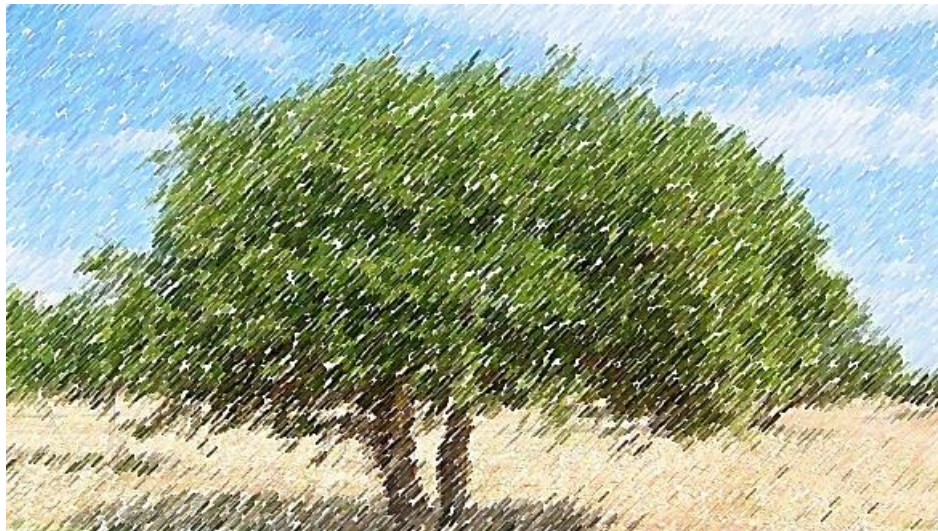




Alternative Green Energy & Environment Solutions



A CIRCULAR ECONOMY APPROACH TO AGRO-BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN THE SOUSS-MASSA REGION OF MOROCCO MID-TERM EVALUATION



- REFERENCE RFP 03/2017 -
DELIVERABLE 3 | EVALUATION REPORT
- final version -

Alternative Green Energy and Environmental Solutions – ALGEES

Business License | 25108207 – CR | 104 495 – Tax ID | 3370437 – CNSS | 4099158
Address | 17, rue ML Ahmed Loukili - appt. 3 - Hassan, Rabat | P.O Rabat Souissi, B.P5143
Tel. | +212.(0)661.30.55.92 – E | atouzanikia@gmail.com – smajdouline.wazner@gmail.com

<i>Project Title</i>	A Circular Economy Approach to Agro-Biodiversity Conservation in the Souss-Massa Region of Morocco				
<i>Project ID</i>	00089921				
<i>Field</i>	Environment and biodiversity				
<i>Country</i>	Morocco	<i>Regions</i>	Souss-Massa		
<i>Duration of the project</i>	5 years	<i>Start Date</i>	01/07/2014	<i>End Date</i>	30/06/2019
<i>Partners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests (<i>MAF</i>) – National Agency for the Development of Oasis Areas and Argan Trees (<i>ANDZOA</i>) 				
<i>Agency in charge of the execution</i>	– Agricultural Development Agency (<i>ADA</i>)				
<i>Development Agency</i>	United Nations Development Programme (<i>UNDP</i>)				
<i>Overall Budget</i>	<p>The total budget for the project is of USD 10,147,272 broken down as follows according to the contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – MAF USD 7,300,000 – Global Environmental Facility (GEF) USD 2,647,272 – UNDP USD 200,000 				
<i>Timetable for the Mid-Term Evaluation</i>	October – December 2017				
<i>Team members in charge of the mid-term evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Majdoulaine Semlali Wazner – Abdellatif Touzani 				

Acknowledgements

The evaluators extend their appreciation to all the stakeholders of the CEP-SM project that have contributed directly or indirectly to the completion of this mid-term evaluation, particularly: the Agricultural Development Agency, the United Nations Development Programme (*Morocco*), the National Agency for the Development of Oasis Areas and Argan Trees, the Wilaya of the Souss Massa region, the SM Regional Directorate for Agriculture, the Moroccan Inter-professional Argan Federation, the SM Regional Association of Beekeepers and the Network for the Development of Rural Tourism.

We also extend our appreciation to the National Project Coordinator and his team for their availability and involvement in this process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	VI
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	VII
SUMMARY	1
1. Qualitative assessment of the project's performance	1
2. Findings	2
3. Recommendations	3
I. INTRODUCTION	5
1. Purpose and objectives of the mid-term evaluation	5
2. Scope and methodology	5
2.1. Scoping Meeting	5
2.2. Document Review	5
2.3. Field Mission	5
2.3.1. Interviews with the stakeholders	6
2.3.2. Interviews with the stakeholders	6
3. Structure of the mid-term evaluation report	6
II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND	7
1. Project Development Background & Challenges	7
2. Project Strategy	7
III. PROJECT RESULTS	8
1. Project Strategy	8
1.1. Coherence of project design	8
1.2. Project Relevance	10
1.3. Strategic Results Framework	11
1.3.1. Indicators and targets	11
1.3.2. Progress towards the project's expected effects and objective	11
1.3.3. Gender dimension of the project	13
2. Progress towards the achievement of results	14
3. Project implementation and adaptive management	18
3.1. Management-related provisions	18

3.1.1.	Project steering and supervision	18
3.1.2.	Project Management	20
3.1.4.	Implementation and coordination	22
3.2.	Activity Planning	23
3.3.	Project monitoring and evaluation systems	24
3.3.1.	General M&E overview	24
3.4.	Adaptive management and lessons learned	25
3.4.1.	Adaptive management	25
3.4.2.	Lessons learned from the project	25
3.5.	Efficiency	26
3.5.1.	Financing and co-financing	26
3.5.2.	Human resources	29
3.5.3.	Material resources	29
3.6.	Stakeholder Participation	30
3.7.	Communication	31
4.	Sustainability	32
4.1.	General risks associated with the roll-out of the project	32
4.2.	Specific risks for the project's sustainability	33
4.2.1.	Financial Risks	33
4.2.2.	Socio-economic and political risks	33
4.2.3.	Institutional framework and governance risks	34
4.2.4.	Environmental risks	34
IV.	CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	36
1.	Conclusions	36
2.	Recommendations	37
2.1.	Project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation	38
2.2.	Monitoring and strengthening of the project's initial benefits	38
3.	Future orientations proposed by the stakeholders	39
V.	APPENDICES	40
1.	Appendix 1 Table of submitted documents	40
2.	Appendix 2 List with stakeholders with whom meetings were held	41
3.	Appendix 3 Meeting schedule	42
4.	Appendix 4 Evaluation matrix	43
5.	Appendix 5 One-on-one reports	44

6.	Appendix 6 Summary of the focus groups _____	54
7.	Appendix 7 Key milestones and stakeholders of the CEP-SM _____	58
8.	Appendix 8 ProDoc Obstacles and Assumptions _____	60
9.	Appendix 9 Analysis of FSR Indicators _____	61
10.	Appendix 10 Specific, gender-driven actions _____	64
11.	Appendix 11 Assessment of CEP-SM achievements _____	65
12.	Appendix 12 Analysis of M&E activities _____	69
13.	Appendix 13 Lessons learned from the CEP-SM internal reviews _____	74
14.	Appendix 14 Risks identified by the CEP-SM _____	75
15.	Appendix 15 CEP-SM risk mitigation measures _____	76
16.	Appendix 16 CEP-SM risk mitigation measures _____	77
17.	Appendix 17 Financial contributions for CEP-SM sustainability _____	78

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURES

<i>Figure 1 Cumulative Successes and Achievements of CEP- SM 2017</i>	12
<i>Figure 1 Succès et réalisations cumulatives du PEC-SM en 2017</i>	12
<i>Figure 1 Succès et réalisations cumulatives du PEC-SM en 2017</i>	12

TABLES

<i>Table 1 CEP-SM Budget</i>	26
<i>Table 2 Annual expenditures against approved budgets</i>	27
<i>Table 3 Project performance indices</i>	28

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Agricultural Development Agency
ANDZOA	National Agency for the development of oasis areas and Argan trees
APATI	Ida Outanane Tourist Host Country Association
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
NPC	National Project Coordinator
CoPiL	Steering Committee
FSR	Framework of Strategic Results
NPD	National Project Director
RDA	Regional Directorate for Agriculture
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
FG	Focus group
RBM	Results-based Management
HCEFLCD	High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification
PGI	Protected Geographical Indication
INDH	National Initiative for Human Development
MAD	Moroccan Dirham
MFAC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity
ONSSA	National Office for Food Safety
CEP-SM	Circular Economy Project for the Conservation of Agro-Biodiversity in the Souss Mass Region
NFP	National Forest Programme
PIR	Project Implementation Report
GMP	Green Morocco Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ProDoc	Project Document
PES	Payment of ecosystem services
AR	Annual internal reviews
ABR	Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve
RDTR	Network for the Development of Rural Tourism
MIR	Mid-year Internal Review
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
DSOQ	Distinctive sign of origin and quality
SMART	Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound
PMU	Project Management Unit
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteers Programme

The purpose of the CEP-SM is to contribute to the preservation of biodiversity in the Souss Massa region in Morocco through the establishment of the payment for ecosystem services (PES) and the related sustainable usage of biodiversity. A focus was made on the Argan and honey sectors. To meet the objective, the project's intervention was broken down into four main components aiming to (i) *create an environment that is more conducive to the establishment and promotion of PES models*, (ii) *capacity building* (iii) *strengthening of organic producers that are respectful of biodiversity* (iv) *and the strengthening of the conservation of agro-biodiversity in the Argan ecosystem through PES pilot models*. This mid-term evaluation was hence commissioned to evaluate the progress made during the achievement of the project objective and its outcomes. The evaluation focused on the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

1. Qualitative assessment of the project's performance

<i>Evaluation</i>	<i>Mid-term Evaluation</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Progress made towards the achievement of results</i>	Objective MS	Overall, the project has not deflected from meeting its objective. Nevertheless, the establishment of a regulatory and legal environment that is conducive to the designed PES models requires more time for its realization. The same applies to the marketing of the organic production of Argan oil and honey intended to generate a higher income for local beneficiaries. The innovation of the CEP-SM and the ambitious dimension of its components result in the fact that the achievement of all the outcomes can only be partial by the time the project is scheduled to end (<i>an extension should be considered</i>).
	Component 1 MS	The regulatory and legal framework of the CEP-SM is under development. At this stage, the FDA funding mechanism, through rainwater harvesting and through the creation of agricultural terrassettes is currently being revised. This situation is justified by the necessity to align the project's approach with the needs of beneficiaries and the findings of the technical studies carried out in this field.
	Component 2 HS	Capacity building and awareness-raising activities were carried out effectively and enabled the achievement of the targeted results. The progress made in this field is quite substantial and has had a positive impact on stakeholders' perception of circular economy and PES. The visibility of the CEP-SM was also enhanced.
	Component 3 MS	The ABR eco-label process has yet to be implemented at this stage. However, the development of the ABR eco-label reference framework and the design of its management structure have been undertaken. Furthermore, the PGI label was established for thyme honey from Souss.
	Component 4 MS	Currently, PES beneficiaries have been identified, along with the entities that could potentially pay for ES. An initiative for terrassettes was launched in Idmine. However, the operationalization of the models overall has not yet taken effect on the field.
<i>Project implementation and responsive management</i>	S	The implementation of the project is supported by sufficient Human Resources from the PMU and the expertise and technical assistance of the resource persons from the DRA and ANDZOA. Cooperation among stakeholders and their involvement in the project's implementation was sought after by project leaders. To do so, local and steering committees were established and follow-up meetings were held. The monitoring and evaluation of the project were strengthened and consolidated by regular data collection and sharing activities. However, methodological enhancements in this field are also needed. Also, the easing of certain administrative and logistics procedures is necessary for the completion of the project's activities. Stakeholder involvement in the roll-out phase of the PES models as well as their funding must be ensured.
<i>Sustainability</i>	ML	The project's financial, socio-economic, institutional and environmental sustainability are quite likely (<i>moderate risks</i>). The formalizing of the regulatory framework of PES, the resilience of the project's actions to climate change and the availability of financial resources are the causes.

2. Findings

Pilot Initiative and Awareness

CEP-SM is a pilot initiative in Morocco intended to position the country on a forward-looking strategic focus clearly rooted in the current concerns of sustainable development. Through its approach, the project decouples economic growth and the depletion of natural resources through the creation of innovative payment of ecosystem services (*PES*) models. The wake-up call regarding the notion of CE and its PES approach was backed by the strengthening of skills undertaken in the framework of the project. As such, a reflection was conducted with stakeholders in the Souss Massa region on alternatives to conventional development models. This approach made it possible to demystify the notion of CE and PES for some local players and for others, to open up new prospects in terms of the management of their sectoral activities. This resulted in a positive perception with regards to the scope of the project and its objectives.

Strengthening of skills and visibility

The CEP-SM made it possible to upgrade and consolidate the knowledge of 223 beneficiaries, including 68 women among the suppliers and technicians/decision-makers concerned by the ecosystem services (*ES*). Since its launch, the project has shown a particular interest for this dimension that represents one of the project's actual successes. However, an understanding of the notion of CE and PES and the mitigation of interpretation biases of some stakeholders need to be consolidated by a more tangible approach. Furthermore, the project showcased the potential of the Souss Massa region and drew attention on the fragility of its ecosystems. In fact, the CEP-SM implemented a number of actions to communicate on the project's areas of focus and their promotion. To do so, the CEP-SM used social media. It also developed a unique initiative by organizing educational tours which included inter alia, tour operators, international media and civil society players.

Beyond promoting the project, the initiative targeted the identification of economic activities for the implementation of its PES models.

Designing the PES models

At this stage, the project designed four PES models, which include: the development of agricultural terraces for the preservation of agro-biodiversity,

offsetting of the carbon footprint by tourism and the sound management of solid wastes for the preservation of the natural heritage, eco-labeling of local products through sustainable production practices and the promotion of pollination services through the rehabilitation of the natural habitat of bees. Via startups, the PES models translate the project's approach into more tangible concepts for stakeholders. The project managed to identify 17 tourism operators and 7 professional agricultural organizations as beneficiaries for the implementation of the PES pilot models. To do so, a concerted effort was undertaken with project beneficiaries, namely through the creation of local project committees. This approach was welcomed by the beneficiaries who felt that their voices were heard and also felt involved in the process. At this stage of the project, the PES modules are pending the development of a regulatory and legal framework to facilitate their implementation. Currently, the texts governing the funding mechanism for agricultural terraces for rainwater harvesting are under review. Indeed, the project adopted this mechanism based on the outcomes of a technical study carried out to this effect and to meet the expectations of the project beneficiaries. Initially, the CEP-SEM was intended to capitalize on the program by the HCEFLCD in order to defend the critical forest zones. Nonetheless, the lack of pooled efforts and poor coordination between the agricultural and forestry sectors impeded this action. Also, the review of the regulatory and legal framework was supposed to be backed by an inter-ministerial working group. The lack of convergence in terms of public efforts for the promotion of shared objectives was the main cause. The absence of a shared vision and of a high-level sponsor that could increase the involvement of players also impacted this process.

With regards to the ABR eco-label, it is under development (*reference framework established*). However, socio-political challenges in the sectors targeted by the project as well as the multiplicity of representatives and their strategic divergence must be taken into account. Achieving a consensus with regards to the management of the ABR label among the members of the 5 retained colleges (*Argan, honey, almonds, aromatic and medicinal plants, and tourism*) is also a risk factor that must be considered and mitigated. As for the Protected Geographical Indication (*PGI*), this label was granted to thyme honey from the Souss region.

Project Management

From a management perspective, the project benefited from a Project Management Unit (6 members, including the National Project Coordinator), a National Project Director and a support team from the agricultural administration (6 people). The CEP-SM also benefited from external technical assistance provided by a consortium of two engineering offices (6 experts). There are enough Human Resources for a sound execution of the planned project components and to achieve its results. The monitoring and evaluation of the project were strengthened by the project by bringing in activities in addition to those required by the ProDoc through the establishment of monthly coordination meetings, monthly reports, internal reviews and the development of annual reports. However, the *reporting*, documenting lessons learned from the project, adaptive management as well as the management of risk mitigation must be improved from a methodological standpoint. As for financial resources, the contribution by the Moroccan government of USD 7,300,000 is expected for the implementation phase of the PES models designed so far by the project.

A program is under development and will be submitted to the ADA and ANDZOA. Furthermore, the budget's financial management is deemed by the PMU to be rigid due to the limitations

in terms of funds transfer between the lines. The administrative procedures and their cumbersome nature impact the project's management with regards to tendering and contracting. The administration's regulation also impacts the logistical aspects of the project and its action on the field.

General Conclusion

In conclusion, the CEP-SM brings forth a new dimension for the conciliation of the environment, the economy and societal aspects in Morocco. The reflection on this issue has been launched at the regional and national levels and its dynamic has been initiated. For the time being, communication and capacity strengthening are the project's most striking successes. For their achievement, the 4 PES designed models are pending the consolidation of their regulatory framework, the mobilization of government funds and the full support of the stakeholders targeted by the project. Also, the CEP-SM by nature remains quite ambitious and complex. It addresses areas focusing on regulation and marketing that require preparatory phases that are both adapted and realistic in the face of the national contextual constraints and the high expectations of the beneficiaries in terms of improving their living conditions. Henceforth, an extension of the project duration could indeed be considered.

3. Recommendations

#	Recommendations
Project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation	
R1	Analyze the project's stakeholders (<i>roles, effective responsibilities in the framework of the CEP-SM, needs and level of influence</i>) and establish a strategy for their management
R2	Establish a Steering committee with a limited member count and differentiate the steering process from the sharing of information with stakeholders
R3	Have the CEP-SM vision ' <i>backed</i> ' by a high-level sponsor with a genuine power of influence and legitimacy in order to mobilize the stakeholders
R4	Adopt an advocacy strategy, with the support of donors and the sponsor, with key stakeholders to ensure their backing and support of the project
R5	Involve academia in the project's studies and activities (<i>formalize a cooperative partnership with universities and higher education institutions</i>)
R6	Ease administrative procedures relating to financial management (<i>access to public procurement contracts, funds transfer between budget lines with accountability and traceability</i>) and Logistics (<i>allowing the PMU to use vehicles</i>).
R7	Collect and document the changes made to the project's activities, the annual achievement rates for activities, best practices for their capitalization and improvement of the formulation of mitigation measures for the identified risks
#	Recommendations
Project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation	
R8	Evaluate the impact of climate change on the sustainability of the subsidies mechanism for terraces by the ADF
R9	Ensure transparency and monitoring of the management of the future funds of the ABR eco-label

R10	Create synergies with Moroccan programs that are focused on the resilience of climate change in order to identify preventive actions against the effects of droughts on beekeeping and Arganeraie activities in the Souss Massa region
R11	Identify mitigation measures addressing the risk of the multiplicity of representatives of the Argan and honey sectors and the challenge of converging their priorities
R12	Identify alternative solutions for beneficiaries with scarce financial capacities to obtain the necessary production and packaging equipment
R13	Develop a long-term strategy for the development, promotion and management of the tourism circuit by involving regional and national institutional players
R14	Implement concrete and adapted mechanisms for the mitigation of the strategic risks incurred by the project
R15	Find complementary sources of financing for the project and consider an extension of the project's duration in order to achieve the expected results

1. Purpose and objectives of the mid-term evaluation

As specified in the terms of reference (*ToR*), the mid-term review shall evaluate the progress made towards the achievement of the project's results, as set out in the Project Document (*ProDoc*) and shall measure the project's first signs of success or failure, in such a way as to define the changes that must be set in motion to put the project on the right track to achieve the expected results. The mid-term review shall also evaluate the project's strategy and the risks associated with its sustainability.

2. Scope and methodology

To conduct the mid-term evaluation of the project of A Circular Economy Approach to Agro-Biodiversity Conservation in the Souss-Massa Region of Morocco several data and information collection methods were implemented. In this perspective, triangulation was used through multiple sources of data in order to verify or match them if necessary. Furthermore, the participative approach is a core component in the framework of this review. As such, the involvement of the project's players, team members and beneficiaries were integrated in the evaluation's methodology. To do so, various meetings were held with project stakeholders.

2.1. Scoping Meeting

A scoping meeting was held on October 25, 2017 between the Project Management Unit (*PMU*) of the CEP-SM (*National Project Director and the National Project Coordinator*), UNDP-Morocco (*Energy and Climate Change Program Officer*) and the evaluation team. This meeting made it possible to go over the evaluation methodology and discuss its steps. A presentation was prepared to this effect by the evaluation team. The meeting also made it possible to identify the stakeholders that need to be consulted during the evaluation and to map out a preliminary timetable for the field mission. Discussions were held with the PMU regarding the context and challenges of the CEP-SM. This was also an opportunity to clarify the objectives of the evaluation that aim to assess the achievement of the project's objectives and expected results as well as to shed light on its current impact.

2.2. Document Review

The preliminary collection of documents produced by the project was initiated during the evaluation scoping meeting and was completed during the field mission. The desk review aimed to analyze the project design, the objectives' coherence, its management and its achievements. The documents that were subject to this review are listed in the report's appendices. [Appendix 1 – Table of submitted documents].

2.3. Field Mission

The field mission was conducted between November 13 to 17, 2017 in Agadir with the purpose of meeting a group of CEP-SM stakeholders [Appendix 2 – List of stakeholders with whom meetings were held]. The purpose of the meetings and visits that were conducted during the field mission was to collect and document information on the achieved results, the successes, the challenges met and the improvements to be made to the CEP-SM. In view of preparing for the interviews with the selected stakeholders, the evaluation questions were developed on the basis of a set matrix [Appendix 3 – Evaluation Matrix]. This matrix served as a basis to create interview fact sheets based on the nature of the meeting and the profile of the relevant stakeholder.

For the first focus group (*FG*), a participative and creative approach for data collection and prioritization was adopted (*The six thinking hats, Meta-plan, brainstorming and active listening*). The second FG was more of a joint meeting bringing together the stakeholders.

2.3.1. Interviews with the stakeholders

In accordance with the program established with the PMU and UNDP [Appendix 4 – Meetings Agenda], 12 one-to-one meetings (*individual interviews*) were held in Agadir with the stakeholders involved in strategic, decision-making and/or operational aspects of the project and in the guidance and coordination of the CEP-SM [Appendix 5 – One-to-one reports]. It should be noted that 2 other one-to-one meetings were held in Rabat with stakeholders at the decision-making level. The one-to-ones were held in a semi-structured framework in order to obtain in-depth information on the project's progress.

During the field mission, 2 focus groups [Appendix 6 – Summary of the focus groups] were conducted with the beneficiaries (*tourism and agriculture*) of the project and PMU members. It should be noted that the focus group's methodological approach with farmers was mainstreamed and adapted to their numbers and profile in view of facilitating discussions and also to take their time constraints into account. Furthermore, 3 remote interviews (*via Skype*) were conducted with UNDP-Morocco and the National Project Coordinator (NPC). The remote discussions with the NPC were directly incorporated into this report.

2.3.2. Interviews with the stakeholders

During the evaluation mission, 2 field visits were conducted. The first took place at the Zolado Hotel in Tiqui, to discuss their approach in terms of carbon offsetting. The second visit took place at the Afoulki women's association in Idmine, which made it possible to see the entire Argan production process and to integrate labelling requirements. A visit of the Argan trees planting site during the educational tour was also organized.

3. Structure of the mid-term evaluation report

The CEP-SM mid-term evaluation report includes five main chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the evaluation's objectives and its methodology. Chapter 2 presents the project's background, challenges, strategy and its key stakeholders. Chapter 3 addresses the project's outcomes in terms of strategy, implementation and management. This chapter also addresses the project's sustainability and the risks that could impact it. Chapter 4 concludes the evaluation report, presenting the findings of the mid-term review and the recommendations intended to redirect or strengthen the project's action. Chapter 5 includes all the report's appendices.

Note | qualitative scores are provided in this report based on the following scale:

Project results

Highly Satisfactory (HS): <i>no shortcomings</i>	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): <i>major shortcomings</i>
Satisfactory (S): <i>minor shortcomings</i>	Unsatisfactory (U): <i>major issues</i>
Moderately Satisfactory (MS): <i>moderate shortcomings</i>	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): <i>very serious issues</i>

Sustainability

Likely (L): <i>negligible risks for sustainability</i>	Moderately Unlikely (MU): <i>major risks</i>
Moderately Likely (ML): <i>moderate risks</i>	Unlikely (U): <i>high risks</i>

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND

1. Project Development Background & Challenges

The CEP-SM aims to contribute to the preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity which is of global importance in the Souss Massa (SM) region in Morocco, acting principally through 4 intertwined components. The first component concerns the creation of an environment conducive to the introduction of payments for ecosystem services (PES) in Morocco by addressing the institutional, political and legal changes that are necessary for the establishment and steering of such a mechanism in the SM region. Through the second component, the project will strengthen the technical capabilities for the implementation of the PES models in the SM region and will hence lay the foundation for a national replication of the PES tools and concepts through the dissemination of the lessons learned and the sharing of experiences with other projects and programs. The activities of the third component will make it possible to promote an organic, sustainable biodiversity-friendly production through a labelling and marketing system adapted to products from the Argan ecosystem. Overall, the project addresses two major issues concerning the degradation of the environment and biodiversity due to a unsustainable exploitation of the Argan tree as well as the lack of PES models in Morocco with a focus on Argan trees.

Furthermore, the project operates in the Argan Biosphere Reserve (ABR) with a focus on priority sites that are representative of homogeneous agro-ecological zones which include:

- **Oued Tamaraght watershed, Imouzzer Ida Outanane** (*honey road*) | the site covers the rural municipalities of Idmim, Bigoudim, Aquesri, Imousser, Tiqui and Argana.
- **Chakoukane watershed** (*under the Aouzina water catchment*) | the site covers the rural municipalities of Ounaen, Tizrasse, Ouzioua and Assaki.
- **Oued Massa and Assif Oussaka sub-basins** | the site covers the rural municipalities of Tassegdelt, Hilala Ait Mzal, Tizi NTakoucht Ida Ougnidif, Aouguez, Tanalt, AABRa Ait Hmad and Anzi.
- **Arghel watershed** | the site covers the rural municipalities of Toughmart, Nirt, Imi Ntayart, Adar Azaghar Nirs and Azrar.

