshops were convened. 270 people participated	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops will have a total of at least 150 different stakeholders including at least 50 senior decision-makers and planners 	A total of 270 participated representing all stakeholders with more than 50 senior decision-makers and planners participated in these workshops. Around 35% were females.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training courses begin by month 13 and end by month 16 	Two training of trainers' training were organized on public awareness on the use of NRV in 2015 and 2017.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No fewer than 200 government staff will have participated in courses and average test score of at least 80% 	400 participated in different training courses from different government and public organizations representing different geographical locations. Around 1/3 of the participants were government officials.	Targets almost achieved.	S

Output 2.1: Mainstreaming natural resource valuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Criteria for high-value development project to pilot NRV tools ▪ Stakeholder workshop to select development project for piloting ▪ Workshops to evaluate pilot project and feedback surveys from attendees ▪ Pilot project evaluation and report on best practices and lessons learned ▪ Awareness-raising brochures prepared from report ▪ Sectoral screening workshops ▪ Guidelines and methodologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a shortage of technical capacity amongst planners at all levels to utilize information and knowledge related to the value of ecosystem goods and services, and to mainstream it into the planning processes ▪ Civil society stakeholders have limited experience with participation in the economic arena, and few CSOs have the necessary technical and administrative capacities to operate effectively in Kazakhstan ▪ Kazakhstan will host the International Exposition (Expo 2017) in June 2017, the central theme of which is innovative and practical energy solutions. This will be an opportunity to showcase its lessons learned in pursuing green economy, and project activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Criteria approved by Project Board by month 14 	Criteria for high-value development project to pilot NRV were approved January 2016.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshop convened by month 16 with at least 50 representatives from private sector and NGOs, project for NRV piloting selected by month 17 	The piloting project was selected in September 2015 and approved in 2016.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Six workshops with at least 100 staff and stakeholder representatives convened by month 22 	In consultation with the Government, it was agreed to organize 3 workshops instead of 6 for logistical and operational purposes. The 3 workshops attracted 159 participated from different organizations.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 90% response rate for workshop feedback surveys by month 22, and statistical analysis of evaluations by month 23 	Was not done as the project team focused on analyzing participants feedback after training workshops only.	The statistical analyses did not take place for any workshop.	MUS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Best practices and lessons learned report from workshops drafted by month 24, peer-reviewed by month 26, and finalized by month 28 	A specific report on best practices was prepared in 2015 and then it was finalized and distributed to stakeholder end of 2015.	Targets achieved	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 500 brochures available for distribution at Expo 2017 	During 2015 and 2016 many publications prepared concerning the project and all of them were	Targets achieved	HS

	for application of NRV			presented in the Expo 2017. However, it was not allowed to use paper in the Expo, so they presented an e-brochure in the Expo.		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five sectoral screening workshops with at least 250 key government staff and representatives by month 30 	The project decided to merge these workshops with the other ones and had involved six sectors; forestry, fisheries, hunting, water resources, industrial and tourism. The total number of participants was 400.	Targets achieved	S
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines and methodologies for NRV drafted by month 28, peer-reviewed and finalized by month 31, and officially endorsed by month 32 	Wildlife, PAs and forest codes were already integrated into the national relevant laws. While the EIA is under review to be considered by end of 2017.	Targets achieved	HS
Output 2.2: Legislative and institutional reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional and legislative assessment Bills for institutional and legislative reforms Resource mobilization strategy for long-term financial needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some political reforms are already on-going including a draft Law on Local Governance that is designed to strengthen capacities of local communities to monitor local state budget spending, and encourage development of multi-stakeholder public and local community entities that can engage with the local and sub-regional authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional and legislative assessment drafted by month 9, revised by month 26, and finalized by month 28 Expert working groups validate expert analysis on NRV institutionalization by month 12 and institutional and legislative assessments by month 30. Group meets three times in year 2 for project updates. 	<p>The matrix is under consideration currently as it is being reviewed by legal experts from the Ministry of energy.</p> <p>The WG had several unofficial working meetings and 2 official meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The first meeting February 10th, 2016. Reviewed changes proposed for the current practices on ecosystem economic valuation mechanisms. Based on the result of 2015 work. The second meeting February 28th, 2017. They reviewed the EIA, 	<p>The work is ongoing, and it is expected to be finalized before project closure</p> <p>Targets achieved</p>	<p>S</p> <p>HS</p>

				biodiversity offsets, Payments for Eco-system services (PS), and results of economic valuation of ecosystems in the pilot site (ele-Balkhash), the progress made towards made regarding the approvals to the changes made to the legislations.		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bills for reforms drafted by month 30, peer-reviewed, validated and submitted for Parliamentary approval by month 33 	The project is working with the Parliament to provide members of Makhilas with the needed technical deliverables to be approved as official Bills.	3 of the documents were approved, and one is on the process to be approved.	HS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expert working group convened by month 13 to draft resource mobilization strategy by month 21, strategy reviewed and finalized by month 25 and approved by month 28 	<p>The Resource mobilization strategy is currently under development. It is planned to finalize the draft by 15th November, reviewed and finalized by 5th of December, and submitted to the Government by the end of December 2017.</p> <p>The delay was related to the difficulties in hiring an expert</p>	It is expected that the project is going to finalize the strategy by end of December 2017. A consultant is working on it.	MS

Based on the abovementioned the achievement the project's overall progress is rated:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
HS					

3.3.2 Relevance (*)

During the TE mission, all evidences showed that the project is very relevant to the government and addressed highly regarded topic.

