# MID-TERM REVIEW

## *Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems Project*
## (DOLPHIN – EPASIIAE) (UNDP PIMS # 4620) (GEF Project ID # 5099)

**Final Version**

Submitted to:

**UNDP Bangladesh**


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The opinions and recommendations in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily reflect the position of the GEF, UNDP or the Ministry of Environment and any of its agencies. The consultants, namely the international consultant, are responsible for any errors or omissions.


**Front cover**: Focus group with livelihood women group; Joymonir Ghol village, Sundarban, 19 December 2018.

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| APR | Annual Progress Report |
| BEMP | Bangladesh Environment Management Project |
| BFD | Bangladesh Forest Department |
| BGDP | Bangladesh Green Development Programme (UNDP) |
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| CNRS | Centre for Natural Resource Studies |
| CO | Country Office |
| CWBMP | Coastal Wetland Biodiversity Management Project |
| DC | Deputy Commissioner |
| DG | Director General |
| DoE | Department of Environment |
| DoF | Department of Fisheries |
| ECA | Ecologically Critical Area |
| ECAMU | Ecological Critical Area Management Unit |
| EMS | Ecosystems Management System |
| EPASIIAE | Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems Project |
| FAO | Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations |
| GED | General Economic Division |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GoB | Government of Bangladesh |
| Ha(s) | Hectare(s) |
| IMED | Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources |
| LFM | Logical Framework Matrix |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MoEF | Ministry of Environment and Forests |
| MoL | Ministry of Land |
| MTR | Mid-term Review |
| NEX | Nationally Executed Project |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NPD | National Project Director |
| NPPP | National Project Professional Personnel |
| PA(s) | Protected Area(s) |
| PMU | Project Management Unit |
| PRIF | Pre-investment Formulation |
| PSC | Project Steering Committee |
| SLGs | Sustainable Livelihood Groups |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UNCED | United Nations Conference Environment & Development |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Education Science and Culture Organisation |
| UNOPS | United Nations Operations and Programme Services |
| US$ | United States Dollar |
| VCG | Village Conservation Group |
| AIG | Alternative Income Generation |

# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Project Information Table

The following table resumes the main project and Mid-Term Review data:

***Table 1.1**: Project and Mid-term related basic information*

| | |
|---|---|
| **UNDP/GEF Project Title:** | Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems Project (DOLPHIN – EPASIIAE) |
| **GEF Project ID No:**<br>**UNDP Project ID No:**<br>**Implementing Agency:**<br>**Co-Implementing Partners:** | GEF Project ID # 5099<br>UNDP PIMS # 4620<br>Ministry of Environment & Forests<br>Bangladesh Forest Department |
| **Region and Countries included in the Project:** | East Asia and the Pacific, Bangladesh, Bangladesh Sundarbans and neighbouring areas |
| **GEF Focal Area:**<br>**GEF Operational Programme:** | Biodiversity<br>8 Water Body based Operational Programme |
| **GEF Strategic Programme:** | 1 (Catalysing sustainability of protected area systems)<br>2 (Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation in Production Landscapes/River/Wetlands and Sectors) |
| **Implementing Agency**<br>**Executing Agency:**<br><br>**Project Partners:** | UNDP Bangladesh<br>Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate change<br>NGOs (IUCN-CNRS consortium, CODEC). |
| **Project Budget:** | USD 1,626,484 |
| **Funded By**: | Global Environment Facility(GEF) |
| **Programme/Project Goal:** | Contribute to the sustainable management of important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans. |
| **Programme/Project Purpose:** | (i) To introduce an effective management system in the existing Protected Areas established for dolphin conservation in the Sundarbans.<br>(ii) To expand the coverage of dolphin protected areas in and around the Sundarbans.<br>(iii) To enhance alternative livelihood options for local fisher folk to reduce their dependency on aquatic resources.<br>(iv) To enrich knowledge and information base of aquatic habitats in the region.<br>(v) To provide sectoral policy recommendation for aquatic ecosystem friendly practices. |
| **Evaluation Time Frame:**<br>**Date of the Evaluation Report:**<br>**Evaluation Team Members:** | 29 November 2018 – 31 December 2018<br>27 December 2018<br>Gianluca Ragusa, Md. Amanullah Bin Mahmood |

## 1.2 Project Description

The People's Republic of Bangladesh, nestled between the Indo-Himalayas and Indo-Chinese sub-regions (between 20° and 27° N and 88° and 93° E), is the farthest downstream alluvial zone of three major river systems of the Himalayan Range – the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, and the Meghna. The

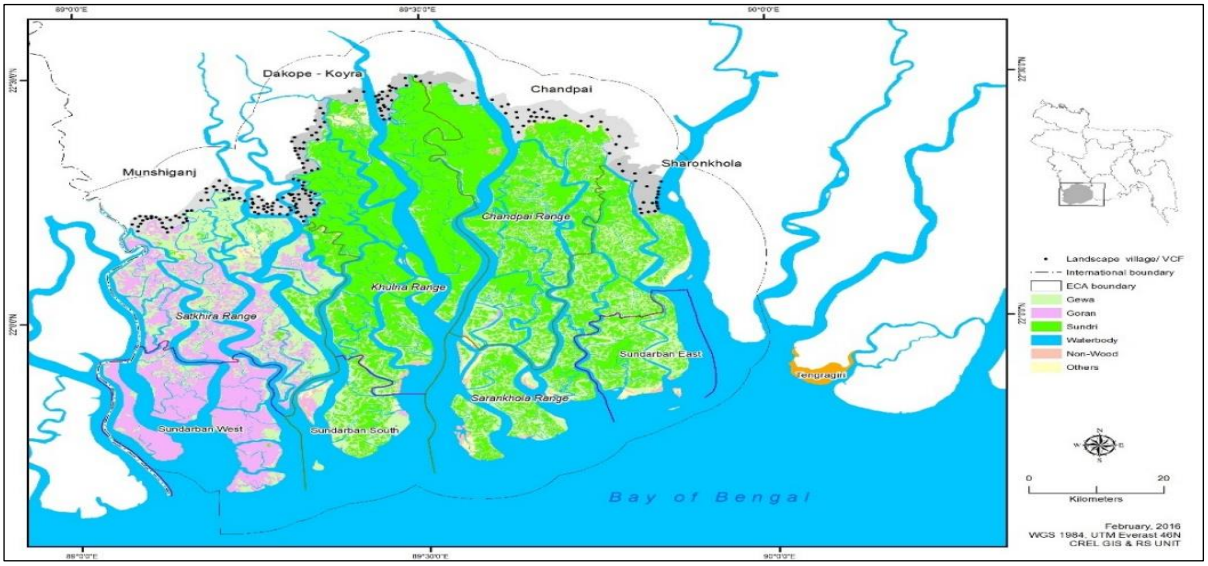
total geographical area of the country is 147,570 km$^2$, of which about 80% is comprised of one of the world's largest deltas (floodplains and wetlands networked over 300 rivers) bordered by India in the West, North and Northeast, by Myanmar in the Southeast and by the Bay of Bengal in the South (GoB, 2010).

The Sundarbans wetlands, world's largest area of mangrove, supports Asia's last two remaining species of freshwater dolphins, the Endangered Ganges River Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*), and the vulnerable Irrawaddy Dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*). While these species are generally threatened with extinction across the world, both occur in the Sundarbans in populations large enough for conservation and sustainable management, in ensuring their long-term survival.

The people Republic of Bangladesh has been reported as the highest densely populated (1,015/km$^2$) country in the world with a total population of more than 160 million (BBS, 2011). Around 75% of the population is rural and a significant proportion (around 35 million or 22%) lives along the 710 km of the coastal areas (World Bank, 2010; PDO-ICZMP, 2004). An estimated 50 million people still live in poverty, including almost 18% living under extreme poverty (BBS, 2010).

Recognizing the global biological significance of the area, in 1997, UNESCO declared the three Wildlife Sanctuaries in the far southern portion of the Sundarbans viz., Sundarbans West (715 km2), Sundarbans South (370 km2), and Sundarbans East (310 km2), covering 139,700 ha, as a 'World Heritage Site' (Fig. 1), in the Bagerhat district. Together these sanctuaries encompass about 23% of the Reserved Forest (UNDP, 2016). In 2012, the Government of Bangladesh declared three Dolphins Protected Areas (PAs) comprising of six channels each with five km segments that support especially high densities of these two dolphin species.

***Figure 1:*** *The three Protected Areas of the EPASIIAE Project.*




The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), acting as an implementing agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as a funding donor, is providing assistance to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, under the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, in the preparation, management and implementation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Medium Size Project "*Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems*" (Dolphin – EPASIIAE project). The project was approved the 16 March 2016, and an Inception workshop was held the 18 July 2017, with the final launch of the project. The

project is being implemented by the Bangladesh Forest Department with the support of UNDP Bangladesh in the Bagerhat district covering the three (PAs), namely Chandpai, Dudmukhi and Dhangmari wildlife sanctuaries.

The goal of the project is to contribute to the sustainable management of important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans. The EPASIIAE project has two expected outcomes: OUTCOME 1: Important aquatic ecosystems support the globally threatened species of the two species Cetaceans are conserved. OUTCOME 2: Community-based ecosystems management systems is in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation.

## 1.3 Project Progress Summary

The EPASIIAE project has been signed on the 30 of June 2015, its final approval dated the 16 March 2016 and its starting up the 1 of July 2016, but the project effectively started with the inception workshop the 18 of July 2017. Total budgeted amount of this project is USD 1,626,484 (128,493,000 Bangladeshi Taka). Official duration of the project is from July 2016 to December 2019. However, due to unavoidable circumstances and due to the funding and implementing partners procedures, the project started in July 2017 and it will be completed by the 31 of December 2019.

The AWP of 2017 was 115,000 USD and almost 100% of the delivery has completed and in 2018 the AWP was of 550,000 USD and the end of the December 2018, it will be delivered around 95% of the amount.

Along with the UNDP Project Management Unit (PMU), two partner NGOs are implementing this project, namely IUCN-CNRS consortium and CODEC.

The project is following the PAs management plan, being approved by the Government every 6 months. The project is providing SMART patrolling (surveillance) activities in the three sanctuaries and in the neighbouring areas. Relating to the SMART patrolling, the project has provided training to 80 employees of the Forest Department and will conduct further training for more 20 employees. The GPS based patrolling also helps to other purposes; Identification of the Dolphins abundances, avoiding unauthorized movements and identifying the location of illegal fishing and poaching activities. The project has successfully conducted a “Research Gap Analysis”, identifying 5 new hotspots for the two species Dolphins and have been drafted and approved 5 sectors guidelines (fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, marine traffic).

The project intends with the sub-project CODEC under the Outcome 2: Output 2.2 to provide livelihood support to 1000 marginalized villagers, notably fishermen and women, previously involved in fishing activities in the sanctuary and neighbouring areas. The total duration of the CODEC activities is from July 2018 to December 2019. The total budgeted amount of the CODEC activities are USD 615,662. The livelihood sub-project is providing support to few villages of the 3 Unions (Chilla, Chandpai, Baniasanta) in 2 Upazilas (Mongla and Dacope) and in 2 Districts (Khulna and Bagerhat). The sub-project is presently providing support to 365 households. Along with the livelihood training, the project has provided 32,632 tk. (443 USD appx.) to each household, for starting AIG. The sub-project is also providing specific training to 10 SLGs (Sustainable Livelihood Group).

According to the Ramsar Convention, Resolution VII.18, Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management, ratified during “People and Wetlands: The Vital Link” 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands

(Ramsar, Iran, 1971), San José, Costa Rica, 10-18 May 1999, the Integrated water resources management is based on the concept of water being an integral part of an ecosystem, a natural resource and a social and economic good, whose quantity and quality determine the nature of its use (Agenda 21, United Nations, 1992). Another key issue is the lack of awareness of the cross-sectoral nature of water problems and the need for a new development paradigm towards integrating the technical, economic, environmental, social and legal aspects of water management. The development of administrative units in water resource management has to coincide with river basins' boundaries instead of political boundaries. The lack, or inadequacy, of water legislation and policies is another stumbling block to integrated management of river basin and optimal use of water resources.

Despite the reviewed project, is carrying on some of the Ramsar suggested actions, is still lacking in scientific and technical knowledge on the ecosystem as well as in governance instruments and sustainable and equitable co-management measures for the wise use of the PAs and wetlands areas, notably in the local communities participation and ownership of the sustainable and equitable management of the natural resources. Some solutions are included in the conclusions and recommendations related to the design, outcome 1 (conservation) and 2 (Livelihood).

More specifically, the project relevance and effectiveness supports one of the last remaining and viable populations of the Ganges and the Irrawaddy dolphins across the world. Some concerns in terms of cost effectiveness (small numbers of villagers beneficiaries of the outcome 2 livelihood) and in term of sustainability for the low inclusion and participation of the villagers in management and planned co-management activities.

Generally speaking, the project needs a 1 year extension to complete the planned and revised activities and a revision and a strengthening in the management and in the outcome 1 and 2 activities and a future planning for new activities in strengthening the livelihood and participation of the people villagers in the PAs sustainable and equitable co-management of the natural resources. The women groups and subsistence fishers in the livelihood sub-project are facing strong challenges due to the previous commitment with local moneylender (*dadonder)*, and loss of the source of subsistence fishing notably in the no-take period around the PAs. A pilot study need to conduct for collect information on how to regulated access to the fishing and collection of other aquatic resources (eg. crabs), around the PAs during no-take period with a Monitoring Control and Surveillance and co-management strategy, as suggested by the conventions and guidelines of the main international related organization cited (e.g. Ramsar Convention, UNESCO, etc.). There is the need in terms of sustainability and livelihood of the people to identify and draft a future participatory 4 years pilot project, to apply an effective participatory co-management of the aquatic resources in the PAs.

## 1.4 MTR Rating and Achievement Summary Table

The Table 1.1 in the following page summarizes the project achievements and rates.