2. Project Strategy

The overall project strategy is in line with the GEF strategy which targets the strengthening of the strategic and regulatory framework for the integration of biodiversity as well as the promotion of marketplaces for goods and services related to biodiversity. More specifically, the purpose of this strategy is to:

- Implement the necessary policies to take biodiversity into account in production systems through the circular economy approach and the promotion of the payment of ecosystem services
- Develop institutional capabilities at all levels to take biodiversity into account and eliminate the main bottlenecks and obstacles to the development of the PES in the agricultural production systems in the SM region in particular and Morocco in general
- Adopt a regulatory framework governing the use of financial instruments dedicated to the promotion of the conservation of goods and services originating from agro-biodiversity,
- Design and implement PES pilot models at the grassroots level

The project's main milestones and its stakeholders are outlined in the report's Appendices [Appendix 7 – Project's key milestones and CEP-SM stakeholders].

1. Project Strategy

1.1. Coherence of project design

The CEP-SM design stems from a situational analysis of the environmental, socio-economic, institutional, political and legal aspects. Indeed, the project aims to mitigate the impact of human pressure (*overgrazing and transhumance, intensive agriculture and the overexploitation of water resources, excessive harvesting of fuel wood, uncontrolled exploitation of medicinal and aromatic plants*) on this ecosystem, the lack of natural regeneration as well as the effects of droughts and desertification triggered by climate variability in Morocco. The goal is to allow for the conservation of the Argan ecosystem in the Souss Massa region by supporting the payment of ecosystem services (PES) and the sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity associated with it. In view of implementing the project's innovative approach, obstacles were identified, and solutions were suggested through the project strategy. These stem from the ProDoc and are consolidated in the report's Appendices [Appendix 8 – ProDoc Obstacles and Assumptions].

Obstacle 1 | Institutional weaknesses and legal instruments

Despite the fact that the ProDoc announces a coordination challenge among administrative players whose prerogatives and mandates overlap, the actions suggested to address obstacle 1 do not include remedial measures in this field. Indeed, the ProDoc proposes no actions in favor of enhanced intersectoriality to limit the lack of harmony and consensus in decision-making by administrative stakeholders. In fact, in the project's risk register (*ProDoc Appendix 4*), these obstacles are considered to be low. As for the review of the institutional and regulatory framework required as per the recommendations stemming from the analysis of the overall legislative framework and policies, it is suggested to carry out communication activities and follow-up meetings. The ProDoc does not provide for a necessary and decisive step, which is high-level political advocacy to operate such a change. First, it is necessary to counter the lack of familiarity with PES and a possible reluctance from the concerned players or a possible inertia of the political environment. Also, after 18 months of the project's implementation, the ProDoc provides for the establishment of the structure dedicated to the management of PES in the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (*ABR*) following the development of the necessary regulatory framework. The set objective seemed unrealistic given the complexity of the regulation and public policy review process. Furthermore, the institutionalization of a public benefit body for the management of the PES remains challenging in a context that could be weakened by the lack of intersectoriality and coordination between State players. In short, despite the identification of these factors in the assumptions, they are not qualified in the ProDoc.

Obstacle 2 | Lack of expertise and technical capabilities

The capacity building approach proposed in the ProDoc was defined on the basis of the players' levels of intervention (*technical, decision-making, research, service providers*). This enabled the development of training programs adapted to the profiles and needs of beneficiaries. However, capitalization and dissemination rely on the PES management structure of the ABR. The effective realization of such a structure at such an early stage of the project is highly unlikely. In fact, no assumption or risk was formulated in the framework of strategic results (*FSR*) with regards to this issue. To convey the importance of PES, it is expected to rely on forums, workshops, meetings and the media. For example, the use of forums to iron out conflicts and redundancies between the various organizations does not seem appropriate. The forums should be used to raise awareness of local, regional or national players on PES-related issues and to disseminate the project's achievements and increase its visibility.

Obstacle 3 | The inadequate promotion and marketing of products originating from agro-biodiversity

The development phases of the ecological label (*eco-label*) for the ABR seem to be coherent. The same applies for the protected geographical indication label (PGI). However, the skills development and awareness-raising aspects are lacking so as to be able to integrate the approach's advantages. Indeed, in the framework of the establishment of the ecological label for the ABR and PGI for thyme and spurge honey, conducting training sessions for farmers and beekeepers on good production practices to ensure compliance with the requirements of the labels in question are crucial. The organization of information workshops presenting the labeling process is also essential. In another realm, the management organization of the future ABR ecological label is not addressed, let alone its legal, technical and control bodies. The skills enhancement of farmers and beekeepers could be necessary. They also need technical support to meet the requirements of the National Office for Food Safety (ONSSA). The logistics associated with the marketing of labeled Argan oil and honey provides for the integration of a logistics platform in Agadir and an area dedicated to ABR. This part of the third component of the CEP-SM is quite ambitious and implies that the labeling process is proceeding without any implementation constraints (*skills enhancement of beneficiaries, agreement between the various producers, low impact of drought*) and in a reasonable timeframe. Indeed, the assumptions do not address the technical and human risks relating to this aspect nor the resilience issue with regards to the potential effects of droughts, which happens to be considered in the project risk register as "low". However, the positive perception of the process as a value driver is addressed by the last assumption of the component.

Obstacle 4 | Operational challenges associated with the implementation of PES systems

The idea of having the development of the PES pilot model draw upon an existing approach in Morocco is favorable to overcome resistance and mitigate the likelihood of failure compared with the introduction of a model without any local anchorage (*even if in practice another mechanism was selected*). The reintroduction of traditional practices, the *agdal*, is also an asset for the project. The formalization phases of the PES pilot models, their management and their monitoring seem to be coherent. The risk for this fourth Component is the availability, in the project's first year, of an operational guide of the terms and conditions applicable to PES contracts as well as the calculation methods of the amounts to be disbursed for the planned conservation techniques in the framework of the PES model. This action requires a real understanding of the PES issue by project stakeholders involved in this task and the availability of information and data that is indispensable for the preparation of the aforementioned guide. Targeting such an action at the project's early stages is not appropriate. What would be preferable is to establish this document during the consolidation of the PES pilot models and the capitalization of the lessons learned after 1 or 2 models have been confronted on the field. Furthermore, the risk of achieving the objectives of Component 4 is connected to the realization of certain products from Component 1: reviewing the regulatory and legal framework and the availability of a structure dedicated to the management of the PES of the ABR.

Overall, the CEP-SM intervention strategy is clearly detailed and draws upon the specific contextual data and integrates the obstacles to the achievement of the solution brought forth by the project. This relies upon the development of a regulatory and legal framework that allows for the consolidation of PES as a crosscutting component of development policies and programs in Morocco. In support of this approach are the skills enhancement of CEP-SM stakeholders and the consolidation of promotional and marketing tools for products originating from the ABR with the support of the PES models. Nevertheless, in its 5-year time framework, the project targets quite ambitious components that act upon institutional, regulatory, environmental and economic fronts. Indeed, certain components of the CEP-SM act more as full-fledged projects rather than structuring elements established by the project (*especially components 1 and 4*). As such, the CEP-SM takes on a multifaceted nature with influencing factors at various levels. This is augmented by the issue of the effective participation of the stakeholders in CEP-SM. The ProDoc merely mentions the players concerned by the fields and sectors targeted by the project. A clear distribution of the roles and responsibilities falls short in the context of the project. As such, the issue relating to the involvement of the players targeted in the project and the pooling of their efforts in the project implementation and more specifically in component 1 remains in abeyance. In addition, these risks were deemed to be low in the ProDoc.

Concerning the intervention logic of the project, the integration of the concept of circular economy and PES in the SM region, could have started out with skills enhancement activities and limited pilot actions in terms of development of PES models (*protection and/or subsidy of terraces*). The implementation of 2 models (*the most adapted locally with greater chances for success*) would have made it possible to test the PES approach in the region, to face the challenges on the ground, identify corrective mitigation measures and to draw lessons and recommendations to broaden the approach to adapt to other models. On this basis, the consolidation of the regulatory and legal context will act to set the framework and formalize the project's approach, and at the same time, its institutionalization and anchoring in local and national biodiversity preservation policies. The showcasing of the project's successes has a higher chance of strengthening the involvement of local players by showing the approach's applicability on the ground by shedding light on the advantages and synergies with their sector. The strengthening of the CEP-SM process through the labeling of ABR products and the development of logistics and marketing aspects for their launch would intervene later on in view of consolidating the project's economic dimension. Consequently, the CEP-SM could have been designed into multiple, integrated, gradual phases in the framework of a more general program.

Project Design

Coherent

1.2. Project Relevance

1.2.1. Relevance for the country

As addressed in the ProDoc, the project allows Morocco, in the international front, to uphold its commitments with regards to the protection of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of advantages arising from the use of genetic resources of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CEP-SM also contributes to the objectives and obligations of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) within the country. The actions targeted in terms of sustainable agriculture, land management and the conservation of the ecosystems in the SM region fall within these perspectives. On the national front, the project is aligned with the challenges of the "Green Morocco Plan" (GMP) and its development strategy for local products. The CEP-SM brings improvements to the GMP in terms of conservation of biodiversity and sustainable ecosystem services to its Pillar 2 intended for projects that support small-scale farmers. The CEP-SM also brings forth a new dimension of circular economy and PES to its actions in favor of the preservation and development of the Arganeraie ecosystem in the SM region and the beekeeping sector. The project is therefore articulated into a number of initiatives from the agricultural and forestry sector. Furthermore, the CEP-SM builds on the strategies and programs in Morocco that aim to consolidate sustainable development, the mitigation of poverty and the degradation of the environment. Some of these initiatives include:

- The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (NBSAP) that recognizes the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as an overarching national objective
- The National strategy for the protection of the environment and sustainable development and its national action plan that aims to integrate the considerations relating to the protection of the environment in the various socio-economic sectors
- The National Forest Program (NFP) by pushing the sustainable management of forest resources forward through a decentralization policy
- The National Anti-Poverty Strategy, and particularly the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH)

On the regional front, the project covers aspects that are beyond the reach of local administrative players due to their limited budgets. These aspects mainly concern the marketing and access to the marketplace for the Argan and honey sectors that are provided for in Component 3 of the CEP-SM. Furthermore, through its pilot actions, the project targets the watersheds that are subject to significant anthropogenic and climatic pressures. The adoption of the PES models would mitigate the impacts of these pressures and contribute to the preservation of local biodiversity.

1.2.2. For donors

As presented in the ProDoc, the CEP-SM is rooted in the GEF and UNDP strategies. For the GEF, the CEP-SM is in line with the GEF BD-SO-2 strategic objective: to integrate the conservation of biodiversity in the land and seascape production sectors. In this context, the project's contribution to this objective is associated to the integration of biodiversity in PES production systems and their promotion within local regulations and practices. Indeed, the CEP-SM fits in with the GEF strategy for the following specific points: SP-5 | promote marketplaces selling goods and services with a focus on biodiversity and SP-4 | implement the necessary policies to take biodiversity into account in production systems. As for UNDP-Morocco, the CEP-SM falls under Domain 5 of the 2012-2016 United Nations cooperation framework (*UNDAF*) on resilience to climate change. The project is called to achieve results 3 and 5 by UNDAF that are respectively: the mitigation of inequalities through the support of policies, strategies and socio-economic development programs as well as the implementation of the principles of the National Environment and Sustainable Development Charter. Furthermore, the CEP-SM is a strategic area of importance for UNDP-Morocco given its pilot nature that will enable the dissemination of circular economy concepts and tools as well as PES models at the national level.

1.3. Strategic Results Framework

The GEF results framework (*Section II of the ProDoc*), presents performance assessment and impact assessment indicators for the CEP-SM based on the project's overall objective and components. A baseline scenario was specified for each objective and component that act as benchmarks of the project's starting position prior to the project's intervention. Targets are also specified to measure the project's implementation status in a gradual manner. The verification sources are listed for each indicator. The risks and assumptions are introduced for each objective/component. It should be emphasized that the activities that are considered to be necessary measures to obtain the project's products are not specified in the FSR nor in the project's strategy. A description of the steps to be implemented is however set out for each product of the CEP-SM components in Part II-Strategy (*ProDoc*).

1.3.1. Indicators and targets

The formulation of certain indicators in the FSR require a review, which explains the analysis presented in the report's Appendices [Appendix 9 – Analysis of FSR indicators]. However, overall, CEP-SM indicators in the FSR are SMART (*specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound*). As for the targets, they are specified for each indicator or by objective/component. In most cases, the targets are staggered over time which makes it possible to measure the project's expected progress, from a timeframe perspective, towards the project's results.

1.3.2. Progress towards the project's expected effects and objective

The objective announced by the project is to conserve the Argan ecosystem of global importance in the Souss Massa region through the PES and the sustainable use of agro-biodiversity that is associated to it. This objective is theoretically supported by the project's components specified in the ProDoc and its FSR, namely: the implementation of a regulatory framework conducive to the integration of the PES at the national level, enhancing the skills of stakeholders in view of integrating payment ecosystem services and the sustainable use of agro-biodiversity, the development of PES pilot models and the carrying out of actions for the labeling, promotion and marketing of ABR products.

From an operational standpoint, since its launch in 2014, the CEP-SM managed to gradually deploy actions in view of introducing the concept of circular economy and the PES in the Souss Massa region (*cf. adjacent figure 2*). The project enjoys a positive perception among the stakeholders encountered during the field mission conducted by the evaluation team in November 2017. In terms of achievements, one of the CEP-SM's successes concerns the mainstreaming of concepts promoted by the project, circular economy and the PES, and skills enhancement in these fields. This approach was welcomed by the project's stakeholders who had a better understanding of the scope of this pilot initiative focused on the sustainability of their activities and their region's resources.

The efforts made towards the awareness-raising and training of the project's stakeholders and increasing the visibility of the CEP-SM at the regional, national and international level supported this process. The studies and diagnosis carried out on the local context of the project were also highlighted as a positive point of the approach. Furthermore, another one of the CEP-SM's successes achieved by the stakeholders was the organization of 2 educational tours that highlighted the project's pilot approach as well as the potential of the Souss Massa region for the development of carbon neutral eco-tourism tours. Communication and promotional activities for the project were also carried out through various channels, including social media that are ideal to reach a

broadier audience. Furthermore, the promotion and rehabilitation of traditional agricultural practices (*terraces, agdal, traditional apiaries*) by the project are favorable actions for the preservation of biodiversity, water resources and the Argan ecosystem. Dialogue with local populations and their consultation was also underlined as a good practice of the project by the stakeholders. To date, 4 PES models were designed, their beneficiaries were identified, and the start-up data sheets were established.

From a strategic standpoint, the review of the regulatory and legal framework for the project's first component was not accomplished during the project's first year as expected in its initial design (*based on the ProDoc*). The same is true for the establishment of intra and inter-ministerial working groups for this purpose. It should be noted that both of these tasks are difficult to fulfill within the time limit laid down for the reasons brought up in section III-1.1. *Coherence of project design*. At this stage, the review of the Moroccan offsetting mechanism for the protection of the HCEFLCD was abandoned due to a low pooling of efforts between the CEP-SM and the water and forests administration. The project therefore selected the legislative framework governing the support of terraces (*Agricultural Development Fund*). This choice stems from a technical study on the identification of the flows of ES in the four priority areas of intervention of the CEP-SM and the needs of their potential users. The results of this study were supported through a bottom-up approach of consultations with the beneficiaries of the ES identified within the local committees. These come to strengthen the project's local coordination efforts. As for the labeling of ABR products, the PGI label was established for thyme honey (*its attribution is expected in 2018*). For euphorbia honey, the certification is under review by the National Commission of Distinctive Signs of Origin and Quality of Food Products (*DSOQ*) (*recognition expected in April 2018*). As for the ABR reserve, it should be recalled that the CEP-SM focused on the creation of a private ABR label.

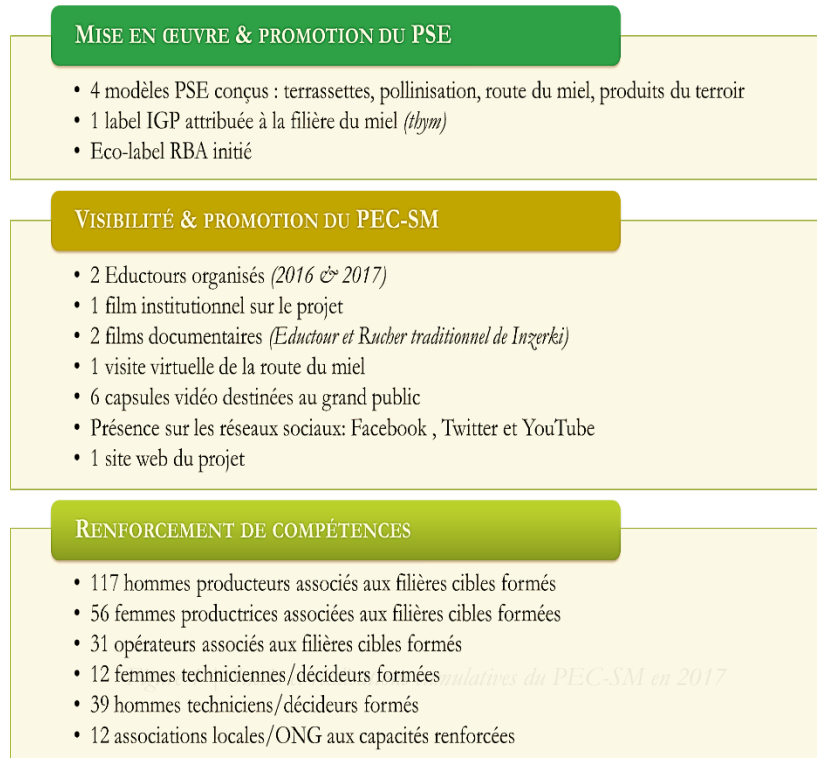


Figure 3 | Cumulative successes and achievements of the CEP-SM in 2017

It will be managed by a group of professionals from sectors targeted by the project. The technical and legal reference framework for the ABR eco-label was developed and approved by local committees. An ABR eco-label logo has also been designed. The definition of the operational modalities for the ABR eco-label college has been established while waiting for their approval in 2018.

The question of marketing ABR products at the Agadir logistics platform could, on the other hand be compromised at the end of the project. Its culmination goes hand in hand with the establishment of the labeling system and the availability of the certified products in 2019. Furthermore, some misconceptions still exist as to circular economy and PES among certain stakeholders. Some clarification on this matter is necessary to ensure that the project's mechanism and its objective are clearly understood. To conclude, attainment of the project's objective and its 4 components by 2019 will only be partial due to its innovative dimension, its ambitious components and the cumbersome procedures for the establishment of a regulatory and legal framework that is adapted to the CEP-SM. This framework will therefore require an extension of its implementation period to achieve the desired outcomes.

Progress towards the expected impacts and the project's objective

Moderately Satisfactory | MS

1.3.3. Gender dimension of the project

The CEP-SM pays particular attention to women's empowerment and their participation in the project. As such, the gender dimension has been included into the project design since the inception. Monitoring indicators of the women's involvement in the project's activities have been integrated into the project's FSR. UNDP-Morocco has shown great interest in this dimension by calling upon the PMU to highlight the CEP-SM's contribution to women. During the presentation of the project's internal reviews (*mid-year and annual*), the topics of gender equality and women's empowerment were often raised. According to the PMU, the project has allocated more than 50% of its expenditures towards gender and among its staff, one person is dedicated to gender issues. This fulfills 2 out of 3 *gender marker* criteria for the CEP-SM. However, a systematic approach to document the gender dimension in the project has not been implemented. Data on women's participation in the CEP-SM is entered just like the other monitoring indicators for the project. Indeed, according to the PMU, the systematic and factual monitoring of the gender dimension can only be carried out during the operationalization of the PES models that are being finalized. As for capacity building, the PMU requires that 20 to 30% of women be selected among the participants. At this stage of the project, the women who benefited from capacity building activities (*component 2*) are estimated to be:

- 56 women trained as producers associated to the target sectors of agro-biodiversity with a view of being potential providers of ES (*equivalent to a 32% ratio*)
- 12 women among the technicians/decision-makers had their capacities upgraded to assess the tradeoffs relating to ES, the design and implementation of the PES models (*equivalent to a 25% ratio*)

As for the PES models, the six startup platforms have begun to create women's cooperatives to promote local products. Other specific actions were also planned by the beneficiaries as set out in the report's appendix [appendix 10 –Specific gender-driven actions].

Integration of the gender dimension

Satisfactory | S

2. Progress towards the achievement of results

The table below presents an analysis of the progress towards the achievement of the CEP-SM objective and its components on the basis of the data extracted from the project report and the information gathered from the PMU. In addition, the detailed assessment of the project's achievements, in terms of its objective and expected results, is summarized in the report's appendix [appendix 11 – Assessment of CEP-SM achievements]. Based on all of this data, progress towards the achievement of results was rated moderately satisfactory according to the justifications provided in the table below.

Progress towards achievements	Moderately Satisfactory
-------------------------------	-------------------------

Project strategy	Indicator	Reference level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Mid-term evaluation	Rating	Justification of the evaluation
Objective conserve the Argan ecosystem in the SM region, which plays a significant role on a global scale, through the payment of eco-systemic services and the sustainable use of the associated agro-biodiversity.	Indicator 1: <i>1a) Net loss of the Argan ecosystem</i> <i>1b) Regeneration of Arganeraies</i> <i>1c) Argan ecosystem area under restoration.</i> Indicator 2: <i>% of increase of PES providers' revenues, who also take part in the PES pilot models.</i> Indicator 3: <i>Number of PES pilot models and hectares covered in each agro-ecological area.</i> Indicator 4: <i>Number of hectares identified for the scaling up of PES models after the end of the project.</i>	No formal PES model is implemented in the project's area of intervention.		Target 1: unspecified Target 2: unspecified Target 3: unspecified 9,715 hectares covered in each agro-ecological area Target 4: unspecified		MS	The project design entailed 4 PES models. The PES model on terraces (<i>ADF mechanism</i>) is currently under revision according to an economic study on environmental services. Furthermore, three other new PES were identified and designed and will be implemented (<i>carbon neutral Ida Outanane, eco-labeling and pollination services</i>)

Color Code

Green = achieved	Yellow = under development	Red = not under development
------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------

<i>Project strategy</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Reference level</i>	<i>Mid-term target</i>	<i>End of project target</i>	<i>Mid-term evaluation</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Justification of the evaluation</i>
Component 1 Environment more conducive to the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SM region and the integration of the approach at the national level.	Indicator 5: Finalization and quality of laws and regulations developed and adopted required to establish and implement a national PES model.	A regulatory and institutional framework adapted to PES has not yet been identified nor developed at the regional or national level	-	Review of the regulatory and institutional framework and gender-responsive recommendations to be amended and revised during the 1 st year; set-up and operationalization of an inter-ministerial working group (at least 30% of women) < 2 nd year; new laws and regulations adopted < 5 th year.		MS	A regulatory and institutional framework suited to PES has yet to be finalized at this stage of the project. The CEP-SM has undertaken the revision of the regulatory framework governing water-harvesting systems through the construction of terraces; this mechanism is funded by the Agricultural Development Fund (ADF).
	Indicator 6: Number and diversity of local and regional institutions actually engaged and that support the PES model.		-	Adoption of the revisions and amendments proposed for the regulatory and institutional framework at the national / regional levels.		MS	Currently, only one institution is involved in the PES model on terraces. It is the ADF's 'one-stop shop'.
	Indicator 7: Management structure for the development of PES models and the eco-certification of agro-biodiversity in the ABR.		-	Management structure dedicated to the PES development models and to the eco-certification implemented in the ABR from the 2 nd year.		MS	The 'core' of the ABR eco-label management structure has been identified. Its formalization will take place during the general meeting in January 2018
Component 2 Capacity building to implement and integrate the payment of eco-systemic services and the sustainable use of the associated agro-biodiversity.	Indicator 8: Genderized number of producers and other operators involved in the target sectors of agro-biodiversity trained as potential ES providers.	No producers/operators have been trained yet as potential PES providers and no technicians/decision-makers with experience in tradeoffs over ES and the design and implementation of the PES models.	Number of persons trained per target group Year 3: - 120 producers (at least 40 women) - 8 Associations/ NGOs - 12 Operators/ intermediaries - 30 Technicians (at least 10 women) - 10 Decision-makers (at least 3 women)	Number of persons trained per target group Year 5: - 200 producers (at least 70 women) - 20 Associations/ NGOs - 20 Operators/ intermediaries - 50 Technicians (at least 8 women) - 20 Decision-makers (at least 7 women)		HS	The CEP-SM has made it possible to train 173 male and 56 female producers involved in the targeted sectors. The project has indeed provided for additional training sessions in 2018.
	Indicator 9: Genderized number of technicians and decision-makers that had their capacities upgraded to assess the tradeoffs of ES, the design and implementation of the PES models.					S	39 male and 12 female technicians / decision-makers have been trained so far. It should be noted that other trainings are scheduled in 2018. Furthermore, participants of these training programs represent 12 local associations/NGOs and 31 operators involved in the targeted sectors.