The stakeholders interviewed during the mission expressed the added value of the project, and emphasized that a new phase to pilot the developed economic valuation tools in other ecosystems and different biogeographical zones is very important and critical for Kazakhstan. In fact, one of the major achievements attributed to the Project was the introduction of a set of tools for economic valuations that suits Kazakhstan context. While the Project provided specific advice and support in revising the main codes (Forestry, protected areas, and Wildlife) and improvements in the EIA process, it improved national capacity through the learn-by-doing and support local communities in sensitive ecosystems, those issues are all fully relevant to the country's biodiversity, climate change, and land management strategies priorities. This relevance is evidenced by the fact that not only economic valuations tools and assessment but also the voluntary payment schemes introduced by the project were approved by the respective Governmental institutions as well as by the Parliament.

The project has also been highly relevant to UNDP activities in Kazakhstan. This project represents a contribution to the fulfilment of Kazakhstan's 2010-2015 UN Development Assistance Framework, in particular Development Outcome 2 on Environmental Sustainability. This outcome calls for "communities, national, and local authorities [to] use more effective mechanisms and partnerships that promote environmental sustainability" (UNDAF, 2009:15). Among the UNDAF priorities is the development of integrated services to bridge the gap between competitive industrial production and environmental concerns (UNDAF, 2009:17). The integration and application of natural resource valuation with particular emphasis of global environmental benefits is one such important mechanism. Kazakhstan's 2008 Country Analysis, prepared in fulfilment of the Common Country Assessment that analyzes the national development situation and identifies key development issues, determined that the "United Nations is well-placed to contribute to environmental sustainability in Kazakhstan, in a gender-sensitive manner" (UN, 2008:34).

Based on the abovementioned the Relevance is rated as Relevant (R).

Relevant (R)	Not Relevant (NR)
R	

3.3.3 Effectiveness and efficiency (*)

The FE has reviewed the project's performance over its lifetime. It has considered what has been the impact of the project and how has it contributed to the GEF objectives. Therefore, the FE has:

- Assessed the effectiveness of the individual activities (monitoring performance);
- Assessed the effectiveness of the various activities in achieving the Outcome (monitoring the impact), and;

- Assessed the effectiveness of the various *Outcomes* on achieving the *Objective* (monitoring the change).

The analysis of these has allowed the FE to comment on the: Implementation – did the project do what it planned to do (i.e. is the plan still untested because the implementation was poor); Effectiveness – did the plan meet the predicted objectives (i.e. has the plan been tested and found to have flaws), and; Validation of the strategy’s parameters and relationships (i.e. which assumptions, variables and interactions were correct).

Effectiveness

The Project has achieved its overall Objective to support Kazakhstan in the economic valuation of natural resources and ecosystem services as well as institutionalize new capacities by improving standards of environmental management. It also puts in place the necessary framework: revised wildlife, forestry, and protected areas codes; proposed amendment to Environmental Impact Assessment and piloted the new tools in two sites. Furthermore, the necessary local capacity has been developed and relevant tools have been developed. The Project Objective and Outcomes have been achieved; the most of established targets have been met.

The high effectiveness of the project strategy is evidenced by:

- Parliament approved the amendment suggested by the project to the Wildlife, Forestry, and Protected Areas codes.
- National ownership and high policy level engagement and buy-in: Parliament’s review and anticipated approval of the amendment proposed to the EIA guidelines.
- Cost-effectiveness demonstrated. All proposed co-financing resources were mobilized, and the government in-kind contribution has already exceeded the planned.
- Effective partnership demonstrated. The involvement of all stakeholders in the selection of the project’s piloting sites.

Considering the above-mentioned facts, Effectiveness was rated **Highly Satisfactory**.

Efficiency

The rating for project **Efficiency** is **Highly Satisfactory** for the following reasons:

- High quality project results achieved in less than 3 years since project commencement in September 2014, even though some of the project’s activities are beyond the project’s control when it comes to Government’s approval of the proposed changes to the guidelines and codes.
- The hosting of the four UNDP projects in one place enhanced the projects’ efficiency and as a hub for different projects and their stakeholders.
- The international consultants were able to provide the needed technical backstopping and develop some critical outputs during the project implementation.
- Quality inputs and collaboration from stakeholders and national and international technical experts at established funding level contributed to high cost-efficiency.

The Project leveraged necessary financial resources (from the Government and UNDP). The efficiency of the financial management of the Project was evidenced by its ability to meet all of the procurement needs not only for initially planned activities (original ProDoc) but also additional ones practically within the original budget. This shows that decision on extension of the duration of Project for only 3 months and without cost, was appropriate.

Based on the above mentioned the Effectiveness & Efficiency is rated:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
HS					

3.3.4 Country Ownership

As per the project document, “Kazakhstan is eligible to receive technical assistance from the UNDP and is thus eligible for support under the Global Environment Facility. Kazakhstan ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on 9 June 1994, the Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought on 9 July 1997, and the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) on 19 June 2009. Kazakhstan also ratified a number of related protocols under the Rio Conventions, namely The Cartagena Protocol on Biological Safety was ratified on 8 September 2008 to protect biodiversity from the potential risks posed by genetically modified organisms that are the product of biotechnology, and The Kyoto Protocol was ratified on 19 June 2009, committing to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions for the period 2008-2012 at the 1990 level”.