***Table 1.2:*** *MTR Ratings and Achievement Summary Table for the Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems Project*

*The MTR table uses the following 6-points scale* ***to rate the project's progress towards the objective and each project outcome****: Highly Satisfactory* ***(HS)****, Satisfactory* ***(S)****, Moderately Satisfactory* ***(MS)****, Moderately Unsatisfactory* ***(MU)****, Unsatisfactory* ***(U)****, or Highly Unsatisfactory* ***(HU).***

| Measure | MTR Rating | Achievement Description |
|---|---|---|
| **Project strategy** | N/A | |
| **Progress Towards Results** Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | **Objective:** To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local people.<br><br>Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | **MS**: Capacities to manage PAs (specially the surveillance, monitor and control by the FD and voluntaries) partially established, lack of knowledge and information still exist on aquatic resources and present Dolphins population in the sanctuaries and the rivers (including Indian part).<br><br>**MU**: In meeting the livelihood aspirations of local people, the PAs management plan foresees that total conservation measures have considered without the scientific and technical data on the status of the aquatic resources. Moreover, it does not consent that without the effective participation (e.g. co-management committees) of the local people the sustainable co-management wouldn't successful and the two outcomes of the project haven't coordinated effectively. |
| | **Outcome 1**: Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved.<br><br>Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | **MS:** Several key activities under this outcome have already completed (Table 4.4). Although there are more activities have completed but few activities need to endorse by the appropriate government authorities for proper adoption (i. e. sectoral guidelines, regional technical group and regional cross-sectoral committee etc.). Moreover, for better management of the PAs it is highly required to continue surveillance and capacity building of more conservation and economic staffs, adopt the PAs management plan properly, setting boundaries and demarcation of sanctuaries and a study to identify the dolphin population. It is also required to conduct a scientific study, prepare and adoption of community-based resource co-management plans,<br>The Outcome 1 needs a no-cost extension for one year considering the dues activities as well as provide more options for effective adoption of completed activities. |
| | **Outcome 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation.<br><br>Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | **MU**: The ownership of the communities in the EMS is far away to be achieved. The adopted model is based on a top-down approach with the FD and IUCN consortium that planned to manage with the management team. There are no co-management committees in the villages for EMS. However, there are few beneficiary groups (eg. Sustainable Livelihood Group - SLG) have formed, which are only involved in the management with some income generating activities. These groups have formed for providing the compensation to the losses of their income, due to the closure of the areas to marginal subsistence fishing and collection activities (eg shrimp fry, crabs, other aquatic resources, etc.). |
| **Project Implementation & Adaptive Management** | **Objective:** To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local people.<br><br>Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | **MU**: The project has suffered more due to delay starting. For this reason, planned activities have not completed by the stipulated timeline. During the midterm (December 2018) total 39% of the project budget has spent, it is very difficult to spend rest of 61% in the only one year. It is already underlined that for completion of planned work, a 1 year extension of the project will be required. An effective work plan will be needed to complete key dues work eg. some measures of conservation, communication and awareness (namely surveillance by the FD and voluntaries), develop scientific and technical data (during the project implementing situation) on the dolphins and on the aquatic resources (Table 4.7). |
| | **Outcome 1**: Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved. | **MS**: Several planned activities under this outcome have already completed. However, few completed activities need to endorse by the government for proper adaption and some planned activities need to conduct in the coming year (Table 4.7). the project needs to one year of no-cost extension considering the situation,. |

| Measure | MTR Rating | Achievement Description |
|---|---|---|
| **Project strategy** | N/A | |
| | Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | |
| | **Outcome 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation.<br><br>Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | **MU**: The activities of the Outcome 2, livelihood has been underestimated in the design and needs a no-cost extension for 1 year to comply with the expected outcomes in terms of complete the livelihood related activities, communication and awareness in school and surrounding village level.<br><br>Formulation of community-based resource management plan is required, an appropriate committees with the presence of the representatives of the villages (eg. local government member, representative from the community, women groups, fishermen groups, traders, etc.) and an appropriate budget for the management plans have to be allocated for continuing the proper management.<br><br>Notably, effective participation of the bordering villages of PAs in the co-management plans is a key element to manage the natural resources of PAs sustainably. A pilot study also required on sustainable extraction of resources ( small-scale subsistence activities eg. controlled amounts of fishes or collect a controlled amount of crabs) all along the year with technical and scientific knowledge of the consistent of natural resources.<br><br>Above mentioned studies have to conduct and an amendment of the policies and management plan will help to allow fishing and collection of other resources based on periods and species in and around the PAs for the subsistence activities of the villagers according to the the stocks. |
| **Sustainability** | **Objective:** To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local people.<br><br>Achievement Rating: (rate 4 pt. scale) | **MS**: To build the capacity effectively, the project expect to flexibly implemented the law interpreting with a less conservatory regime. The conditions of the local people and the subsistence living are unsafe and unhealthy as well as working conditions of the people of the fishing villages located in adjoining area of three PAs also unsafe and unpredictable. Compliance of strong law also hamper their subsistence living, introducing an effective participatory co-management will help to sustain the project results. It is suggested that a strengthening of the activities of the livelihood outcome, a complete stakeholders and needs assessment, socio-economic assessment and align the outcome and results with an upcoming project also sustain the project results. |
| | **Outcome 1:** Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved. Achievement Rating: (rate 4 pt. scale) | **MS**: The conservation sub-project has to extend the planned communication and awareness activities to the bordering villages. Draft a co-management plan for the PAs, conduct field studies on the effective population of the dolphins (locally and in the region and with the India trans-boundaries waters) and on the fish and aquatic resources stocks of the PAs, more coordinated with the activities of the livelihood sub-project will help to sustain the outcome 1. |
| | **Outcome 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation. Achievement Rating: (rate 4 pt. scale) | **MU**: Based on the planned project activities, providing livelihood support to the very small number of beneficiaries of the surrounding village of the PAs for reducing their dependency on harmful fishing and other aquatic resources collection activities. The activities needs a 1 year of no-cost extension to comply with the expected outcomes as gathering multiannual data on the aquatic resources (including dolphins), co-management plans for three existing PAs, formulation of community-based resource management plans, implementation of selected activities identified.<br><br>Finally, the sustainability of the project still under great risk, due to the following lacking activities:<br>• Lack of an effective participative and inclusive co-management of the natural resources by the FD and the people of villages. The co-management should based on an effective knowledge of natural resources |

| Measure | MTR Rating | Achievement Description |
|---|---|---|
| **Project strategy** | N/A | |
| | | of the PAs (based on multiannual data on the aquatic resources and an effective Monitoring Control and Surveillance).<br>• Existing regulated fishing and other aquatic resources collection activities in and around the PAs<br>• Existing pressure from the moneylenders (local Dadondar) for pay back his/her money that has lent by the marginal fishermen as advance sell of their collected fish, shrimp fries and other aquatic resources. This pressure could increase the risk to get them back to illegal fishing and collecting activities.<br>• Lack of people proper participation, inclusion and adoption of the project supported guidelines and plans.<br><br>The project needs to consider the mentioned activities seriously for effective sustainability of the project and of future planning. |

## 1.5 Recommendations

The MTR team recommendations are summarised in the following table:

***Table 1.3:*** *MTR Recommendations summary table*

| Outcomes | Recommendations |
|---|---|
| **Overall (Management)** | 1. Strengthen the PMU with two more personnel (one administrative and one monitoring expert). |
| | 2. Strengthen coordination and simplification among the funding partners in funding procedures. |
| | 3. Plan a 1 year more no-cost extension for the project to complete the planned and revised activities. |
| | 4. Conduct studies and analysis on scientific and socioeconomic aspects on the PAs aquatic resources and socioeconomic aspects of the poor people living in the three villages bordering the PAs. |
| **OUTCOME1: Conservation** | 5. Strengthen the communication and awareness activities notably in the villages around the three PAs. |
| | 6. Introduce and adopt an effective sustainable and equitable participated co-management plan for the three Dolphins PAs. |
| | 7. Develop co-management plans for the three PAs, taking care of the ownership and participation of the people and their needs (to be assessed) for an effective participated sustainable and equitable (women) co-management of the aquatic resources in the PAs. |
| **OUTCOME2: Livelihood** | 8. As per the stock assessment and ecological studies of the aquatic resources, plan and permit regulated access to the PAs aquatic resources at low impact subsistence activities (e.g. artisanal fisheries, crabs and wood women collectors, etc.). |
| | 9. Support women and fishermen in the villages, taking care of their previous engagements with the local moneylenders (*dadonder*). This is a potential threat to the effectiveness and sustainability of the project outcomes. |
| | 10. Identify and draft a new future participatory (notably three villages) 4 years project sustainable and equitable co-management project, funded on the Government or other external funding support to assure the sustainability of the project and of the Government policies and strategies and and effective livelihood to the people villagers bordering the three PAs . |

# 2. Introduction

In accordance with the UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a Mid-Tem Review (MTR), upon the partial completion of the implementation of the project. The Mid-term Review is the interim evaluation of the project, to identify project progress, achievements and shortcomings and to suggest and revisions on the activities to assure the achievement of the outputs and the project sustainability. As well, the MTR main objective is individuate lessons from any project success and failure and to provide valuable solutions based on the intended objectives and outcomes.

## 2.1 Purpose of the MTR and Objective

The MTR of the project titled *"Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems"* has conducted as per the "*Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects"* . The MTR team has assessed progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes, to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results.

The MTR team has assessed the progress of the project on following four main categories:

- **Project strategy:** Review the project design in different perspectives, i. e. relevancy with assumption and objective, trend of achievement towards planned results and analyse the project result framework including effectiveness of the present indicators etc.
- **Progress towards results:** Review the progress of Log-Frame indicators as per the project mid-term targets.
- **Project implementation and adaptive management:** Review and analyse the project management arrangement, work planning, financing, project level monitoring, reporting and communication.

and

- **Project sustainability:** Analyse the project sustainability in different perspectives i. e. financial, socio-economic, governance, institutional and environmental.

The MTR team has assessed early signs of project success or failure with the goal, identifying and suggesting the necessary changes to be made to set the project on track to achieve its planned results.

The approved Inception Report and the Terms of Reference (TOR) (Annex – 8) sets out the strategy, methodology and expected outputs of the Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Project.

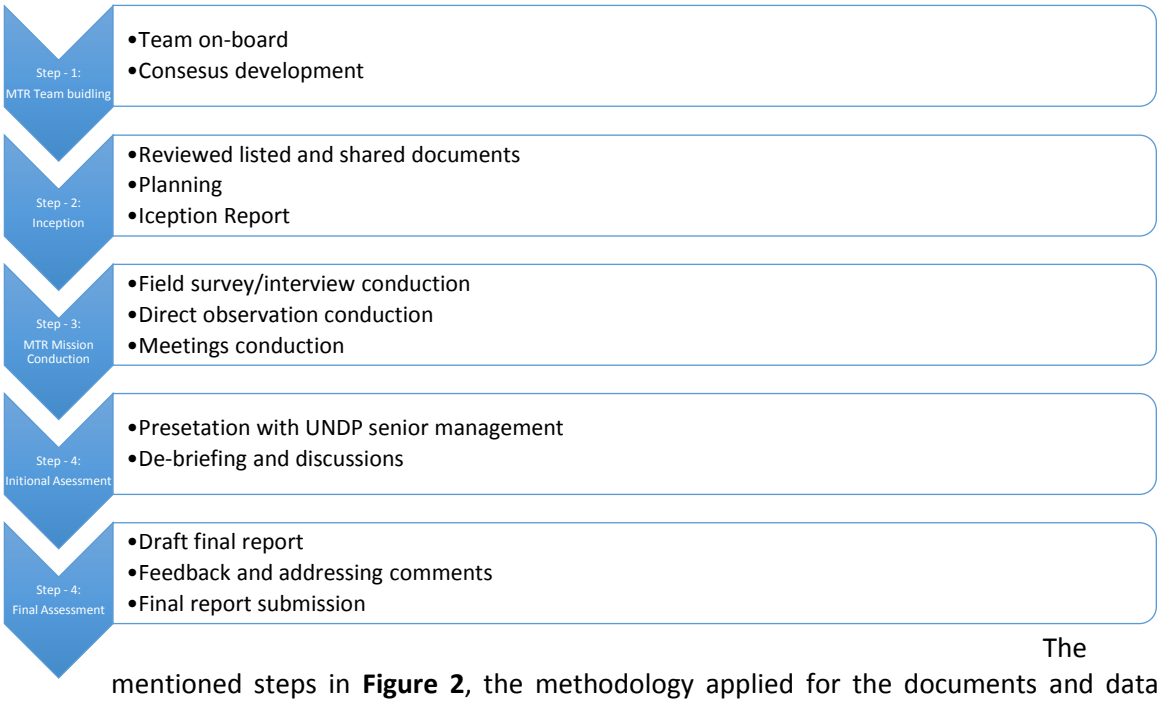
The duration of the MTR was 25 days that was spread over between 28 November and 31 December 2018, including 7 days field mission from 17 December to 24 December in Dhaka and project location at Khulna, Bangladesh. The MTR team consisted of two independent consultants one International MTR Consultant (as a Team Lead) and one National MTR Consultant (as a Team Member).

## 2.2 Scope and Methodology

The MTR applied the following steps for collecting and analyzing the primary and secondary documents, data and information.

As per the methodology (Fig. 2 in the following page) proposed in the Inception Report according to the ToR, the MTR has adopted different participatory methods for the review, collecting and analysing related information and project documents. Moreover, conducted face to face interviews and FGDs with key informants (at national and local level, including at three villages level) and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Treats) analysis for the triangulation of the information collected on literature and on the field and other technical analysis evaluation instruments, such as Logical framework analysis, that is included in the MTR Final Report.

***Figure 2:*** *Steps of the methodology adopted by the MTR*




The mentioned steps in **Figure 2**, the methodology applied for the documents and data and information collection was the following:

a) **Documents collection and analysis:** The MTR team has collected and reviewed a significant amount of project related documents, as well as other scientific and technical related documents and data. The lists of the reviewed documents mentioned in the **Annex 2.**

b) **Conduct meetings with interviews and focus groups:** The MTR has conducted the following meetings, with the related project personnel, beneficiaries, stakeholders/stakeholders representatives (see following table 2.1).

***Table 2.1:*** *Lists of meetings conducted by MTR*

| Conducted meetings | Requirements |
|---|---|
| Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), Bangladesh Forest Department under the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) | Head of the hosting government agency and key person of Project Implementation Committee (PIC). |
| Part of the project Implementation Committee (PIC) | CCF, Bangladesh Forest Department |
| Programme Analyst (Environment), UNDP Bangladesh | Programme Manager of the implementing agency |
| Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), the Sundarbans East Forest Division, Khulna | Conservator of the project implementing area (three Dolphin Sanctuaries) |

| Conducted meetings | Requirements |
|---|---|
| Project Management Unit (PMU) | Management unit personnel |
| Dolphin Conservation Team | Local CBO (formed by the support of the project) |

**c) Face to face interviews:** The MTR team has conducted several face to face interviews and focus groups with key project personnel. informants and stakeholders representatives and has collected valuables information related to the project (see table 2.2 in the following page).

***Table 2.2:*** *Lists of interview conducted by MTR*

| Persons interviewed | Requirements |
|---|---|
| Project Director (PD) | As a head of the Project Management Unit (PMU) |
| Project Manager (PM) | The key person of the Project Management Unit (PMU) |
| Programme Coordinator, IUCN-CNRS Consortium | As a team lead of the implementing partner |
| Project Coordinator, CODEC | As a Team lead of the implementing partner |
| Ms. Shahara Banu | Project beneficiary |
| Ms. Monju Begam | Project beneficiary |

d) **Focus Group Discussion (FGD):** Three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) have conducted with the project beneficiaries at different levels. The following table 2.3 lists focus groups discussion conducted during the MTR.