<i>Project strategy</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Reference level</i>	<i>Mid-term target</i>	<i>End of project target</i>	<i>Mid-term evaluation</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Justification of the evaluation</i>
Component 2 (next)	Indicator 10 : formal operational orientations for the implementation and scaling up of the PES approach at the regional and national levels.	No established orientations	First draft < end of the 2 nd year	Final version < end of the 5 th year		MS	At this stage, the CEP-SM has identified 4 orientations: terracing farming land, carbon neutral circuit, ABR eco-labeling and pollination services. They will be proposed for implementation at the regional and national level.
Component 3 Capacity building of organic companies that adopt biodiversity-friendly practices through the labelling and marketing of local products from the Argan ecosystem.	Indicator 11 : Genderized number of producers, professional organizations and intermediaries certified in accordance to the ABR eco-label	The ABR eco-label has not yet been established	ABR Eco-label established < 2 nd year	40% of producers (<i>including at least 30% of women</i>) and 40% of intermediaries (<i>including at least 30% of women</i>) certified < end of the 5 th year.		MU	The ABR eco-label has been launched and a toolkit was designed. The delay in the implementation of the label is justified by the challenge in gaining the endorsement of professionals.
	Indicator 12 : % of genderized producers adhering to the new label of protected geographical indications (PGI) for the honey sector	The PGI label for honey has not yet been established in the SM region	PGI label for honey established < end of the 2 nd year	60% of producers at the pilot sites certified < end of the 5 th year		S	The PGI label for thyme honey has been initiated but its operationalization is planned for 2018. Nevertheless, 20 beekeepers are involved in the labeling process for their upgrading.
	Indicator 13 : Marketing plan for the argan and honey sector developed and adopted by the responsible institutions and key stakeholders	No marketing plan for the argan and honey sectors.	First draft of marketing plans < end of the 2 nd year	Implementation begins on the 4 th year.		MS	A draft of the marketing plan has been developed for ABR labeled products as part of the technical assistance provided in the context of the project (<i>scoping study of the eco-certification system</i>).
	Indicator 14 : Genderized revenue of producers and intermediaries using the space dedicated to the ABR/SM eco-label within the regional logistics platform.	Logistics platform foreseen for the implementation.		At least 25% increase of revenues for certified users in the area dedicated to ABR/SM within the logistics platform.		na	Integration in the Agadir agropolis is expected to occur later on in the project. This explains why this component is not yet under development. The evaluation of this task is premature at this stage.

<i>Project strategy</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Reference level</i>	<i>Mid-term target</i>	<i>End of project target</i>	<i>Mid-term evaluation</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Justification of the evaluation</i>
Achievement 4: Strengthening of the conservation of agro-biodiversity in the Argan ecosystem by the PES pilot models.	Indicator 15 : Genderized % of authorized stakeholders that have expressed an interest in taking part in the PES pilot models.	Absence of a formal PES model with the exception of the forestry protection program of the HCEFLCD	At least 30% of authorized stakeholders (including 30% of women) wish to take part in PES models in the pilot sites < end of the 2 nd year	At least 80% < at the end of the 5 th year.		S	The project currently counts 255 beneficiaries, including 85 women, actively involved in the PES.
	Indicator 16 : Number of models quantifying ES in the various agro-ecological areas, particularly the cost-effective use of services provided and their potential economic profitability.	(High Commission for Waters and Forests and the Fight against Desertification)(see baseline scenario for the project's objective).	The PES pilot models have been developed for at least one pilot project < end of the 2 nd year for the remaining pilot sites < end of the 3 rd year.	-		MS	The model for terraces will be evaluated for its economic profitability. Currently, a pilot action has been launched in Idmine(<i>Al Mavada Association</i>). The 7 other ES providers have initiated this approach with the support of the <i>Small Grants Programme</i> (SGP).
	Indicator 17 : Number of entities requesting ES and their willingness to pay for the provided services.		-	At least one entity requesting ES identified for PES models in each pilot site and is willing to pay at least the minimum price set for the provided ES.		MS	The entities identified to pay for the ES are currently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1 institutional player: The State via the ADF for terraces – 10 modern agriculture farms in the Souss region for pollination services. – 1 consortium of partners under negotiation between Tokela and Exclusive travel service, tour operators for the carbon neutral circuit For the ABR eco-label, no entity has been identified yet. This must be done in the framework of the eco-label's promotional strategy.
	Indicator 18 : Genderized % of PES providers participating in the PES pilot models that receive funding and provide services to the target ESs:		-	At least 50% of potential PES providers (including at least 30% of women) participating in PES models in the pilot sites.		na	These achievements are expected by the end of the project (<i>premature evaluation at this stage</i>). This justifies the fact that they are not yet underway.
	Indicator 19 : % of PES audits carried out in accordance with the established procedures.			At least 95% of PES audits are carried out in accordance with the established procedures and within the required time limits.		na	

3. Project implementation and adaptive management

3.1. Management-related provisions

The supervisory and management modalities for the project have been defined and addressed in the ProDoc. The latter set out the implications for the project's partners (*MAF* 'Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries' -*ADA* and the *UNDP-GEF*), its committees (*steering committee* and *local committees*) and its resource persons (*NPD* and *PMU*).

3.1.1. Project steering and supervision

3.1.1.1. Steering committee

In 'Part III – Management modalities' (§ 163), the ProDoc sets out the responsibilities of the Steering committee. It is appointed as an entity for the decision-making, monitoring and evaluation of the project. Generally speaking, its purpose is to set the project's strategic orientations and oversee its execution in accordance with the annual work plan. The composition and prerogatives of the Steering committee shall be as follows:

Priority Area	Description	
Prerogatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Make management-related decisions (<i>prior approval of work plans, budget plans, project revisions and main deliverables</i>) – Provide guidance regarding the project's technical feasibility – Control the quality of processes and products of project monitoring and evaluation – Carry out evaluations to enhance performance, accountability and learning 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure commitment of resources needed for the project – Arbitrate on any conflict arising in the project or negotiate a solution to any issue with an external organization – Examine and approve any major deviation from the original plans according to the approved work plan 	
Members	<i>Executive</i>	– Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (<i>MAF</i>)
	<i>High-level government officials</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Representatives from the Ministry of Finance – UNDP representatives
	<i>High-level beneficiaries</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Representatives from the Agricultural Development Agency (<i>ADA</i>) – Representatives from the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve management entity (<i>ABR</i>)
(Management)	<i>Chairmanship</i>	– Senior official from the <i>MAF</i> (<i>other than the National Project Director</i> (<i>NPD</i>))
	<i>Secretariat</i>	– Project management unit
Frequency	– At least once a year	

The chairmanship of the Steering committee has been under the responsibility of the Regional Director of Agriculture for the Souss Massa region, who is a senior official of the *MAF*. The list of participants of the Steering committee is as follows:

Priority Area	Description	
Institutional players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agricultural Development Agency – UNDP-Morocco – National Agency for the Development of Oasis areas and Argan Trees (<i>ANDZOA</i>) – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation – Ministry of Economy and Finance 	
ABR management unit	<i>Stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wilaya of the Souss-Massa region – Regional Directorate of Agriculture Souss-Massa – Regional Directorate for the development of the argan tree – Regional Directorate for water, forests and combating desertification in the south-west of Souss-Massa – Regional Tourism Office of Souss-Massa – Regional Directorate for the Souss-Massa Water Basin Authority

Priority Area	Description	
ABR management unit (next)	Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Regional Council of Souss-Massa – Regional Chamber of Agriculture of Souss-Massa – Moroccan Interprofessional Federation of the Argan Sector – Regional Association of beekeepers of Souss-Massa – Associations' Network of the Souss-Massa Biosphere Reserve – Rural Tourism Development Network of Souss-Massa – Souss-Massa Regional Observatory for the Environment and Sustainable Development

At this stage of the project, the Steering committee convened three times (*on November 14, 2014, December 16, 2015 and January 13, 2017*) to accompany decision-making and to approve the annual action plans of the CEP-SM. The ProDoc does indeed provide for an annual meeting of the Steering committee (*carried out so far by the project*), however two annual meetings (*1 meeting per semester*) would be more beneficial for the remainder of the project. Indeed, the CEP-SM project is a pioneering concept with a pilot-based approach for the SM region and for the country. Its strategic dimension and difficulty implementing certain components (*i.e. component 1*) call for closer monitoring. At the project's launch, it would have also been preferable to organize a quarterly meeting of the Steering committee to ensure that the project is indeed aligned with the ProDoc and to make any necessary adjustments in due time. Therefore, the frequency adopted in the framework of this project may not be optimal.

Furthermore, the Steering committee meetings were attended by many stakeholders. As such, between 32 and 24 participants (*32 participants including 8 women in 2014 and 2015 and 24 participants including 5 women in 2017*). Such a strong presence of participants does not correspond to the steering function per se, but rather to share information on the project's progress with CEP-SM stakeholders. Bringing together too many participants could hinder the efficiency of the steering process. Ideally between 7 to 10 participants should be part of the Steering committee. It is also possible to invite other project stakeholders to enlarged meetings dedicated to monitoring the project's progress. On the other hand, members of the Steering committee should all have real decision-making power and should not be limited to playing a coordinating role only. As a consequence, the configuration of the Steering committee of the CEP-SM is part steering and part sharing information. Therefore, separating these two processes would be more relevant to adjust the scope and the depth of information to discuss and validate with the stakeholders. In order for this to happen, the creation of another project monitoring committee could be a viable option. The latter would include all the CEP-SM stakeholders to complement and validate the work in progress and ensure the appropriate arbitrations are implemented at their level.

3.1.2. Stakeholder involvement

The stakeholders, as well as their missions, were identified in the ProDoc. However, their roles and responsibilities with respect to the execution of the CEP-SM have not been specified. A comprehensive plan for stakeholder involvement was supposed to be developed at the beginning of the project. This task does not appear in the project documents submitted by the PMU. Consequently, the formal involvement of stakeholders aside from the approval of a possible co-funding of the project or announcing their support of the approach (*ProDoc*), has yet to be clarified and formalized. This situation means that the effective mobilization of key stakeholders and their appropriate involvement could be compromised outside of a formal and institutionalized framework. Without the necessary elements to analyze the stakeholders (*needs, interests and potential impact on the project's success*), a strategy pertaining to their management cannot be considered at this stage of the project. It is therefore necessary to develop and adopt strategies and plans with the purpose of involving stakeholders and provide a global overview of their relations with the CEP-SM. This is all the more important since on the field, some players have shown a relatively modest mobilization and inadequate support of the project.

3.1.2. Project Management

3.1.3. CEP-SM Directorate and CEP-SM Management Unit

Member	Description	
Direction	Leader	– 1 National Project Director (NPD)
	Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure that the project shows the outcomes set out in the ProDoc – Lead and manage the strategic issues necessary for the project's success – Ensure the overall management and monitoring of the project in accordance with the regulatory framework of the UNDP in terms of UNDP-GEF project management – Prepare project progress reports for the Steering committee – Organize Steering committee meetings – Organize a monthly meeting with UNDP

The project's NPD is Mr. Mohammed Mezgar, appointed to this position on October 2, 2014. He is responsible for managing the project through regular monitoring with the PMU, and he also oversees pending cases or issues to ensure that progress continues to be made for the project. The NPD co-chairs the Steering committee and invites all relevant stakeholders to participate. He is also in charge of establishing strategic contacts with players involved in the project's focal area. However, project progress reports and organization of the Steering committee are prepared and handled by the PMU.

Members	Description (based on the ProDoc)	
Coordination (PMU)	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1 National project coordinator – 1 Chief technical adviser (<i>if necessary</i>) – 1 Administrative Assistant – Team of external consultants
	Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prepare and update work plans and budget forecasts for the project, record keeping, accounting and quarterly and annual progress reports – Draft ToR, technical specifications and other documents (if appropriate) – Identify the project proposal submitted by consultants to be approved by the Steering committee, coordination and oversight of consultants and providers – Organize missions, seminars, community outreach activities and other project-related events – Maintain working contact with project partners at the central, regional and local levels

During the roll-out of the CEP-SM, the PMU was given adequate human and financial resources to fulfill its operational role for the coordination and monitoring of the project at the regional level. The NPC for the project is Mr. Moha Haddouch, he was hired to fill this position on August 1st, 2014. He is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the CEP-SM and its actions with stakeholders, the preparation of project reports, the organization of its various assemblies, activities and monitoring and planning meetings (*Steering committee, local committees, planning meetings, internal midyear and annual reviews*). As highlighted by its team members and the stakeholders they encountered, the NPC is involved in the project's approach and has shown leadership qualities by leading his colleagues by example. Hiring young staff members (*1 to 2 years of experience*¹) within the PMU has allowed the CEP-SM to contribute to training the next generation on the topic of circular economy, the PES and project management. As such, with regard to what was planned in the ProDoc, the PMU includes the following members:

- 1 Finance and Administrative Assistant | Ms. *Bouchra Lakehmissi*
- 3 resource-persons from the United Nations Volunteer Program (UNV)
 - 1 Head of cross-sector support, monitoring and evaluation, and gender-related issues | Ms. *Narjisse Marson*
 - 3 Heads of local development | Mr. *Abdellilah El Filabi*, Mr. *Ahmed Tantim* and Mr. *Mohamed Benjmoud*

The finance and administrative assistant of the CEP-SM is in charge of following-up on administrative issues for the project. Yet, to carry out her tasks, she expressed the need to undergo training in administrative

¹ Mr *Abdellilah El Filabi*, the Head of local development has 4 years of work experience.

management and computerized tools to perform her duties (*databases or tenders software and digitalization of records*). Mr. Abdellah Baroud, the Head of the Planning and Programming Department (*RDA*), also takes the lead as the senior financial controller for the project. Mr. Baroud namely issues purchase orders from the CEP-SM and checks the accounting documents and payments.

As for the project's administrative management, some regulatory and administrative challenges regarding the use of the public procurement portal have been noted as having been hindering the launch of the project's services (*tendering and placing of orders*). Indeed, the CEP-SM is not included on the ADA's final budget to carry out this action. Currently, the project resorts to common law agreements and purchase orders. Furthermore, the redistribution of funds between budget headings is deemed to be stiff by interested parties. From another perspective, the management of aspects relating to the promotion of the CEP-SM and its visibility are under the responsibility of Ms. Marsou (UNV). She is also in charge of the monitoring and evaluation, and gender-related issues. The three Heads of local development are in charge of coordination with local players, facilitation of areas of the CEP-SM and representation of the project. Their knowledge of the local context, players and/or the Berber language are a major asset to the activities on the field.

3.1.3.1. Local committees

The ProDoc considered the creation of local committees including the key stakeholders participating in the PES model.

Priority Area	Description
Roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Connect the project's objective to local plans, and to the interventions or investments in progress or planned by local partners and/or beneficiaries – Identify resources to meet the project's requirements and the possibilities of broadening its scope – Provide support to institutions to coordinate the implementation of project activities for each pilot site – Invite experts from private and public sectors and from civil society organizations to discuss major issues relating to the project's implementation

The CEP-SM includes 4 local committees:

- Oued Tamraght-Imouzzet Ida Outanane Basin (*honey road*)
- Chakoukane catchment (*Aouziya sub-basin*)
- Oued Massa and Assif Oussaka sub-basins
- Arghen watershed

The committees are composed of project leaders connected to the operationalization of the pilot actions of the PES models through start-ups. They also include stakeholders with an expertise in the ES themes of each area. These committees' meetings are held during field missions. Other meetings are also organized to make critical decisions or to continue to drive the project's activities. An annual planning workshop is held every November with these committees' members to set out the work plan for the following year. The schedule developed in consultation with the local committees is submitted to the Steering committee for approval.

3.1.4. Implementation and coordination

3.1.4.1. Implementing agency of the Moroccan government

The management and coordination arrangements of the CEP-SM have been set out in the ProDoc (*Part III – Management arrangements*).

Entity	Responsibilities according to the ProDoc
ADA	<p>As the implementing agency of the CEP-SM, the ADA is in charge of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Coordination of activities to ensure achievement of the agreed results– Certification of expenditures in accordance with the approved budgets and work plans– Facilitation, monitoring and reports on the purchasing of inputs for the project and the execution of products– Coordination of interventions financed by the GEF/UNDP with other parallel interventions– Approval of the consultants' terms of reference and the tendering documents for outsourced inputs– Reports submitted to the UNDP on the execution and impact of the project– Disbursement of funds

The ADA is designated as the project executing agency. However, the project's coordination was entrusted by the ADA to the Regional Directorate for Agriculture (RDA) as its regional representative in Agadir in the framework of the decentralization approach. Also, the NPD represents the ADA in the CEP-SM. The agency is invited to the Steering committee meetings and to the internal midyear and annual reviews as well as the project's major events. It is also kept informed of the project's progress (*on a monthly and annual basis according to the PMU*) and is solicited to approve the CEP-SM work plans. Within the ADA, a CEP-SM focal point has been designated to monitor the project. This configuration means that the support expected from the project in the field by the ADA is not consistent with the responsibilities set out in the ProDoc.

3.1.4.2. Implementing agency of the GEF

Entity	Responsibilities according to the ProDoc
UNDP-Morocco	<p>The role of the implementing agency of the GEF is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Carry out an independent and objective control of the project– Provide technical and strategic support to achieve the project's objectives– Track the quality of the CEP-SM

In the framework of the CEP-SM project, UNDP-Morocco monitored the implementation of the CEP-SM with stakeholders in charge of its execution. In order to achieve the expected results, UNDP-Morocco provided quality assurance with the purpose of controlling the achievement of the project's objectives within the stated periods of time and within the limit of the available budget. According to UNDP-Morocco, regular monitoring is carried out with the CEP-SM management and its PMU. In order to provide reliable information on the contribution of the achievements to the CEP-SM products, the data obtained from the project's internal reviews and gathered from the PMU are translated, using the ATLAS software, into progress indicators. The midyear and annual reviews also allow UNDP-Morocco to report on the CEP-SM's progress and to shed light on the gaps, analyze risks and provide guidance to achieve the set objectives. It should be noted that UNDP-Morocco contributes to drafting the PIR (Project Implementation Report) by evaluating the project's annual achievements. Furthermore, UNDP-Morocco is a member of the CEP-SM Steering committee. Its role is to validate the yearly work plan and the results achieved for the project.

Overall, the roles and responsibilities for the project's management were specified by the ProDoc. The deployment of this function on the field is carried out by the PMU from an operational standpoint. From a strategic and technical perspective, the NPD and UNDP-Morocco provide their support to the project team. The consultation and involvement of project beneficiaries is ensured through local committees. The steering on the other hand is extended to a whole range of stakeholders of the CEP-SM.

The optimization of the regularity of this activity and the degree of involvement of its stakeholders should be considered. Similarly, reinforcements are necessary, with the support of UNDP-Morocco and the ADA, with respect to administrative aspects (*placing of orders, tendering*) and logistics (*project vehicles*) in order to bolster the

efficiency of the project's day-to-day management. As for the project's backing and the support of its approach, a more regular involvement of the CEP-SM partners on the field must be reinforced. In the same way, the involvement of the ADA is solicited for the institutionalization of the project at the central level, with the prospect of an integration of the PES to the agency's strategy and development programs at the national level and their dissemination.

Project Management	Moderately Satisfactory – Satisfactory MS - S
--------------------	---

3.2. Activity Planning

Activity planning began in 2014 (*4th quarter*) and has resulted in 4 reports (*November 2014, December 2014, January 2016, January 2017*). The evaluation of this component was based on the annual reports as well as the planning reports and workshops. The latter are organized annually in the presence of CEP-SM stakeholders. This approach reinforces the consultation dynamic established by the project. At the beginning of the project, a first draft of the project planning was presented and included 54 activities. The main purpose of the 2014 work plan was to set up the project team and to mobilize the necessary resources for the effective operation of the project. The 2015 work plan was focused on the mobilization of the necessary expertise for the design and initiation of the PES models. In 2016, two planning workshops were organized on the field (*Ida Outanane and Taroudant*). Planning in 2017 focused on the following points:

Field	Priority Area	
PES Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mobilization of expertise for the implementation of PES systems for agricultural terraces and the offsetting of the carbon footprint – Training of project leaders on PES financing mechanisms, best practices for the rehabilitation of the arganeraie, terrace work and adaptation to climate change – Supporting 7 PES projects implemented in partnership with the EMP-GEF and the GCF project for arganiculture 	–
Carbon-neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Launch of the tendering process for the organization of the 2017 “<i>eductour</i>” in collaboration with regional and international partners 	–
Labelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continuation of the accompanying study of the profession for the establishment of the Distinctive sign of origin and quality (<i>DSOQ</i>) for spurge honey from the Souss region – Preparation of the accompanying study for the creation of the ABR eco-label 	–
Pollination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Launch of the study on the management plan of the Inzerki traditional apiary 	–

For 2018, planning focused on:

Field	Priority Area
PES Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mobilization of expertise for the implementation of PES systems for the financial support of agricultural terraces (FDA) and the compensation of the carbon footprint – Continuation of training of project leaders on PES financing mechanisms
Carbon-neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Organization of the 2018 “<i>eductour</i>” in collaboration with the Network for the Development of Rural Tourism (<i>RDTR</i>)

Field	Priority Area
Labeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continuation of the accompanying study of the profession for the establishment of the Distinctive sign of origin and quality (<i>DSOQ</i>) for spurge honey from the Souss region – Launch of a consultation for the creation of an ABR eco-label for products derived from argan trees, almond trees, aromatic plants, honey and ecotourism services
APAC/micro-financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation and support of the Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (<i>ICCA</i>) of Inzerki, Idaougnidif and Idmine and of the 5 micro-financing projects of the GEF-UNDP in line with the arganiculture project financed in the framework of the DARED (<i>Green Climate Fund</i>)

Activity planning takes place in consultation with stakeholders and seeks to respect the specifications based on the constraints that arise during the implementation of the project.

Activity Planning	Satisfactory S
-------------------	------------------

3.3. Project monitoring and evaluation systems

3.3.1. General M&E overview

The monitoring and evaluation (*M&E*) of the project is based on the requirements of the ProDoc and includes further additions such as monthly monitoring, mid-year and annual internal reviews, ADA reports and end of year reports. A detailed analysis of the M&E activities is provided in the report appendix [Appendix 12 – Analysis of the CEP-SM activities].

Efforts are made by the PMU to collect and update data relating to this task as well as the preparation of necessary documents (*reports, concept notes, minutes, PPT*). The documents prepared in the framework of the M&E of the project are centralized by the PMU in electronic format (*document management*). Support by the NPD and UNDP-Morocco is provided to the project team to ensure close monitoring and to overcome implementation constraints. However, the consolidation of the project's approach expected by the ProDoc at the launch of the CEP-SM has not been achieved. The formal specification of the project's activities and the distribution of roles and responsibilities has not been implemented. However, the management of stakeholders cannot be rolled out. In fact, stakeholder participation in the framework of the project falls short of the ProDoc's expectations at this stage of the project.

As for the documents prepared in the framework of the M&E, they must be more structured and consolidated. FSR indicators have indeed been updated, but their interpretation is lacking. The M&E does not explain how the activities are implemented and does not address the issue of timeliness and the use of resources (*ex. Interpretation of the project cost control*). Also, the implementation rate of the project's components from an operational standpoint, is not documented in the M&E to state the project's progress. Furthermore, the recommendations are formulated in the framework of the project's internal reviews but should be more specific and fact-based (*specify how to specifically take action to improve or correct the given situation*). The documentation process of the issues encountered, and the solutions provided as well as the lessons learned still needs to be improved.

In conclusion, the monitoring and coordination efforts deployed on the field by the PMU are being made, but do not necessarily appear in the project report. As such, the overall M&E of the CEP-SM is satisfactory but does require some improvements from a methodological perspective.

Design of the monitoring and evaluation (<i>ProDoc</i>)	Satisfactory S
Implementation of the CEP-SM monitoring and evaluation	Satisfactory S

3.4. Adaptive management and lessons learned

3.4.1. Adaptive management

The changes made to the project and resulting from adaptive management are neither documented in the project's annual reports nor in the ADA reports, nor the project's internal review documents (*midyear and annual*). This information is available within the PMU. However, it is not formalized in these documents. Nevertheless, when referring to the 2015 planning meeting minutes, adaptations have been suggested for the implementation of the project. They focus on regulatory and legal framework issues as well as labeling. These changes have been proposed following discussions between project stakeholders, including UNDP-Morocco and the NPD. During the Steering committee meeting that same year, the adaptations in question were presented to the committee's members for approval. On the other hand, the other Steering committee meetings contain recommendations or guidance in favor of a more efficient rolling out of the project. Currently, no project document in the team's possession reflects their impact on the adaptive management of the CEP-SM. However, discussions with the PMU do make it possible to list the following elements:

Component	Changes made
Component 1 Regulatory and legal framework	The project has started to perform a diagnosis of regulation on the support of terraces retained in consultation with the beneficiaries. The formulation of a revised national regulation is postponed for mission 5 of the external expertise (<i>provided by the consortium of consultancy firms</i>) scheduled in 2018. This option substitutes the action initially planned in the ProDoc whose scope covered the operation of the mechanism set up by the HCEFLCD for the protection of forest areas. This action was induced due to a relatively low collaborative support from the water and forest administration and to meet the needs expressed by the members of Local committees.
Component 3 labeling	At the beginning of the project, it was agreed during the planning meetings to revise the PGI for argan oil by incorporating good environmental practice specifications and hence make it qualify as an ABR eco-label. However, the PMU was not able to bring this proposal to fruition given the disparity in the levels of quality control among the local products from the ABR. After consultation with UNESCO, the CEP-SM chose to go for a private ABR label (<i>based on a benchmark of the biosphere reserves network</i>).

According to the PMU, the changes to be made are approved by the members of the Steering committee. Furthermore, meetings have been held with key stakeholders of the project (*UNDP-Morocco, DRA, ADA*) to find suitable adaptations to tackle any potential bottlenecks and facilitate the unfolding of the project. As for the follow-up to the PIR, it seems that no specific measures have been implemented or communicated to the stakeholders.

