

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a *Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the two sister projects under the same CBPF-MSL (China Biodiversity Partnership Framework-Mainstream of Life) programme, they are: Project 1 (DXAL Project, PIMS 4824), Strengthening the management effectiveness of the protected area network in the Daxing'anling Landscape; Project 2 (Hubei Project, PIMS 4823), Strengthening the management effectiveness of the wetland protected area system in Hubei Province.*

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

Project Summary Table

Please find the detailed summary tables for 2 project in attachment

Objective and Scope

The project was designed to:

Project 1: The project goal is to conserve the globally significant biodiversity of the Daxing'anling Landscape, as a key asset for sustainable development. The project objective is to strengthen the management effectiveness of protected areas to respond to threats to the globally significant biodiversity in the Daxing'anling Landscape of Heilongjiang Province and Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

Three outcomes including:

Outcome 1: Development planning frameworks for the Daxing'anling Landscape provide the enabling environment for expanding the forest and wetland PA network and mainstreaming biodiversity as an asset for sustainable development

Outcome 2: The management effectiveness of the PA network across the Daxing'anling landscape is greatly strengthened

Outcome 3: Effective PA management is demonstrated in the Duobuku'er NNR and the Genheyuan NWP

Hubei Project 2: The project objective is to strengthen the management effectiveness of the wetland protected area system of Hubei province in response to existing and emerging threats to the globally significant biodiversity and essential ecosystem services.

The objective will be achieved through three outcomes:

Outcome 1: Establishment of Provincial level capacity to identify and alleviate wetlands conservation threats;

Outcome 2: Establishment of water-basin level capacity to identify and alleviate wetlands conservation threats;

Outcome 3: Establishment of protected area administration capacity to identify and alleviate wetlands conservation threats.

The sum of these three outcomes will be an institutional and policy safety net for WPA's that incorporates and coordinates conservation across all three management tiers: basin, province, and protected area.

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

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

Evaluation approach and method

An overall approach and method^[1] for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR (*fill in [Annex C](#)*) The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission to *China*, including the following project sites *including Hubei, Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang Provinces*. Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum: (*UNDP, SFA, Forestry Authorities in Hubei, Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang Provinces*).

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

Evaluation Criteria & Ratings

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

Project finance / cofinance

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

Mainstreaming

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

Impact

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.[\[2\]](#)

Conclusions, recommendations & lessons

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

Implementation arrangements

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

Government etc.

Evaluation timeframe

The total duration of the evaluation will be 55 days according to the following plan:

Activity-Timing-Completion Date

Preparation-6 days-July 15, 2018

Evaluation Mission-22 days-August 10, 2018

Draft Evaluation Report-22 days-Sep 5, 2018

Final Report-6 days- Sep 20, 2018

Evaluation deliverables

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following, please find in the attachment.

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

Team Composition

The evaluation team will be composed of *1 international and 1 national evaluators*. The consultants shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The *international evaluator will be designated as the team leader and will be responsible for finalizing the report*. The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The Team members must present the following qualifications:

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

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