***Table 2.3:*** *Lists of Focus Group Discussion conducted during the MTR*

| Conducted FGD | Requirements |
|---|---|
| SLG Group of Joymonir Goal Village, Union: Chila, Upazila: Mongla, District: Bangerhat | Direct project beneficiaries women group (marginal fishers) and the group formed by the support of the project. |
| School children students of Badamtala Madhomik Biddhaloy (Laudob Badamtala Secondary School) at Karamjal, Upazila: Mongla, District: Khulna | Beneficiaries of project supported outreach programme |
| Beneficiaries of the Rekhamari Village, Union: Baniasanta, Upazila: Dacope, District: Khulna | Direct project beneficiaries (marginal fishers) |

e) **Analysis:** Project budget and Logical Framework indicators has been analyzed, per output and activities.

The following table 2.4 shows the itinerary of the MTR.

***Table 2.4****: Itinerary of the MTR Team during the MTR*

| Date | Location | Time | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| 17 December 2018 | Dhaka | 12:00 pm | Arrival of the International consultant |
| | | 2:00 – 4:00 pm | Introductory meeting with UNDP Assistant Country Director and |
| 18 December 2018 | Dhaka | 8:30 am | Travel to Khulna (Via Jashore) |
| | Khulna | 3:00 pm – 8: 30 pm | Meeting and discussion with PMU, Project Partner (IUCN-CNRS and CODEC) |
| 19 December 2018 | Khulna | 8.00 am | Travel to project sites |
| | | 9:00 – 9:30 | Visiting conservation site: Dhangmari Dolphin Sanctuary |
| | | 9:30 – 11:00 am | Visiting the livelihood programme at Joymonir Gol village, discussion with beneficiaries and SLG group |
| | | 12:00 – 1:30 pm | Discussion with students under outreach programme at Karamjal Wildlife Center, Mongla |
| | | | Discussion with patrolling staff at Karamjal Wildlife |

| Date | Location | Time | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Center, Mongla |
| | | 2:00 – 3:00 pm | Visiting livelihood programme and discussion with beneficiaries at Rekhamari Village at Dacope Upzila |
| | | 3:30 – 4:30 | Discussion with Dhangmari Dolphin Conservation Group at Dhangmari Forest Office |
| | | 5:00 pm | Travel to Khulna |
| 20 December 2018 | Khulna | 9:00 am – 12:00 pm | Discussion with Project Director at PMU |
| | | 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm | Discussion with Project Manager at PMU |
| | | 3:30 – 5:30 pm | Working with documents at PMU |
| 21 December 2018 | Khulna | 6:00 am | Travel to Dhaka |
| | | 12:00 pm | Arrived at Dhaka |
| 22 December 2018 | Dhaka | 9:00 – 10:30 am | Meeting with Divisional Forest Officer, the Sunderbans East Forest Division |
| 23 December 2018 | Dhaka | 9:30 – 10: 30 | Meeting and discussion with the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) and a part of Project Implementation Committee (PIC) |
| | | 3:00 – 4:30 | De-briefing with UNDP Senior Management |
| 24 December 2018 | Dhaka | 1:00 pm | Departure of International Consultant |

**Limitation of the MTR:**

The time-frame of the MTR was short to carry out the whole of activities. The project sites are located in and around the Sundarbans which is a very remote area of Bangladesh. Travelling to several remote villages and project sites within the stipulated time was more challenging, few more days in the field will be more helpful to identify more insight of the project.

## 2.3 Structure of the MTR Report

Based on the desk review and analyses of the available and/or collected information, the MTR has followed the structure of the report of the ToR (Annex – B). The detailed structure of the report is annexed (**Annex 2).**

# 3. Project Description and Background Context

## 3.1 Project Development Context

The project, "Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems, EPASIIAEP" or DOLPHIN-EPASIIAEP project is implemented by the Bangladeshi Forest Department (FD), the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), supported by the technical assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and financial support of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). The project area is located in Mongla and Sharankhola Upazila of the Bagerhat district and Dacope Upazila of the Khulna district.

The project is implemented in three sanctuaries and bordering areas, located in the southwest part of Bangladesh, within the Sundarbans wetland area, bordering with India and has a total area of 10,000 $km^2$, of which 62% are in Bangladesh and the remaining in India and the world's largest continuous mangrove forests with globally significant ecosystems under threat by the impact of global climate change. Considering the importance of the unique eco-system, the Sundarbans Reserve Forest has been declared RAMSAR Site in 1992 and the three Wildlife Sanctuaries (Sundarbans West, Sundarbans East and Sundarbans South) was declared as World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1997.

The wetland area is rich in biodiversity and the habitat of the two endangered freshwater and brackish water Dolphins the Ganges River Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*) and the Irrawaddy Dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*), that in Bangladeshi part of the Sundarbans has been estimated to be respectively around 225 and 451 individuals. The habitat of the dolphins is also under threat due to some different human activities and the impact of climate change. In 2012 the government established 1070 ha (32 km) of protected river and canal areas in 3 Dolphins sanctuaries (Chandpai, 560 ha, Dhangmari, 340 ha and Dhudmukhi, 170 ha), in the Sundarbans, to protect these two species. Moreover, along with the provision of important ecosystem service the project area also important for the provision of human livelihoods and other economic activities (eg fishing, navigation, ecotourism, etc.). Despite high ecological, economic and livelihood value, the project area is subject to unsustainable extraction of resources and the adverse impact of the development activities.

For the medium and long term, the Government of Bangladesh has planned the conservation of the mentioned dolphin species and established a sustainable management of the sanctuaries and bordering areas. As per the request of the government, the GEF is providing support, to establish an enabling framework for strengthening the biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of the aquatic environment of the Sundarbans area, notably the mentioned sanctuaries as a key habitat of the Dolphins.

The project is also contributing to achieving the UNDAF Outcome 2: Sustainable and Resilience Environment, which states "By 2020, relevant State institutions, together with their respective partners, enhance effective management of the natural and man-made environment focusing on improved sustainability and increased resilience of vulnerable individuals and groups".

Additionally the project is covering national priority by contributing to fulfilling one of the key objectives of the 7th Five Year plan. In fact, from the point of view of the national strategies in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, aligning with the 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020), supporting the Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) of the Project General Economics

Division (GED), Planning Commission and notably with the Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. 6.6.1 Change in the related ecosystems, including wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes related ecosystems. Maintain the inland river systems and ecosystems for fishery, sediment transport, and inland shipping. Protecting in the dry season water flows, restoration of habitat and fish species. Coping with climate changes. Proper eco system management is required to ensure the sustainability of natural resources without hampering the livelihood of people dependent on the goods and services.

## 3.2 Problems That the Project Intends to Address

Despite the legal, policy and institutional arrangements exist the ecosystems of the Sundarbans, including the three protected areas are facing increasing threats. Due to the high dependency of livelihood, over-exploitation of the resources, impact of the development activities in the up-stream and surrounding area, as well as impact of the climate change these threats are increasing day by day. A number of threats of the biodiversity, including dolphins has been partially overestimated in the absence of reliable historical data and identified in the project preparation, notably:

- over-harvesting of fish and other aquatic resources, using different harmful gear;
- Entanglement of the dolphin in the fishing gears, notably from 2007 to 2013 there are 52 death cases of dolphins, recorded in the Sundarbans.
- Increasing of maritime traffic in and around the project area.
- Different industrial activities in development (e.g. construction of Silo, petroleum reservoirs and power plants) in the upstream river of the project area; ,
- The project area is a potential destination of the tourists, unsustainable tourism increasing the threat on biodiversity, including the dolphins.
- The potential impact of the Climate Change (e.g. sea level rise, increasing salinity, decrease the flow in the rivers upstream, changes in sedimentation, etc.) increase threats on the habitat of the dolphins.

The establishment of the sanctuaries (Protected Areas, PAs) is the first step to conserve the dolphins population, only the PAs will not ensure the long-term protection of the dolphins and their habitat. Along with the establishment of the PAs, the medium and long-term solution is planned to develop and adopt a sustainable management of the significant aquatic biodiversity of the Sundarbans, which includes the establishment of a related database, the control of use of the destructive fishing gears, adaptive management and strong institutional framework and promotion of alternative livelihood for the affected communities. However, there are two main barriers that embeds the proposed long-term solution and notably:

**Barrier 1: Limited government capacities to mitigate threats to globally important aquatic habitats and species.** As already mentioned, the establishment of three PAs is the key initiative for the protection of the endangered dolphin species, but it has to be considered that the dolphin habitat is not limited within the sanctuaries (eg there is a study on a river close to Dhaka, where the conditions of the freshwater Dolphin is threatened by organic and industrial pollution but registered in a good number of exemplars). Consequently, there are more potential areas for dolphins habitats are still exists in the Sundarbans, which needs to be identified. Related knowledge gaps on preferred habitats of dolphins as well as on the real consistency of the population inside and outside, unsustainable fishing, impact on upland industrial and human activities (eg industrial, agriculture, oil extraction, pollution, etc.), impact of maritime traffic and tourism on the aquatic biodiversity exist. Presently, existing knowledge (although lacking) on the project area of activity still remains largely in the academic domain and these need to be strengthened and addressed to the managers and user

communities. Moreover, there are also inadequate institutional capacities to manage aquatic ecosystems and species, from the long term perspectives. The Forest Department has considerable expertise in terrestrial forest management, but the capacity to manage aquatic resources needs to enhance.

**Barrier 2: Local stakeholders, especially local communities have limited incentives and capacities to support aquatic biodiversity conservation.** The over-fishing using harmful gear by the local fishermen is one of the key causes of resources depletion in the project area. Although the fishermen are aware of the harmful fishing, but they have not any other options due to their poor economic condition. Considering the high dependency of the local people by the natural resources, the conservation activities will not have success without the strong support and capacity building of the related affected populations.

## 3.3 Project Description and Strategy

The project has been designed to remove the mentioned barriers and to establish a sustainable management. The main goal of the project is to contribute is to the sustainable management of the globally significant aquatic biodiversity of the Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the project are:

- To introduce an effective management system in the existing Protected Areas, established for dolphin conservation in the Sundarbans region.
- To expand the coverage of dolphins protected areas in and around the region.
- To enhance alternative livelihood options for local fishermen, to reduce their dependency on aquatic resources.
- To enrich the knowledge and database of the aquatic habitats in the region.
- To provide policy recommendations for aquatic ecosystem friendly practices.

For achieving the project objectives, the following outcomes and outputs have been designed:

***Outcome 1:*** **Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved.** This outcome mainly focuses on the transformative changes, that need to be made for the planning and execution framework to address existing and emerging threats to biodiversity in the project area. Develop an effective knowledge management framework, that supports better decision making for the management of the aquatic habitats and the sustainable resource use in the protected areas and biodiversity sensitive land use of the buffer zone. Moreover, this outcome is also supporting to identify a further area for conservation, capacity development of the conservation and economic sector staffs for better management of the existing and newly identified protected area, institutionalizing a monitoring and evaluation framework and a replication strategy. The following outputs will contribute to achieve this outcome.

***Output 1.1:*** *Knowledge generation and dissemination system improves decision making related to the management of aquatic habitats and sustainable use of resources in the protected areas and buffer zones.*
***Output 1.2:*** *New and additional areas to be managed as Protected Areas and buffer areas identified, notified and capacities developed among conservation and economic sector staff for strengthening the management effectiveness of biodiversity conservation efforts.*
***Output 1.3:*** *Support provided to the implementation of Management Plans of new PAs and buffer areas to address existing and emerging threats to aquatic biodiversity particularly the cetaceans.*

***Output 1.4*** *Monitoring and evaluation framework and replication strategy developed for effective aquatic PA management specifically for the Sundarbans and other aquatic ecosystems across country.*

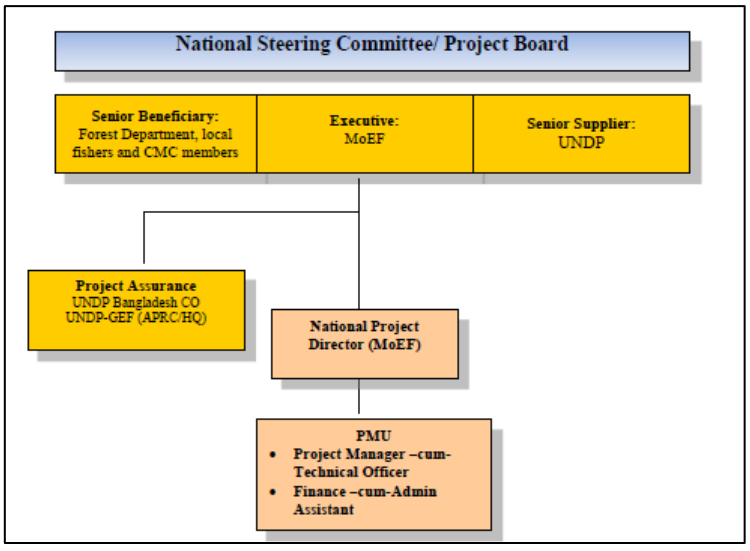
**Outcome 2: Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation.** This outcome will support to strengthening community capacities for managing aquatic ecosystems. This outcome will be achieved by developing a Community Based Resource Management Plan (CBRMP) and providing limited support for implementing the mentioned CBRMP and alternative income generation activities. Along with these community-based institution will be developed for the effective implementation of the CBRMP. Following outputs will contribute to achieve this outcome.

***Output 2.1*** *Community based resource management plan prepared, capacities developed and financial support extended for operationalizing sustainable resource use practices and conservation of aquatic biodiversity.*
***Output 2.2*** *Strategies for alternate income generation and livelihood diversification developed and implemented leading to reduced dependence on natural resources.*

## 3.4 Project Management

As per the approved design, the project is managed according to the UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM) and the NIM Project Implementation Guidelines, agreed with UNDP and the Government of Bangladesh. The following **Figure 3** shows the project organigram[1] and overall organizational structure.

***Figure 3:*** *Organigram of the Project*




[1] ProDoc, Pp. 62

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is the Implementing Partner (IP) of this project. The MoEFCC designated the Bangladeshi Forest Department (FD), as Executing Agency of the project.

The UNDP Bangladesh ensures the operational oversight with the strategic guidance of the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor (RTA).

**The Project Board (PB)/National Project Steering Committee (NPSC):** The PB/ NPSC is the body responsible for decisions making for the project, notably when strategic guidance and decisions are required. There are three main functions of the PB/NPSC:

**The PB/NPSC** provides the overall guidance to staring up, implement and close the project. Moreover, it plays a critical role in the project monitoring and quality insurance, approving the periodic work-plans, as well as any essential revision of the original plans.

**The Project Management Unit (PMU):** The PMU is composed by a Project Manager cum Technical Officer, and a Finance-Administrative assistant. The PMU carries on among other tasks: i) to develop the Standard Operating Procedures for the project implementation, ii) to develop Quarterly and Annual Work Plans and Budgets, iii) to provide technical, financial and administrative management support, iv) to prepare the Quarterly and Annual Financial and Technical Progress Reports to be submitted to the MoEF, v) to ensure the compliance with the applicable UNDP/GEF/LDCF/Government rules and regulations, and vi) to provide the Quality Technical support to various project components and activities**.**

## 3.5 Project Main Stakeholders

The main stakeholders and their key roles are indicated in the table in the following page as mentioned in the stakeholder's engagement plan of the ProDoc.