3.4.2. Lessons learned from the project

A section on the lessons learned has been incorporated into the annual reports. Its contents are included in the table below:

Year	Lessons learned
2014	– The project's participative approach has encouraged a spirit of partnership among the beneficiaries through their organizations (<i>case of AMIGHA for the promotion of PGI argan oil</i>)
2015	– Strengthen capacity for the mobilization of human resources – Adopt a targeting strategy within the RBM for an enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of the projects – Promote online communication (<i>website, capsules, forums, Dropbox, TLR</i>)
2016	– Strengthen regional decision makers' capacity to mobilize decision-makers – Adopt a targeting strategy within the RBM for an enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of the projects – Promote online communication (<i>social media networks</i>)

Given that they are incorporated into annual reports, they are disseminated to project stakeholders. However, the formulation of lessons learned does not make it possible to clarify which were the lessons learned during

the reporting period. Furthermore, the lessons learned in 2015 and 2016 are identical. Lessons learned are also included in the internal reviews PPT [appendix 13 – Lessons learned from the CEP-SM internal reviews]. Just like the annual reports, they focus on human resources, RBM and communication. However, overall, they are redundant. Furthermore, it should be noted that the 2015 Steering committee minutes include lessons learned from the Costa Rica Study tour, and the approach to adopt for the development of PES models in Morocco, the role of education and research in the promotion and implementation of PES, best practices for the promotion of argan sectors and the regulatory and legal framework for the management of PES. This information was shared and discussed with stakeholders during the Steering committee meeting. However, the follow-up has not been documented.

Adaptive management and documentation of the lessons learned from the CEP-SM do not seem to be completely formalized at this stage of the project. In fact, the elements of these two components are addressed in certain cases, during Steering committee meetings for the benefit of project stakeholders or in annual reports and internal reviews. This is by no means a systematic approach, supported by documents aimed at extracting relevant information for the project. This may impact the documentation of the adaptations made at the strategic and operational levels and their justification. The same should be applicable for the capitalization of knowledge and know-how in the framework of the CEP-SM. As for the key stakeholders, there is no information as to their integration of the changes that were made to the project at their level. Moreover, the participation of academia and / or the research community did not materialize, as expected in the project concept, despite indications on this issue during the project's internal reviews.

Adaptive management and lessons learned	Moderately Unsatisfactory MU
---	--------------------------------

3.5. Efficiency

3.5.1. Financing and co-financing

3.5.1.1. Use of financial resources being made available ²

The current use of the project's financial resources is based on the PMU's consolidated figures. According to the ProDoc, the overall budget of the CEP-SM is of USD 10,147,272 with a contribution of the GEF, the UNDP and the Moroccan government via the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF). GEF and UNDP contributions were initiated from the start of the project to make it possible to implement the different stages of PES model design and stakeholder capacity building. At this stage of the project, the government's contribution will be mobilized for the implementation of the models under consideration. This contribution will be established through the second pillar of the Green Morocco Plan under the ADA, the argan development program as well as the Green Climate Fund program, and the RDA local products development program.

Table 1 | CEP-SM Budget

Bailleur de fonds	Financement prévu par le PoDoc (USD)
Fonds pour l'environnement mondial	2 647 272
PNUD	200 000
Gouvernement marocain (MAPM)	7 300 000
	10 147 272

²This does not replace a proper financial audit.

The financial implementation of the project benefited from the services of the financial and technical assistant of the PMU as well as the support of the Planning and Programming department head (*RD4*) for the control of the financial management of the project. The financial monitoring of the project is carried out by the PMU based on the budget established in the ProDoc and by updating the expenditures according to the CEP-SM components and their products (*XLS file*). Summary items are included in certain project management and M&E documents. To this effect, the consolidation of payment rates per project component is included in the ADA reports. The summary plan (*major points*) of the annual budget is included in the Steering committee minutes and the evolution of disbursements can be viewed in the PIR. As for managing the budget, it is considered to be somewhat inflexible in terms of its use because it does not allow for the reallocation of funds or budget remainders between the different project components. In terms of documenting information on the use of the project's financial resources, further efforts are needed. It is necessary to define the implementation rate of the components/products of the CEP-SM from an operational perspective (*against the planned activities*), to explain the annual changes that were made to the budget and their impact on the unfolding of the project.

Table 2 | Annual expenditures against approved budgets

Année	2014		2015		2016		2017		Grand Total (USD)	
Composante	Budget prévisionnel	Budget annuel	Budget prévisionnel	Budget annuel	Budget prévisionnel	Budget annuel	Budget prévisionnel	Budget annuel	Budget total prévisionnel	Dépenses annuelles totales
1 Environnement propice au PSE	800,00		54 600,00	31 829,91	89 326,00	93 069,44	39 600,00		184 326,00	124 899,35
2 Renforcement des capacités			73 400,00	43 231,05	117 334,00	81 508,93	60 350,00	73 503,00	251 084,00	198 242,98
3 Labellisation et commercialisation			106 760,00	94 398,72	196 639,00	130 387,07	195 200,00	96 431,09	498 599,00	321 216,88
4 Modèles pilotes de PSE			151 500,00	110 944,29	94 009,00	117 055,70	212 000,00	34 219,94	457 509,00	262 219,93
Gestion de projet	51 000,00	50 644,23	100 000,00	74 774,09	81 983,00	95 692,04	80 300,00	109 938,76	313 283,00	331 049,12
Total par an en USD	51 800,00	50 644,23	486 260,00	355 178,06	579 291,00	517 713,18	587 450,00	314 092,79	1 704 801,00	1 237 628,26

Taux d'exécution annuel	98%		73%		89%		53%		73%
Source	Plan de travail annuel 2014	CDR 2014	Plan de travail annuel 2015	CDR 2015	Plan de travail annuel 2016	AAA 2016	Plan de travail annuel 2017	AAA 2017 (3 trimestres)	

According to Table 2, 2014 focused on the recruitment of the project team and the mobilization of its operating resources. This can explain the fact that all of the expenses are under the '*project management*' line and the high implementation rate which stands at about 98%. This period of the CEP-SM has shown some delay in the designation of the NPD. In 2015, the expenses incurred by the CEP-SM reached 73%. They match the actual implementation of the project's activities. The latter focus on the launch of the technical assistance process for the carrying out, among others, of the diagnostic studies necessary for the rolling out of the project's activities and the analysis of its context. Also, during this period, the project remains at a diagnostic phase with respect to the suitable approach to adopt in terms of PES and the involvement of stakeholders. The final positioning of the project in its context has yet to be fully established.

2016 has posted an 89% implementation rate with more or less balanced expenditures for the 4 components of the project. The largest budget item concerns support of the profession, for the recognition of the honey and thyme PGI, and capacity building of beekeepers carried out in the framework of component 3. In 2017, the implementation rate achieved dropped to 53%. This figure remains to be confirmed because figures for the 2017 annual budget are a forecast for the end of December. Moreover, project management related expenditures represent 20% to 30% of the overall budget. On a broader front, the overall implementation rate for the project stands at 73%. The predominant expenditures of the CEP-SM concern component 3 and project management. For the latter, the implementation rate stands at 27%. Ideally, these expenses should be around 20%. The annual objectives set during the financial planning seem to each time exceed the actual achievements, except for 2016 when the implementation rate of the CEP-SM was of approximately 90%. According to the PMU, this situation is linked to the need to conduct a needs analysis and a specification of the characteristics of the local context for the beneficiaries and stakeholders to select the realistic and acceptable PES models (*orientation phase*).

3.5.1.2. Efficiency of financial resources³

In order to evaluate the efficiency of the use of the project's resources, the Earned Value Management (*EVM*) is used hereafter. Its results are directly linked to the accuracy of the reported data. The point of the EVM is to summarize the overall trends of the project and to report on its performance. According to figure 2, when comparing the actual costs (*AC*) (*actual/incurred expenses*) of the CEP-SM and the earned value (*EV*), the budgetary valuation of the work actually carried out, efficiency in the use of resources invested has yet to be observed at this stage of the project. In fact, the actual cost of the project is higher than its earned value. However, the difference between these two indices began to narrow in 2017 which is a good indication (*to be confirmed at the end of the 2017 financial year*). On another front, the earned value overall is lower than the planned value for the CEP-SM, indicating the delay in the unfolding of the project. Analysis of the project's performance indices is reflected in the results presented hereafter:

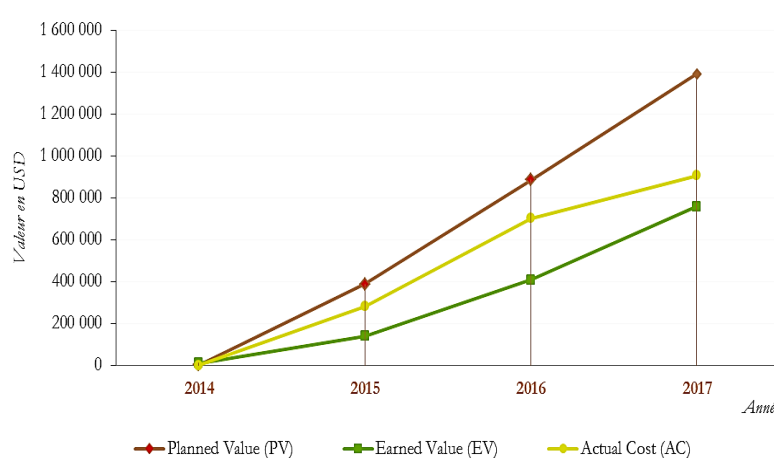


Table 3 | Project performance indices

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cost Performance Index (CPI = EV/AC)		0,49	0,58	0,84
Schedule Performance Index (SPI = EV/PV)		0,36	0,46	0,54

The cost performance index (*CPI*) for the CEP-SM is less than 1 which implies a cost overrun with regard to the work accomplished. The project is therefore in deficit. As such, for USD 1 invested the CEP-SM has generated USD 0.49 in 2015 and USD 0.58 in 2016. 2017 shows a progression of the CPI nearing 1, hence towards a potential balance between the cost invested and the work carried out. This remains to be confirmed at the close of the 2017 budgetary year.

³ *PV* Planned Value - *EV* Earned Value - *AC* Actual Cost | *Incurred cost* - *CV* | *Cost variation* - *SV* | *Schedule variation*- *CPI* | *Cost Performance Index* - *SPI* | *Schedule performance Index* - *CR* | *Critical Ratio*

The Schedule Performance Index (*SPI*), the actual progress of the project against the foreseen progress is below 1. This result indicates that the amount of work carried out is less than expected (*the project is lagging behind*). For 2015, this delay is estimated at 64% and 54% for 2016. For 2017, given that these activities are still in progress, the CPI is not final. Under the assumption that the CPI and the SPI remain below 1, the project will cost more than expected and will be outside the extended time-limits.

Financial efficiency of the project	Moderately Satisfactory MS
-------------------------------------	------------------------------

3.5.2. Human resources

There are two levels of human resources for the project: internal and external. They concern PMU members, (*NPC and 5 resource-persons*) enough staff members for the operational roll-out of the project and its monitoring on the field. PMU members are motivated and involved⁴. However, they don't feel very much involved within the administration (*little acknowledgement*). The NPD focuses on the project's strategic issues. He has mobilized an internal team within the RDA in order to support the PMU in the management of the CEP-SM. This team is composed of 6 people (*including the Head of the PPD, mobilized for the project's financial management*). Encouraging these staff members has been noted as a factor to consider for the rest of the project. At an external level, the project sought technical assistance (*6 experts*) through a group of engineering offices (*Agro Concept and Acteon*), among others, for the development of the diagnosis of ecosystem flows and study of the legal and regulatory framework for the implementation of PES models. Technical assistance of this group has been mobilized for the 3-year duration of the project.

3.5.3. Material resources

The CEP-SM has an issue with the use of the vehicles purchased during the project to facilitate the movement of teams on the field. In fact, project vehicles can't be used by PMU members without designated drivers from the RDA. Given that they are unavailable, the NPC has to drive his team around on the field, which takes up 15% of his working time. This situation has put the project's management and coordination on the field at a disadvantage. Furthermore, the PMU highlighted its need to upgrade its hardware for the management of its day-to-day activities. Repairs of breakdowns that occurred in 2017 could not be made due to insufficient credit of the "*Project management*" budget-line. This action was postponed to 2018.

In short, human resources for the project are sufficient to support the implementation of its activities and the achievement of the expected results. The CEP-SM is an exception in the field of cooperation and development because its PMU is composed of 6 resource-persons in addition to the NPD and the support of administrative players who collaborate on a part-time basis in the rolling-out of the project. This does not include the experts that intervene in strategic (*regulation/law*) and innovative (*PES models*) priority areas of the project. It should be noted that PMU members are involved and motivated for the shaping of the project's results. It would be useful to identify means for promoting PMU members and the agricultural administration team supporting the project in order to maintain their level of motivation and involvement. Training of the PMU team in results-oriented management and reporting best practices for the project should be considered. For the monitoring of CEP-SM human resources, workloads that show the deployment of resource-persons by number of days and according to project tasks must be established. The goal is to check the effectiveness of CEP-SM human resources management and to make the necessary improvements to mobilize the right resources at the right time. Moreover, given that external expertise operates at the level of the project's guiding principles, it would be useful to ensure a skills transfer to the members of the PMU and the RDA support team. The goal is to ensure the sustainability of the project's achievements and their appropriation of the project. On the logistics front, it is crucial to facilitate procedures for the use of vehicles for the PMU team in order to efficiently perform their job on the field.

⁴ One of the UNV created a model of the argan ecosystem on his own personal time. He also invested MAD 20,000 for its development. This amount remains unpaid by the project (according to him).

3.6. Stakeholder Participation

Institutional Players

<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>Involvement</i>
ADA	Designated implementing agency member of the Steering committee; monitoring of the project through its focal point; completion of the VAT exemption certificates and participation in coordination meetings with UNDP
RDA	Regional implementing agency member of the Steering committee; support for the technical aspects (<i>tenders, approval of outputs</i>) and the financial management (<i>approach, opening of bids, decisions, establishment of purchase orders, contracts and agreements taking budgets into consideration, verification of accounting documents</i>) of the project through the mobilization of 6 resource-persons from the agency
ANDZOA	Technical support member of the Steering committee; collaboration with the PMU for tenders and consultations; approval of study reports and expertise missions
HCEFLCD	Consultation participation in meetings and support of field missions in the forestry sector
MEMEE	No involvement at this stage of the project
Academia	University of Agadir participation in forums organized by the project

Socio-economic players

<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>Involvement</i>
<i>Professional Associations</i>	
FIFARGANE	Coordination and consultation interface between operators of the argan sector, the administration and ANDZOA
RTDR	Carbon-neutral Circuit support in the implementation of PES model actions (<i>eco-energy programs and waste management</i>); key partner of the project
ANCA	Technical support support in the fostering of partnerships and the mobilization of argan cooperatives in the region
RAABR	Technical support contribution to communication with local beneficiaries (<i>facilitation of the conservation and sound management of natural resources; facilitation and operationalization of the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve and technical and institutional support for member associations</i>); participation in trainings and field workshops organized by the project
AMIGHA	Coordination coordinate and structure the work of the Argan sector and identify with the professionals involved the various strategies to promote the product and the ABR label
<i>Civil Associations</i>	
Inzerki Association	Pollination services key partner of the PES program dedicated to the pollination service around the Inzerki traditional apiary
Ida Ougnidif Associations Union	Agricultural terraces partner dedicated to local community outreach in Ida Ougnidif to solicit subsidies from the agricultural development fund for earthworks
Al mawada Association	ABR Ecolabel involvement in the implementation process of the ABR ecolabel for arganeraie products
<i>Private sector players</i>	
Tour operators	Exclusive Travel Services Morocco and Ataqwa Voyages SARL participation in the organization of the demonstration tour (eductour) in 2016 and 2017 respectively. Thirty-three other tour operators

	and international media were invited to contribute to the promotion of the tour and to raise awareness of the population on the low carbon PES solution
--	---

Institutional stakeholders participate in the Steering committee meetings and the project's internal reviews. They are also involved in the CEP-SM management process through the planning of project activities as well as the approval of outputs and the ToR of tenders. As for project's coordination and implementation, the role of the implementing agency was delegated at the regional level to the RDA by the ADA. The latter maintains the role of the implementing agency at the national level and ensures the project's monitoring. This skills transfer is part of the nation's decentralization policy. As such, the RDA provides its support to CEP-SM to carry out project activities during the development phase of the PES models. For the implementation phase of the CEP-SM components, the involvement of the RDA will be consolidated by the participation of other relevant institutions in the fields of intervention of the PES modules designed, particularly the tourism delegation and the Regional Directorate for Water and Forests. The mobilization and endorsement of socio-economic players was fostered by skills and communication development activities as well as additional micro-financing actions operated by the project in the framework of the *Small Grants Programme* by the GEF. Furthermore, the project has paid particular attention to mobilize local players capable of rolling out PES models namely: the Network for the Development of Rural Tourism (RTDR), the regional association of beekeepers from Souss, the Ida Ougnidif cooperatives union, FIFARGANE and other groups that are urged to adopt the ABR eco-label.

The deployment of PES models will be backed by the mobilization of the national contribution in support of start-ups and by the commitment of high-level decision-makers for the formalization of PES transactions. To this effect, the PMU is preparing a support program based on the studies that were conducted and the management plans that have been developed. This program will be submitted to the RDA and ANDZOA. Its realization is crucial for the unfolding of the project. Furthermore, a draft framework agreement has been submitted for approval to the RTDT for the operationalization of the carbon neutral PES circuit. The full participation of institutional partners is expected for the implementation phase of the PES models.

Stakeholder participation	Satisfactory* S
---------------------------	-------------------

* depends on the achievement of the CEP-SM support programs

3.7. Communication

The project's communication activities have been developed based on several areas of focus in the framework of the CEP-SM. As such, communication materials have been developed, the project's visibility has been enhanced and its presence has been marked on social networks.

Category	Components
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Development and implementation of the project's graphic charter – Development of a brochure, in Arabic and French, presenting the Oued Massa/Assif Oussaka start-up project – Design and layout for the printing of 10 technical documents on PES
Technical Guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Development of a best practices guide on honey production in French and Arabic, addressing breeding apiary and product packaging – Development of a good apiary sanitary practice guide in partnership with the chamber of agriculture
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Design of 1 institutional film on the project – Production of 2 documentary films (<i>Eductour and traditional apiary from Inzerki</i>) – Development of 1 virtual visit of the honey road – Production of 6 video capsules for the general public – Presence on social media: Facebook, Twitter and YouTube – Availability of 1 project website
Project Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Organization of 2 CEP-SM eductours (2016 & 2017)

	– Organization of a PES global forum bringing together more than 100 participants, including some 20 African, Asian and European scientists
Miscellaneous	– Design and preparation of a project model

These tools and communication materials have been used in a highly satisfactory way and shared with project stakeholders. The generic content is used to raise awareness and inform the general public. In terms of continuous improvement, the CEP-SM website should include more specific project results and should also feature all the audiovisual materials that were produced. Following this action, the effects of the CEP-SM communication plan (*good perception of the CE, PES concept, of the project, stakeholder interest, etc.*) must be evaluated. On another front, it would be beneficial to celebrate and publicize the project's short-term success (*on a factual basis*) to maintain the involvement of stakeholders in the CEP-SM and to engage other players.

Communication

Satisfactory | S

4. Sustainability

4.1. General risks associated with the roll-out of the project

Project annual reports present a risk update as an introduction as shown in the report's appendices [appendix 14 – Risks identified by the CEP-SM]. The risks of the project should be reformulated, categorized (*for example, as strategic, technical/ operational, economic, legal, political, environmental, internal management risks, etc.*) and ranked. The goal is to develop a risk management plan which includes corrective and preventive measures. In a similar vein, the mitigation measures should be more specific and fact-based. Giving a set implementation deadline is also fundamental. On this topic, the project's internal review proposes a section on risk management in its PPT presentations. Each factor is categorized, and a managerial response is proposed, a person in charge is designated and deadlines are set. This methodology should also be adopted in the annual reports. According to UNDP-Morocco, the data collected during the project's internal reviews make it possible to update the project's risks. For internal reviews, the risks identified for 2015 and 2016 are similar and the same goes for their managerial approaches and the implementation timeframes. According to the latest internal review to date (2017), some of the suggested approaches appeared unfavorable to reducing the risks incurred by the CEP-SM [appendix 15 – CEP-SM risk mitigation measures]. It should be noted that risks associated with stakeholder involvement and their contribution to the project were found to be prevalent since the launch of the project as noted here below.

Year	Updated project risks
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Weak national institutional capacities in terms of efficient contribution to project objectives and to drive its implementation process. The governing ministry may lack the appropriate tools to channel investments – The SMD region may face challenges in coordinating project activities with other institutions aside from the MAF
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Weak ADA capacities with regard to the implementation of PES investment requirements – Failure of inter-ministerial coordination
2016	– Idem
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lack of coordination among stakeholders – Lack of management capacity of PMF/GEF project leaders – Lack of stakeholder commitment to honor their financial commitments

The persistence of these risks could be linked to the inadequacy of the managerial approach proposed by the CEP-SM. PMU actions in this regard cannot provide an effective solution by reason of the scale of the action, which is at an operational level. On the other hand, the issue of stakeholder endorsement is strategic. Furthermore, in the project design (*ProDoc*), a risk analysis has been carried out (*Appendix IV – Risk register*) indicating the risks on a systematic basis, taking into account their type, their impact and their probability as well as the counter-measures or management approaches.

However, in this register, several critical risks (*for ex. Capacity of national institutions to efficiently contribute to project objectives, risk of failure of inter-ministerial coordination and integration, drought*) for the CEP-SM have been perceived

to be low [appendix 16 – Extract of risks noted in the ProDoc]. As such, the risks associated with national institutional capacities, and their contribution to project objectives, inter-ministerial coordination in the framework of the CEP-SM, the establishment of PES models and the implementation deadline were underestimated since the project design (*given the innovative aspect of the approach*). This is why the proposed counter-measures do not make it possible to tackle them and limit their impact.

Finally, the identification and management of risks within the CEP-SM require a more structured and systematic approach so as to minimize the negative impact of the risks on project resources, objectives and results. Risk analysis during the project design considered most of the risks noted by the CEP-SM in its reports (*annual reports and internal reviews*) to be low, which did not allow for the implementation of effective measures for their mitigation since the project's initiation.

4.2. Specific risks for the project's sustainability

4.2.1. Financial Risks

Several sources can be considered in the perspective of sustainability of the project's achievements outside of financing provided by the GEF. In fact, Morocco has launched several initiatives and programs in favor of agricultural development and the preservation of the argan ecosystem. However, access to these resources will remain dependent on several determining factors [appendix 17 – Potential financial contributions for the sustainability of the CEP-SM]. Moreover, in the framework of its components, the CEP-SM provides for the promotion of organic production of argan oil and honey as well as their certification and marketing in order to generate higher income for local beneficiaries while ensuring the viability of the associated production systems. The realization of this objective will allow the project to ensure the sustainability of its achievements. Furthermore, in order to ensure access to funds for the CEP-SM, it was suggested by the ADA to consider inserting the PES concept into Morocco's National Defined Contributions (NDC) against the causes of climate change.

4.2.2. Socio-economic and political risks

All stakeholders met during the mid-term field evaluation mission are aware of the interest and necessity to maintain the CEP-SM achievements. In actual fact, however, there was a scant participation/appropriation of certain stakeholders targeted by the ProDoc in the project at this stage of PES development. Furthermore, the CEP-SM tries to find approaches to actively involve these players. This point is noted in the project reports (*annual reports and internal reviews*) as one of the risks of the CEP-SM. The project is also marked by a lack of convergence of efforts and endorsement of the forest and tourism administration in favor of the integration of PES principles. This situation affects the institutionalization of the project and the conservation of its achievements and benefits in the long term.

As for the CEP-SM beneficiaries within the local population, they are interested in improving their living conditions and their income. Their endorsement is based on a consultation process initiated by awareness-raising actions and capacity building, and consolidated through local committees of the CEP-SM. Nonetheless, for some beneficiaries, what is urgent is to solve the water issue before engaging in the implementation of the designed PES models. Also, the multiplicity of representatives of the argan sector and the lack of convergence of their priorities and concerns are risks that must be addressed in this framework. The same applies to existing socio-political tensions among the colleges of professionals involved in the future management of the ABR eco-label.

In terms of knowledge, the dissemination and capitalization of project achievements at a larger scale, documentation and sharing of the lessons learned should be further strengthened by the PMU. Nevertheless, the efforts made by the PMU in terms of awareness-raising and communication have been perceived as positive elements in the project's approach and have made it possible to familiarize stakeholders with the concept of circular economy and PES. On the other hand, the assimilation of these notions and their integration into biodiversity conservation activities, local development and sectoral policies and strategies in the country in the long term remain dependent on political factors.

4.2.3. Institutional framework and governance risks

The implementation of an environment conducive to the introduction of PES in Morocco, focusing on the institutional framework and the necessary legal and political changes to support PES has yet to be finalized at this stage of the project. Initially (*according to the ProDoc*), the project was meant to base its approach on the revision of the institutional and regulatory framework with protection as the entry point for the adoption of PES in Morocco. Due to a lack of intersectorality and to align the CEP-SM approach with the needs of the local context, the project relied on the results of its technical expertise by selecting the subsidies mechanism for water harvesting, by the construction of terraces, financed by the Agricultural Development Fund. Currently, the development of a revised national regulation is postponed for 2018. In this context, the inter-ministerial group that was meant to coordinate efforts and harmonize the PES integration approaches has not been operationalized. The choice of PES models adapted to the local context was necessary before initiating this action. Furthermore, according to the PMU, the involvement of institutional stakeholders will be consolidated during the PES models roll-out phase.

Morocco has developed a new territorial division plan. It now has 12 regions according to Decree no. 2.15.10 of February 20, 2015. As such, the region targeted by the project, Souss Massa Drâa became Souss Massa. However, no impact has been noted on the regional scope of the project given that the CEP-SM areas of intervention are only located in the Souss and Massa region.