The country ownership is evident in the strong interest and participation of stakeholders. The project was considered strategic and timely -at the development stage- as the Parliament had at the time of the project development, approved a seven-year action plan for the country’s pursuit of a Green Economy, which was and still a top priority of the President. While natural resource valuation was not viewed as a new concept or approach, yet, its application remains one that will be innovative and potentially transformative for Kazakhstan.

This project has strategic value as it is connected with high political commitment from the Government and The President for Kazakhstan’s Concept for a Green Economy. It supports Strategy Kazakhstan 2050 to help the country transition into a green economy and one of the top thirty most developed countries by 2050. Further, the Project design was formulated with extensive contributions from national stakeholders. There was close involvement of major ministries and key stakeholders through participation in the Project Steering Committee.

3.3.5 Mainstreaming

The project addresses the UNDP priorities of developing the Government’s capacity to mainstream Rio Convention implementation and obligations in national plans. The Project was able to successfully mainstream several UNDP priorities. In particular:

- Some policy frameworks have been improved (revised 3 codes and EIA guidelines)
- The Project catalyzed integration of biodiversity conservation into national strategies, and planning.
- The Project developed capacity of local teams and consultants, as well as decision makers, with regard to the Rio Conventions.
- Impacts on certain ecosystems have been valued (in the 2 piloting sites)
- The Project objectives conform to agreed priorities in the UNDAF.
- Gender issues - The Project staffing was balanced; and the trainings involved representative of women and men.

3.3.6 Sustainability (*)

The project’s main approach to sustainability is to strengthen the institutional, legislative, and human capacities for continued improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan, through the introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements.

This project serves to develop a national skill set in natural resource valuation tools, reducing the risks that these skills must be secured from overseas over the long-term.

Developing a set of natural resources valuation tools as well as a cadre of local expertise in the use of these tools will reduce dramatically the need to rely on international expertise in addition to its contribution to the sustainability of the process itself.

The sustainability of the project can be measured against the following criteria³:

- **High-level political interest and commitments toward Green-Economy**
 - The project has effectively lobbied to raise high-level political commitment to implement the project. The TE was pleased by the high-level interest and commitment of the FWC and it is evident that the Government is thinking very positively about the project and its outcomes. It is also evident that the FWC is interested to utilize the developed tools and guidelines in other locations, with different ecosystems and biogeographical zones. This will contribute to the sustainability of the project's outcomes after the project comes to an end.
 - CB2 Project is already receiving high governmental priority and is backed by technical, institutional, and legislative frameworks in place including specific targets to achieve. Development of the Forestry, Wildlife, and Protected Area Codes, as well as the amendment to the EIA guidelines, and capacity development provided to the team are addressed by the CB2 project.
- **On-going commitment and accountability for the implementation of the project's outcomes;**
 - There is consensus amongst all stakeholders that the Project should continue as it contributed positively towards the advancement of the work on biodiversity and land management under the climate change threats at the country level. Technical staff from the different stakeholders are meeting on regular basis and have the chance to discuss several issues pertaining to Rio Conventions and the project's outcomes. Stakeholders stated that the project was able to contribute tremendously to the development of the needed legal, institutional, and human capacities to effectively value ecosystem services in Kazakhstan. In more than one occasion, high-level decision makers highlighted the need to have another project to test the newly developed tools and guidelines under different circumstances and biogeographical zones.
- **Regular trainings for stakeholders at the national and local level using economic valuation tools and guidelines**
 - As stated in the Project Document (Page 28-29), one of the main key challenges facing the country is *"Natural resource valuation is a very specialized skill, situated within a highly technical field. The ability to use and interpret these models require highly trained expertise in order to apply and institutionalize these skills within those institutions where the existing skill set is not necessarily of the appropriate kind or level"*. To the TE's opinion, after 3 years of project implementation, there is a very good capacity among the stakeholders on the use of these guidelines and tools.
- **Increasing the ownership of project benefits.**
 - The Government high-level officials show high level interest and ownership of project's benefits. Furthermore, the project is hosted at the Biodiversity Project

³ As identified in the Project Document, Section C.3.a, Page 28

Portfolio Offices and the team is in direct contact with the high-level decision makers working on different projects. This is considered as one of the main aspect of the institutional and governance sustainability of the project.

- Government professionals are trained on different topics in relation to economic valuation, volunteer payments and the piloting of developed tools. However, TE consultant believes that the remaining targeted activities should focus primarily on improving the awareness and knowledge and build ownership at local level.

As stated in the UNDP-GEF guideline for TE, sustainability is generally considered to be the likelihood of continued benefits after the project ends. Consequently, the assessment of sustainability considers the risks that are likely to affect the continuation of project outcomes.

Below is the detailed assessment of the four main risks categories:

Financial risks

There is only one financial risk related to mobilizing needed resources to ensure the implementation and use of the developed economic valuation tools. However, as the project has already set up the needed mechanism to inject the money generated and collected from the payments of ecosystem services as well as the economic valuations, this will minimize the financial risk and will ensure the implementation of the project's outcomes in other geographical zones to assess different ecosystems in Kazakhstan.

The financial sustainability is rated as Likely (L)

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MS)	Unlikely (U)
L			

Socio-economic risks

Social risks were not identified by the project or in the project document. However, introducing economic valuations for different ecosystems services might have some direct socioeconomic impacts on local community if their livelihoods and socio-economic situations are not taken into consideration during the economic valuations of the ecosystems they are relying on.