***Table 3.1:*** *Main stakeholders and their key role*

| Stakeholders | Key role |
|---|---|
| Forest Department | The Forest Department will be the lead institution for this project. Its office at Khulna Division will be the primary project implementation unit. The Forest Department will be involved in the overall project implementation, coordination and in ensuring cooperation / collaboration with other stakeholders. At the national level, the FD will ensure that lessons learnt from this project are fed into developing other aquatic protected areas and in integrating better management principles in aquatic ecosystem management as well. |
| Local communities | Local communities, particularly fishers, are the most important stakeholders of this project. The project will ensure a strong collaborative approach in spearheading the conservation and sustainable resource-use agenda. Component 2 of the project is focusing exclusively on communities. The primary focus of engagement with communities will be through the Co-Management Committees (CMCs)/ Village Forums and other user group based organizations |
| Women's associations | Community level women's associations have been promoted in Bangladesh by the government and many NGOs as a means to empower them economically and politically. Such associations will be involved to create opportunities for women and to ensure gender-specific roles in PA management, buffer area management and activities envisaged under Component 2 of the project. |
| Nature tourism operators | Community level women's associations have been promoted in Bangladesh by the government and many NGOs as a means to empower them economically and politically. Such associations will be involved to create opportunities for women and to ensure gender-specific roles in PA management, buffer area management and activities envisaged under Component 2 of the project. |

| Stakeholders | Key role |
|---|---|
| Nature tourism operators | Small scale tourism exists in the Sundarbans that is based on dolphin watching. Some boat captains have been involved in documenting locations where sightings of dolphins occur, in order to build a more comprehensive data on where the species are located at different times of the year. The project will strengthen capacities of local tourism operators, such as by promoting the existing boat captain's sighting network, providing guidance for dolphin-watching within tourism programmes, including input from tourism operators into PA management plans. |
| Local social service, conservation NGOs | Local NGOs will be involved, as appropriate, to provide information to communities on aquatic conservation, sustainable fisheries management, and strategies to cope with climate change and declining freshwater flows – local NGOs including Prodipan, CARINAM, Rupantar, and Coastal Development Partnership. They may also be involved in community mobilization and awareness raising activities and in conflict mitigation. Since some of these NGOs are involved in promoting sustainable livelihoods, the project will partner with them to strengthen appropriate actions and to ensure that the NGO promoted activities are compatible with conservation actions being promoted by this project, |
| International conservation organizations | Several international conservation organizations have been active partners in conservation actions in Bangladesh. For example, WCS has been providing support through capacity building, research and monitoring, educational outreach, and the development of management plans for aquatic conservation. Other international conservation organizations active in Bangladesh include IUCN, WWF, and CARE International etc. Such organizations will have a strong role under Component 1, where a partnership has been envisioned to strengthen national and regional capacities to manage threatened aquatic species by exchanges of information, knowledge, expertise and experiences. Additionally, specific organizations may be used for implementing certain aspects of the project – such as to support PA management planning, capacity development etc. Some of the organizations will also provide co-finance to this project. |

## 3.6 Project Timing and Milestones

The key milestones and timing of the project are shown in the following table.

***Table 3.2:*** *Project timing and key milestone*

| Key Milestone | Date |
|---|---|
| Received by GEF | 28 August 2012 |
| Preparation Grant Approved by GEF | 21 February 2013 |
| Concept Approved by GEF | 21 Feb 2013 |
| Project Approved for Implementation by GEF | 10 Sep 2014 |
| Agreed by the ERD, GoB | 30 June 2015 |
| Approved by the Ministry of Planning, GoB | 3 March 2017 |
| Project on-board | 1 July 2017 |
| Inception Workshop Conducted | 18 July 2017 |
| Planned Closing Date | 31 December 2019 |

# 4. MTR Analysis and Main Findings

## 4.1 Project Strategy

The Sundarbans wetlands, world's largest area of mangrove, supports Asia's last two remaining species of freshwater and brackish water dolphins, the Endangered Ganges River Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*), and the vulnerable Irrawaddy Dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*).

In 2012, the Government of Bangladesh has declared three Dolphins sanctuaries (PAs, namely Chandpai, Dudmukhi and Dhaangmari with six channels each and five km segments, that support high densities notably of the two mentioned dolphin species. A few projects have also been implemented in the Sundarbans, in the past for the sustainable management of cetacean ecosystem.

The EPASIIAE project has been signed on the 30 of June 2015, its final approval dated on 16 March 2016 and its starting up on the 1 of July 2016, but the project effectively started with the inception workshop on 18 of July 2017.

### 4.1.1 Project Design

The EPASIIAE project intends to introduce an effective management system in the existing Protected Areas established for dolphin conservation in the Sundarbans, also expand the coverage of dolphin protected areas in and around the Sundarbans. More specifically, the project landscape supports one of the last remaining and viable populations of the Ganges and the Irrawaddy dolphins across the world. The project landscape is also highly vulnerable in the context of climate change and the two cetacean species targeted by the project have high indicator values in understanding and monitoring the impacts of climate change.

Despite the goal of the project is to contribute to the sustainable management of important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans the project design analysis shows that the goal in terms of sustainable management and future sustainability is not to be achieved, due a lack of historical data and studies of technical and scientific issue on the design and implementation. Specially, the studies and research on the ecology of the three PAs, the dolphins species and on the aquatic resources, as well as on the socio-economic aspects including of an adequate stakeholders identification and needs assessment of the people livelihood in the three villages.

Relating to the second specific objective to expand the coverage of dolphin protected areas in and around the Sundarbans, is far away to be achieved. The actual protected areas are not still delimited by buoys (work is planned and in progress) and the management plan has to be drafted.

Relating to the specific objective of the introduction of an effective sustainable co-management system in the existing Protected Areas, established for dolphin conservation in the Sundarbans, the Forest department has in place a surveillance system (but not with technical and scientific data on the aquatic resources and not a Monitoring Control and Surveillance -MCS). There is the absence of co-management committees at the village level, including the participation and ownership of the people of the three villages, in order to support the drafting of the sustainable co-management plans of the areas.

Relating to the specific objective to enhance alternative livelihood options for local fisher folks in order to reduce their dependency on aquatic resources, this objective have been underestimated in terms of participation and ownership of the people as well as of the knowledge of the socio-economic needs and safety of the life and working conditions of the inhabitants of the three villages.

### 4.1.2 Result Framework/Log-frame

The project is following the result framework ( "Log-Frame") mentioned in the ProDoc (Table III. Strategic Results Framework on page 53). Total 12 indicators have mentioned in the Log-Frame, among these 2 indicators complying in the objective level and other 10 indicators are complying in the outcome level.

The MTR seems that the Log-Frame of the project developed based on the different analysis and established indicators are about the expected outcomes. It is already noted that the project has suffered by the delay starting and the implementing time has reduced almost half as per the plan. Considering the present time frame and implementing situation few indicators of the mentioned Log-Frame need to revised and amended.

As per the MTR, the indicators of the Log-Frame need to asses by 'SMART' criteria, in the following **Table-4.1** described how the indicators are complying with specific, measurable, attainable/achievable, relevant and time-bound standard.

***Table 4.1:*** *'SMART' Analysis of Log-Frame indicators*

| Objectives /Outcomes | Indicators | SMART Criteria Analysis | | | | | Comments/status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | S | M | A | R | T | |
| **Objective:** To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local communities especially the fishers. | **Indicator – 1:** Extent of aquatic environment of the Sundarbans brought under effective conservation planning and management framework | Y | Y | Q | Y | Y | Despite the indicator complies with the SMART criteria and the establishment of the new hotspots for Dolphin is in progress, the target needs to be revised and updated to the present situation as a result of the related studies. |
| | **Indicator – 2:** Population status of the following critical species remain stable or increases:<br>Ganges freshwater dolphin and Irrawaddy dolphin | Y | Y | Y | Y | Q | The indicator complies with the SMART criteria, however, there are no updated information on the status of Dolphins populations in the rivers and in the hotspots. It is highly recommended to conduct studies and historical census for the two Dolphins populations. |
| **Outcome 1:**<br>Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved | **Indicator – 3:** Improved management effectiveness PAs as measured and recorded by Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) | Y | Y | Q | Y | Q | Despite this indicator complies in time with the target, the actual state is widely of no management (only surveillance is in place and no data collection (monitoring) and control (lack of MCS, lack of data on the status of the Dolphins populations and on the aquatic resources, ongoing delimitation of the sanctuaries with buoys, full |

| Objectives /Outcomes | Indicators | SMART Criteria Analysis | | | | | Comments/status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | conservation measures inside the areas. etc.) and participation and ownership in co-management of the people of the boundaries villages. Need to revise activities with annual studies on the stocks and MCS of the aquatic species (including Dolphins), introduce forms of sustainable co-management of a known aquatic resources, with pilot activities with legal regulated fishing and collection (eg. crabs) activities inside the sanctuaries territories, involving people of the villages in monitoring and control of the illegal activities. It is recommended for the sustainability of the management the draft of a future programme specifically for the livelihood of the poor people of the village, including capacity building in MCS for FD personnel and fishing people of the village. |
| | **Indicator – 4:** Biodiversity-friendly Sectoral Guidelines prepared and implemented leading to effective integration of biodiversity considerations into economic sector practices | Y | Y | Q | Y | Q | Despite this indicator complies with the SMART criteria, the achievement depends on the successful adoption of the outcomes of future studies. Project need to take care on the results on the proposed studies. |
| | **Indicator – 5:** Effective and functioning cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder institutions (including conservation, livelihood and production) established at regional and national level. | Y | Q | Q | Y | Q | Achieve this indicator is very challenging during the project period, notably the establishment of the mentioned institutions at the regional level, that are recommended to be established including co-management committees at the three villages level. |
| | **Indicator – 6:** Number of representatives from the key government sectors trained in effective management of aquatic biodiversity | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The indicator complies with the SMART criteria. |
| | **Indicator – 7:** Reported mortality of dolphins by entanglement in nets and vessel hit. | N | N | N | N | N | The indicator not complies with the SMART criteria, due to the inconsistent baseline values, consequently the target will not be achieved. MTR is recommending to revise the value of the mentioned indicator. |
| | **Indicator – 8:** Improvement in Systemic Level Indicators of Capacity Development Scorecard (Annex 19) | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The indicator complies with the planned SMART criteria. |
| **Outcome 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity | **Indicator – 9:** Number of fishers in the project area using sustainable fishing gear as evidenced by mesh size | N | N | N | N | N | The indicator not complies with the SMART criteria. The baseline value of this indicator is not consistent; in |

| Objectives /Outcomes | Indicators | SMART Criteria Analysis | | | | | Comments/status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| conservation. | | | | | | | fact, after the establishment of the sanctuaries all fishing and collection activities are fully prohibited in the sanctuaries project areas. The MTR team recommends the revision of the activities and the introduction of the adequate measures for co-management, suggested at the comments of the status of the indicator 3. |
| | **Indicator – 10:** Amount of resources flowing to local communities annually from community based ecotourism activities | Y | N | N | N | N | The indicator not complies with the SMART criteria. Due to delay in the starting up of the project, the indicator is not achievable and underestimated and the areas planned for schooling and awareness and other activities has to be adequately managed to be consistent with the welcome of the people. MTR team recommends to revise this indicator and implement the mentioned on-going activities. |
| | **Indicator – 11:** Number of people shifting to alternative income generating options that reduce pressure on biodiversity | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The indicator complies with the SMART criteria. |
| | **Indicator 12:** Number of people sensitized on aquatic biodiversity conservation particularly that of cetaceans | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | The indicator complies with the SMART criteria. |
| S = Specific, M = Measureable, A = Attainable/Achievable, R = Relevant and T = Time bound;<br>Y = Complying the SMART criteria, Q = Questionably complying the SMART criteria and N = Not complying the SMART criteria | | | | | | | |

Among the 12 indicators in the Log-Frame, 4 are fully complying with the SMART criteria, 5 are complying the SMART criteria with few questionable situations relate to the achievement and time frame, and 3 are need to revise. Project need to be more careful during the further implementing period on the achievement and time frame of the mentioned 5 indicators.

The log-frame needs a revision at least in terms of activities and indicators. The status of the indicators in the result framework is the following: Total Indicators: 11, Objective indicators: 2 Outcome indicators: 9. Updated information available: 5. Depending of further studies (by project or mentioned sources): 3 and need to revised: 3

In **Annex – 8,** reports some recommendations on the indicators to be revised in the Log-Frame.

### 4.1.3 Gender analysis

The MTR has not found any gender-sensitive indicators in the Log-Frame of the project. In the ProDoc no gender analysis has been conducted and the attached "Environment and Social Screening Check List" (ProDoc, Annex – 9, Pp. 85) also shows a general and very low sensitivity on gender analysis. As per the requirement of the GEF-6 programme, a gender analysis must be carried out, but the project has not still conducted this kind of analysis (see **Recommendation 4.e, Chapter 5.2.1**).

Almost half of the project activities (Outcome - 2) are related to community-based interventions, and both female and male beneficiaries are involved in the planned project activities. As per plan, the project plans to provide support to 1000 marginal fishermen, developing AIG. Despite both male and female household beneficiaries are member of the group, considering the poor situation of the villagers and the active and high involvement of the women beneficiaries or not in livelihood activities (e.g. crab collection and fattening, fishing, etc.) the MTR team strongly recommends to add 2 more gender sensitive indicators, for tracking the gender equity and empowerment changes (**Annex – 8**).

Finally, the women groups and subsistence fishers in the livelihood sub-project are facing strong challenges due to the previous commitment with local moneylender (*dadonder)*, and loss of the source of subsistence fishing notably in the no-take period around the PAs. A pilot study need to conduct for collect information on how to regulated access to the fishing and collection of other aquatic resources (eg. crabs), around the PAs during no-take period with a Monitoring Control and Surveillance and co-management strategy, as suggested by the conventions and guidelines of the main international related organization cited (e.g. Ramsar Convention, UNESCO, etc.). There is the need in terms of sustainability and livelihood of the people to identify and draft a future participatory 4 years pilot project, to apply an effective participatory co-management of the aquatic resources in the PAs.

## 4.2 Progress Towards Results

### 4.2.1 Progress towards outcomes analysis

From a technical point of view, the Government has established 3 sanctuaries for Dolphins conservation in the Sundarbans and the project is implementing in the 3 sanctuaries and surrounding villages, however, the project is providing advocacy for a sustainable bio-diversity management.

The project area has considerable national and local significance as it provisions vital ecosystem services, sustains human livelihoods (primarily through fisheries) and supports economic activities (e.g. ecotourism).

Along with the UNDP Project Management Unit (PMU) there are two partner NGOs are implementing this project they are IUCN-CNRS consortium and CODEC. The IUCN-CNRS consortium is working for this project from June 2018 and their contract will continue up to December 2019 on ending of this project. The consortium is responsible for; Assignment 1: Conducting Shusuk Mela/fair/festival and awareness raising (under the Outcome 1: Output 1.1); Assignment 2: Capacity building for conservation staff (under the Outcome 1: Output 1.2); Assignment 3: Implementing the PA management plan (under the Output 1: Output 1.3).