4.2.4. Environmental risks

The risk of drought was identified by the PMU as one of the issues that could impact the project. The latter could indeed threaten the project's achievements and their sustainability. Even if the project claims to target sites characterized by a strong resilience to climate change, the severe drought seen in 2017 impacts the CEP-SM action as well as the achievement of its results. The country has indeed experienced a major dry spell. 2017 witnessed a 74% rainfall reduction and the dam storage level reached 32% in agricultural areas⁵. It should be noted that climate change was considered to be a low risk for the project. The latter was designed to strengthen the resilience of the argan ecosystem by focusing on improving the regeneration of arganeraies and consequently, on the reduction of risks associated with climate change, climate variability and desertification in the Souss Massa region⁶. However, the direct impacts of drought had a real effect on the PES models of the CEP-SM.

As such, in terms of the rehabilitation of natural bees' habitat for the promotion of bee pollination services, project beneficiaries are reluctant to roll out this component. According to the PMU, they don't want to invest in purchasing apiaries given the depletion of bee-forage plants. If this situation persists, the rehabilitation of the Inzerki apiary and the production of labeled honey from the Souss Massa region will be impacted. As for the development of agricultural terraces, they should be subsidized by the FDA given their contribution to water harvesting.

In the absence or shortage of rainfall in the long term, this mechanism could not only become obsolete with the State, but would also impact the regulatory framework targeted at this stage by the CEP-SM. Indirectly, the effects of recurring droughts on natural and landscape resources in the Souss Massa region could lead to

⁵ Source: *The agricultural season threatened by drought: Akhannouch announces measures*, H24info, November 21, 2017

⁶ Appendix IV: Risk Register, ProDoc

the degradation of the tourism circuit intended to preserve the region's natural heritage through the offsetting of the carbon footprint by tourists and solid waste management. With the depletion of water resources, tourist activities will be undermined and compromised. As for the eco-certification of local products, the reduction of honey and argan oil production in a context that is impacted by the depletion of water resources cannot achieve its objectives of optimal production

In summary, the sustainability of the CEP-SM is quite likely, but it still depends on several factors, the most critical being the institutionalization of the project (PES regulatory and legal framework) and its endorsement by its stakeholders. The implementation of a strategy in this direction is necessary, along with the mobilization of a sponsor with the power to mobilize the actors concerned. In the short term, the risk is that the CEP-SM will not be able to achieve its objective and results within the set framework time and that it will require an extension of its duration. In the long term, climate change poses a real threat to the sustainability of the project's future achievements. The implementation of climate change mitigation measures as part of the CEP-SM is to be considered and scheduled for the project's exit.

Sustainability of the project	Moderately likely ML
-------------------------------	------------------------

IV. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusions

The CEP-SM is a pilot initiative in Morocco aimed at positioning the country on a promising strategic axis that is firmly anchored in current sustainable development concerns. Circular economy (CE) is a source of new economic logic, social well-being and value production. Through its approach, the CEP-SM decouples economic growth from the depletion of natural resources by creating innovative models for the payment of ecosystem services (PES). Awareness of the concept of CE and its PES approach was backed by the capacity building activities undertaken as part of the project. Thus, a reflection on the alternative to traditional development models was launched among stakeholders in the Souss Massa region. This approach has helped to demystify, for some local players, the notion of CE and PES and for others, to open up new prospects for the management of their sectoral activities. This has resulted in a positive perception of the project's scope and objectives. In this context, the CEP-SM has upgraded and consolidated the knowledge of 223 beneficiaries, including 68 women among suppliers and technicians involved in ecosystem services (ES). Since its launch, the project has paid particular attention to this dimension, which represents one of the current successes of the CEP-SM. However, an assimilation of the notion of CE and PES and the mitigation of biases in interpretations with certain stakeholders still need to be reinforced by a more concise approach.

Furthermore, the project has given visibility to the potential of the Souss Massa region and has drawn attention to the fragility of its ecosystems. In fact, the CEP-SM has carried out various actions to promote and communicate the project's priorities. To do this, the CEP-SM used social networks. It has also developed a unique initiative through the organization of 2 educational tours (edutours) for the benefit, among others, of tour operators, the international press and civil society players. The objective was to promote the concept of the CEP-SM and its components to professionals and a wider audience. Beyond promoting the project, the initiative also focused on identifying economic opportunities for the implementation of its PES models.

In this respect, the project has designed 4 PES models, namely: the development of agricultural terraces for the preservation of agro-biodiversity, the offsetting of the carbon footprint by tourism and the rational management of solid waste for the preservation of natural heritage, the eco-labeling of local products through the efficient use of resources and the promotion of pollination services through the rehabilitation of the Saharan yellow bee's natural habitat. Through start-ups, the PES models designed translate the project approach into more tangible concepts for stakeholders. The project was able to identify 17 tourism operators and 7 professional agricultural organizations to participate in the implementation of the PES pilot models. To this end, a concerted effort with project beneficiaries was implemented through local committees set up in the 4 priority areas of intervention of the CEP-SM. This approach was welcomed by the beneficiaries who felt that their voices were being heard and that they were involved in the process. At this stage of the project, the PES modules are awaiting the development of a regulatory and legal framework to facilitate their implementation. Currently, the texts governing the financing mechanism for agricultural terraces for rainwater harvesting are being revised. Indeed, the project chose this mechanism according to the results of a technical study carried out in this regard and to meet the expectations of the project's beneficiaries. Initially, the CEP-SM was intended to capitalize the program by the High Commissioner for Water and Forests and the Fight against Desertification (HCEFLCD) for the defense of critical forest areas. However, the lack of pooling of efforts and poor coordination between the PMU and the forest administration has hampered this action. In this respect, the intersectorality targeted by the CEP-SM has not been operationalized. The revision of the regulatory and legal framework of the project was to be supported by an inter-ministerial working group. The insufficient convergence of public efforts in promoting common objectives has been one of the causes. The lack of a shared vision and a high-level sponsor that could strengthen stakeholder involvement also had an impact on this process. The aim is also to ensure the sustainability of the project's results at regional and national levels. Concerning the ABR label, it is under development (*reference framework was established and its management group identified*). However, it is necessary to take into consideration the socio-political issues operating within the sectors targeted by the project as well as the multiplicity of representatives and their strategic divergence. The achievement of a consensus on the management of the ABR label between

the members of the 5 selected colleges (*argan, honey, almonds, aromatic and medicinal plants and tourism*) is also a risk factor to be considered and mitigated. On the protected geographical indication (PGI) component, this label has been established for thyme honey from the Souss region.

At the management level, the project benefited from a Project Management Unit (*6 members, including the National Project Coordinator*), a National Project Director and a support team from the agricultural administration (*6 people*). The CEP-SM also received external technical assistance from a consortium of engineering offices (*6 experts*). The project's human resources are sufficient to carry out the planned components and achieve its results. Project monitoring and evaluation have been strengthened by the project by providing activities that supplement the requirements of the ProDoc through the establishment of monthly coordination meetings, internal reviews and the development of annual reports. However, reporting, documentation of project and adaptive management information, and management and mitigation of its risks need to be strengthened from a methodological standpoint.

As for financial resources, the Moroccan government's contribution of USD 7,300,000 is expected for the implementation phase of the PES models developed by the project. A program is being developed for submission to the ADA and ANDZOA. Furthermore, the financial management of the budget is considered by the PMU to be rigid due to limitations in the transfer of funds between lines. Administrative procedures and their cumbersome nature impact project management in terms of tendering and ordering for the project. The administration's regulations also affect the logical aspects of the project and its action in the field.

To conclude, the CEP-SM brings a new dimension of reconciliation of environmental, economic and societal concerns to Morocco. Reflection on this subject is being launched at regional and national levels and its dynamics initiated. Communication and capacity building continue to be the project's most significant successes. For their implementation, the 4 models designed by the PES are awaiting the consolidation of their regulatory framework, the mobilization of government funds and the full support of the stakeholders targeted by the project. The project also remains very ambitious and complex by its very nature. It addresses regulatory and commercial aspects that require adapted and realistic preparatory phases in response to the country's contextual constraints and the high expectations of beneficiaries to improve their living conditions.

2. Recommendations

Based on the elements analyzed and assessed in the previous sections of this report, recommendations are proposed. These are given to launch the reflection on the improvements to be made to the project at different levels. It goes without saying that they must be the subject of an in-depth analysis by the project leaders in order to select those that are in line with its priorities and objectives. Prioritization should also be established in view of the current constraints of the CEP-SM.

To this end, a detailed action plan specifying the persons responsible for the corrective measures selected and the implementation deadlines must be developed accordingly. It would also be advisable to take into consideration the necessary workload, lead times and costs to be made available.

2.1. Project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Project design	1. Analyze project stakeholders (<i>roles, effective responsibilities within the framework of CEP-SM, needs and degree of influence</i>) and establish a strategy for their management
Project implementation	2. Set up a Steering Committee with a limited number of members and differentiate the steering process from information sharing with project stakeholders 3. Have the vision of the CEP-SM be “ <i>supported</i> ” by a high-level sponsor with a real power of influence and legitimacy to mobilize stakeholders 4. Engage in an advocacy strategy by donors and the sponsor with key stakeholders to ensure their commitment and support for the project 5. Involve the academic community in the studies and activities of the project (<i>formalize a cooperation partnership with universities and colleges</i>) 6. Alleviate administrative procedures for financial management (<i>access to the public procurement portal, transfer of funds between budget lines with justification and traceability</i>) and logistics (<i>permission for vehicles to be used by the PMU</i>)
Project monitoring and evaluation	7. Collect and document changes in project activities, annual or periodic implementation levels of completion of those activities, best practices and lessons learned for their capitalization and improve the formulation of mitigation measures for identified risks

2.2. Monitoring and strengthening of the project’s initial benefits





























































<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Institutional framework	8. Assess the impact of climate change on the sustainability of the FDA's terraces subsidy mechanism 9. Ensure transparency and monitoring of the management of the future ABR eco-label fund 10. Create synergies with Morocco's climate change resilience programs in order to identify actions to prevent the effect of drought on beekeeping activities and on the Souss Massa Arganeraie
Labeling	11. Identify measures to mitigate the risk of multiple representatives of the argan and honey sectors and the difficulty of converging their priorities 12. Identify alternative solutions for beneficiaries with low financial resources in order to have the necessary production and packaging equipment at their disposal
Carbon tour	13. Design a long-term strategy for the development, promotion and management of the tourist tour by involving regional and national institutional players
Sustainability	14. Establish practical and appropriate mechanisms for mitigating the strategic risks of the project 15. Seek additional sources of funding for the project and extend the duration of the project to achieve its expected results

3. Future orientations proposed by the stakeholders

Based on the discussions held with CEP-SM stakeholders during the field mission from November 13 to 17, 2017, the following future orientations were proposed:

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Orientation</i>
Labeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Roll out the ABR eco-label at the national level through the country's 4 biosphere reserves– Develop a program to preserve and reintroduce the Saharan bee and develop a PGI of its honey– Integrate the protection of thyme (<i>zeitra</i>), which is of great importance to beekeepers, in order to curb its extinction.
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Integrate the carbon neutral tourist tour of the PES model into Morocco's commitments to combat global warming– Install solar well pumps for farmers and beekeepers to cope with the consequences of droughts
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fund scientific studies, doctorates and master's degrees on circular economy and PES models through the ANDZOA research grants fund

1. Appendix 1 | Table of submitted documents

Category	Documents	
Context and strategy	UNDAF  UNDAF 2017-2021_Final for signature.pdf  UNDAF_2012-2016.pdf	ProDoc  PRODOC EC-SMD LPAC Français.pdf  PRODOC EC-SMD.docx  Prodoc-EC-1.pdf
Monitoring and evaluation	Internal reviews  Reunion ADA Juillet 2017.pdf  Revue annuelle 2015.pdf  Revue annuelle 2016.pdf  Revue annuelle 2017 economie circulaire...  Revue mi annuelle 2015.pdf  Revue mi annuelle 2016.pdf  RMA 15.doc  RMA 16.doc  RMA 17.doc  RA 14.ppt  RA 15.ppt  RA 17.ppt  RMA 15.ppt  RMA 2016.ppt	Launch  pv compte rendu seminaire demarrage lv3.doc Annual reports  Rapport ANNUEL de revue du projet 2014 LV3.doc  Rapport annuel 2016 PEC-SMD lv.doc  Rapport annuel 2015 PEC-SMD.doc  Rapport annuel 14 PEC-SMD.doc PIR  PIR-2017-GEFID3989-PIMS5079.doc FSR  Cadre de suivi évaluation du prodoc Economie circulaire (2).doc
Steering	Steering committee  PV du comité de pilotage 2014.pdf  PV du comité de pilotage 2015.pdf  PV du comité de pilotage 2016.pdf	ADA reports  note ADA bilan PEC 17.doc  rapport annuel ADA bilan 2016.doc
Planning workshops and meetings	Planning workshops  Atelier de planification Novembre 2015.pdf  Atelier de planification 2014.pdf  Atelier de planification 2016.pdf  Atelier de présentation du projet au niveau local 2015.pdf  Reunion ADA Juillet 2017.pdf  Revue mi annuelle 2017.pdf	Work plan  PT 2017 PEC-SMD (fev 17) 15_mars 17.doc  PT 2016 PEC-SMD.doc  PT 2015 PEC-SMD v 20 avril 15 (SSE).doc  PT 14 PEC-SMD.doc  PT 2017.pdf  PT 15 scané.pdf  PT 16 scané.pdf  PT 14 scané.pdf  schema planification LV.xls
Project deliverables	PES Start-up  A VA A5.pdf  B VA A5.pdf  B VF A5.pdf	Best practices guide  Extrait illustré du guide des bonnes pratiques de production du miel arabe et français.pdf  دليل الممارسات الصحية و السليمة لتربية النحل.pdf  دليل الممارسات الصحية و السليمة لتربية النحل.rar
Budget	CDR  CDR EC-SMD 2015 Signé.pdf  CDR PEC SM 2016.pdf  CDR Projet EC SMD 2014 certifié.pdf	PMU XLS File  budget GEF global 2017 mars.xls
Miscellaneous	 Marché 1 2015 Agro Concept PSE  Marché 3 2015 PCM consulting Miel	 ACTE du FORUM PSE 2016.pdf  actes de l'eductour 2017.pdf

2. Appendix 2 | List with stakeholders with whom meetings were held

Organization	Stakeholders met
ORMVA/SM	– Mr. Hro Abrou Director of the Regional Office for Agricultural Development of Souss Massa
UNDP	– Ms. Amal Nadim Energy and Climate Change Programme Officer
ADA	– Mr. Hamid Faik Head of the Financing Division
ANDZOA	– Mr. Gahmou Amesmoud Head of the development of agricultural projects department
DRA	– Ms. Bouchra Asmaa Responsible for the agricultural components of the project – Mr. Abdeslam Lamtaibi Head of the agricultural production sector department – Mr. Abdellah Baroud Head of the PPS in charge of project control
Wilaya of Agadir	– Mr. Abdellatif Chouli Head of the Rural Affairs Division
PMU	– Mr. Mohammed Mezgar NPD – Mr. Moha Haddouch NPC – Ms. Narjisse Marsou Responsible for cross-cutting project support, M&E and gender – Mr. Abdelillah El Filahi Local Development Officer – Mr. Ahmed Tantim Local Development Officer – Mr. Mohamed Benjmoud Local Development Officer – Ms. Bouchra Lakhmissi Administrative and financial assistant
Tourism	– Mr. Abdelhakim Sabri President of the RTDR – Mr. Zaïd Jaakou Member of the RTDR – Mr. Hicham Kdir President of PATI
Farmers	– Mr. Mohammed Moussaoui Association of agricultural water users (<i>Doaur Zaouiat Sidi Bouzakri</i>) – Mr. Brahim Chatoui Tadart Inzerki Association – 2 other farmers
Argan and honey sectors	– Mr. Lahoucine Bourhim President of the Moroccan Interprofessional Argan Federation – Abdellah Agnao President of the Regional Beekeeping Association

3. Appendix 3 | Meeting schedule

Monday 13.11.17	Tuesday 14.11.17	Wednesday 15.11.17	Thursday 16.11.17	Friday 17.11.17
9.00 DRA <i>Mr. Hro Abrou</i> 10.00 PMU <i>Mr. Moba Haddouch (NPC)</i> 11.00 DRA <i>Ms. Bouchra</i> <i>(Responsible for the agricultural components of the project)</i> 12.00 AAF <i>Ms. Bouchra Lakbmissi</i>	9.00 PMU <i>Mr. Mohammed Mezgar (NPD)</i> 10.00 DRA <i>Mr. Abdeslam Lamtaibi,</i> <i>(In charge of the beekeeping components of the project)</i> 11.00 ORMVA/SM <i>M. Abdellab Baroud</i> <i>(Head of the PPD in charge of project control)</i> 12.00 VNU <i>Ms. Narjisse</i> <i>(Responsible for cross-cutting project support)</i>	9.00 Honey road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel Zolado APATI <i>Mr. Zaid Jaakou</i> Inzerki Association Paradise Valley <i>Mr. Brahim Chetoni</i> <i>(President of the association)</i> 11.00 Afoulki Cooperative <i>Ms. Fatima Ait Moussa</i> <i>(President)</i>	09.00 Honey <i>Mr. Abdellah Agnao</i> <i>(President of the Regional Beekeeping Association)</i> 10.00 FIFARGANE <i>Mr. Lhoucine Abourrahim</i> <i>(President)</i>	9.00 Wilaya of the Souss-Massa region <i>Mr. Abdellatif Chouli</i> <i>(Head DAR)</i> 10.00 UNV <i>Mr. Abdelilah Filahi</i> <i>Mr. Ahmed Tantim</i> <i>Mr. Mohamed Benjmoud</i> <i>(Local development officers)</i>
14.30 ANDZOA <i>Mr. Abderrahmane Ait Lhaj</i> <i>Mr. Gabmou Amesmoud</i> <i>(Responsible for monitoring project activities)</i> 16.30 RDTR <i>Mr. Abdelhakim Sabri</i> <i>(President)</i>	14.30 FG 1 – Tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ms. Mamoun</i> <i>Mr. Sabri</i> <i>Mr. Jaakou,</i> <i>Mr. Kdir</i> <i>Mr. Oulbachmi</i> 		14.30 FG 2 – Farmers (terraces) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Mr. Mabni</i> <i>Mr. Moussaoui</i> <i>Mr. Ait Lhaj</i> <i>Mr. Chetoni</i> <i>Mr. Hassi</i> 	14.30 Debriefing PMU UNDP

Legend

	One-to-one		Focus group		Field visit
---	------------	---	-------------	---	-------------

Abbreviations

- RDA | Regional Directorate of Agriculture
- PMU | Project Management Unit
- NPC | National Project Coordinator
- ANDZOA | National agency for the development of oasis and argan zones (Min. environment)
- RDTR | Rural Tourism Development Network
- NPD | National Project Director
- ORMVA/SM | Regional office for agricultural development of Souss-Massa
- PPD | Planning and Programming Service
- UNV | United Nations Volunteers Programme
- APATI | Association of the tourist host country of Ida Outanane
- FIFARGANE | Inter-Professional Federation of the Argan Sector
- FG | Focus group

4. Appendix 4 | Evaluation matrix

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Project strategy: <i>To what extent is the project strategy adapted to the country's priorities, national ownership and the best way to achieve the expected results?</i>			
Is the project relevant to the needs of the country and its beneficiaries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Compliance with UNDAF objectives</i>– <i>Integration into the strategies of the Moroccan agricultural and tourism sectors</i>– <i>Quality of the information in the ProDoc</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– UNDP country framework programme documents for Morocco (UNDAF and Strategic Plan)– ProDoc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Collection and documentation of information</i>– <i>Analysis and interpretation</i>– <i>One-on-one meetings with stakeholders</i>
Is the project design logical and coherent?			
Progress towards results: <i>To what extent have the project's expected achievements and objectives been achieved to date?</i>			
What is the project implementation rate in terms of quantity and quality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Compliance with the project objectives set</i>– <i>Level of achievement of expected results</i>– <i>Effective application of project approaches</i>– <i>Satisfaction of beneficiaries</i>– <i>Level of stakeholder involvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– ProDoc– <i>Annual work plans</i>– <i>Progress reports</i>– <i>Steering Committee minutes</i>– <i>Various documentation related to the workshops carried out</i>– <i>Stakeholder consultation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Collection and documentation of information</i>– <i>Analysis and interpretation</i>– <i>Meetings with the involved stakeholders (one-on one and focus group)</i>– <i>One-on-one meetings with members of the Project Management Unit / UNDP</i>
To what extent has compliance with the planning been ensured?			
What factors prevented or facilitated the achievement of the project's objectives and activities?			
Have the original target beneficiaries been reached? And how satisfied are they with their involvement and participation in the project?			
Project implementation and responsive management: <i>has the project been implemented efficiently and cost-effectively?</i> <i>Has the project been able to adapt to new circumstances, if any? To what extent do the project's monitoring and evaluation systems, data reporting and project-related communication support project implementation?</i>			
Were the resources (<i>human and financial</i>) allocated to the project in line with the target results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Adequacy of Project Management Unit resources</i>– <i>Quality of the monitoring and evaluation approach</i>– <i>Relevance of monitoring indicators</i>– <i>Observance of planning</i>– <i>Activity completion rate</i>– <i>Fund utilization rate</i>– <i>Relationship between achievements and fund utilization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Periodic reports of project activities</i>– <i>Annual reports</i>– <i>Annual work plans</i>– <i>Updated results framework</i>– <i>Financial reports /project budget revisions</i>– <i>Combined expense reports (CDR)</i>– <i>Financial monitoring document of the Project Management Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Collection and documentation of information</i>– <i>Analysis and interpretation</i>– <i>One-on-one meetings with members of the Project Management Unit / UNDP</i>
What are the specific factors related to resources (<i>human and financial</i>) that have affected the project results?			
How was the functioning of the Project Management Unit set up for the management and execution of project activities?			
What monitoring & evaluation system is in place (<i>functionalities/ components</i>)?			
What was the adaptive management of the project?	See above	See above	See above
To what extent have the partners been involved and contributed in the design and implementation of activities?			

5. Appendix 5 | One-on-one reports

<i>Person met</i>	Mr. Hro Abrou Regional office for agricultural development of Souss Massa	<i>Date</i>	13 Nov. 17	<i>Location</i>	RDA
-------------------	--	-------------	------------	-----------------	------------

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT FOR THE DRA

The project is of significant importance to the sector over and above its budget. It is integrated at the strategic level into the Green Morocco Plan. The project addressed aspects that the DRA could not address with its budgetary resources. A qualitative leap has been recorded in the framework of the CEP-SM. It was able to address the issue of marketing and market entry of products from the argan and honey sectors (*great help for the sector*). In this context, the CEP-SM has addressed aspects that are beyond the scope of the DRA and has addressed a number of issues. One of the successes of the project is that it has brought together partners from both the argan tree and honey sectors.

OPPORTUNITIES TO BE DEVELOPED BY THE PROJECT

For the record, the argan tree was considered to be a forestry sector (*under the responsibility of the High Commissioner for Water and Forests*), but since 2008 it has become a tree sector (*Ministry of Agriculture*). Currently, production is at 4,000 tons per year while demand stands at 20,000 tons at the international level, which is an opportunity to be exploited within the framework of the project to meet this strong demand through marketing, production, development and market research. To do this, there is a need for:

- Quality
- Traceability
- Labeling

COLLABORATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF PROJECT PARTNERS

The RDA operates at the Souss-Massa region level in order to take into account the convergence of the efforts of the various local players and their mobilization. Thus, the CEP-SM benefits from good coordination and project communication.

FUTURE ENHANCEMENTS

- Consolidation of project results
- Use of more resources
- Focus the action of the project, in conjunction with training, on:
 - *development*
 - *market access*
 - *marketing approaches*
 - *product enhancement techniques*

<i>Stakeholder</i>	Ms. Bouchra Asmaa Responsible for the agricultural components of the project	<i>Date</i>	November13, 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDA
--------------------	---	-------------	------------------	-----------------	------------

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT FOR THE DRA

The CEP-SM is of great importance because it provides another action-oriented approach by assisting cooperatives and farmers at the RDA level. The project allows the anchoring of best practices with environmental aspects and the notion of sustainability. The CEP-SM encourages stakeholders to take the time to understand what they were doing before and to update the best practices that have been neglected to sustain the action.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT

The RDA provides technical support for the project: participation in commissions, validation of project deliverables and actions

I. CURRENT PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Successes

1. Capacity building for all partners, which has demystified the enigmatic side of PES at all levels: institutional, partners, associations.
2. Communication media products: videos, films
3. Creation of 4 PES models with specifications
4. Make the tourism aspect a reality (*Eductour*)

B. Challenges

The nature of the project brings an open-mindedness, but it is hampered by the slow pace of the administration: inflexible solutions concerning logistics and procedures. This creates a time lag for the project to be completed.

ENHANCEMENTS TO BRING TO THE PROJECT

1. **Payment financing aspect** | find a solution to the legal and legislative framework at the level of dam management agencies for terraces (*impact on dams*). Compensation must be given to farmers
2. **Support** | The Regional Council can support initiatives, it has a role to play in this regard.
3. **Transparency** | a clear and defined legislative and legal framework is needed

ANCHORING OF THE PROJECT AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

The project has a regional and national base; it is just a matter of addressing the problems of the regulatory and legal framework. And then, the actions of the CEP-SM should be scaled up through political will. The project management unit should mobilize partners and move the project forward.

RISKS FOR THE PROJECT, SUSTAINABILITY & REINFORCEMENTS

1. **Legislative aspect** | there is a risk on this point, because it is beyond us. A 'normal' procedure must be followed for this action and thought must be given at a high level.
2. **Financial income** | there is a risk that resources may not meet the expectations created. As far as tourism is concerned, it is settled. But solutions must be found for other PES that require an established legislative framework.
3. **Partners** | the project partners must be more supportive. In this sense, efforts must be combined. Indeed, involvement in the project remains scattered. It is necessary to work continuously throughout the project outside of large-scale events.