Certainly, stakeholders are interested in economic valuations as this will facilitate the integration of economic assessments into the conservation and protection efforts, yet, a detailed assessment of the socio-economic impacts should be taken into consideration.

Based on the above-mentioned Socio-economic Risk, the sustainability is rated as

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MS)	Unlikely (U)
	MS		

Institutional framework and governance risks

The project has taken the necessary mitigation measures to avoid institutional and governance risks as outlined in the project's risks log. The project's outcomes have already established the needed institution and legal frameworks that would ensure the project's outcomes sustainability.

The Institutional framework and governance risks are low and the sustainability is rated

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MS)	Unlikely (U)
L			

Environmental risks to sustainability

There are no activities that may pose any environmental threats to the sustainability of the project's outcomes

The Environmental risks are negligible, and the sustainability is rated

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MS)	Unlikely (U)
L			

Overall rating: All the associated risks are negligible and thus, the overall rating for Sustainability is Likely (L)

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MS)	Unlikely (U)
L			

3.3.7 Impact

The Project has made major and unprecedented advances in economic valuations for ecosystems services in Kazakhstan especially considering the starting point and the baseline scenario, in which economic valuations and voluntary payments were minimally reflected in national policy, investment, educational curricula, and design practice.

Many outputs of the Project were first time achieved in Kazakhstan. The successful impact of the project is evident through;

- Development of parameters and procedure of economic valuation of wildlife and hunting concessions.
- Assessment of the country potential for institutional assessment of nature resources within EIA, Feasibility Study, and Cadastral Value.
- Conducting economic valuation of ecosystem services of the proposed Ile-Balkash reserve in order to identify the economic value of ecosystem services for fund raising and piloting assessment tools
- Conducting economic valuation of ecosystem services in order to design offset tools for biodiversity losses at the Kansu site near the Ustyurt state nature reserve.
- The environmental law of Kazakhstan was analyzed for compliance with the international obligations under the CBD, CCD, and UNFCCC and Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in the transboundary context with the aim to integrate the biological resources valuation into the EIA.
- Prepared a set of recommendations for the integration of methods of economic valuation of ecosystem services into the process of environmental impact assessment and feasibility study of development project.
- Methodological approaches were developed to assess absorption and reduction of the green gas emissions by forests and grasslands.
- Identified a set of criteria to select large-scale development project for approbation of natural resource assessment tools.
- Developed nine schemes of payments for ecosystem services to be integrated in current legislation.
- The exchange of experience with experts from other countries like Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Serbia, Tajikistan, and Ukraine has contributed greatly to increase awareness on the role of natural resource valuation, monitoring of environmental indicators and environmental management.
- Developed training module on biodiversity funding monitoring.
- Developed and implemented education training modules for training of trainers with the participation of 13 experts from different fields: sustainable development, environmental protection and policy, agriculture, business/marketing, and education.

- Developed a publication on: assessing the potential of forests and grasslands of Kazakhstan to absorb CO₂ and reduce green gas emissions until 2030. The report was released in Russian and English with the aim to share knowledge.
- Key 10 ecosystem services of the Ile-Balkhash pilot area were identified for the assessment of economic valuation and development of PES. Calculations were prepared for economic valuation of ecosystem services for the proposed Ile-Balkhash reserve.
- Amendments were prepared to the Environmental Code of Kazakhstan and relevant regulatory and legal acts in terms of conducting of the EIA in the context of biodiversity conservation, land degradation and climate change. Recommendations on the improvement of the legislative framework related to natural resources valuation were submitted to the Mazhilis of the Parliament of the RK and received prior approval.

4. Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

The project has been very successful and achieved its objectives in terms of key targets, developing tools for assessing natural resources and training on the use of these tools to provide an enabling environment for improving planning and decision-making to achieve global environmental problems, and institutionalizing natural resources valuation to ensure their long-term use. It was also very successful in leveraging co-financing from the government.

Overall, the project was able to complete most of the planned activities within the planned period with only 3 months extension with no cost requested to finalize the project's activities in a quality manner. The project has even carried out additional essential activities such as the piloting of the economic valuation tools in two places instead of one pilot area.

4.1 Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project

The project design was relevant to the national development priorities and the Green Economy Strategy, and continues to be of relevance to the current national development strategy. Adaptive management measures were effectively taken during project implementation to avoid any delay or disruptions in project implementation, and to enhance project effectiveness by incorporating additional essential activities such as the piloting in two different places instead of one. With PMU personnel taking over the responsibilities for day-to-day project management, this provided benefits for a more direct and effective monitoring and management of the project activities, in addition to building capacity building of Biodiversity Projects Portfolio in effective project management. Some recommendations below have been put forward for the timely implementation of the remaining activities presently underway.

4.2 Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project

The FE recognizes the considerable achievements of the Project and would like to make the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: The project holds a final workshop of stakeholders (FWC, MoA, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Finance, local governments in piloting sites and UNDP) to map out the future of economic valuation tools. This workshop should be used to map out a common vision for, and decide the appropriate roles and responsibilities of these agencies in, managing

the various components of the entire economic valuation process. The vision should also provide a clear statement that conservation of ecosystems and other natural values will be through a mixture of protection and sustainable use.

One possible outcome might be to establish a Board for the management of the fund resulted from the implementation of the economic valuation and the voluntary payment systems and there may be possibilities of partnerships with private sector who have industrial investments and activities in several sensitive areas.