The MTR team has analysed the project progresses, based on the achievements of the outputs versus the End of Project (EOP) expected outcomes.

In the tables (Table 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4) in the following pages the progress based on the objectives and two outcomes as per the guideline supplied in the ToR are shown.

***Table 4.2:*** *Progress towards the project objectives*

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Baseline level | Level in 1st PIR (self-reported) | Midterm Target | End of the Project Target | Midterm Level & Assessment | Achievement Rating | Justification for Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Objective:** To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local communities especially the fishers. | a) Extent of aquatic environment of the Sundarbans brought under effective conservation planning and management framework | a) 0 ha | not evaluated[2] | a) 51, 000 | a)102,000 ha | : 60,280 ha.<br><br>(17,080 ha. is existing + 2200 ha. is in progress + 41,000 ha. is buffer area), | | A good progress has achieved in extent of the area under conservation network. Presently 58,180 ha. under the PA and declaration of PA for 2200 ha. are in progress. |
| | b) Population status of the following critical species remain stable or increases: Ganges freshwater dolphin Irrawaddy dolphin | b)Ganges:225 Irrawaddy:451 | | b) Remain stable | b) Remain stable or increase by project end | Dolphin population estimation have not conducted even | | No update by the mid-term level. |
| **Assessment keys:** | | Green= Achieved | | | Yellow = On target to be achieved | | Red = Not on target to be achieved | |

The project has conducted a study on "Identifying Dolphin Hot-spot in South-western Bangladesh" and under this study successfully identified 5 new hot-spots for Dolphin which are calculated 33,450 ha. Among this, 16,100 ha. identified within the Sundarbans Wildlife Sanctuaries which are already under the PA. Rest of 17,440 ha. identified outside the Wildlife Sanctuaries which are potential for declared as PA (**Annex – 3**). However, presently 52% area of the Sundarbans are already under the PA and rest of 48% are open for fishing and extracting other aquatic resources, declaration of the new PA will be reduced the opportunity for the dependent people. Based on a critical analysis, forest department is considering only 2,200 ha. area (form 17,440 ha.) to declared as a new PA for Dolphin sanctuaries. Moreover, the study also recommended 41,100 ha. as a buffer area, which are already under conservation network. Including the existing and newly proposing PA as well as buffer area presently total 60,280 ha. under conservation network (**Annex – 3**).

[2] Project started just 2 months before the submission of the first PIR

Relating to the status of the Dolphins populations, there are no updated information found. For identify the present number of the Dolphin population, a census need to conduct. The MTR is strongly recommend to conduct a Dolphin census as soon as possible as per the same method followed in baseline period (**Recommendation – 4.a, Chapter 5.2.1**).

***Table 4.3:*** *Progress towards Outcome 1*

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Baseline level | Level in 1st PIR (self-reported) | Midterm Target | End of the Project Target | Midterm Level & Assessment | Achievement Rating | Justification for Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome 1:** Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved | **Indicator 1:** Improved management effectiveness PAs as measured and recorded by Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) | 46 out of 300 | Not evaluated | 58 out of 300 | Increase in METT scores (at least around 70 out of 300) by 30 percent by year 5 | METT scored have not prepared in this year. | | Any update is available by the Mid-term state f the art |
| | **Indicator 2:** Biodiversity-friendly Sectoral Guidelines prepared and implemented leading to effective integration of biodiversity considerations into economic sector practices | 0 | Not evaluated | 2 | At least 5 Sectoral Guidelines (Fisheries, Tourism, Maritime traffic, industrial development and Aquaculture prepared and adopted. | 5 sectoral guidelines on Fisheries, Tourism, Maritime traffic, Industrial development and Aquaculture prepared. | | 5 sectoral guidelines have been prepared and endorsement process is on-ongoing by the highest level related Authorities. |
| | **Indicator 3:** Effective and functioning cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder institutions (including conservation, livelihood and production) established at regional and national level. | 0 | Not evaluated | 1 | 2 | Establishment of the two committee is in progress | | Establishment of two Committees is in a very initial stage. |
| | **Indicator 4:** Number of representatives from the key government sectors trained in effective management of aquatic biodiversity | 0 | Not evaluated | Conservation Sector - 50 Economic Sector – 50 by MTE | Conservation Sector -100 Economic Sector – 100 | Conservation Sector: 70<br><br>Economic Sector: 0 | | A good progressh as been achieved related to training of the FD conservation staff. |
| | **Indicator 5:** Reported mortality of dolphins by entanglement in nets and | 90 reports in 2013 | Not evaluated | 25% by the MTE | 50% reduction by year project end | | | Any progress has been registered on this indicator |

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Baseline level | Level in 1st PIR (self-reported) | Midterm Target | End of the Project Target | Midterm Level & Assessment | Achievement Rating | Justification for Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | vessel hit. | | | | | | | due to a baseline inconsistent value. The MTR Team recommends to revise the indicator and baseline value (Table 4.2) |
| | **Indicator 6:** Improvement in Systemic Level Indicators of Capacity Development Scorecard:<br><br>1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies, programme<br>2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes<br>3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders<br>4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge<br>5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate and report and learn at the sector and project levels | Not evaluated<br><br>20<br><br>25<br><br>15<br><br>20<br><br>10 | | 25<br><br>28<br><br>20<br><br>25<br><br>15 | 30<br><br>30<br><br>25<br><br>30<br><br>20 | 33 | | 2 (Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes) is still to develop (Annex – 4: Table D) |
| **Assessment keys:** | | Green= Achieved | | | Yellow = On target to be achieved | | Red = Not on target to be achieved | |

The project has conducted a "Research Gap Analysis", individuating main sectors for studies and research. Relating to the PA management, the project is presently following a PAs management plan, which is not participatory and approved by the Government every 6 months. The project has successfully prepared biodiversity friendly sector guidelines (but lacking of technical and scientific data on the natural resources and on the socio-economic context, namely of the three villages and the region) for five key economic sectors (fisheries, tourism, maritime traffic, industrial development

and aquaculture). These guidelines are waiting for the final endorsement by the highest Authorities of the Government.

The project is providing SMART patrolling (Surveillance, but not Monitoring and Control) activities in the three sanctuaries and the surrounding area. Relating to the SMART patrolling activities, the project has provided capacity strengthening and training to 70 employees of the Forest Department (FD) and is planning to conduct other training for 20 voluntaries (or future employees) of the established community patrol group (that very marginally includes people of the affected boundaries villages).

The Global Positioning System (GPS) related activities in patrolling has been designed for the Identification of the presence of marked Dolphins, to detect unauthorized boats movements, to identify and register in situ the location of illegal fishing and poaching activities. To assure the in situ patrolling activities, the project is providing to the Forest Department 100 lit./month of fuel for each of the 8 FD stations. The project is planning to draft a management plan including future training of the community patrol group, during the 2019 (**Annex - 9**).

The project has notified to the Team that will release buoys to delimitate the three sanctuary areas in the river, for signalling the presence of the three sanctuaries areas (not still present during the field survey) and to plan to establish a National and a Regional Committees (National Technical Group in Aquatic Conservation in Bangladesh and Regional Cross Sectoral Stakeholder Committee). A full proposal for the establishment of these committee it has been already submitted to the Government for revision and approval.

Relating to the capacity development, the project has given low contribution to the "capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes (strategic support area – 2)", the Team has calculated a total of 33% (7 out of 21) on the total possible amount **(Annex – 4)**, which meets very low the expectations in terms of outputs. However, expected capacity development depends on the capacity of implement project activities (still planned), providing the legal framework in supporting related project activities. The project is providing training for the conservation staff and planning to provide training to economic sector staffs. It is strongly recommend to conduct a KAP (Knowledge, Attitude and Practice) survey after have completed all the training (**Recommendation – 4.c, Chapter 5.2.1**).

***Table 4.4:*** *Progress towards Outcome 2*

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Baseline level | Level in 1st PIR (self-reported) | Midterm Target | End of the Project Target | Midterm Level & Assessment | Achievement Rating | Justification for Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation | **Indicator 6:** Number of fishers in the project area using sustainable fishing gear as evidenced by mesh size | 0 | Not evaluated | 15% of fishers follow the mesh size norms set up by the project by MTE | 30% of fishers follow the mesh size norms set up by the project by project end | | | This indicator is not correctly related to the outcome statement, the MTR Team recommends to revise this indicator ( Table 4.2). |

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Baseline level | Level in 1st PIR (self-reported) | Midterm Target | End of the Project Target | Midterm Level & Assessment | Achievement Rating | Justification for Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Indicator 7:** Amount of resources flowing to local communities annually from community based ecotourism activities Indicator | 0 | Not evaluated | .05 million by year MTE | USD 0.1 million by year 5 (target value to be re-confirmed during the 1st year of the project) | | | Considering the present duration of the project, the MTR Team recommends to revise the indicator before the end of the project target. |
| | **Indicator 8:** Number of people shifting to alternative income generating options that reduce pressure on biodiversity | 0 | Not evaluated | At least 500 by MTE | At least 500 fishers by year 3 and 700 by project end | 365 fishers | | More 600 fishers are under consideration to include in AIG programme. |
| | **Indicator 9:** Number of people sensitized on aquatic biodiversity conservation particularly that of cetaceans | 0 | Not evaluated | 1500 by MTE | 3000 by year 3 and 5000 by project end | 16000 | | 16,000 people directly sensitized by the different awarenes s activities of the project. |
| **Assessment keys:** | | Green= Achieved | | | Yellow = On target to be achieved | | Red = Not on target to be achieved | |

The project intends with the sub-project implemented by CODEC to provide livelihood support to 1000 marginal villagers (fishermen and women), who was previously involved in fishing and collection activities in the sanctuary and surrounding areas. The livelihood is provided in few villages of 3 unions (Chilla, Chandpai, Baniasanta) under 2 Upazilas (Mongla and Dacope) of two districts (Khulna and Bagerhat). Among the targeted number, the project presently is providing support to 365 households out of planned 1000. Along with the training on income generating activities, the project has provided 32,632 tk. (443 USD appx.) to each household for starting AIG. The beneficiaries have started different income generating activities (e.g. crab fatting, goat rearing, small groceries, rickshaw van, fuel-wood selling, cultural activities, etc.). The project is also providing support with training and technical assistance to 10 SLGs (Sustainable Livelihood Group) of females beneficiaries.

Although the project is providing AIG support to marginal subsistence fisheries activities, but majority of the beneficiaries have previous engagements (debts) with the local "Moneylenders (*Dadonder*)". They have taken moneys in advance and committing themselves to sell their products (fishes, shrimps, crabs, etc.) directly to them at fixed prices, always at prices lower, than the ones of the local market. After their involvement with the project, the beneficiaries have been obliged to leave their harmful fishing activities (eg using forbidden nets/gears for eg shrimp fry collection), but

at the present moment they are under pressure of their "Moneylender" to have their money back or to deliver them the mentioned products, as per their previous agreements. This situation make higher the risk of illegal activities (due their needs) by the project supported AIG groups. Although this situation is actually beyond the control of the project activities, the suggested co-management plan has to be careful to forbid without technical and scientific data on the status of the local natural resources stocks and take care of these complexes socio-economic and social dynamics. Additionally, the project has to take care of the safety and healthier conditions of all the villagers and of the workers (eg flooding, management of the villages areas, landing facilities, search and rescue, value chains development, primary healthcare, potable drinking water access, etc.).

The project has given good results in awareness and communication activities. At the mid-term period, the project has already sensitized around 16,000 people directly on the Dolphins and aquatic resources conservation, which is more than the expectations, but not at the village level. Moreover, project activities (i. e. dolphin fair, celebration of dolphin day etc.) publicized by the 30 printed and electronic media, where the more people are sensitized (**Annex – 5**). Regarding to effective conservation, the project need to more effort to sensitize and make able to include and participate the local communities of the PAs boundaries villages, notably the marginal fisheries communities living in boundaries of the three mentioned sanctuaries that are actually are exposed to too strict conservation measures (all activities are forbidden in the sanctuaries areas, including subsistence fishing and crab collection. It is suggested that the introduction of pilot basis regulated and monitored activities of subsistence (regulated access and small-scale activities, such as subsistence fishing and small amount of crab collections or crab fattening in cages inside the areas) to allow a first step of a sustainable co-management of the areas and that strengthen the participation and ownership of the communities . The following **Table – 4.5** shows the awareness activities in their different aspects.

***Table 4.5:*** *Number of people sensitized on aquatic biodiversity conservation*

| Sensitizing events | Number of people sensitized |
|---|---|
| Distribution of awareness materials | 5000 |
| Community based campaign | 400 |
| Dolphin fair (*Sushuk Mela*) | 10,000 |
| Celebration of Dolphin day | 500 |
| Meetings, seminars and workshops | 100 |
| Total | 16,000 |

### 4.2.2 Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

Bangladesh has been reported as the highest densely populated (1,015/km$^2$) country in the world with the total population of more than 160 million (BBS, 2011). Around 75% of the population is rural and a significant proportion (around 35 million or 22%) lives along the 710 km along the coastal belt (World Bank, 2010; PDO-ICZMP, 2004). An estimated 50 million people still live in poverty, including almost 18% living under extreme poverty (BBS, 2010).

According to the report "Socio-economic conditions, sustainable resource use, and alternative livelihoods in the three Wildlife Sanctuaries for Freshwater Dolphins in the Eastern Sundarbans mangrove forest, Bangladesh", prepared by the Wildlife Conservation Society's Bangladesh Cetacean Diversity Project and annexed to the project management plan, the wetlands and water bodies provide a key source of livelihood for many rural poor in the country. Over 70% of the rural households in the floodplain catch fish either for income or for food (Thompson et al, 1999). Fish

and fishery products are the country's third largest export commodity contributing 5.1% of its exchange earnings (FAO, 2011), 4.91% of GDP and provides 63% of the national animal protein consumption (DoF, 2003). Total fish production the country during the 2007-2008 was about 2.57 million tonnes of which 2,065 million tonnes were produced from freshwater including culture fisheries and 0,04 million tonnes from marine water including shrimp (DoF, 2009).

The study prepared with systematic interviews in from 77 villages to more than 300 fishermen, using 16 different fishing gear types, underlines that generally speaking their extreme poor condition, low educational levels with less than half completing primary school and incomes averaging less than 2 US$ per day. Expenses for fishing trips, especially money stolen by pirates or dacoits and "unofficial fees" paid to the FD, were high relative to the value of their fish catch.

In the same report, all of the 25 field-level FD staff interviewed, suggested that a more effective fisheries management, including an increasing in manpower, improving the facilities, establishing rewards for special duties, strengthening training and law enforcement capacity, reducing pressure from local politicians and government officials, and integrating fishery and forestry laws.