<i>Person met</i>	Bouchra Lakhmissi Financial and administrative assistant	<i>Date</i>	November 13, 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDA
-------------------	---	-------------	-------------------	-----------------	------------

PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Successes

The National Project Director (*NPD*) is present in Agadir, which allows the CEP-SM to benefit from technical assistance from the DRA.

B. Challenges

There are delays in the implementation of project activities. One of the causes is the late signing of the work plan by the partners (*3 and 4 months after the meeting of the steering committee*). This makes the project execution rate at approx. 50%. Moreover, the funds are not being transferred on time. There are also lengthy procedures delaying the signing of the VAT assessment. There are also differences in the project's accounting with the CDRs. Concerning administrative management, the project does not have software for tendering and the digitization of documents is missing.

COLLABORATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF PROJECT PARTNERS

The project partners are located at the local level in Agadir. It is therefore easy to mobilize them to participate in the working sessions. However, as mentioned above, there are delays in the validation of the annual work plan by the project partners.

FUTURE REINFORCEMENTS

Furthermore, in order to carry out my tasks, I need financial management training.

<i>Person met</i>	Amsmoud Gahmou Head of Department of Agricultural Project Development	<i>Date</i>	13 Nov. 17	<i>Location</i>	ANDZOA
-------------------	--	-------------	------------	-----------------	---------------

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT FOR ANDZOA

The CEP-SM is innovative because it addresses innovative concepts such as the circular economy. It focused on watersheds. These are pilot regions subject to anthropogenic and climatic degradation. Currently, the CEP-SM has trained 4 people from ANDZOA through its capacity building activities, and more generally, the project can support ANDZOA's actions by raising awareness among the population about the implementation of argan tree development projects (*being more cooperative and responsive*).

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT

1. Member of the Steering Committee
2. Collaboration with the project management unit for tenders and consultations;
3. Validation of study reports and expert missions.

CURRENT PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Successes

- **Communication** | communication, information and training efforts were made during the project
- **Search for scientific information** | a wealth of information has been brought through the technical assistance of the project (*to be exploited now*)
- **Eductour** | it is a means of promoting ecosystem services
- **Partners** | dynamic between partners
- **Project approach** | ANDZOA's satisfaction with the progress of the project, which invests in people and also integrates the financing of micro-projects
- **Revision of laws** | new articles of laws that are similar to the protection of ecosystem services (*e. g. defenses*)

B. Challenges

The concept of ecosystem services is not yet well understood by several players, including the population, and it is necessary to explain to them what this really means so that the population and institutional players can better take ownership of the project.

REINFORCEMENTS FOR THE PROJECT

- **Population** | make efforts to change the mindset of the population
- **Administration** | adopt the language of the circular economy to share it with the population
- Maximum number of players to be sensitized
- **Research** | finance scientific studies by PhDs/Masters, as there is an ANDZOA fund for thematic research grants
- **Defense enforcement** | work on defense cases and show that it is feasible: drain money for the population, involve associations and follow up with the Water and Forests Department and the right holders

OPPORTUNITIES TO BE DEVELOPED BY THE PROJECT

- Forest Domain: rehabilitation action including regeneration (planting)
- Planting of the arganeraie: this sector depends on rainfall (it must be rehabilitated)
- Programme contract for the development of the *argan* sector: 200,000 ha of forest rehabilitation and 5,000 ha of intensive argan orchards
- Financing of the Green Climate Fund: 10,000 ha for an amount of MAD 490,000,000
- Subsidy from the Ministry of Agriculture for the planting of argan trees (*purchase of seedlings*): 4 nurseries are authorized

There is a need for project coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture and all sectoral players and associations.

FUTURE REINFORCEMENTS

In the future, the project should focus on raising awareness among professionals in the agricultural sectors that have an impact on the environment, namely citrus fruits, early crops and livestock. Once these professionals have been sensitized, the project can build a collaboration with them to set up local PES systems.

<i>Person met</i>	Abdelhakim Sabri President	<i>Date</i>	13 Nov. 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDTR
-------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------	--------------	-----------------	-------------

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT FOR THE RDTR

The Rural Tourism Development Network is the first official contact for rural tourism in the Souss Massa region (*50 members: individuals, hospitality associations, provincial tourism councils*). Indeed, the rural world is still excluded from connectivity, and sales and promotion tools. The RDTR is trying to overcome this situation through:

- Consultation with stakeholders
- Improving product quality and connecting with the outside world
- Product qualification and promotion
- The creation of new rural tourist circuits
- The development of stability around the local tourism structures of the region

Its collaboration with the CEP-SM allows it to be encouraged to go further in its actions. Indeed, the consultation process and the working environment between the RDTR team and the project management unit are favorable to this perspective.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT

- Honey circuit management
- Carbon sequestration in the honey circuit
- Installation of solar panels in tourist accommodation establishments on the honey circuit
- Promotion of the traditional Inzerki apiary
- Contribution to the Eductours

CURRENT PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

C. Successes

- Awareness-raising of stakeholders in the project and the discussion on carbon neutrality | through meetings and consultations on greenhouse gases, people are starting to think about what they produce as carbon and how to sequester it.
- Honey road | offset carbon by solar water heaters (thermosyphons) - no frost in the mountains, no electricity to supplement
- Environment | involvement in the CEP-SM has enabled the network to integrate the environmental component into its strategy

D. Challenges

- Absence of an institutional link with the Ministry of Tourism
- The RDTR has a problem in setting up crowdfunding for fundraising for the preservation of local natural resources

- How to promote the sites of the region while protecting them from degradation (*this is an opportunity for the CEP-SM to benefit from the expertise of the stakeholders*). Indeed, the RDTR was involved in a campaign in the Paradise Valley; the high attendance in the region gave rise to significant complaints from the population due to the presence of waste. The RDTR has participated in a campaign to this end, but it should be pointed out that this region lacks the infrastructure to receive tourist flows.
- Problem at the beginning of the project is to talk about the forest and defend its access. This is a sensitive topic. It took a lot of effort for the beneficiaries to accept the idea and give them some time to identify the projects. It was also necessary to gain their trust. Currently, people know what we are talking about and the projects of the CEP-SM are linked to the honey circuit.

Note

Support from the Green Destination (GD) to the RDTR to meet environmental criteria. The GD makes a non-binding visit to propose region-specific criteria to rural tourism establishments. The assistance, thereafter, is not free and the GD promotes the destination. This is more realistic for rural tourism than the rigid and inaccessible criteria of the Green Key, for example.

FUTURE REINFORCEMENTS

- The environment is the capital of the accommodation sector, so it is essential to raise awareness and involve the neighboring population and the douars. The aim is to raise the level of work in this area.
- In the context of the rehabilitation of the Inzerki apiary, the problem is who will manage it and in what context. A legal framework must be defined and the creation of an association encouraged to consolidate the activity
- The Ain Assmama forest presents a problem with the uprooting of medicinal plants. An action in this respect is to be considered by the project
- Eductour 2018: leave the initiative to professionals with the support of the project and think about the sustainability of the action

<i>Person met</i>	Narjisse Marsou Responsible for cross-cutting project support	<i>Date</i>	November 14, 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDA
-------------------	--	-------------	-------------------	-----------------	------------

ROLE IN THE PROJECT

- In charge of cross-cutting support, monitoring and evaluation, communication and gender issues
- Good knowledge of the region
- Joined the team in March 2017

PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Successes

- Expected beneficial effect of the terraces for the local population
- Involvement of women in local cooperatives such as Afoulki
- Realization of the eductours
- Workshops on terraces, pollination and awareness of best practices
- The population is interested, curious and wants to succeed in order to have more income and sources of financing later on

A. Challenges

- Issue of bureaucracy delaying the project
- Lack of participation or involvement of the Agricultural Development Agency (ADA)
- The region is experiencing severe drought, so the population is interested in diversifying its sources of income

PROJECT PROGRESS

CEP-SM activities are planned and carried out as planned. The schedule is thus respected.

<i>Person met</i>	Mr. Abdeslam Lamtaibi Head of the Agricultural Production Department	<i>Date</i>	November 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDA
-------------------	---	-------------	---------------	-----------------	------------

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT FOR THE RDA

As Head of the Agricultural Production Department, I welcome the project with interest. Indeed, the CEP-SM emphasizes a need: the promotion of the Inzerki region, which is a unique cultural treasure. The fact of wanting to revive this collective apiary through pollination and the honey road meets a real local need.

People are so much in need and they are supportive and open to this initiative in order to improve their living conditions. Focusing the efforts of the CEP-SM on the apiary is significant for the region.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT

- In charge of the beekeeping components of the project: monitoring of these activities and coordination, participation in meetings, support of experts and support of beneficiaries (*beekeepers, farmers*)

CURRENT PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Successes

- The development of the honey road and its promotion. *Once there are honey resources on site, the operational apiary and organized producers, the project will develop an on-site film and a Museum with the products on site and a tasting area*
- Total consultation with the population (*individual beekeepers, cooperatives, federations*): dialogue, have their approval for the implementation of actions (*once the target population has been defined*)
- Use of Arabic and Berber language
- Existence of parallel 'projects' currently converging towards actions on the ground
- Good work and collaboration with the project management unit

B. Challenges

- Beekeepers currently do not have hives due to drought

ANCHORING OF THE PROJECT AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

- The action of the CEP-SM will be sustainable because it is composite. It includes several parallel actions for an integrated approach

FUTURE REINFORCEMENTS

- The local population is asking for tangible things | functional apiary, diversification, developed road and water resources
- Human factor | the population must be involved for each targeted and specified action
- Contact with the population | do not impose things, gain their trust, formalize the agreement with them (*agreements and contract*) as appropriate and depending on the action
- People need to be organized into cooperatives or associations
- Financial incentive is insufficient: give compensation

<i>Person met</i>	Mr. Abdellah Baroud Head of PPS (ORMVA of Souss Massa) and in charge of Souss Massa	<i>Date</i>	November 14, 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDA
-------------------	--	-------------	-------------------	-----------------	------------

ROLE IN THE PROJECT

Following the project request after the transfer of Ms. Hafida Moubtassim (*Head of Administrative Department at DRASM*), the Regional Directorate of Agriculture of Souss Massa proposed Mr. Abdellah Baroud as a resource person for the financial aspects of the CEP-SM: approach, opening, judgment, establishment of purchase orders, contracts and agreements taking into account budgets, verification of accounting documents (POs, Agreement, invoices, accounts, receipt minutes, and payment (*steering and validation*)).

PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Successes

The CEP-SM is new; it concerns projects of significant importance and provides for the implementation of specific actions towards sustainability.

B. Challenges

The launch of the project's services is based on the application of the texts in force: regulations on public procurement of the specific state of the ADA. In the current context, the launch of calls for tenders (*public procurement portal*) mentions online bidding. However, this cannot be done because the project in question is not on the ADA's budget morasse. Currently, common law agreements and purchase orders are used.

RISKS THAT MAY HINDER THE PROJECT AND ITS SUSTAINABILITY

Lack of funding and self-financing

PROJECT PROGRESS

- Possibility of delegating the provision of tendering services to UNDP
- Dematerialization: read the projects in their entirety at the Moroccan level and central level in UNDP
- Think about employee motivation/travel/materials

<i>Person met</i>	Mr. Agnaou President of the Regional Beekeeping Association	<i>Date</i>	November 16, 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDA
-------------------	--	-------------	-------------------	-----------------	------------

PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Successes

- Attribution of the PGI to thyme honey
- Establishment of a national committee to give the PGI to euphorbia (*Dagbmouss*)
- 10 cooperatives are targeted for ABR labeling

B. Challenges

- In 2016 we tried without success, there was a misunderstanding. They did not understand that it is an assistance for the marketing of their product.
- The financing of the equipment (extractors, bins, etc.) required by ONSSA is expensive for beekeepers (MAD 200,000). Farmers want to obtain ONSSA authorization to be certified, but their means are limited
- There are no honey points of sale (*which are ONSSA certified*). There is only one point of sale in Casablanca: traditional market of local products. A Solidarity Market was also created in 2017
- Intense drought in 2017 which resulted in low production
- Problem with black bees for the endemic race of Morocco: the Saharan bee (*adapted to the country's climate, higher production, heat resistance of 50°C*). Public markets use the black bee which is more available and easy, so the Saharan one is not reserved and developed.

FUTURE REINFORCEMENTS

- Add training to explain the label to beekeepers
- Organize beekeepers into cooperatives; to have hives, it is a condition of the Green Morocco Plan (*tendency is to move to the producers' organization*)
- Clean up the environment to control the quality and traceability of honey
- Set up a PGI for the Saharan bee; it is necessary to protect the latter, which has almost disappeared. Its reintroduction and development (*safeguarding the Saharan bee*) are essential
- Train beekeepers for the multiplication of the Saharan bee by artificial insemination to preserve it

<i>Person met</i>	Lahoucine Bourhim President of the Moroccan Interprofessional Argan Federation	<i>Date</i>	16 Nov. 2017	<i>Location</i>	
-------------------	---	-------------	--------------	-----------------	--

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT FOR FIFARGANE

FIFARGANE brings together cooperatives, companies and traders. There are 2,000,000 right holders (*argan trees*) grouped into 8 associations. The Moroccan government wanted to structure agricultural sectors. To this end, it has set up structures through provincial associations (*Essaouira, Ida Outanam, Onzekane, Tiznit Guelmim, Ait baba, Taroudane*). Most of the regions where the argan tree is found are poor regions with a high rate of illiteracy. People don't really know the value of argan, they cut it to sell the wood. The role of the project is finally to promote understanding of the value of the tree. In this context, the CEP-SM supports the awareness and supervision of professionals in the argan sector. This is all the more important as argan is increasingly in demand and its prices are rising. However, it would be useful to redistribute this wealth to the right holders.

The current production is of 4,000 T/year and the objective is to reach 20,000 T/year.

RISKS FOR THE SECTOR

- 90% of women work in the sector; women's cooperatives do not benefit from the income from the sale of argan, it is rather the intermediaries that do
- Production traceability problems (*need for certified batches*). There are many informal people in the sector indeed
- Harvesting takes place in the summer (*hot weather*): women are at risk of being bitten by snakes and scorpions
- Effect of drought on the sector
- Transhumance problem: unauthorized grazing in the arganeraie (*a project financed by Qatar will make it possible to build the necessary infrastructure in Tiznit, Guelmim, Ighrem to allow this population to move around*)

<i>Person met</i>	Abdellatif Choulli Head of the Rural Affairs Division	<i>Date</i>	November 2017	<i>Location</i>	Wilaya of Agadir
-------------------	--	-------------	---------------	-----------------	-------------------------

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT FOR THE WILAYA

The project is of interest for the organization and authority because of its new concept, which is currently being addressed at the global and national levels (2013 launch of the concept of the circular economy and its initiation in 2015, then its integration in 2016). The concept is interesting from an approach point of view for ecosystems and sustainable development and climate change. It is also intended to preserve resources.

The project plays an important role in raising awareness among players, institutions and associations. The advantage of the project is also to act on several regions to create a ripple effect.

PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Successes

- Knowing and talking about circular economy is a success
- Exploitation of renewable energy
- Identification of best practices: the identification of best traditional practices is one of the project's successes: terraces for the collection of rainwater and *agdal*. They must be mainstreamed now.
- The CEP-SM project will make it possible to leave a tangible mark and not just to produce documentation.
- Project information is shared

B. Challenges

- The duration of the project is limited in view of its objectives
- There is a need to pool efforts in the sector: GIZ - argan tree, HCEFLD - desertification, EU (*tanmia*) adaptation to climate change.
- Geographic identification GIS: use IT tools to manage environmental aspects

FUTURE REINFORCEMENTS

- Awareness-raising and training need to be strengthened among the population, NGOs, local players
- Set up pilot projects to convince the local population and motivate them to replicate best practices (*terraces, water retention, etc.*)
- Conduct studies and technical approaches
- Review of certain legal aspects of the agricultural sector
- Media buy-in at the national level is needed to talk about the project and give them visibility

THE PROJECT'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE FOR UNDP AND ITS OUTLOOK

The CEP-SM is part of UNDAF 2012-2016: domain 5 - environmental protection, prevention and management of natural risks and climate change, under results 3 and 5.

The project is important and strategic for UNDP-Morocco, as the notion of circular economy is new. This is a pilot approach that UNDP-Morocco wishes to disseminate to other regions. Indeed, the circular economy is an integrated concept that will make it possible to conserve biodiversity and generate income. As a result, the CEP-SM will have a positive impact on the standard of living and social dimension of the beneficiaries. This is the first experience in Morocco in the field of Payment for Ecosystem Services.

ROLE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION IN THE PROJECT ROLL-OUT

UNDP-Morocco is the implementing agency for this GEF project. UNDP has developed the project with the Ministry of Agriculture and plays a quality assurance role in its implementation. It is present in the steering committee to validate the year's work plan and the results achieved. UNDP-Morocco is also involved in the monitoring and implementation of the project. It strives to ensure that the project achieves its objectives on time, with the required quality and within the available budget.

To do this, day-to-day monitoring is carried out and, if necessary, quarterly monitoring is carried out. The latter is then transferred to the ATLAS software (*incorporating progress indicators that can be consulted at UNDP headquarters*). The mid-year review of the project provides an opportunity to review the progress of the CEP-SM and to highlight gaps and provide guidance as needed. For the annual review, it assesses the achievement of the stated objectives, explains any deviations identified and analyzes the risks of the project.

The PIR carried out as part of the project is a GEF requirement that informs headquarters and colleagues in the organization about the progress of the project.

COMMITMENT AND CONTRIBUTION OF PARTNERS

The project partners are aware of the importance of developing this approach and its impact on biodiversity as well as economic and social issues. There is a will to succeed in this pilot action at the Souss Massa level.

As the project is difficult (*since it is a new approach even internationally*), knowledge-building and awareness are needed among partners to ensure that they are at the same level of understanding of the CEP-SM and that they have a clear idea of its benefits. The current difficulty lies in this point, because it is a conceptual project. Measuring partner commitment therefore remains different.

CURRENT PROJECT SUCCESSES

1. **Communication component** | it is one of the project's strengths thanks to a communication approach, tools and a presence on social networks
2. **PES Start-up** | the demonstration projects of the CEP-SM to support the approach are a success
3. **Field work** | conducting the eductours, terraces and apiary are factors of success.

PROJECT CHALLENGES

The regulatory component of the project remains a current challenge for the project. Indeed, it is essential to implement the circular economy approach and make it a reality. These aspects are important for the project's sustainability. If the project continues in this direction, it will not be able to achieve the expected results in this area. The work on the institutional aspect is crucial.

Furthermore, support for PES start-ups in the field is still lacking.

The project is ambitious and wanted to work on several things. Focusing on 2 PES models would have been more advantageous. Subsequently, the CEP-SM could expand to several PES models and disseminate its results on a broader scale.

CHANGE OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES, ORIENTATION OR ACTIVITIES

Ms. Nadim joined the project this year; she had some observations on this topic. She does not believe that the CEP-SM may have experienced any changes in objective or direction. The project must comply with the GEF's 'locked' requirements.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PMU'S EFFICIENCY

The project management unit is performing satisfactorily. It has a commendable approach that aims to involve young UNVs as local development agents. This is a positive point. However, the distribution of the territory of the CEP-SM remains broad, which does not allow for a presence in all project areas, frequent exchanges with local players and visibility on the ground.

SUSTAINABLE ANCHORING AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

A tremendous effort has been made to popularize and promote the PES approach to biodiversity conservation in general and the arganeraie in particular. However, a strong anchoring of the project can only be achieved through the establishment of a legal framework regulating the development of PES initiatives in Morocco. The pilot projects being developed by the project can also facilitate the adoption of this intervention approach for biodiversity conservation.

RISKS OR THREATS THAT THE PROJECT SHOULD FACE

The issue of deadlines is a risk, as the project will come to an end in one year. It would be good to step up the pace, focus on practical issues and move away from the aspects pertaining to capacity building.

6. Appendix 6 | Summary of the focus groups

<i>Focus group</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 2 beneficiaries of the tourism sector /association – 4 PMU members and the NPC 	<i>Date</i>	November 14, 2017	<i>Location</i>	RDA
--------------------	---	-------------	-------------------	-----------------	------------

What was your involvement or contribution to the project?

- Project coordination and implementation
- Integration of the concept of clean energy
- Participation in the first part of the carbon neutral project in the tourism sector
- Welcoming tourists and local players and accompanying experts
- Coordination with local players
- Facilitation at the level of the project areas
- Communication about the CEP-SM and updating of media pages
- Identification of new players, diagnosis and implementation of PES models
- Representation of the project at local, regional and national levels (*e.g. UNESCO MAB Youth Forum*)
- Participation in the organization of education and training

How would you evaluate it?

3 participants find their involvement/contribution to be significant	4 participants find their involvement/contribution to be very important
--	---

How satisfied are you with your involvement and participation in the project?

3 participants are satisfied with the project	4 participants are very satisfied with the project
---	--

Causes

- Participation in workshops, availability of online information, feeling that things are progressing, partners' buy-in.
- Involvement to achieve project objectives
- Possibility to communicate with other players
- Positive working environment with support between team members; recognition of the efforts made by the team and management
- Progress in raising awareness among beneficiaries and this is a good sign for the success of the project
- Ambitious and innovative project in terms of its principles and scientific value
- Establishment of a new system for biodiversity conservation

In your opinion, what are the successes of the project?

- Well-known project at the regional, national and international levels
- Trip to Costa Rica
- Mastery of Eductours and their links with sustainable local development
- Support from local stakeholders and involvement of environmentally sensitive tourists
- Promoting the region
- Awareness of the project and its objectives
- Establishment of an important network of players motivated to support the project

What factors facilitated them?

- Good PMU team
- Participatory approach
- Identification of roadmaps
- Choice of the project implementation site
- Community need (population, tourists)
- Knowledge of the language, local mindsets and regional players
- Presence of local agents
- Facebook page of the project

Have you observed any unexpected outcomes of the project at your level?

- APAC: opportunity that arose halfway through the project

What are the risks/threats that the project's achievements should face in the future?

- Weak support and insufficient motivation of partners and the project owner
- Bureaucracy
- Complexity of some laws and regulations
- Conflict of interest among beekeepers
- Problem of logistical means for field travel
- Stakeholders not all at the same level of interest in project implementation

Financial resources 4	Climate risks 1
Political will to implement PES 6	Ownership and anchoring of the project beyond involvement and institutionalization 1
Activities in villages (<i>project disengagement, rural exodus, etc.</i>) 2	

In your opinion, are the current achievements of the project sustainable? Why?

The project is progressing towards sustainability: 6 participants find the CEP-SM sustainable and 1 person is undecided.

What improvements can be made in the next phases of the project?

- Capacity building
- Governance and flexibility at the administrative level
- Redefine the project's intervention areas
- Communicate more about the project and diversify the media
- Involve partners, elected officials and rural municipalities with clear and specific objectives
- Search for donors
- Give more support to the PMU and enhance the value of its members
- Allow PMU members to drive the project vehicles
- Make administrative procedures more flexible with regard to project activities
- Motivate stakeholders to get involved
- Training of the PMU team
- Maintain awareness and training
- Organize professionals into associations to give them more weight
- Focus on results-sensitive aspects: ecological crisis, political effects, livelihoods of populations

Organize professionals into associations

RBM-based project management 4	Governance 4
New sources of funding 2	Involvement of local municipalities / elected officials / members of parliament 3
Professionalization of beneficiaries 1	

Focus group	4 farmers	Date	November 16, 2017	Location	RDA
-------------	-----------	------	-------------------	----------	-----

I. ACTIONS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT

Project | Contribution to the conservation of biodiversity and combating soil degradation through the rehabilitation of the Argan ecosystem in the Ighafri locality in the province of Taroudant

The CEP-SM and its team facilitated the project set up for the association, allowed the population to participate in the training and to integrate good practices with the objective of increasing income by conserving the Argan tree from erosion. An action plan was defined for the local project and people are motivated.