Recommendation 2: The PMU to finalize all project's deliverables and make them available for national stakeholders who are interested in economic valuations for ecosystem services. These deliverables can be made available online by developing a dedicated website for economic valuations of ecosystem services. Such a website should be linked to the UNDP homepage to ensure the dissemination of the results to a wider audience like other countries aiming at implementing economic valuations.

Recommendation 3: The PMU to prepare a summary booklet in English for the project's deliverables and disseminate that at global level. This could be done virtually by uploading the materials into the project's website, or through preparing a small booklet about the project, listing its main deliverables with one-two summary about each one of them. This will help in sharing lessons learned from the projects, and disseminates the results to other countries by overriding the language barrier.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that the few remaining project activities be completed as soon as possible, including the booklet for awareness campaign, and the approval of the amendment to the EIA.

Recommendation 5: Economic valuation for ecosystem services capacity presently has limitations to meet the actual needs at the Country level. The FWC should fast-track the upgrading of the national capacity in order not to meet the needed demand created under the project.

Recommendation 6: During the TE mission and meetings with project stakeholders, the need for clearly written guidelines and standards for economic valuations for different kind of ecosystems, including forest, wetlands, rangelands, rivers, etc., was strongly stated. While the guidelines developed by the project are prescribed for the protected areas and forest ecosystems, other critical ecosystems should be valued and assessed. It is therefore recommended that FWC considers introducing a system to list all ecosystems that need to be valued, starting from vulnerable ecosystems first, then moving to the least vulnerable ones. This necessarily requires putting in place a system of economic valuation from ecosystems services. The system should include the needed capacity, financial resources, and period to conduct the valuation.

Recommendation 7: To ensure the availability of needed financial resources, it is recommended that all economic valuation and voluntary payments revenues be maintained at specific well-established fund like the Biodiversity fund.

4.3 Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

The implementation of economic valuations in different ecosystems and at different biogeographical zones is very important and will further mainstream the Rio Conventions and global environmental agreements in the decision-making process in Kazakhstan.

4.4 Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success

The project demonstrated several good practices which resulted in the successful implementation of the project that may be adopted for the formulation of other projects. Some of the best practices are:

- i. Timely and well-developed adaptive management measures undertaken during project inception phase and implementation have helped the PMU to avoid project delay, and utilize whatever opportunities arising that led to improved cost-efficiency, and/or offers solutions to a problem.
- ii. Stakeholder involvement including government, private sector, academia, and research institute as well as local and international non-governmental organizations are important tools for the mainstreaming of global environmental agreements at local level.
- iii. Capacity development at the institutional, legislative, and individual levels are critical for achievement the project outcomes and to ensure its sustainability.
- iv. The focus of the CB2 project on mainstreaming global environmental conventions and agreement in national planning, strategy and policy is very crucial, beneficial, and very much needed.

5. Annexes

Annex 1. ToR

TERMINAL EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. This terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the project “Improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements» (CB2), PIMS #5248

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project title	“Improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements» (CB2)			
GEF Project ID:	5399		<i>at endorsement</i> (Million US\$)	<i>at completion</i> (Million US\$)
UNDP Project ID:	UNDP PMS #5248 Project ID #00090945	GEF financing:	500.000 (grant)	500.000 (grant)
Country:	Kazakhstan	IA/EA own:	50.000 (in-kind)	50.000 (in-kind)
Region:	ECIS	Government:	600.000 (in-kind)	600.000 (in-kind)
Focal Area:	Multi-Focal Area	Other :		
FA Objectives , (OP/SP):	CD2	Total co-financing:	650.000	650.000
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan, Ministry of Finance of Kazakhstan	Total Project Cost:	1.150.000	1.150.000

Other Partners involved:		ProDoc Signature (date project began):		16 Sept. 2014
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 16 Sept. 2017	Actual: 16 Sept. 2017

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The project was designed to be complementary to other related projects under implementation in Kazakhstan, in particular those supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to ensure non-duplication of GEF grants. Careful attention has been given to coordinating project activities in such a way that activities are mutually supportive and opportunities capitalized to realize synergies and cost-effectiveness.

The goal of this project is to put in place new approaches that will facilitate better development decisions for the global environment. To that end, the project objective will undertake a targeted set of activities to develop technical and institutional capacities for undertaking an economic valuation of global environmental goods and services as potentially impacted by proposed development policies, programmes, plans and projects. Specifically, the project has developed natural resource valuation tools for valuing global environmental benefits; provided training and learn-by-doing exercises on their use; and helped institutionalize natural resource valuation. The expected outcomes of this project are: (1) Decisions to protect the global environment are better enabled and (2) Technical and management staff sufficiently trained in the use and application of natural resource valuation tools, and decision-makers fully aware of natural resource valuation tools.

This project is structured into two inter-linked components. The first component focuses on the development of the natural resource valuation tools and providing training on how to use these tools for improved planning and decisions to meet global environmental objectives. The second component focuses on the institutionalization of natural resource valuation to ensure that they continue to be used over the long-term. Activities under this component has included testing the use of natural resource valuation tools and facilitating the legislative and institutional reforms necessary for their long-term use.

The total project budget is USD 1.150.000. The allocated resources including the co-financing amount are as follows:

- GEF USD 1,758,182
- Government of Kazakhstan USD 600.000 (in-kind)
- UNDP USD 50.000 (in-kind)

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An overall approach and method⁴ for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR ([Annex C](#)). The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a mission **to Astana and Almaty cities, Kazakhstan** ([Annex H](#)).