The Mangrove ecosystems exists along intertidal area of south-west and south-central parts of the country. The Sundarbans Reserve forest is the largest mangrove forest of the world that extends over an area of about 6,017 $Km^2$. A part of the Bangladesh Sundarbans, an area of about 1,39,700 ha under three wildlife sanctuaries, was designated as the 798th World Heritage Site (WHS) by UNESCO in 1997 and classified as natural heritage.

Till now, various initiatives have been taken by the government to conserve biodiversity. These can be broadly regarded in two major ways namely *ex-situ* conservation and *in-situ* conservation. *In-situ* conservation has been carried out in few protected areas like National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Game Reserve Area etc. as well as in World Heritage Site (The Sundarbans) and in RAMSAR site (Sundarbans and Tanguar haor).

The Government formulated the National Environment Management Action Plan (NEMAP) to reverse this degrading trend. It was a cost effective process and tries to ensure people's participation in national planning.

The existing policies, law and institutional arrangements for conserving biological resources: To protect biological resources against different negative effects, appropriate policy and law need to be adopted. The Government of Bangladesh has promulgated several important laws/policies, strategies for the protection and conservation of renewable natural resources and ecosystems. All the policies should place special attention towards conservation and wise use of wetlands and its vast biological resources. The Government has also prepared National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans where the wetlands conservation is given a priority sector for sustainable development. In addition, existing environmental institutions like Forestry Department (FD), Department of Environment (DoE), Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and related NGOs need to enhance their capacities and cooperation.

There is substantial knowledge gap in the area of bio-diversity. Regarding biological resources and its conservation, following gaps have been identified in Bangladesh:

- Lack of a complete inventory of species.
- Lack of institutional arrangement for regular environmental monitoring
- Little knowledge for causes of extinction of wild species
- There is no data available for the harvest quantity of molluscs and turtles.

Addressing these knowledge gaps and establishing a proper monitoring and evaluation system for biodiversity and the environment are important agendas (BDP, 2100).

According to the Ramsar Convention, Resolution VII. 18, Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management, ratified during "People and Wetlands: The Vital Link" 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), San José, Costa Rica, 10-18 May 1999, the Integrated water resources management is based on the concept of water being an integral part of an ecosystem, a natural resource and a social and economic good, whose quantity and quality determine the nature of its use (Agenda 21, United Nations, 1992). Another key issue is the lack of awareness of the cross-sectoral nature of the water problems and the need for a new development paradigm towards integrating the technical, economic, environmental, social and legal aspects of water management. The development of administrative units in water resource management has to coincide with river basins' boundaries instead of political boundaries. The lack, or inadequacy, of water legislation and policies is another stumbling block to integrated management of river basin and optimal use of water resources.

Water management takes place in a decentralized and participatory manner, with local governments, public-private partnerships and stakeholders taking part in integrated water resources management. Water resources are allocated according to accepted and science-based allocation priorities, as laid down in national policy documents and the Water Act. These include off- and in stream demands, and environmental flows defined according to accepted methods. Emergency plans are in place to deal with water and food shortages.

**Management**

In terms of the project technical management, the project staff human resources to manage the project has been underestimated in the administrative and technical purposes (notably, only 1 administrative officer and no internal ROM expert) have charged the top management (notably PM and PD) of technical and administrative incumbencies not directly related to their role affecting their other proper role other activities.

The administrative and financial procedures among the donors (GEF, UNDP and Bangladesh Government) had shown some problems in their application (notably the delay in starting up the project has leaved three years to the implementation) and needs a simplification, notably the ones related to the administration.

**Implementation**

**OUTCOME 1: Conservation**

The Conservation sub-project need a revision, but has show good results in terms of communication and awareness in schooling despite far away by the sanctuary boundaries area.

The facilities (eg. for schooling and other related conservation activities) need proper landing and management facilities.

The sanctuary management team is of a trained voluntaries and generates some preoccupations, in terms of sustainability if the management will be not of voluntary people and a management plan has to be drafted.

Conduct more communication and awareness planned activities with the marginal fishermen community (4 have been completed out of 12); Need to introduce eco-tourism related AIG.

Need to conduct future ecological studies on the three areas and aquatic resources stocks assessment , introducing MCS and amendment to the full conservation policies, that are limiting the access to the protected areas resources at low impact subsistence activities (eg. crabs collection by the women group or artisanal fisher folks, without any facility for value chain development), that have conserved the environment of the dolphins without appreciable negative s impacts on the river ecosystem.

The sub-project need a 1 year no cost extension, to complete the planned and revised activities.

**OUTCOME 2: Livelihood**

As anticipated in the design findings section, the needs of the affected villages communities has been underestimated in number (proposed target 1,000 persons) only for generating new or alternative income activities and in the quality of the proposed tasks. The proposed activities needs external support after December 2019. Other activities to be considered in a follow up future project for effective people livelihood could be e.g. management of the areas, safe landing facilities and life jackets, access to drinking potable water, housing and sanitation, etc. and there is urgent need to conduct a stakeholder and needs assessment of the communities of the three villages that lives in an unsafe and unhealthy environment.

The women groups and subsistence fishermen in the livelihood sub-project are facing strong challenges, due to the previous commitment with small businesses with local moneylender (*dadon)*, and loss of a source of subsistence, notably in the no-take period and inside the PAs and considering the absence of scientific and technical data on the aquatic resources in the PAs and the low impact of the mentioned activities is suggested to ask to the Ministry a derogation and conduct a pilot study on the regulated access to the crab and other aquatic resources, inside the PAs with a Monitoring Control and Surveillance capacity building for the FD and fishermen and women collector for monitoring and control and sustainably co-manage the aquatic resources in the PAs, as suggested by the conventions and guidelines of the main international related organization (e.g. Ramsar Convention, UNESCO, etc.).

The need to identify and draft a future participatory 4 years pilot project, that seems that sees the government support, in applying effective co-management of the aquatic resources in the PAs and in the management plan (with the establishment of co-management committees within the three villages), facilitating the cooperation between the FD and the people of the villages (with capacity building and training in MCS) and considering other development activities for the communities livelihood of the people (e.g. safer management of the village area and landing facilities, access to potable drinking water, housing, sanitation, value chain facilities development, etc,) along the income diversification planned and on-going, that need a strengthening.

The sub-project need a 1 year no cost extension, to complete the planned and revised activities.

## 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

### 4.3.1 Management Arrangements

As per the project design, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) has been formed. However, along with the PSC another technical committee namely, “Project Implementation Committee (PIC)” also has

been formed (Annex – 6). Both the Committees are functioning and have been conducted few meetings.

Within the last 18 months of project implementation, it has been registered only one PSC meeting. The meeting held on 19 September 2018 was chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and attended by the majority of the Committee members (21 out of 29). The meeting has reviewed project progress and has provided strategic directions to implement the project. Moreover, the Committee also emphasised the need of regular PSC meetings.

There are two meetings of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) conducted within the mentioned period. A meeting was held on 18 September 2017 and another one on the 14 August 2018. The PICs provided technical orientation and technical oversee of the project. However, the main decisions and approval has been provided by the PSC.

It is essential to conduct notably the PSC meetings regularly allowing the project at national level to achieve qualitative outcomes.

The IMED (Implementing Monitoring and Evaluation Division), project monitoring authority of the Government of Bangladesh, is overseeing the project activities. One Director and an Assistant Director from the IMED have visited the project sites and reviewed the project progress (to note that the SDG in the report is the 14 but it seems better to indicate 6 and 15) . UNDP senior management (Assistant Country Director and Portfolio Manager) have carried out visits in the project sites and reviewed the progress.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) is functioning too, but the PMU is lacking and undersized in terms of human resources. The PMU is headed by the National Project Director (NPD) and is composed by a National Project Manager-cum-Technical Officer and a Finance and Admin Associates. It is easy to analyse that the PMU is facing difficulties to performing effectively with an undersized staff. On the basis of the analysis of the situation on the field, the MTR team recommends to add technical (M&E) and administrative personnel to the PMU (**Recommendation – 1, Chapter – 5.2.1**).

### 4.3.2 Work planning

Due to the delay to starting up of the project, the planned activities is difficult that they will achieve the expected outcomes at the end of December 2019. The approval process and necessary arrangements for starting up the project have been delayed for partners lacking of coordination internal funding and administrative procedures and the project has lost 2 years from the initial 4.5 years planned period. Despite the project flexibility the amount of activities planned seems to be very difficult been completed within the present mentioned time-frame.

The project has completed its policy related outputs, however, all these documents need to be endorsed from the related highest authorities of the government, as well as there is need to adopt appropriate field activities. Moreover, the establishment of the committees and institutions (national, regional and community-based) are in progress and will also take time to be fully functional, e.g. in the livelihood support for developing AIG activities, the project has started these activities few months before the MTR. As per the plan, the livelihood sub-project plans to provide support to 1000 household, but presently only 365 beneficiates of the project activities and

considering the actual situation, the pending required activities and the unspent budget, the MTR team recommends one year no-cost extension for the project, to complete all planned activities (**Recommendation – 3, Chapter – 5.2.1**).

The project has completed 2 Annual Work Plans (AWPs), in 2017 (from July to December) and in 2018 (full year). The preparation of the AWP for 2019 is in progress. As per the financial statement shared by the PMU, the project has successfully delivered 100% based on the AWP of 2017 and 94% on the AWP of 2018. To note that the two implementing partners of the project (IUCN-CNRS and CODEC) have started the project activities from June 2018, the PMU is preparing the AWP for 2019 with the close collaboration of the two mentioned partners.

In the **Annex – 8** resumes the completed activities in 2017 and 2018, as well as planned activities for 2019.

### 4.3.3 Finance and co-finance

The EPASIIAE project has been signed on the 30 of June 2015, its final approval dated the 16 March 2016 and its starting up the 1 of July 2016, but the project effectively started with the inception workshop the 18 of July 2017.

The total budget amount of the project is of USD 1,626,484 (128,493,000 Bangladeshi Taka), planned to be spent from 2015 to 2019 (actually July 2017 to June 2019), by the MTR (December 2018) total expenses identified were of USD 632,202.86, which is 39% of the total budget amount. From the inception to MTR period, there any changes was found in the budget. The following Table – 4.6 shows the expenses and the balance amount of the project as per the outcome, output and years.

***Table 4.6:*** *Financial status of the project by the Mid-term*

| Outcomes | Outputs | Expenses 2017 | AWP 2017 | Expenses 2018 | AWP 2018 | Total Expenses by 2018 | Budget | Balance | % of Expenses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome 1: Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved. | Output 1.1 | 6,141.25 | **112,393.00** | 59,334.03 | **550,000.00** | 65,475.28 | 284,500.00 | 219,024.72 | 23.01 |
| | Output 1.2 | 35,878.12 | | 152,991.54 | | 188,869.67 | 100,000.00 | (88,869.67) | 188.87 |
| | Output 1.3 | 41,610.13 | | 57,231.10 | | 98,841.24 | 420,000.00 | 321,158.76 | 23.53 |
| | Output 1.4 | 10,211.70 | | 26,609.80 | | 36,821.50 | 96,200.00 | 59,378.50 | 38.28 |
| **A. Sub-total (Outcome - 1)** | | **93,841.21** | | **296,166.48** | | **390,007.68** | **900,700.00** | **510,692.32** | **43.30** |
| Outcome 2: Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation | Output 2.1 | 11,139.42 | | 12,873.82 | | 24,013.24 | 325,000.00 | 300,986.77 | 7.39 |
| | Output 2.2 | 894.64 | | 193,873.03 | | 194,767.67 | 320,000.00 | 125,232.33 | 60.86 |
| **B. Sub-Total (Outcome - 2)** | | **12,034.06** | | **206,746.85** | | **218,780.91** | **645,000.00** | **426,219.09** | **33.92** |
| **C Sub-Total (Project Management Costs - PMC)** | | **9,333.47** | | **14,080.80** | | **23,414.27** | **80,784.00** | **57,369.73** | **28.98** |

| Outcomes | Outputs | Expenses 2017 | AWP 2017 | Expenses 2018 | AWP 2018 | Total Expenses by 2018 | Budget | Balance | % of Expenses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grand Total (A+B+C) | | 115,208.74 | 112,393.00 | 516,994.12 | 550,000.00 | 632,202.86 | 1,626,484.00 | 994,281.14 | 38.87 |

Despite the overall delivery percentage is of the 39%, among the 6 outputs of the project, 4 (Outputs 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 and 2.1) show low delivery rate at MTR period. The remaining 2 outputs, one (Output 2.2) shows the expected percentage rate and the other (Output 1.2) shows more than the budgeted amount. Actually, the delivery of the project is affected due to the delay in starting up the project. As per the present situation, the remaining 61% of the budget, need to be delivered during the 2019, and it seems difficult considering activities and their quality, as well as the achievement of the outputs and their timing. For this reason, considering the remaining and suggested activities and the related budget, the MTR team strongly recommends a no-cost extension for one more year (**Recommendation – 3, Chapter – 5.2.1**).

The AWP of 2017 was 115,000 USD and almost 100% of the delivery has completed and in 2018 the AWP was of 550,000 USD and the end of the December 2018, it will be delivered around 95% of the amount.

### 4.3.4 Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

The project is following the planned Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework and plans of the ProDoc, which is based on the GEF template. However, a weak M&E plan has been found at the project level. The project has successfully completed the inception workshop and in the Inception Report, a detailed monitoring plan has added, but unfortunately the plan has not been implemented properly. Numbers of indicators of the framework have not been updated periodically such as per the plan and due to the lacking of data and studies as well as of M&E. No separated periodic M&E reports are available as well as the M&E plan not reflects the Annual Project Report (APR). Field level M&E also found as weak, the project is seriously suffering by lack of M&E personnel in Project Management Unit (PMU). Only one technical person Project Manager cum Technical Officer responsible for implementing the project and contribute in M&E activities.

Considering the lack of updated data and generally speaking of scientific and technical data on the PAs, the MTR team strongly recommends to conduct the following studies (**Recommendation – 4, Chapter – 5.2.1**);

- A census or study to identify the Dolphins populations.
- Studies on the stocks of the aquatic resources in the PAs and socio-economic studies on the livelihood and needs of the people and women in the villages for the sustainable co-management of the PAs. A Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey for updated the Capacity Development Score Card.
- Related study and workshop for update the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tools (METT) Score.

Based on the analysis of the project Log-Frame, the MTR team also recommends to revise few indicators according the reality and recommends to add gender sensitive indicators (Table in **– Annex 8**). The M&E budget of the project is 76,200 which is 4.6% of the total budgeted amount[3].

As already mentioned, the PMU of the project is undersized and there is no technical personnel for conducting monitoring activities. The MTR also recommends to include a monitoring technical staff and an administrative staff (**Recommendation – 1, Chapter – 5.2.1)**.

### 4.3.5 Stakeholder engagement

There are several stakeholders involved in the project (**Table 3.2**). At the management level, a number of related government agencies (at national and regional level), civil society members, and community representative are engaged. There are 30 related government agencies are the member in the In the National Project Steering Committee (NPSC). In the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) there are 15 government agencies, and 2 civil society and CBOs are the members. All the mentioned stakeholders actively provide their input in the decision-making process of the project.