The planned activities are:

- Micro-financing: pruning trees to retain water, terrassettes against erosion
- The development of lands, Argan tree planting
- Designation of a women's association for the marketing of Argan
- Establishment of a centralization/production unit: a room in which argan fruit is centralized and prepared for resale according to National Office for Food Safety (ONSSA) criteria
- Pruning old trees
- Construction of a well: with or without solar pumps
- Community outreach
- Rehabilitation of old practices

Preservation of the ecosystem and natural services of the largest traditional collective apiary worldwide

Tadarte Inkerki Association

- Development of an action plan to implement the project's activities
- Benefits provided by the CEP-SM: publicize the apiary by organizing 2 educational tours, 1 Amoudou film and the installation of 2 solar pump operated wells
- Conservation of the Saharan bee
- Planned planting of 5'000 – 6'000 trees : carob, almond
- Setting up of a bee-breeding association
- Setting up of a women's cooperative: *dour inzerkin, jamate argane*

Region's problem

- Having bee-forage plants
- The region suffers from an 80% rural exodus rate and slowing it down is a matter of urgency. To do so, there is an urgent need of water to ensure the apiary's operation
- Improve water access for farmers (*terrassettes would come next*)

Conservation of the Zaouia Ait Bouzakri landscape and combating soil degradation through the restoration and development of agricultural terrassettes

2017 : Training, awareness raising, proposal for micro-financing: MAD 80'000 - 160'000

Development of an argan production unit at the local level

Micro-financing: Association composed of 4 women: an argan centralization unit: the women can meet on the premises to produce argan, almond and prickly pear (*subject to the mobadara wataniya program*)

Problems

- Erosion
- Water is the key to success: build solar wells

Suggestions

- Work on almond trees, plant thyme and other aromatic and medical plants
- Plant prickly pear trees
- Increase access to water for local producers
- Prune trees and train farmers in organic farming

II. ADDITIONAL NEEDS

- Provide local beneficiaries with information on calls for projects because they are not aware of them. Need for information, guidance and instructions on how to apply for funds and put together projects
- Establish a protected area for thyme in the region; *zeitra* will disappear within the next decade (*because it is pulled up from its root*). There is a need to regulate this issue, because it has an impact on beekeeping
- Continuously monitor the project
- Invite rural women to fairs and provide them with the relevant necessary information in this regard
- Find solutions for water shortage

7. Appendix 7 | Key milestones and stakeholders of the CEP-SM

The initial calendar established during the first and second steering committee meeting was as follows:

Year	Key milestones
2014 <i>(last quarter)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Recruitment of the project management unit team – Organization of planning workshops – Identification of the project working group
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review of the institutional and regulatory framework of environmental finance at the national level and proposal of conducive framework for the establishment of PES models that are suited to the region – Design and publication of communication tools around the project – Creation of a platform for exchange within the working group and highlighting the eco-design and forum on PES – Organization of a 3-day training session on PES for the working groups – Organization of a trip abroad on PES – Compiling an inventory of training and capacity building needs for the establishment of PES – Organization of a forum on PES – Expertise for the introduction and implementation of a new eco-certification system – Study on the establishment of the Distinctive sign of origin and quality (SDOQ) for thyme and spurge honey and PGI for argan oil to integrate eco-systemic values in order to grant them the eco-label – Draft of the marketing plan for argan and honey certified products in accordance with the “value chain” approach – Overall design of PES models in the pilot areas – Development of sustainable practices and of pilot site maps reflecting the situation of the baseline scenario – Economic evaluation of SE paired with the various practices and techniques of potential PES providers
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continuation of the study and technical assistance: review of the legal framework and institutional setup – Continuation of the technical assistance study: capacity building aspects – Training of stakeholders and project leaders on sound ecosystem management practices and international finance – Continuation of the study for the establishment of the Distinctive sign of origin and quality (SDOQ) for thyme and spurge honey over an 18-month period – Launch of a study for the promotion of argan PGI – Organization of a PES Eductour – Organization of a forum on PES (<i>March 2016</i>) – Continuation of the study and technical assistance for the establishment of PES in the four areas of the project
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Legal support and institutional set-up necessary for the implementation of the four financing mechanisms retained for PES – Support in the implementation of the project’s communication plan – Training of project leaders on PES financing mechanisms, good practices in Arganeraie rehabilitation and social media networks – Organization of an Eductour in collaboration with a network from the global scientific community – Continuation of the study for the establishment of the Distinctive sign of origin and quality (SDOQ) for thyme and spurge honey – Launch of a study for the establishment of an EcoOrganic label dedicated to the UNESCO/RBA – Participation in fairs, exhibitions and international meetings for the promotion of local products from SM and related to international finance – Support the awarding process of a carbon credit certificate for the benefit of a project leader – Conducting of a study of the management plan for the Inzerki apiary and supporting its implementation

Key stakeholders of the Project are combined into three categories:

Institutional Partners: These are Ministries that are closely connected to the implementation of the Project and that will become the custodians of the results and that will be carrying out certain functions of the project with respect to the facilitation of networks and sharing information. They also contribute to co-financing the Program:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF)

- National Agency for the development of oasis areas and Argan trees (ANDZOA)
- High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification (HCEFLCD)
- Regional Observatory for the Environment and Sustainable Development (OREDD)
- Ministry of the Environment (MEMEE)
- Agency for the SMD basin
- Regional Council of SMD
- Social Development Agency (SDA)

The implementation partners are:

- Agricultural Development Agency (ADA) which is the national institution implementing the project, it hosts the project Team, recruits and manages technical assistance and consultations, selects and signs contracts, purchases and ensures the maintenance of equipment, disseminates the results and ensures the overall sound performance of the project.
- Network of Associations for the Argan Biosphere Reserve (RAABR)
- Moroccan Federation of Associations of Argan Users
- Moroccan Association for the Geographic Indication of Oil (AMIGHA)
- National Association of Argan Cooperatives (ANCA)
- Network for the Development of Rural Tourism (RTDR)
- Local Development Associations (LDA)
- National Institutes in charge of research, development and training
- Moroccan Interprofessional Federation of the Argan Sector (FEMAGRANE) representing Argan beneficiaries.
- Argan cooperatives
- Bee-keeping associations

The technical and financial partners of the project are:

- UNDP-GEF
- The Moroccan government
- Design offices: ACTEON Environment and AGROCONCEPT

8. Appendix 8 | ProDoc Obstacles and Assumptions

<i>Obstacle</i>	<i>Project Strategy</i>	<i>FSR assumptions</i>
<i>1- Institutional weaknesses and poorly adapted legal instruments limit the creation, implementation and integration of PES models</i>	The CEP-SM suggests in its first component, the review of the institutional and regulatory framework in order to facilitate the implementation of PES and the creation of an inter-ministerial working group to encourage inter-sectoral coordination of efforts among stakeholders. This point is also strengthened by the introduction of various institutional, political and legal changes, that are necessary for the promotion and integration of PES in the SM region and throughout Morocco. A general regulatory framework for PES is meant to put this approach into practice and specify its mechanism. To consolidate the approach, a PES management and financing structure will be established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Efficient intra-ministerial coordination</i> – <i>Formal and rapid adoption of the revised regulatory and institutional framework</i>
<i>2- Lack of know-how and technical capabilities to develop PES systems and sustainable use of the related agricultural biodiversity</i>	Component 2 of the ProDoc, aims to develop the skills of technicians, auditors and decision-makers from the relevant organizations as well as ES providers and other key stakeholders. The idea is also to consolidate access to information on the value of eco-systemic services, basic data on land use and services provided in agro-ecological areas, positive externalities related to agricultural practices. This was carried out through the involvement of local institutions, partner organizations and national institutes. Leveraging and disseminating the lessons learned from the design and implementation of PES pilot models is also planned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Mobilization of the required technical assistance for training/ capacity building activities</i>
<i>3- The inadequate promotion and marketing of agro-biodiversity products from the argan ecosystem.</i>	To overcome the limitations that hinder the marketing of agro-biodiversity products from the SM region due to inadequate management and the regulation of certification systems in place, on the basis of Component 3, the project provides for the promotion of the organic production of argan oil, honey, their labeling and marketing. The goal is to guarantee the traceability of products, the viability of the production system and the higher income generation for local beneficiaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>The eco-certification process provides an important added-value to producers and other operators</i> – <i>Quality assurance, certification mechanisms and marketing plans are perceived as positive drivers</i>
<i>4- Operational challenges in the implementation of PES systems and awareness raising and the limited commitment of local communities with respect to biodiversity conservation.</i>	Operational obstacles were identified by the ProDoc with regard to the innovative and pilot dimension of the PES, its management process and the costs inherent to the PES preliminary activities. To address these concerns, it has been proposed to develop a PES pilot model based on the offsetting model practiced by the High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification through rehabilitation. An evaluation of pilot actions initiated in this context will also be conducted to identify sustainable practices and facilitate the replication of the models. As for the negotiation and formalization of the implementation of PES models, it shall be based on the terms and management modalities of the PES model as well as the mapping of the pilot sites. The monitoring and control of the relevant models are also planned in the framework of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Willingness for PES providers and other stakeholders to get involved in PES pilot sites</i> – <i>Adequate and rapidly mobilized technical assistance</i>





9. Appendix 9 | Analysis of FSR Indicators

The analysis of CEP-SM indicators focuses on SMART criteria (*specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound*). The goal is to determine whether the indicators are objectively verifiable. For the *time-bound* criterion, it shall be considered that achievement of objectives is scheduled for the project's time framework (*5 years*).



To guide the reformulation of certain indicators, suggestions are provided. They must be validated or adapted by the project leaders.







Legend	 SMART Indicator (5 criteria covered)	 Partially SMART (4 to 3 criteria covered)	 Non-SMART (2 criteria covered)
---------------	--	---	--





Impact Indicators

Indicator	Comments	
Objective <i>conserve the Argan ecosystem in the SM region, which plays a significant role on a global scale, through the payment of eco-systemic services and the sustainable use of the associated agro-biodiversity</i>		
1a) Net loss of the Argan ecosystem	This indicator is not measurable. It does not clearly state the results that should be measured here. It would be preferable to choose the following wording for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nb. of ha. lost in the argan ecosystem per year Nb. of argan tree bottoms lost per year 	
1b) Regeneration of Arganeraies	This indicator is not measurable. It is not sufficiently clear to measure the results in question. It would be more suitable to use the following indicators: Natural regeneration rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nb. of trees between the age of 1 to 5 per ha (<i>provided in note 6</i>) Nb. of ha regenerated 	
1c) Argan ecosystem area under restoration.	This indicator is not measurable. The indicator should be formulated as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nb. of ha under restoration in the argan ecosystem 	
4) Number of hectares identified for the scaling up of PES models after the end of the project.	This indicator is not specific to measure the progression towards the result because it includes two indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nb. of pilot PES models in each agro-ecological area Nb. of hectares covered by the PES model in each agro-ecological area 	

Performance Monitoring Indicators

Indicator	Comments	
Component 1 <i>Environment more conducive to the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SM region and the integration of the approach at the national level</i>		
5) Finalization and quality of laws and regulations developed and adopted required to establish and implement a national PES model.	This indicator is SMART, but its wording must be revised to give it more clarity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of laws and regulations for the implementation of the national PES models that were developed and adopted 	
6) Number and diversity of local and regional institutions actually engaged and that support the PES model.	Likewise. For further clarity the indicator should be formulated as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nb. of local and regional institutions providing efficient support to the PES model 	

Indicator	Comments	
Component 1 		
7) <i>Management structure for the development of PES models and the eco-certification of agro-biodiversity in the ABR.</i>	<p>This indicator is not specific or measurable. The indicator makes it difficult to know which progress to measure. Also, it is not reliable and clear to measure the expected results. It should be formulated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presence of an operational structure for the management of PES models and the eco-certification of agro-biodiversity in the ABR <p>Here, the measurement of the definition and availability of this structure's management arrangements should also be considered.</p>	
Indicator	Comments	
Component 2 Capacity building to implement and integrate the payment of eco-systemic services and the sustainable use of the associated agro-biodiversity.		
8) <i>Genderized number of producers and other operators involved in the target sectors of agro-biodiversity trained as potential ES providers.</i>	<p>This indicator is SMART, but its wording should be revised. Furthermore, it gives the impression of encompassing several levels in a single indicator. It should be revised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nb. of producers (M/F) trained as potential ES providers by the agro-biodiversity sector – Nb. of operators (M/F) trained as potential ES providers by the agro-biodiversity sector – Ratio of women trained per category and per sector in agro-biodiversity 	
9) <i>Genderized number of technicians and decision-makers that had their capacities upgraded, etc...</i>	<i>Likewise</i>	
10) <i>formal operational orientations for the implementation and scaling up of the PES approach at the regional and national levels.</i>	<p>This indicator is not specific or measurable. It is not sufficiently specific or clear to measure the progression leading to the results. It should be further clarified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality of operational guidelines for the roll-out of the PES approach at the national and regional level 	
Component 3 Capacity building of organic companies that adopt biodiversity-friendly practices through the labeling and marketing of local products from the Argan ecosystem		
11) <i>Genderized number of producers, professional organizations and intermediaries certified in accordance to the ABR eco-label</i>	<p>Same as indicator 8 under Component 2. This indicator should be formulated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nb. of producers (M/F) certified in accordance with the ABR eco-label – Nb. of professional and intermediary professionals certified in accordance with the ABR eco-label – Ratio of women certified per category <p>Furthermore, as an indicator, it is important to consider the availability of a functional eco-label.</p>	
12) <i>% of genderized producers adhering to the new label of protected geographical indications (PGI) for the honey sector</i>	<p>This indicator is not specific enough to establish the progression towards the expected result and its wording should be revised. Indeed, the percentage should be cross-referenced against the entire honey sector and it is also preferable to have the number of new beneficiaries that are affiliated with PGI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nb. of producers that are affiliated with the PGI honey – Ratio of women affiliated with PGI honey <p>As additional indicators, the availability of the PGI label should be considered for the honey sector as well as the presence of a professional association managing the certification process</p>	

Indicator	Comments	
<i>Component 3 next</i>		
13) <i>Marketing plan for the argan and honey sectors developed and adopted by the responsible institutions and key stakeholders</i>	For this indicator to be measurable, it should reference the number or quality of marketing plans in question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality of marketing plans developed for the argan and honey sectors – Nb. of marketing plans adopted by institutions in charge and key stakeholders 	
14) <i>Genderized revenue of producers and intermediaries using the space dedicated to the ABR/SMD eco-label within the regional logistics platform.</i>	This indicator is not specific as to the impact expected from this component. As indicated in the target, it should focus on increasing income for beneficiaries. Furthermore, the wording for the indicator should be revised. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Growth rate of revenue for producers that use the ABR eco-label within the regional logistics platform – Growth rate of intermediaries that use the ABR eco-label space within the regional logistics platform – Ratio of women per category For this point, an indicator relating to the availability of an operational regional platform should be considered.	
<i>Component 4 Strengthening of the conservation of agro- biodiversity in the Argan ecosystem by the PES pilot models.</i>		
15) <i>Genderized % of authorized stakeholders that have expressed an interest in taking part in the PES pilot models.</i>	SMART indicator, but the wording should be revised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nb. of stakeholders interested in taking part in the PES pilot models – Ratio of women interested in taking part in the PES pilot models 	
16) <i>Number of models quantifying ES in the various agro-ecological areas, particularly the cost-effective use of services provided and their potential economic profitability.</i>	SMART indicator, but it needs to be completed by considering the quality of PES models available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality of PES models developed – Nb. of pilot sites where the PES models are developed 	
18) <i>Genderized % of PES providers participating in the PES pilot models that receive funding and provide services to the target ES.</i>	This indicator is ambiguous. It should be further clarified.	

10. Appendix 10 | Specific, gender-driven actions

<i>Project</i>	<i>Gender sensitivity</i>
<i>Preservation of the ecosystem and natural services of the largest traditional collective apiary worldwide</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Produce a comparative analysis of the situation of men and women from an economic, social and cultural standpoint, with respect to their relationship with the apiary and the resources – Encourage the effective participation of women in the development and implementation of its PAG
<i>Conservation of the Zaouia Ait Bouzakri landscape and combating soil degradation through the restoration and development of agricultural terraces</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The men and women will equally benefit from the project's activities. The project will ensure that no social disparities are created between men and women – Promote the role and the contribution of women throughout the project – Assign conducting enhancement activities resulting from the development of terraces to women
<i>Contribution to the conservation of biodiversity and combating soil degradation through the rehabilitation of the Argan ecosystem in the Ighafri locality in the province of Taroudant</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strengthen women's leadership in argan management and decision-making for the conservation of this natural and cultural heritage – Ensure gender balance in the project's implementation by encouraging an equal participation of men and women according to the role and calendar for each group

11. Appendix 11 | Assessment of CEP-SM achievements

A capacity building program and a communication plan have been established and carried out very satisfactorily. Training sessions and a study trip were organized to raise awareness and promote the adherence of local committees to all of the project's paradigms. These trainings were highly appreciated by all the beneficiaries that were met with. The PGI label for local thyme and spurge honey was introduced and a dozen professional organizations are supported through their certification process. Eight projects adapted to four various PES systems have been identified and their implementation has been initiated. The Ida Outanane platform for sustainable development includes 3 PES pilot projects (i) the first being a traditional apiary in Inzerki to promote pollination by bees on the basis of crowdfunding campaigns (ii) safeguarding the cleanliness of the landscape through climate related waste management campaigns and (iii) PES for argan rehabilitation through terraces and related best practices as well as eco-design specification. The 4 other PES start-ups have been initiated in Awzioua, Ida Ougoummad, and Tidnas on the basis of terraces and the conservation of agro-biodiversity.

Furthermore, technical assistance was carried out to characterize the argan ecosystem in the four high-priority areas for the project. The designated local committees participated in the entire design and development process of the PES start-ups. However, certain regulatory measures as well as the existence of some socio-political tensions among the various "vocational" streams systematically derail the complete implementation of these pilot projects and can delay their development on the field.

Component	Results
Overall project objective conserve the Argan ecosystem of global importance in the Sous Massa region through the PES and the sustainable use of agro-biodiversity that is associated to it	<p>Indicator 1a: Net loss of the Argan ecosystem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 1a: unspecified Achievement: not applicable for the time being <p>Indicator 1b: Regeneration of Arganeraies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 1b : unspecified Achievement: Preparations initiated in 2017: 200 ha planned in 2018 with the contribution of the ADA and ANDZOA (financing provided by the GCF benefiting start-ups from Idmin and Idaougoummade) <p>Indicator 1c: Argan ecosystem area under restoration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 1c: unspecified Achievement: not yet started <p>Indicator 2 : % of increase of PES providers' revenues, who also take part in the PES pilot models.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 2: Minimum of 10% increase in revenue for PES providers that participate in PES systems Achievement: No noticeable increase at this stage. <p>Indicator 3: Number of PES pilot models and hectares covered in each agro-ecological area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 3: 9715 hectares covered in each agro-ecological area Achievement: A total of 3'650 ha are covered by PES systems: 250 ha in the Oued Tamraght - Imouzzar Ida Outanane basin; 330 ha in the Chakoukane water catchment; 3000 ha in the Oued Massa and Assif Oussaka sub-basin and 70 ha in the Arghel basin. <p>Indicator 4: Number of hectares identified for the scaling up of PES models after the end of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 4: unspecified Achievement: 145,000 ha: 10,000 ha of terrace land; 400 ha of eco-brand ; 50 ha dedicated to the Inzerki management plan and 134,550 covered by the carbon offsetting model of the Idaoutanane honey circuit.
Product 1 A more conducive environment to the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SM region and the integration of the	<p>Indicator 5 : Finalization and quality of laws and regulations developed and adopted required to establish and implement a national PES model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 5: Review of the regulatory and institutional framework and gender-responsive recommendations to be amended and revised during the 1st year; set-up and operationalization of an inter-ministerial working group (at least 30% of women) < 2nd year; new laws and regulations adopted < 5th year. Achievement: In 2015, a regulatory and institutional framework adapted to PES was identified for the rehabilitation of the arganeraie, MAP, arboriculture on terraces and eco-tourism. The

<p><i>approach at the national level.</i></p>	<p>first mission was launched and carried out by a consortium of 2 engineering offices and consisted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A literature review aiming to identify and characterize agricultural systems and practices as well as the eco-systemic services of the argan ecosystem. – An exploratory visit in each of the relevant territories to learn about the main characteristics of the territory and to meet the players – An identification of the environmental challenges with the players – Development of PES proposals – A workshop with players from the 4 territories to prioritize and discuss the most relevant PES for each territory, and identify the players that could be involved in the implementation of PES <p>As for the regulatory and institutional environment, this mission has shed light on two critical lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The current offsetting mechanisms for rehabilitation lack efficiency, mainly due to the difficulty in distributing funds to the populations – The prerogatives vested in the communal councils and provincial forestry councils by the Dahir from 1976 on the organization and participation of the population in the development of the forestry economy makes these two bodies privileged places to cater for the planning and monitoring of the establishment of PES systems – A second mission was dedicated to the review of the institutional and regulatory framework in view of facilitating the implementation of PES. – Evaluation: The review of the regulatory and institutional framework was studied extensively, and recommendations have been formulated. However, the intra and inter-ministerial working group (<i>at least 30% of women</i>) is not yet operational and could delay the completion of the laws and regulations at the end of the project. It should be noted that local committees examine the proposals made in this field by the technical assistance consortium. <p><u>Indicator 6: Number and diversity of local and regional institutions actually engaged and that support the PES model.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 6: Adoption of the revisions and amendments proposed for the regulatory and institutional framework at the national / regional levels. – Achievement: 15 stakeholders and beneficiaries have been identified and organized within 4 local committees (2016). The identification of stakeholders concerned by the regulation has been carried out (public institutions and civil society). Five local and regional institutions are committed and support the PES system (RDA, ANDZOA, DREFSO, FIFARGANE and ONMT). – Evaluation: The adoption of revisions and modifications proposed for the regulatory framework will be difficult to achieve by the end of the project. Involvement and commitment of stakeholders (elected officials, ministries, etc.): not yet acquired, is necessary. <p><u>Indicator 7: Management structure for the development of PES models and the eco-certification of agro-biodiversity in the ABR.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 7: Management structure dedicated to the PES development models and to the eco-certification implemented in the ABR from the 2nd year. – Achievement: Two structures have been identified. An ABR eco-label management body and the RTDR to offset the carbon footprint and collective waste management. However, their organization has not yet been established. – Evaluation: the target is partially achieved.
<p><i>Product 2 Capacity building to implement and integrate the payment of eco-systemic services and the sustainable use of the associated agro-biodiversity.</i></p>	<p><u>Indicator 8 : Genderized number of producers and other operators involved in the target sectors of agro-biodiversity trained as potential ES providers.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 8: 120 producers (at least 40 women) and 8 Associations/ NGOs by the 3rd year – Achievement: 56 female and 117 male eco-systemic service providers trained in the field of PES, particularly in terms of argan and honey value chains. 31 operators associated to the target sectors, including professional argan and producers as well as professionals in the agro-tourism sector. – Evaluation: Target has been largely achieved <p><u>Indicator 9: Genderized number of technicians and decision-makers that had their capacities upgraded to assess the tradeoffs of ES, the design and implementation of the PES models.</u></p> <p>Target 9: 30 technicians (at least 10 women) and 10 decision-makers (at least 3 women) by the 3rd year</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Achievement: 12 female and 9 male technicians and decision-makers were trained in the design and implementation of PES systems as well as 51 technicians and decision-makers and NGOs trained in the design and implementation of PES systems. – Evaluation: Target has been largely achieved <p><u>Indicator 10 : formal operational orientations for the implementation and scaling up of the PES approach at the regional and national levels.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 10: First draft < end of 2nd year; revised version after the trial phase < end of the 3rd year; final version < end of the 5th year. – Achievement: Assimilation of the PES principle. First draft of the operational orientations proposed: 4 videos on PES fundamentals, an institutional film on the project and a film of the education tour have been broadcasted on social networks. – Evaluation: the tests leading to a revision of the orientation have not yet been carried out, however the stakeholders met with insisted on the fact that the quantity of communication tools in the framework of the project made it possible to achieve a real understanding of the PES notion.
<i>Product 3 Capacity building of organic companies that adopt biodiversity-friendly practices through the labeling and marketing of local products from the Argan ecosystem.</i>	<p><u>Indicator 11: Genderized number of producers, professional organizations and intermediaries certified in accordance to the ABR eco-label</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 11: ABR eco-label established < 2nd year; 40% of producers (including at least 30% of women) and 40% of intermediaries (including at least 30% of women) certified < end of the 5th year. – Achievement: An eco-label has been defined, a logo proposed, a toolkit established, and the core of the management body has been identified – Evaluation: this target has encountered difficulties due to the controversy between the various partners because there are several labels and the question raised is what positioning to adopt with regard to these labels. Aware of this issue, the project's technical assistance developed advocacy campaigns based on the benchmarking of biosphere reserves at the global level and drawing on the strong points and lessons learned from these experiences <p><u>Indicator 12: % of genderized producers adhering to the new label of protected geographical indications (PGI) for the honey sector</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 12: The PGI label for honey has been established < end of the 2nd year; 60% of the producers of pilot sites certified < end of the 5th year. – Achievement: No professional organization is certified to date according to the ABR eco-label. However, the Souss regional honey association was accredited to manage the thyme honey PGI – Evaluation: At this stage, the target has not yet been achieved. The labeling designations is planned in 2018 for 20 organizations in the framework of a technical assistance contract <p><u>Indicator 13: Marketing plan for the argan and honey sector developed and adopted by the responsible institutions and key stakeholders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 13: First draft of marketing plans < end of the 2nd year; revision and adoption < end of the 3rd year; implementation is starting on the 4th year. – Achievement: Strategic marketing plans for argan oil and honey value chains have not yet been developed. However, a strategic option is being canvassed and a strategic marketing plan for certified argan oil and honey value chains has been identified in coordination with the regional council. – Evaluation: Target not achieved. <p><u>Indicator 14: Genderized revenue of producers and intermediaries using the space dedicated to the ABR/SMD eco-label within the regional logistics platform.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Target 14: At least 25% increase of revenues for certified users in the area dedicated to ABR/SM within the logistics platform. – Achievement: To date, there has been no increase in income for professional organizations using the space dedicated to certified ABR products. – Evaluation: Target not achieved.
<i>Product 4 Strengthening of the conservation of agro-biodiversity in the</i>	<p><u>Indicator 15: Genderized % of authorized stakeholders that have expressed an interest in taking part in the PES pilot models.</u></p>

Argan ecosystem by the PES pilot models.

- **Target 15 :** At least 30% of authorized stakeholders (including 30% of women) wish to take part in PES models in the pilot sites < end of the 2nd year and at least 80% < at the end of the 5th year.
- **Achievement:** 10 professional organizations to adopt the honey and thyme PGI have been designated from a total of 30 interested organizations.
- **Evaluation :** Target achieved.

Indicator 16: Number of models quantifying ES in the various agro-ecological areas, particularly the cost-effective use of services provided and their potential economic profitability.

- **Target 16 :** The PES pilot models are developed for at least one pilot site < end of the 2nd year and for the remaining pilot sites < end of the 3rd year.
- **Achievement:** 4 PES pilot models have been identified and developed: 1. The subsidy for the construction of terraces (benches); 2. The eco-brand for products from the Argan Biosphere Reserve; 3. Crowdfunding for the management plan of the Inzerki traditional apiary for the promotion of bee pollination services; and 4. Offset of the carbon footprint during the ida Outanane eco-tourism tour associated with collective waste management (operation “*keep it clean, keep it zounin*” initiated by the RDTR).
- **Evaluation:** pilot PES models are developed in accordance with the ProDoc. The target has been achieved.

Indicator 17: Number of entities requesting ES and their willingness to pay for the provided services.