Interviews will be held with the following personnel and organizations:

- 1) UNDP CO representatives;
- 2) Project team;
- 3) Representative of Government, including:
 - Forestry and Wildlife Committee Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan;
 - Ministry of finance of Kazakhstan;
- 4) Representative of private sector including:
 - Kazakh National Agrarian University;
 - Kazakh Research Institute of Fishery;
 - Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity oh Kazakhstan;
 - Other experts

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including **Inception report, annual project progress reports, project budget revisions, GEF focal area tracking tools – CD Scorecards, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials** that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex B](#) of this Terms of Reference.

⁴ For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163

EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework ([Annex A.](#)) which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in [Annex D.](#)

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>rating</i>	2. IA& EA Execution	<i>rating</i>
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	<i>rating</i>	4. Sustainability	<i>rating</i>
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

PROJECT FINANCE / COFINANCE

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
In-kind support	50.000	50.000	600.000	600.000			650.000	650.000
Other								
Totals	50.000	50.000	600.000	600.000			650.000	650.000

MAINSTREAMING

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.⁵

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations** and **lessons**.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in Kazakhstan. The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

⁵ A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROtI Handbook 2009](#)

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be **18 days** according to the following plan:

Activity	Timing	Completion Date
Preparation	3 working days	31 July 2017
Evaluation Mission	5 working days	10 August 2017
Draft Evaluation Report	5 working days	24 August 2017
Final Report	5 working days	7 September 2017

EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	No later than 2 weeks before the evaluation mission. 31 July 2017	Evaluator submits to UNDP CO
Presentation	Initial Findings	End of evaluation mission 10 August 2017	To project management, UNDP CO
Draft Final Report	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within 2 weeks of the evaluation mission 24 August 2017	Sent to CO, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFPs
Final Report*	Revised report	Within 3 weeks of receiving UNDP comments on draft 7 September 2017	Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP ERC.

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation will be conducted by 1 (one) international evaluator. The consultant shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The evaluator must present the following qualifications:

- Master degree in environmental, biodiversity, development, social sciences and/or other related fields (20%)
- Minimum of 5 years of project evaluation and/or implementation experience in the result-based management framework, adaptive management and UNDP or GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (25%)
- Experience with multilateral and bilateral supported multi-focal area capacity development projects (15%)
- Minimum of 5 years of relevant professional experience in biodiversity and environmental sectors (25%)
- Excellent written English (15%)

EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#)

PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

%	Milestone
20%	At contract signing
30%	Following submission and approval of the 1ST draft terminal evaluation report
50%	Following submission and approval (UNDP-CO and UNDP RTA) of the final terminal evaluation report

APPLICATION PROCESS

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

- 1) Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability using the template provided by UNDP¹;
- 2) CV and a Personal History Form (P11 form);
- 3) Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed

Annex 2. List of documents reviewed

The PMU has shared a list of documents to the TE Consultant in advance of the review mission as well as during the mission to Kazakhstan:

Document Title	
1.	PIF
2.	UNDP/GEF Project Document
3.	GEF CEO Endorsement letter
4.	UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
5.	Project Inception Report
6.	Annual Project Progress: 2015, 2016, and mid-term analytical progress report on activities performed till October 2017
7.	Project Work Plans
8	Capacity Building Score Card - at CEO endorsement
9	Capacity Building Score Card - at Mid-time project implementation
10	Minutes of the Project Board Meetings
11	Project Logframe
12	Project's budget revisions
13	Project Budget Balance
14	UNDP CDR 2015, 2016 and 2017 up to October
15	Some of the project's publication – English version
16	Snap shots of UNDP Risks and issues log
17	In-kind assistance table
18	Some of the technical reports produced by the international and national consultants
19	Training sessions progress reports
20	Project's activities media coverage – Samples
21	Request Letter from Implementing Partner requesting no cost extension
22	Approval from the UNDP GEF on the project no cost extension

Annex 3. Itinerary



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

THE MISSION AGENDA

International Expert Ms. Amal Aldababseh

Terminal evaluation of the project 90945 “Improvement of the decision-making process in Kazakhstan through introduction of mechanisms of economic assessment of fulfilling national obligations under global environmental agreements” (CB2)

Mission period: 7-11 November 2017 (5 days, including days of arrival and departure)

Meetings with project partners: capital Astana, city of Almaty

Date and time	Meetings and participants
7 November 2017, Tuesday : Arrival	
8 November 2017	
10.30 – 11.00	Transfer to project’s office
11.00 – 13.00	<p>Meeting with the project team in the project’s office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review of the evaluation process ■ Review of the project implementation results <p><i>Ms. Amal Aldababseh, International Expert</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Talgat Kerteshev, UNDP Biodiversity Projects Manager</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Meruyert Sarsembayeva, Expert on Financial Tools</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Ainur Shalakhanova, Expert on Resource Mobilization</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Aizhan Baimukanova, Specialist on Capacity-Building and Logistics</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Togzhan Akshabayeva, Interpreter</i></p>
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break
15.00 – 16.00	<p>Meeting in the office of the Ministry of Agriculture’s Forestry and Wildlife Committee, national implementing agency of the project</p> <p><i>Mr. Maxat Yelemessov, Head of Forest and Protected Areas Department, Clearing House Mechanism focal point</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Yerlik Nakishev, Chief Expert of Finance Department</i></p>
16.30 – 17.30	<p>Meeting with independence experts</p> <p><i>Mr. Sergey Turumbayev, Expert in assessment of harm caused to forest ecosystems</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Vitaliy Kuzin, Nature resource assessment expert</i></p>