In the project supported "Dolphin Conservation Group," there are a different level of community members along with local government member are the members of this group. Moreover, there is another opportunity to engage more national and regional level stakeholders in the proposed "Cross-Sectoral and Multi-stakeholders National and Regional Institutions". Project support Sustainable Livelihood Groups (SLGs) have formed by the women from the local marginal fisher community.

### 4.3.6 Reporting

The project management was been adapted at the changing situation and has reduced the duration of the project period, due to the delay in starting the project activities. The AWPs of the project was prepared considering the situation and has taken initiatives to complete the priority based work especially the policy related activities, which they will take more time to developed and to be endorsed by the Authority.

During the 18 months of the project implementation, there are two PIRs submitted to the GEF. The first PIR (PIR for 2017) has been submitted after two months by the starting the project. Both of the Development Objective (DO) and Implementing Progress (IP) rating in the first PIR is "Moderately Unsatisfactory". In the last PIR (PIR for 2018), the DO rating of this PIR is "Moderately Unsatisfactory," and IP rating is "Moderately Satisfactory". The rating of PIR of 2017 has not shared or discussed in the NPSC meeting.

### 4.3.7 Communications

The project has successfully conducted a number of communication events both in internally and externally. A number of internal meetings, workshops and discussions have conducted with national, regional and community level stakeholders. The PMU and the project implementing partners are conducting regular meetings with the related conservation staffs of the Forest Department,

[3] M&E Work Plan and Budget, ProDoc, Pp. 69

community level Dolphin Conservation Groups and of the community level direct project beneficiaries.

The project has directly sensitized 16,000 people (**Table – 4.2**) through different awareness campaigns (i. e. celebrating dolphin day, dolphin fair, distribution of different and direct meetings). There are more than 30 stories/news have circulated through the electronic and print media (**Annex – 5**).

The project maintains a webpage with updated information for the public use and a social media page on the Facebook (**Annex – 6**), links of the pages are as follow:

http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/projects/environment_and_energy/expanding-the-pa-system-to-incorporate-important-aquatic-ecosyst/epasiiae-home.html

https://web.facebook.com/DolphinProjectBD/

## 4.4 Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Value added and Sustainability

The following paragraphs underlines points of Strengths and Weaknesses relating to the main international and national policies and strategies, supporting tasks, activities, performances and outcomes of the EPASIIAE project, including the OECD DAC main 5 evaluation criteria (mainly relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value added and sustainability ).

### 4.4.1 Financial risks to effectiveness, efficiency, value added and sustainability

The EPASIIAE project has been signed on the 30 of June 2015, its final approval dated on 16 March 2016 and its starting up on the 1 of July 2016, but the project effectively started with the inception workshop on 18 of July 2017.

The total budgeted amount of the EPASIIAE project is USD 1,626,484 (128,493,000 Bangladeshi Taka). The table in the following page shows the financial flow in USD by December 2018 and the state of the art of the portion of the budget spent at the 31 December 2018, the total budget, the balance to spent at 31 December 2019 and the percentages of expenses per outcome.

***Table 4.7:*** *Status of the project budget per outcomes and outputs.*

| Outcomes | Outputs | Total Expenses by 2018 (USD) | Budget (USD) | Balance (USD) | Percentage (%) expenses at 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome 1: Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved. | Output 1.1 | 65,475.28 | 284,500.00 | 219,024.72 | |
| | Output 1.2 | 188,869.67 | 100,000.00 | 88,869.67 | |
| | Output 1.3 | 98,841.24 | 420,000.00 | 321,158.76 | |
| | Output 1.4 | 36,821.50 | 6,200.00 | 59,378.50 | |
| A. Sub-total (Outcome - 1) | | 390,007.68 | 900,700.00 | 510,692.32 | 43 |
| Outcome 2: Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation | Output 2.1 | 24,013.24 | 325,000.00 | 300,986.77 | |
| | Output 2.2 | 194,767.67 | 320,000.00 | 125,232.33 | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B. Sub-Total (Outcome - 2)** | **218,780.91** | **645,000.00** | **426,219.09** | **34** |
| **C. Sub-Total (Project Management Costs - PMC)** | **23,414.27** | **80,784.00** | **57,369.73** | **29** |
| **Grand Total (A+B+C)** | **632,202.86** | **1,626,484.00** | **994,281.14** | **39** |

The analysis of the data demonstrate that the project with an amount of flow spent of around 40% is hard that it will complete all the planned activities within the end of December 2019. The MTR team suggests for the project sustainability a 1 year extension, to make them able to revise tasks and strengthening some tasks and activities and complete the ones planned, to comply with international policies and strategies and reach the planned outputs.

The administrative and financial procedures among the partners (GEF, UNDP and Bangladesh Government) has shown some problems in their application (notably the delay in project starting up the project that has leaved roughly only three years of the five planned for the implementation) and it is recommended a greater coordination and simplification in procedures, notably the ones related to funding and administrative and technical management.

From the point of view of the national strategies in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, aligning with the 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020), supporting the Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) of the Project General Economics Division (GED) Planning Commission, the project activities complies and are included with the following Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) goals and supports the sustainability of the ESAPIIAE project present and future activities and its short-term sustainability. Notably, the Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all at section 6.6.1 Change in the related ecosystems, including wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes related ecosystems. Maintain the inland river systems and ecosystems for fishery, sediment transport, and inland shipping. Protecting in the dry season water flows, restoration of habitat and fish species. Integrated Coastal Fisheries Resource Management. Coping with climate changes. Proper eco system management is required to ensure the sustainability of natural resources without hampering the livelihood of people dependent on the goods and services. Valuation of goods and services provided by ecosystem and biodiversity will be accomplished towards integration of the values into the national accounting system. Use of Science and Technology as a means of sustainable use of Environment, Ecosystem and Resources contribute to world pool of knowledge in Science and Technology.

In addition, according to the informal meeting held at the Bangladeshi Forest Department (FD), the Government has declared to agree to maintain and strengthen the financial support to the revised and planned activities with a 1 year extension, including the a new proposal oriented to strengthening co-management of the PAs and of the villages, giving to the project an effective sustainable (environmental and socio-economic) co-management of the PAs, including wise use (or co-management) of natural resources, supported by technical and scientific data and a performing system of Monitoring Control and Surveillance in place, co-managed by the FD and an effective livelihood of the affected populations of the boundaries villages, including women and children.

### 4.4.2 The socio-economic risk to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value added and sustainability

The report "Socio-economic conditions, sustainable resource use, and alternative livelihoods in the three Wildlife Sanctuaries for Freshwater Dolphins in the Eastern Sundarbans mangrove forest, Bangladesh", prepared by the Wildlife Conservation Society's Bangladesh Cetacean Diversity Project and annexed to the project management plan, indicates that the wetlands and water bodies provide a key source of livelihood for many rural poor in the country. Over 70% of the rural households in the floodplain catch fish either for income or for food (Thompson et al, 1999). Fish and fishery products are the country's third largest export commodity contributing 5.1% of its exchange earnings (FAO, 2011), 4.91% of GDP and provides 63% of the national animal protein consumption (DoF, 2003). Total fish production the country during the 2007-2008 was about 2.57 million tonnes of which 2,065 million tonnes were produced from freshwater including culture fisheries and 0,04 million tonnes from marine water including shrimp (DoF, 2009).

The study prepared with systematic interviews in from 77 villages with more than 300 fishermen, using 16 different fishing gear types, underlines generally speaking their extreme poor condition, low educational levels with less than half completing primary school and incomes averaging less than 2 US$ per day. Expenses for fishing trips, especially money stolen by pirates or dacoits and "unofficial fees" paid to the FD, were high relative to the value of their fish catch.

In the same report, all of the 25 field-level FD staff interviewed, suggested that a more effective fisheries management, including an increasing in manpower, improving the facilities, establishing rewards for special duties, strengthening training and law enforcement capacity, reducing pressure from local politicians and government officials, and integrating fishery and forestry laws as a solution to solve and improve the livelihood of the people living in the villages.

The District of Khulna is the Divisional headquarters of the Khulna Division. It is an important industrial belt and is also in close proximity to the second port of Bangladesh, Mongla Port.

According to the project, the Outcome 2 is Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation. Achievement Rating: (rate 4 pt. scale).

The relevance, value added and sustainability of the project, according to the data collected on the field, is still at a great risk, due the lack of the following activities:

- The strengthening of a participative co-management (namely, only the patrolling (Surveillance) service is in place, but not studies and multiannual data on the aquatic resources, as well as participation in the co-management and collaboration of the people of the villages with the FD in Monitoring and Control MCS).
- Lack of safe and healthy living and working (including for fishermen and women collectors) conditions in the three village visited.
- The pressure of the moneylender (local Dadondar) to fishermen and women groups in the community that has previously funded fishing and collecting activities now forbidden by the management plan. This pressure make higher the risk that they will be obliged to undertake Illegal fishing or collecting activities.
- Lack of proper adoption by the project of supporting guidelines and co-management plans.
- Absence of scientific and technical data on the status of the aquatic resources (including Dolphins) in the PAs (sanctuaries) and command and control activities supported by full conservatives measures (legal framework and management plan) that fully forbid the access at the people of the villages, all demonstrated carrying on subsistence activities (including

fishing and crab collection and fattening) with a estimable low impact on the natural resources, when effectively co-managed and adequately monitored and controlled.

The project needs to consider all these UN conventions seriously for strengthening the sustainability of the project outcomes as well as the conservation and wise use or sustainable co-management of the natural resources of the PAs. A new programme for villagers effective livelihood and greater collaboration between FD and villagers in the co-management of the sanctuaries, with adequate training for FD and fishermen and women collectors in MCS, namely in monitoring (data collection) and control and collaboration in surveillance has to be planned.

In terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value added and sustainability, the planned activities lacks of an effective knowledge of the status of the natural aquatic resources and effective participated sustainable (co-)management of the PAs and of a full conservative and command and control, put a high risk of not sustainability, not only the PAs (co- management, but also the living conditions and livelihood of the people living in the villages, bordering the three sanctuaries (PAs), increasing the risks of illegal activities (such as poisoning water for fast catching fishes) and make greater the risks of exaction and corruption, even when the patrolling system will be in place. The actual approach is of a top-down conservative management with command and control (including the planned voluntary surveillance management team) and not bottom-up or co-management with the participation and ownership of the people living close to the PAs to the effective co-management of known natural resources and any other forms or co-management committee at regional or villages level are in place and any or few forms of participation and ownership of the people of the villages at the co-management of the natural resources of the PAs (sanctuaries) is foreseen in the Conservation act of 2012 and/or in the management plan.

Finally, the activities of the sub-project livelihood has been underestimated from the design and needs a 1 no-cost year extension.

### 4.4.3 Institutional framework and governance risk to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value added and sustainability

Mangrove ecosystems exists along intertidal area of south-west and south-central parts of the country. Sundarbans Reserve forest is the largest mangrove forest of the world that extends over an area of about 6,017 $Km^2$. A part of the Bangladesh Sundarbans, an area of about 1,39,700 ha under three wildlife sanctuaries, was designated as the 798th World Heritage Site (WHS) by UNESCO in 1997 and classified as natural heritage.

The people Republic of Bangladesh is signatory of many international treaties, laws, legislations and policies related to conserve its biological diversity. Bangladesh has signed the five major conventions and agreements related to biodiversity conservation (i.e. CBD, CITES, CMS, RAMSAR, WHC). As a signatory to these conventions, the government has undertaken various initiatives to conserve the biodiversity in both the ecosystem and at the species level.

According to Iza, A. and Stein, R. (Eds) (2009). RULE – Reforming water governance. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, the Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development, the Paris Declaration on Water and Sustainable Development International Conference, and the Ministerial Declaration of the World Water Forum are the main international instruments.

Sustainability and social welfare are incorporated into Integrated Water Resources Management, which is defined as: 'A process that promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources to maximize economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. To this end, water resources have to be protected, taking into account the functioning of aquatic ecosystems and the the resource, in order to satisfy and reconcile needs for water in human activities. In developing and using water resources, priority has to be given to the satisfaction of basic needs and the safeguarding of ecosystems (Source: Agenda 21. Chapter 18. Protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources: application of integrated approaches to the development, management and use of water resources).

Additionally, the Resolution VIII. 36 Participatory Environmental Management (PEM) as a tool for management and wise use of wetlands indicates that taking into account that the participation of all sectors in sustainable management of wetlands optimizes human, economic and environmental resources, to the point that in many regions it is considered a process that can contribute to reducing poverty and improving the quality of life.
In addition, there is substantial knowledge gap in the area of bio-diversity identified in Bangladesh:

- Lack of a complete inventory of species.
- Lack of institutional arrangement for regular environmental monitoring.
- Little knowledge for causes of extinction of wild species.
- There is no data available for the harvest quantity of molluscs and turtles.

The Bangladeshi Government formulated the National Environment Management Action Plan, to reverse this degrading trend. It was a cost effective process and tries to ensure people's participation in national planning. Existing policies, law and institutional arrangements for conserving biological resources: To protect biological resources against different negative effects, appropriate policy and law need to be adopted. The government has promulgated several important laws/policies, strategies for the protection and conservation of renewable natural resources and ecosystems. All the policies should place special attention towards conservation **and wise use** of wetlands and its vast biological resources. Government has also prepared National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans where the wetlands conservation is given a priority sector for sustainable development. In addition, existing environmental institutions like Forestry Department, Department of Environment, Bangladesh Water Development Board and related NGOs need to enhance their capacities and cooperation.

Finally, to make the project effectively sustainable and relevant, efficient, and with a value added building the capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and expanding their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) and meeting the livelihood aspirations of the local people, the project has to make the law flexible from the total conservation regime that affects local populations, living in the three fishing villages visited, actual conditions of subsistence and unsafe and healthy living and working to a participated effective co-management of the PAs and of the villages (subject to monsoon flooding, with unsafe landing sites and passages, housing, lack of potable water, electricity, dispensaries for first aid, facilities for value chains development, etc.), considering working conditions of the fishers and women collectors, with MCS capacity building for FD and fishers, and management and conservation measures, with studies, adapted to the local conditions of the stocks.

### 4.4.4 Environmental risks to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value added and sustainability

According to recent studies, overall, mangroves in deltaic coasts such as the Mississippi River delta, the Amazon in Brazil and the Sundarbans in India and Bangladesh can sequester more carbon yearly than any other aquatic or terrestrial ecosystem on the globe. These are the world's blue carbon hot spots.

Despite the ESAPIIAE project is carrying on some of the mentioned tasks and activities, is still lacking in scientific and technical knowledge on the ecosystem as well as governance instruments and of sustainable management and co-management measures for the conservation and wise use, relating to the local communities participation and ownership in the sustainable co-management.