- **Target 17:** At least one entity requesting ES identified for PES models in each pilot site and is willing to pay at least the minimum price set for the provided ES.
- **Achievement:** 11 stakeholders participating in the implementation of the PES systems in progress (ADA, 9 professional organizations, RDTR).
- **Evaluation:** The target is partially achieved, and a consolidation of efforts is necessary for its achievement on the field.

Indicator 18: Genderized % of PES providers participating in the PES pilot models that receive funding and provide services to the target ES.





- **Target 18 :** At least 50% of potential PES providers (including at least 30% of women) participate in PES models in the pilot sites (at the end of the project)
- **Achievement:** Not yet.
- **Evaluation:** Premature

Indicator 19: % of PES audits carried out in accordance with the established procedures.



- **Target 19:** At least 95% of PES audits are carried out in accordance with the established procedures and within the required time limits.
- **Achievement:** Not yet.
- **Evaluation:** Premature at this stage.




12. Appendix 12 | Analysis of M&E activities


The steps in the monitoring & evaluation process (M&E) and their deliverables have been listed and clarified in the ProDoc under Section IV. The nature of the activities and their frequency have been described as such. Furthermore, the work plan and the M&E budget have been specified. The monitoring and evaluation components carried out during the CEP-SM are summarized hereafter. The implementation of the M&E activities, in comparison with the ProDoc is assessed from a qualitative standpoint based on the qualitative scale below. Improvements are suggested in order to optimize the monitoring and evaluation process in place.



 Objectives achieved, activities carried out according to the objectives set out in the ProDoc	 Objectives partially achieved, activities carried out with a slight deviation from the objectives set out in the ProDoc	 Objectives not achieved, activities not carried out, major deviation from the objectives set out in the ProDoc	 Initiative developed by the CEP-SM and not set out in the ProDoc
---	---	--	--

na | non-applicable

Frequency	Action planned	Status	Actions carried out	Improvements to consider
Launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 preliminary workshop for the project will be organized within the first 2 months (<i>understanding of the project, first annual working plan, M&E requirements, planning of the steering committee, definition of roles and responsibilities</i>) 1 report from the preliminary workshop serving as the reference document for the project 		<p>A kick-off workshop was organized on June 27, 2014. This event made it possible to discuss the project approach, the steps and its results framework at the strategic level. The selection criteria of pilot sites as well as the 2014 work plan have been reviewed. Recommendations were introduced for the selection of the CEP-SM areas of intervention as well as for stakeholder commitment.</p> <p>The kick-off workshop did not address certain management aspects of the CEP-SM and did not further develop its action plan as required by the ProDoc. However, this last task was accomplished in October 2014 during the planning workshop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the project's activities based on the components (<i>effects</i>) and products expected Define and formalize the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders (<i>action plan for stakeholder management, formalization of commitment agreements</i>) Introduce the technical and financial management approach for the project Consolidate the workshop report into a reference document as required by the ProDoc.
Quarterly Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of progress achieved based on results-based management Updating of the ATLAS risks framework Project progress reports Monitoring of issues, lessons learned, etc. 		<p>The quarterly monitoring of the CEP-SM has been replaced by closer monitoring. Indeed, monthly monitoring is carried out by the PMU to inform the ADA and UNDP of the project's progress. The objective is to facilitate implementation of the project or to identify solutions to obstacles encountered. The NPD, NPC also attend these meetings. An agenda is set, and minutes are drawn up reporting on the decisions made.</p>	-

Frequency	Action planned	Status	Actions carried out	Improvements to consider
Mid-year monitoring	– Mid-year internal review of the project (<i>internal evaluation</i>) – (<i>not part of the ProDoc requirements</i>)		<p>A mid-year internal review (RMA) was adopted (<i>generally in June</i>) in the framework of the project M&E. This is not an activity required in the ProDoc. To do so, the PMU builds its intervention upon a summary of project achievements and its monitoring indicators (<i>in a PowerPoint format</i>). The project has conducted 3 RMA in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Based on the suggested recommendation, an action plan has been proposed (<i>except for 2016</i>).</p> <p>These meetings were attended by: the NPD and the PMU (<i>NPC and employees</i>). ANDZOA took part in the 2015 and 2017 RMA. The ADA only took part in the 2017 RMA.</p> <p>At the end of this mid-year review, a report was prepared. The data collected was interpreted according to UNDP-Morocco, via the ATLAS software, and monitoring indicators accompanied with an overhaul of the project risks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Lighten the background section of the project in the PPT (<i>relevant for the first review, but unnecessary for the rest</i>) ▣ Reformulate the corrective actions to implement with more accuracy in order to achieve the desired improvements (<i>avoid being generic and elaborate on how to proceed to apply the measure</i>) ▣ Ensure the presence of the implementing agency during the review on the project's state of progress
Annual monitoring	– Project implementation review (APR/PIR)		A PIR report is prepared annually in the framework of the project, and according to a format defined by the GEF. Project management assessments by UNDP-Morocco and the GEF relating to the project components are included in the report. PIR data is cumulative.	-
	– Annual status report of the ADA		These reports were established for 2016 and 2017. They summarize the progress achieved by the CEP-SM. As such, the material and financial achievements of the project are presented as well as the list of planned actions for the subsequent year. According to the PMU, reports are requested by the ADA on a monthly basis, or if necessary, to the NPC in order to have information on the project. A monthly report is also submitted to the ADA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Analyze the overall progress of the project ▣ Highlight the successes and gaps of the period ▣ Prepare a summary timetable for the actions of the following year

Frequency	Action planned	Status	Actions carried out	Improvements to consider
Annual monitoring (next)	Annual Reporting (not part of the ProDoc requirements)		<p>At this stage of the project, 4 annual reports were produced: 2 in 2014 in two different formats, 1 for 2015 and 1 for 2016. These reports are presented in tables summarizing the rolling out of the project as well as the update of the FSR by means of a self-assessment. As an introduction, a table recounts the risks encountered during the period, the lessons learned, the problems and changes that occurred in the lives of the beneficiaries. On this final point, the effects listed are generic. They do not make it possible to assess the degree or nature of the change in question.</p> <p>The way the major lessons learned are currently presented in the reports (<i>sometimes redundant</i>), do not enable the development of lessons learned that can be leveraged in the framework of the project or of a similar initiative. As for risks, mitigation measures in certain cases remain preliminary. Overall, aspects relating to the decision-making process, shifts and other changes in the management or execution of the project are not indicated. The same is true for the next steps of the project for the coming year. The interpretation of project expenditures is absent from the reports. However, indications of overall expenditures for the activity against the provisional budget are provided.</p> <p>The format used for the annual report does not provide an analytical approach for the unfolding of the project. Data is reported in the FSR but is not discussed or explained. Furthermore, in the terminology, the components which are ‘effects/outcomes’ in the ProDoc are designated as ‘products’ in the reports. Also, an activity evaluation table has been integrated into each outcome. This approach is misleading, because it only addresses one activity per outcome and it designates a quarterly evaluation (<i>in an annual report</i>). In addition, the wording of the activities in question must be revised, with an action verb in the infinitive. The content and format of the reports must be revised in order to better reflect the unfolding of the project, the year’s highlights as well as the shifts or readjustments that were adopted.</p>	<p>▣ Improve project <i>reporting</i> of the project by integrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The highlights of the period (<i>major successes</i>) • An interpretation of the activities carried out, in addition to FSR indicators for the period and the reasons behind the deviations (<i>explanation of a change in the execution of the activity and/ or its results</i>) • Budget monitoring and explanation of the cash outflow statement • Project implementation challenges, solutions provided and lessons learned • Next steps of the project including a timetable <p><i>Note: the title page, the table of contents, the list of abbreviations/ acronyms and appendices (based on the needs) are required</i></p> <p>▣ Document the project activities’ annual or periodic achievement rate (<i>operational progress percentage</i>)</p> <p>▣ Limit the use of abbreviations for a better understanding (<i>include a list of abbreviations and acronyms in the report</i>)</p> <p>▣ Document the constraints encountered and mitigation measures adopted</p> <p>▣ Opt for more factual documenting of the lessons learned and the changes brought forth by the project to beneficiaries</p> <p>▣ Improve the wording of the mitigation measures for high risks to be more specific and factual</p>

Frequency	Action planned	Status	Actions carried out	Improvements to consider
<i>Annual review (next)</i>	– Annual internal project review (not part of the ProDoc requirements)		<p>Annual internal reviews (AR) were carried out in the framework of the project between October and November. At this stage, 4 AR were conducted in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. To do so, the PMU is preparing a summary in the form of a PPT providing, inter alia, an overview of the project, of its annual results, the changes operated and its management. This document serves as a basis for the exchanges of the meeting organized in the presence of the NPD, PMU (NPC and his team), the UNDP, the <i>Ministry</i> of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MFAC) and the RDA. It should be noted that the ADA was absent from the 2015 and 2016 review. ANDZOA was not present during the 2016 meeting. Reports of the annual reviews explain the interventions of the stakeholders' present. The recommendations resulting from these exchanges are translated into an action plan (in 2016 and 2017).</p> <p>However, certain actions to be implemented lack accuracy to be able to provide a concrete solution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Simplify the project background information (<i>relevant for the first review, but unnecessary for the rest</i>) ▣ Present the effective results of the period and not only the targets and forecasts ▣ Lighten FSR excerpts presented by focusing on the indicators for the period ▣ Specify the actions to be implemented in order to facilitate the approach and achieve the expected results
Periodic monitoring	– Regular site visits to evaluate the project's progress themselves		<p>According to the PMU, the latter commits 50% of its time to field work. The purpose is to support the technical assistance teams, organize the beneficiaries and oversee the project's activities at the local level.</p> <p>For UNDP-Morocco, field visits for the purpose of project monitoring were conducted once a month in 2015 and once every two months in 2016. The increased frequency in the early stages of the project was to support its launch and operationalization. In 2017, only one visit was conducted by UNDP-Morocco. However, the ADA has not yet conducted any effective field monitoring at this stage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Strengthen field support of UNDP-Morocco and the ADA to overcome obstacles that could hinder the achievement of project results in the set deadlines.
Mid-term monitoring of the project	– Independent mid-term review in the midst of the project's implementation	na	The mid-term evaluation of the project was launched in September 2017. According to the 2016 annual review, it was supposed to be implemented in 2016.	na

End of project	– Final evaluation of the project	na	This task shall not concern the current mid-term evaluation. It is planned after the end of the project in 2019.	na
----------------	-----------------------------------	----	--	----

13. Appendix 18 | Lessons learned from the CEP-SM internal reviews

2014

List the successful PES experiences worldwide
Share the project's experience through blogs on ES and CE
Define and establish gateways connecting project stakeholders and beneficiaries

2015

Strengthen human resources' capacity for advocacy
Adopt a targeting within RBM for better efficiency and effectiveness of the projects
Promote online communication (<i>website, capsules, forums, Dropbox, TLR</i>)

2016

Strengthen human resources' capacity for advocacy
Adopt a targeting within RBM for better efficiency and effectiveness of the projects
Promote online communication (<i>website, capsules, forums, Dropbox, TLR</i>)

2017

Adopt a targeting within RBM for better efficiency and effectiveness of the projects and a direct effect on beneficiaries' livelihoods
Continue promoting through audiovisual communication (<i>films and video capsules</i>)

14. Appendix 14 | Risks identified by the CEP-SM

Year	Updated project risks	Suggested mitigation measures	
2014	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk that the accumulated delay since the formulation of the project slows down the momentum and leads to the project being faced with resistance and poor stakeholder credibility 2. Risk of failure of the interministerial coordination and integration at the regional level 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drive a new dynamic for the project's revival that is capable of making up for this backlog <i>How can this dynamic be concretely implemented (what does it entail?)</i> 2. The project will pay particular attention to the institutional system through the creation of an interprofessional working group and its motivation through a capacity building program <i>The working group is already part of the project's prerogatives according to the ProDoc</i> 	3. <i>Comment</i>
2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weak capacity of the ADA to implement the PES investment needs 2. Failure of interministerial coordination 3. Climate change could increase the occurrence of droughts in Morocco and impact the income and pressure on resources 4. Difficulty to implement PES mechanisms 5. Lack of time to integrate biodiversity in the production landscapes 6. The elections planned in 2015 and 2016 delayed the project's programs on the field 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PES pilot models will be carefully implemented as a demonstration. The financing of the start-up by the project could encourage ANDZOA and ultimately the private sector to endorse this initiative <i>mitigation of the absence of a contribution from the ADA cannot be based on a hypothetical interest of ANDZOA (that is normally committed as a key project stakeholder) and the private sector</i> 2. The main core of this institutional structure has been initiated and its capacities will be strengthened and supported by the project 3. Intervention in sites with a strong resilience to climate change 4. Start with the financing of start-ups and status <i>need to be more specific here as to the nature of these funds</i> 5. The project will invest major technical resources to catalyze a dialogue on PES at the national and regional level (<i>side event: 2015 arganeraie conference</i>) <i>since the risk is vague, its link to its measurement seems unclear</i> 6. The focus was placed on office design activities and planning field activities between the periods and post-elections 	7. <i>Comment</i>
2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of the regulatory framework could take a lot of time 2. Low involvement of PES project leaders 3. Difficulty in implementing PES mechanisms 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involvement of MPs <i>how and to what end?</i> 2. Parallel strengthening of the SPG and the GMP <i>be more specific</i> 3. Start with reliable financing: State and crowdfunding <i>be more specific with respect to the approach to adopt</i> 	4. <i>Comment</i>

In italic: evaluation comments

15. Appendix 15 | CEP-SM risk mitigation measures

<i>Year</i>	<i>Updated project risks</i>	<i>Suggested mitigation measures</i>
Operational	Delay in the achievement of the project's objectives	Propose to extend the project duration and improve the management system <i>how can project management be improved: is it a question of human resources, financial management, deadline management, etc.?</i>
Institutional	Lack of coordination among stakeholders	Define a tripartite partnership (CEP/APATI/RDTR) <i>will a partnership be sufficient to improve coordination, or should we opt for the definition of roles and responsibilities for each partner in a formalized framework?</i>
Management	Insufficient management capacity of SGP/GEF project leaders	Set out a multipartite support plan <i>what is the nature of this plan and what aspects does it focus on?</i>
Financial	Lack of stakeholder commitment to meet their financial obligations	Make a participation proposal <i>it should be specified that the participation here is a financial contribution (is it in kind or not?). Is this measure in line with the identified risk (could a participation proposal reduce such a bottleneck rather than high level advocacy)?</i>
Strategic	Low involvement of partners in the process of integrating environmental considerations into the decision-making system	Strengthen capacity at the highest level (<i>national workshop</i>) <i>also consider advocacy and awareness raising</i>
Environmental	Aggravation of the effects of CC on pilot project sites	Reinforce supervision and improve opportunities for adaptation within SGP <i>how will this measure be carried out concretely in order to mitigate the effects of climate change?</i>

16. Appendix 16 | CEP-SM risk mitigation measures

<i>Description</i>	<i>Impact & Likelihood</i>
Weak capacities of national institutions to efficiently contribute to project objectives and to manage the implementation process. The supervising ministry may lack the appropriate tools to be able to channel investments. The capacity of implementing PES investment requirements upon demand may be limited for the time being.	<i>I = Moderate</i> <i>L = Fairly likely</i> <u>Risk Evaluation:</u> LOW
There is a risk of failure of inter-ministerial coordination and integration. The SM region may face challenges in coordination project activities with other institutions outside of the MAF.	<i>I = Moderate</i> <i>L = Fairly likely</i> <u>Risk Evaluation:</u> LOW
According to climate projections, climate change could increase the occurrence of droughts in Morocco. Drought years could significantly reduce the yield of small-scale farmers and drastically reduce their income; declining land productivity may increase pressure on resources through horizontal expansion of agricultural activities and grazing and the unsustainable extraction of areas designated as being of international importance such as argan forests. This situation is further aggravated by the desertification process.	<i>I = High</i> <i>L = Unlikely</i> <u>Risk Evaluation:</u> LOW
Offsetting mechanisms based on PES models that aim to generate positive externalities may be too challenging to implement and ineffective to support payment from beneficiaries to ecosystem service providers.	<i>I = Critical</i> <i>L = Fairly likely</i> <u>Risk Evaluation:</u> MODERATE
There have been some major delays for this project since its inception and inclusion in the GEF work plan. Therefore, there is a risk for the momentum to slow down and for the project to be met with resistance and a low level of credibility from stakeholders once it is finally launched.	<i>I = Moderate</i> <i>L = Fairly likely</i> <u>Risk Evaluation:</u> LOW

17. Appendix 17 | Financial contributions for CEP-SM sustainability

Opportunity	Funding streams that could benefit the project	Influential factors
POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STATE		
<i>Green Morocco Plan (GMP)</i>	<p>The CEP-SM could benefit from the GMP through Pillar 2 according to its category 3 and which targets diversification projects to support the promotion of special products or local products in order to create additional agricultural income through additional productions (saffron, honey, medicinal plants, etc.) Pillar 2 considers the completion, by 2020, of 545 social projects benefiting 855,000 farmers and representing a MAD 20 billion investment. In its funding streams, it provides for subsidies benefiting sectors targeted by the CEP-SM⁷:</p> <p>Sector-specific development contract programs – Argan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rehabilitation of the arganeraie covering a 200,000 Ha surface area – Enhancement and promotion of argan products – Investment cost MAD 2.81 billion (<i>Status: MAD 2.25 billion</i>) - 2011-2020 – Involvement of the Interprofessional Federation of the Argan Sector (FIFARGANE) among the stakeholders <p>Flat-rate grants – livestock sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Beekeeping aggregation project around a honey extraction and packaging unit (honey house) MAD 7'500 / ton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Institutionalization of the CEP-SM within the MAF – Advocacy by stakeholders in the agriculture administration in favor of the CEP-SM – Mitigation of political challenges within the argan sector
<i>Agricultural Development Fund (ADF)</i>	<p>Under the 'rainwater harvesting system', a grant capped at MAD 2,500/ha is allocated for definitive developments, enabling the retention and storage of rainwater in the soil. These systems may include land development with the aim of improving agricultural productivity in the form of benches⁸ (terraces). Furthermore, as part of the ADF, there are some incentives to promote private investment in the agricultural sector to drive it towards targeted grants, and activities in order to better exploit the national agricultural potential, such as the creation of argan orchards: 80% of the acquisition cost for seedlings capped between MAD 6,000/ ha to MAD 9,000 / ha⁹.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Effective revision of the regulatory and legal framework carried out in the framework of the CEP-SM to integrate PES – Providing support to farmers to apply for financial aid – Resilience to climate change

⁷ Development contract programs for production sectors, MAF, Green Morocco Plan, 2015 edition (http://www.agriculture.gov.ma/sites/default/files/contrats_programmes_vf.pdf)

⁸ Agricultural Development Fund, 30 years serving agricultural investments, MAF, Green Morocco Plan, April 2017 edition (http://www.agriculture.gov.ma/sites/default/files/fda2017/FDA_2017_VF.pdf)

⁹ Support in the implementation of agricultural projects, Agricultural Development Agency (<http://www.ada.gov.ma/page/accompagnement-dans-la-mise-en-oeuvre-des-projets-agricoles>)

Opportunity	Funding streams that could benefit the project	Influential factors
POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STATE (NEXT)		
<i>Green Climate Fund (GCF)</i>	The DARED ¹⁰ aims to build the resilience of rural communities and the argan biosphere reserve by planting 10,000 ha of argan orchards with soil and rainwater conservation capacities. The project is estimated to last 6 years and has been allocated a budget of USD 49.2 million (<i>including USD 39.3 million GCF grant</i>). The project will also make it possible to support professional organizations representing argan producers, market access and promoting capacity building for beneficiaries as well as the sharing and co-management of natural forests. Hence, once these activities have been carried out, they will contribute to alleviating anthropic pressure on the natural forest. With respect to the improvement of living conditions for members of the community, especially women, the project aims to improve their livelihood. As for the environmental dimension, this project aims to contribute to the sequestration of 2,091,201 T.eq CO ₂ by 2030. ANDZOA is the implementing agency for DARED and ADA is the accredited entity which ensures the supervision of the project ¹¹ . Therefore, the DARED project could indeed be favorable for the maintenance and development of RBA preservation actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Institutionalization of the CEP-SM within the MAF – Involvement of the ADA and ANDZOA in the effective implementation of CEP-SM actions and its appropriation – Lobbying efforts in favor of the CEP-SM to the authorities concerned
<i>Rehabilitation</i>	Based on the decree of June 30, 1999 and its resolution of March 21, 2002 the compensation mechanism for the rehabilitation of state-owned forests to be operated or regenerated provides for the payment of subsidies to the beneficiaries of communities holding rights to use on the state-owned forests in return for the non-exercise of the right of way which hinders the rehabilitation of the planting of trees carried out by the administration. To collect this "compensation", the rightholders must unite in associations or cooperatives and respect the rehabilitation. This mechanism could benefit the CEP-SM at a later stage as another national PES mechanism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Operational coordination and intersectorality between the agriculture and forestry sectors – HCEFLCD interest in integrating CEP-SM components in its strategy
POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR		
<i>Crowdfunding</i>	Within the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) consideration is currently being given to <i>crowdfunding</i> . It particularly focuses on the definition of a legal framework that will govern crowdfunding activities. As such, a law on crowdfunding could be established in the 2017 legal framework ¹² . According to the MEF website, a conference under the theme "Crowdfunding, a catalyst of entrepreneurship and innovation" was organized on March 22 nd 2016 ¹³ .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Availability of a legal framework governing this activity

¹⁰ Development of Arganiculture orchards in Degraded Environment –DARED / sources: ADA: http://ada.gov.ma/web/uploads/FVC/Projet_Ada_FVC.pdf & Article on Aujourd'hui Le Maroc: <http://aujourd'hui.ma/societe/arganiculture-fonds-vert-pour-le-climat-39-millions-de-dollars-pour-le-projet-dared>

¹¹ ADA: http://ada.gov.ma/web/uploads/FVC/Projet_Ada_FVC.pdf & Aujourd'hui Le Maroc: <http://aujourd'hui.ma/societe/arganiculture-fonds-vert-pour-le-climat-39-millions-de-dollars-pour-le-projet-dared>

¹²The HuffingtonPost International, A law on Crowdfunding in Morocco in 2017 ?, 01/11/2016

¹³ <https://www.finances.gov.ma/fr/sitepages/actualite.aspx?itemId=1523>

Opportunity	Funding streams that could benefit the project	Influential factors
INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES (based on the assumption that the PES models are operational)		
<i>Argan sector</i>	The CEP-SM provides for capacity building actions for women's associations in the framework of the promotion of local products as well as support for ABR labeling and market access. Achieving these outcomes will benefit the argan sector and will improve the living conditions of the target population. The generated income will make it possible to develop the activities of women's cooperatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Availability of the ABR label for the argan sector and definition of its management framework – Capacity for cooperatives to meet ONSSA requirements – Availability of production and packaging materials – Women's readiness to postpone their payment – Mitigation of the multiplicity of sector representatives and convergence of their priorities and concerns – Resilience to climate change
<i>Tourism</i>	<p>Based on the PMU, there are development opportunities to establish a formal partnership with the tour operator, Tokelau-Paris, that is expected to bring 12 tourists per month for a visit of the honey tour. The idea is to strengthen the honey road as a sustainable tourist destination among European travelers and to ensure that the preservation of biodiversity and the scenic and cultural wealth of the region. The CEP-SM also aims to establish a carbon offset scheme for tourists visiting the honey road making it possible to generate income for the conservation of the region's heritage.</p> <p>The programs established in Morocco to mitigate the efforts of climate change through the granting of tourist accommodation subsidies to start using solar energy should be considered. In this regard, the Network for the development of rural tourism (RDTR) supports this approach.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Ida Outanane Tourist Host Country Association (APATI), that seeks to promote Paradise Valley will establish a synergy with the CEP-SM. Paid access on a voluntary basis, for a fee of MAD 10/tourist will be implemented. The entrance fee will be collected in tourist establishments in the concerned area in order to create a conservation fund managed by APATI and the local Paradise Valley Association.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Involvement of the tourism administration and institutionalization of the PES approach in the sector – Ability for local operators to develop the tour in question – Adequate promotion of the region as a sustainable tourism destination – Sufficient patronage and profitability of the destination for its preservation – Transparency in the management of the paradise valley fund – Resilience to climate change

Opportunity	Funding streams that could benefit the project	Influential factors
INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES (based on the assumption that the PES models are operational) - Next		
<i>Honey sector</i>	<p>The sale of honey benefiting the PGI (currently <i>thyme</i>) provide opportunities for a favorable positioning of the product on the market.; This has yet to be evaluated concretely pending the marketing of the product.</p> <p>Furthermore, the ABR label provided for in the framework of the CEP-SM is meant to increase the sale price of the concerned products by 20 to 30%. The label management body will integrate a panel of sector professionals: argan, honey, aromatic plants and tourism. From the sale price of the labeled product, 5% will be deducted to contribute to the ABR label management fund. The goal is to ensure the sustainability of promotional activities of the products with the ABR label after the CEP-SM is discontinued.</p> <p>Morocco is in the process of preparing Moroccan honey access to the European market through its listing on the list of countries authorized for export by the European Union¹⁴. This opportunity can also open up commercial prospects for honey labeled in the framework of the CEP-SM.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Granting of the PGI label for spurge honey – Capacity of small-scale beekeepers to meet ONSSA requirements – Facilitated labeling process for small-scale beekeepers (<i>costs and process</i>) – Beekeepers negotiating capacity with intermediaries in order to benefit from increased sale prices for PGI honey – Mitigation of the multiplicity of representatives of the honey sector and convergence of their priorities and concerns – Agreement among panels and sharing of a common development vision – Transparency in the management of the fund for the ABR label – Resilience to climate change

¹⁴ A. Monjanni, A-K Essamadi, A Terrab. *Beekeepers in Morocco : focus on honey production*. *International Journal of Innovation and Applied Studies*, ISSR Journals, 2017, 20 (1), pp.52-78