9 November 2017, Thursday	
09.00 – 09.30	Hotel - project's office
09.30 – 13.00	Work with the project team Meeting with mr. Kairat Ustemirov, Deputy Chairman, CBD focal point, focal point of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, focal point of Convention to combat desertification and Chairman of the Steering Committee
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break
15.00 – 16.00	Meeting in the UNDP Country Office <i>Ms. Munkhtuya Altangerel, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Kazakhstan</i> <i>Ms. Zhanetta Babasheva, Resources Monitoring Associate</i> <i>Ms. Victoria Baigazina, Programme Associate of Sustainable Development and Urbanization Unit</i>
21.30 – 23.10	Astana – Almaty <i>Ms. Amal Aldababseh, International Expert</i> <i>Ms. Meruyert Sarsembayeva, Expert in Financial Tools</i> <i>Ms. Togzhan Akshabayeva, Interpreter</i>
10 November 2017, Friday	
09.30 – 10.30	Meeting in the Kazakh Research Institute of Fisheries <i>Mr. Damir Zharkenov, Chief Academic Secretary</i>
12.00 – 13.00	Meeting with CB2 project expert <i>Mr. Zhailau Toktassynov, expert on forestry</i>
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.30 – 17.30	Meeting in the office of Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK) <i>Mr. Sergey Sklyarenko, Deputy Director</i> Meetings with CB2 project experts: <i>Ms. Natalya Panchenko, Expert in Natural Resource Valuation Policy</i> <i>Ms. Leila Makhmetova, Expert on legal issues</i> <i>Ms. Lina Valdshmit, Expert on PA management and biodiversity</i> <i>Mr. Askar Kaliyev, economist</i>
11 November 2017, Saturday : Departure	

Annex 4. List of persons interviewed

Name	Position
Mr. Talgat Kerteshev	UNDP Biodiversity Projects Manager
Ms. Meruyert Sarsembayeva	Expert on Financial Tools
Ms. Ainur Shalakhanova	Expert on Resource Mobilization
Ms. Aizhan Baimukanova	Specialist on Capacity-Building and Logistics
Ms. Togzhan Akshabayeva	Interpreter
Mr. Maxat Yelemessov	Head of Forest and Protected Areas Department, Clearing House Mechanism focal point
Mr. Yerlik Nakishev	Chief Expert of Finance Department
Mr. Sergey Turumbayev	Expert in assessment of harm caused to forest ecosystems
Mr. Vitaliy Kuzin	Nature resource assessment expert
Mr. Kairat Ustemirov	Deputy Chairman, CBD focal point, focal point of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, focal point of Convention to combat desertification and Chairman of the Steering Committee
Ms. Munkhtuya Altangerel	Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Kazakhstan
Ms. Zhanetta Babasheva	Resources Monitoring Associate
Ms. Victoria Baigazina	Programme Associate of Sustainable Development and Urbanization Unit
Mr. Damir Zharkenov	Chief Academic Secretary. Kazakh Research Institute of Fisheries
Mr. Zhailau Toktassynov	Expert on forestry
Mr. Sergey Sklyarenko	Deputy Director. The Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK)
Ms. Natalya Panchenko	Expert in Natural Resource Valuation Policy
Ms. Leila Makhmetova	Expert on legal issues

Annex 5. Evaluative Question Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
i. Project Strategy		
1. Project design		
Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.	Reported adaptive management measures in response to changes in context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders.
Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?	Reported progress toward achieving the results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders.
Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country?	<p>Endorsement of the project by governmental agencies.</p> <p>Provision of counterpart funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documents endorsements and co-financing. ▪ Interviews with UNDP, project staff and governmental agencies.
Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?	Level of participation of project partners in project design and actual inclusion in project implementation arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with stakeholders. ▪ Project progress reports.
Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design.	Level of gender issues raised outlined in project documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project documents
2. Results Framework/ Logframe:		
Undertake a critical analysis of the project's log frame indicators and targets, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.	Indicators and targets of outcome and outputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project framework

Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and within its time frame?	The stated contribution of stakeholders in project implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with stakeholders.
Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyze beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.	Indicators of the project's outcome (from the project results framework)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Field visits and interviews with local stakeholders involved with these projects and the direct beneficiaries.
Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.	Measures were taken to ensure proper project implementation based on project monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project's reports. ▪ Interviews with PSC members ▪ Minutes of interviews with key stakeholders
ii. Progress Towards Results		
3. Progress towards outcomes analysis		
Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix developed and presented in the Guidance For Conducting Terminal Review of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects.	Output level indicators of Results Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Tangible products (publications, studies, etc.) ▪ Interviews with the project's staff, partners, and stakeholders.
iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management		
4. Management arrangement		
Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.	Level of implementation of mechanisms outlined in project document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with project staff and partners. ▪ Project progress reports.
Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.	Level of satisfaction (among partners and project staff) of overall management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with project staff, consultants, and partner organizations

	by Implementing partner.	
Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.	Level of satisfaction (among partners and project staff) of overall management by UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with project staff, consultants, and partner organizations
5. Work planning		
Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.	Level of compliance with project planning / annual plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff.
Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?	List of results proposed in the work plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project work plan.
Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.	Level of compliance with project results framework and logframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff.
6. Finance and co-finance		
Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.	Level of compliance with project financial planning / annual plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project financial reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff.
Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.	Level of compliance with project financial planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project financial reports.
Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for the timely flow of funds?	<p>Quality of standards for financial and operative management.</p> <p>Perception of management efficiency by project partners and project staff/consultants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with the project and UNDP finance staff. ▪ Financial reports.
Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the	Level of co-financing in relation to original planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial reports of the project. ▪ Interviews with project

project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?		management staff and UNDP RTA.
7. Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems		
Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?	Measures were taken to improve project implementation based on project monitoring and evaluation. Level of implementation of M&E system. Changes in project implementation as result of supervision visits/missions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress and implementation reports. ▪ Interview with project staff, UNDP team, and key stakeholders.
Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?	The number of cases where resources are insufficient. The number of cases where budgets were transferred between different budget lines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports/ financial reports/ consultant contracts and report
8. Stakeholder Engagement		
Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?	Level of participation of project partners in project design and actual inclusion in project implementation arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with key stakeholders
Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?	Endorsement of the project by governmental agencies. Provision of counterpart funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with national partners, UNDP and project staff. ▪ Project progress reports/PIR.

	Perception of ownership by national and local agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documented endorsements and co-financing.
Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?	<p>Perceived level of collaboration and coordination.</p> <p>The stated contribution of stakeholders in the achievement of outputs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with Project Management team. ▪ Interviews with stakeholders. ▪ Citation of stakeholders' roles in specific products like publications
9. Reporting		
Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.	Reported adaptive management measures in response to changes in context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfill GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly rated PIRs, if applicable?)	Level of alignment with the GEF mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; and the GEF CB2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparison of project document and annual reports and policy and strategy papers of local-regional agencies, GEF and UNDP. ▪ Interviews with UNDP, project and governmental agencies.
Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.	Reported adaptive management measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders.
10. Communications		
Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of	The degree to which plans were followed up by project management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders.

project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?	Perception of effectiveness.	
Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)	Stated the existed means of communication. The degree to which plans were followed up by project management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
iv. Sustainability		
Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.	Identified risks and mitigation measures during project design and the updated risk-log sheet in ATLAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project document ▪ Progress report ▪ Risk log
11. Financial risks to sustainability.		
What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income-generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?	Estimations on financial requirements. Estimations of the future budget of key stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Studies on financial sustainability. ▪ Documented estimations of the future budget. ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
12. Socio-economic risks to sustainability.		
Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public/stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?	Key factors positively or negatively impacted project results (in relation to stated assumptions). Main national stakeholders participate actively in implementation and replication of project activities and results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders. ▪ Project progress reports. ▪ Revision of literature on context ▪ Documentation on activities of key stakeholders

13. Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability		
Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures, and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.	Key institutional frameworks that may positively or negatively influence project results (in relation to stated assumptions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of existing frameworks. ▪ Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
14. Environmental risks to sustainability		
Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?	Number of identified risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk log and management response.

Annex 6. Questionnaire used for the interviews

Below listed questions were used in the interviews. Not all questions will be asked to each interviewee. These questions were used as a reminder for the TE consultant about the type of information required to complete the review exercise and a guide to prepare the semi-structured interviews.

I. RELEVANCE - How does the Project relate to the main objectives of the GEF and to the environment and development priorities of Kazakhstan?

1. Is the Project relevant to the GEF objectives?
2. Is the Project relevant to UNDP objectives?
3. Is the Project relevant to Kazakhstan development objectives?
4. Does the Project address the needs of target beneficiaries?
5. Is the Project internally coherent in its design?
6. How is the Project relevant considering other donors?
7. What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the Project to strengthen the alignment between the Project and the Partners' priorities and areas of focus?
8. How could the Project better target and address the priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries?

II. EFFECTIVENESS – To what extent are the expected outcomes of the Project being achieved?

1. How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?
2. How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?

III. EFFICIENCY - How efficiently is the Project implemented?

1. Was adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?
2. Did the Project logical framework and work plans and any changes made to them use as management tools during implementation?
3. Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for Project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?
4. Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and respond to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?
5. Was Project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)? Was the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happening as planned? Were financial resources utilized efficiently?
6. Could financial resources have been used more efficiently?
7. Were there an institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanism to ensure that findings, lessons learned and recommendations pertaining to Project design and implementation effectiveness were shared among Project stakeholders, UNDP and GEF Staff and other relevant organizations for ongoing Project adjustment and improvement? Did the Project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation?
8. To what extent were partnerships/ linkages between institutions/ organizations encouraged and supported?
9. Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable?

10. What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP/GEF and relevant government entities)
11. Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise as well as local capacity?
12. Did the Project take into account local capacity in design and implementation of the Project?

IV. IMPACTS - What are the potential and realized impacts of activities carried out in the context of the Project?

1. Will the project achieve its objective that is to improve fiscal measures for collecting, managing, and allocating revenues for global environmental management?
2. How is the Project impacting the local environment such as impacts or likely impacts on the local environment; on poverty; and, on other socio-economic issues?

V. SUSTAINABILITY - Are the initiatives and results of the Project allowing for continued benefits?

1. Are sustainability issues adequately integrated in Project design?
2. Did the Project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?
3. Is there evidence that Project partners will continue their activities beyond Project support?
4. Are laws, policies and frameworks being addressed through the Project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms?
5. Is the capacity in place at the national and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of the results achieved to date?
6. Did the Project contribute to key building blocks for social and political sustainability?
7. Are Project activities and results being replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up?
8. What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts?

Annex 7. Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Terminal Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: AMAL ALDABABSEH

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at Jordan (Place) on 15 December 2017 (Date)

Signature: _____