According to the Ramsar Convention, Resolution VII. 18, Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management, ratified during "People and Wetlands: The Vital Link" 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), San José, Costa Rica, 10-18 May 1999, the Integrated water resources management is based on the concept of water being an integral part of an ecosystem, a natural resource and a social and economic good, whose quantity and quality determine the nature of its use (Agenda 21, United Nations, 1992).

Water management takes place in a decentralized and participatory manner, with local governments, public-private partnerships and stakeholders taking part in integrated water resources management. Water resources are allocated according to accepted and science-based allocation priorities, as laid down in national policy documents and the Water Act. These include off- and in stream demands, and environmental flows defined according to accepted methods. Emergency plans are in place to deal with water and food shortages.

In terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value added and sustainability the mentioned international guidelines and the project complies with the ones included in the Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all of Ministries by Targets in the implementation of SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan (2016-20).

Finally, to achieve the project relevance, efficiency, value added and sustainability, the conservation sub-project has to extend the planned communication and awareness activities to the village areas, to draft a management plan for the sanctuaries, conduct field studies on the effective population of dolphins (locally and in the region) and on fish and aquatic resources stocks, coordinates with the livelihood sub-project for livelihood activities. Integrate and make able the local people participate and effectively manage and co-manage the PAs. The activities of the Outcome 1 conservation needs a revision and a 1 no-cost year extension to be completed and strengthened, to meet national and international cited legal frameworks on conservation and wise use (participated co-management) of the natural resources.

It is suggested an assessment of the status of the natural resources in the sanctuaries (including their carrying capacity), the introduction of forms of collaboration with the people of the boundaries villages, namely fishermen and women groups and a co-management, including in the planned Community based resource co-management plan and the introduction of Monitoring and Control together with the Surveillance activities of the natural resources inside the three PAs by the FD and the populations of the three villages.

The project has to consider these issues seriously to assure the project relevance, efficiency, value added and sustainability.

# 5. MTR Conclusions and Recommendations

## 5.1 Conclusions

### 5.1.1 Comprehensive and balanced statements (that are evidence-based and connected to the MTR's findings) which highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project

Despite the ESAPIIAE project is carrying on some of the mentioned tasks and activities, is still lacking in scientific and technical knowledge on the PAs ecosystems, as well as governance instruments and of sustainable management and co-management measures for the conservation and wise use of the PAs aquatic resources, including the local communities participation and ownership and benefits sharing of the sustainable co-management of the aquatic resources.

The analysis of the following references underlines the point of Strengths and the Weaknesses relating to the main policies orientations in supporting tasks, activities and results of the EPASIIAE project, within the national and international related legal framework and guidelines.

According to the A Handbook "Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the implementation of SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan (2016-20)", Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP), Project General Economics Division (GED) Planning Commission, September 2016, The following Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) goal are included and planned, in order to support the ESAPIIAE Project activities:

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. 6.6.1 Change in the related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lake. Maintain the inland river systems and ecosystems for fishery, sediment transport, and inland shipping

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Target 15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and dry lands, in line with obligations under International agreements.

Additionally, the Resolution VIII. 36 Participatory Environmental Management (PEM) as a tool for management and wise use of wetlands takes into account that the participation of all sectors in sustainable management of wetlands optimizes human, economic and environmental resources to the point that in many regions it is considered a process that can contribute to reducing poverty and improving the quality of life.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (Article 5) underlines: 1. Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to have access to and to use in a sustainable manner the natural resources present in their communities that are required to enjoy adequate living conditions, in accordance with article 28 of the present Declaration. They also have the right to participate in the management of these resources. 2. States shall take measures to ensure that any exploitation affecting the natural resources that peasants and other people working in rural areas traditionally hold or use is permitted based on, but not limited

to: (a) A duly conducted social and environmental impact assessment; (b) Consultations in good faith, in accordance with article 2 (3) of the Declaration; (c) Modalities for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of such exploitation that have been established on mutually agreed terms between those exploiting the natural resources and the peasants and other people working in rural areas.

Finally, the Government of Bangladesh and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed an agreement today on 27 December at the Economic Relations Division (ERD) for the implementation of a six-year project titled, 'Enhancing adaptive capacities of coastal communities, especially women, to cope with climate change induced salinity,' financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The USD 33 million project will benefit almost 7 lac people from the disaster prone Satkhira and Khulna districts with a focus on women and adolescent girls. This is first of its kind project in Bangladesh, where the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, providing $8 million, along with GCF, who are providing the rest as a co-financer to plan, implement, and manage climate-resilient solutions.

## 5.2 Recommendations

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

**Design and Management**

1. The MTR Team recommends, in terms of technical management, having the project human resources been underestimated in administrative and technical aspects, to recruit 1 administrative officer and 1 internal monitoring expert. Their absence are over-charging the project top management, notably the PM and PD.

2. The Team kindly recommends a better coordination in funding procedures and a simplification in funding administrative procedures among the donors (GEF, UNDP and Bangladesh Government), due the delay in starting up the project, that has leaved only three years to the implementation phase.

3. The Team recommends a 1 year extension at the project management (and at the two sub-projects), needed to complete the activities planned and to be revised, including some revisions in the log-frame with indicators targets based on the reality and on technical and scientific data.

4. The Team warmly recommends to plan and conduct a number of field studies:
   a. Studies and researches on the ecology of the three PAs (including multiannual Dolphins and aquatic resources stocks assessments).
   b. Field surveys on socio-economic aspects of the people living in the three villages bordering the PAs have to be carefully considered (eg. field studies on stakeholders in-depth socio-economic analysis and needs assessment (including the assessment of safer villages management measures for lands, housing, health, walking passages, safer landing sites facilities, drinking water, value chains development, schooling, etc.).

c. A KAP (Knowledge, Attitude and Practice) studies on the capacity of the economic and conservation sector to evaluate the Capacity Development Score-card.
d. Related studies with the forest department to complete the METT.
e. A complete gender analysis.

**OUTCOME1: Conservation**

5. The Team recommends, for the conservation sub-project, a revision and strengthening of the activities relating to the management plan, notably a strengthening of the communication and awareness activities in the villages bordering the three PAs. Notably, the communication and awareness activities have been conducted in Khulna and in the region (eg. in the schools) but not yet in the marginal fishers villages bordering the PAs. It suggested has to consider the impact of high rate of eco-tourism Additionally is suggested that the PAs management team will be not only composed by the voluntaries trained (otherwise a planned management composed only of voluntaries generates preoccupations in terms of sustainability, when not supported by a management board of paid professionals (based hopefully on the principles of equity, only a women in the actual management voluntary staff).

6. The Team recommends to introduce and adopt of an effective management plan in the three existing PAs established in the Sundarbans, based on validated scientific and technical data (possibly with markers and GPS positioning of the mammals) for the Dolphins and for the other aquatic resources in the three areas. Moreover, the management plan also focus on the including the sustainable and equitable (women) co-management of the aquatic resources of the PAs, taking care of the participation, ownership and needs of the people of the three villages.

7. The Team recommends that the facilities (e.g. for the school awareness and other related conservation activities (eco-tourism)) will have proper and safer landing and management facilities for a safe hospitality for the children.

**OUTCOME 2: Livelihood**

8. The Team recommends to conduct future ecological studies (Recommendation 4.b) on the three PAs and surrounding rivers. The team also recommends to introducing a MCS system (only Surveillance is in place) and an amendment to the conservation laws (Conservation act of 2012), that actually forbid access to the artisanal fishermen and women collectors (eg. crabs and wood), conducting subsistence activities that provides a low impact when based on a limited and regulated access at the aquatic resources in and around protected areas.

9. The Team warmly recommends to support and strengthen its support to the marginal villages fisheries communities and notably the fishermen and women that are facing strong problems for their previous commitments (advance sale of fishes and shrimps or crabs) with local moneylenders (*dadonder).* Presently, fishermen and women are forbidden in their activities and are not able to provide products or pay back the money have had in advance by the moneylenders.

10. The Team warmly recommends to the Ministry and to the UNDP PM to identify and draft a new participatory 4 years project, before the end of the project to be funded by the government or other external funding support, to align the project with the sustainable and equitable co-management of the PAs aquatic resources and to an effective livelihood of the people of the three villages bordering the PAs.

### 5.2.2 Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project

The actual state of the three sanctuaries can be defined of low or no management and not of a participatory co-management, notably related to the participation and inclusion of the including people of the villages and local stakeholders. Only strict conservation and surveillance of the sanctuaries is in place and no data collection (monitoring) and control (notably absence of Monitoring and Control, absence of historical scientific data on the status of the aquatic resources and of the Dolphins populations, both in the sanctuaries and in rivers, including trans-boundaries network activities with India.

Other lacking activities is the ongoing delimitation of the sanctuaries with buoys, full conservation measures inside the areas. etc.) and participation and ownership in the co-management of the aquatic resources by the people of the boundaries villages. To introduce sustainable management and co-management of the aquatic resources in the three sanctuaries there is the need to revise activities in conservation underdeveloped in awareness raising addressed to the people of the three villages, including greater coordination with the livelihood activities and in the proper management of the areas, planned for schooling and awareness raising and other activities oriented to the conservation has to be adequately managed to be consistent with the welcome of the people and future activities of eco- and fishing tourism.

Additionally, from a socio-economic and sustainable co-management point of view, the project activities needs to be integrated by multi-annual studies on the status of the aquatic stocks and with and capacity building in participated (including fishing and women groups people of the villages) Monitoring and Control (and Surveillance, MCS) of the aquatic species including Dolphins, introducing pilot forms of sustainable co-management, including and search and rescue (eg. introducing life jackets for fishermen and women collectors, immediate rescue activities, etc.), to be regulated in the management plan with legally regulated fishing and collection (eg. crabs) pilot activities inside the sanctuaries territories, involving people of the villages in collaboration with the FD personnel, in monitoring and control of the illegal activities.

### 5.2.3 Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

According to the Ramsar Convention, Resolution VII. 18, Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management, ratified during “People and Wetlands”, the Integrated water resources management is based on the concept of water being an integral part of an ecosystem, a natural resource and a social and economic good (Agenda 21, United Nations, 1992). The mentioned Convention guidelines recommend among others to establish mechanisms to identify and involve stakeholders in planning and management of river basins and their wetlands. Develop and implement management plans which take into account the goals and aspirations of the local stakeholders, including the consideration of fair and equitable sharing of benefits. Consequently, the Team as mentioned warmly recommends to the Government and to the UNDP

PM, to identify and draft a new participatory 4 years project, before the end of the project to be funded by the government or other external funding support, to align the project with the sustainable and equitable co-management of the PAs aquatic resources and to an effective livelihood of the people of the three villages bordering the PAs.

# Annexes

## Annex – 1: Lists of documents reviewed by the MTR

1. PIF
2. UNDP Initiation Plan/PPG Report
3. UNDP Project Document
4. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
5. Project Inception Report
6. Project Implementation Reports (GEF-PIR's)
7. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
8. Audit reports
9. Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm
10. Oversight mission reports
11. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
12. UNDP country/countries programme document(s)
13. Minutes of the Project Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
14. Project site location maps
15. Annual Project Report (APR)
16. Quarterly Project Report (QPR)
17. Annual Work Plans (AWPs)
18. Baseline (Socio-Economic) reports
19. Multi-year budget by outputs
20. Communication reports
21. TAPP (Technical Assistance Project Proforma) (project document translated in the government format)
22. Project approval letter (from planning commission)
23. LoAs with partner NGOs
24. Report on the identification of Dolphin hotspots
25. Protected Area (3 Dolphin Sanctuaries) Management Plan
26. The final draft of the five sectoral guidelines
27. Research gap analysis report
28. Communication-related report
29. Training related documents

Other related documents consulted and cited


1. Kreb, D., Reeves, R.R., Thomas, P.O., Braulik, G.T. and Smith, B.D. (Eds). Establishing protected areas for Asian freshwater cetaceans: Freshwater cetaceans as flagship species for integrated river conservation management, , Indonesia, 2009.
2. Iza, A. and Stein, R. (Eds) RULE – Reforming water governance. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, 2009.
3. Dudley, N. (Editor) (2008). Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories. Gland, Switzerland IUCN. IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidance on Recognising

Protected Areas and Assigning Management Categories and Governance Types, Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 21, Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.
4. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas. UN, 2018.
5. A Handbook. Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the implementation of SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan (2016-20). Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) Project General Economics Division (GED) Planning Commission. 2016.
6. Sundarbans Coastal Area Extreme salinity affects nutrition of women, children. 2018.
7. Convention on wetlands of international importance, expecially as waterfowl habitat. Ramsar, 1971
8. Resolution VIII. 36 Participatory Environmental Management (PEM) as a tool for management and wise use of wetlands. Ramsar.
9. 9th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) "Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods". Kampala, Uganda, 8-15 November 2005 Resolution IX.1 Annex C i. River basin management: additional guidance and a framework for the analysis of case studies.
10. 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) "Healthy wetlands, healthy people". Changwon, Republic of Korea, 28 October-4 November 2008 Resolution X.19 Wetlands and river basin management: consolidated scientific and technical guidance.
11. Dickens C., Kotze D., Mashigo S., MacKay H. & Graham M. (2004). Guidelines for integrating the protection, conservation and management of wetlands into catchment management planning. Water Research Commission Report Number TT220/03, Pretoria, South Africa. Available on request from the Water Research Commission.
12. Public Participation and Water Resources Management. UNESCO, 2015.
13. Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Planning Commission General Economics Division. September, 2017.

## Annex – 2: Structure of the MTR Report

**ii. Basic Report Information**

- Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
- UNDP PIMS# and GEF project ID#
- MTR time frame and date of MTR report
- Region and countries included in the project
- GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program
- Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and other project partners
- MTR Team members
- Acknowledgment

**iii. Table of Contents**

**iv. Acronyms and Abbreviations**

**1. Executive Summary**

- Project Information Table
- Project Description (brief)
- Project Progress Summary
- MTR Rating & Achievement Summary Table
- Concise Summary of Conclusions
- Recommendation Summary Table

**2. Introduction**

- Purpose of the MTR and objectives
- Scope & Methodology: Principles of design and execution of the MTR, MTR approach and data collection methods, limitations to the MTR
- Structure of the MTR report

**3. Project Description and Background Context**

- Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope
- Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted
- Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites
- Project Implementation Arrangements: a short description of the Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements, etc
- Project timing and milestones
- Main stakeholders: summary list

**4. Findings**

4.1 Project Strategy

4.1.1 Project Design
4.1.2 Results Framework/Logframe

4.2 Progress Towards Results
4.2.1 Progress towards outcomes analysis
4.2.2 Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
4.3.1 Management Arrangements
4.3.2 Work planning
4.3.3 Finance and co-finance
4.3.4 Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
4.3.5 Stakeholder engagement
4.3.6 Reporting
4.3.7 Communications

4.4 Sustainability
4.4.1 Financial risks to sustainability
4.4.2 The socio-economic risk to sustainability
4.4.3 Institutional framework and governance risk to sustainability
4.4.4 Environmental risks to sustainability

**5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

5.1 Conclusions
5.1.1 Comprehensive and balanced statements (that are evidence-based and connected to the MTR's findings) which highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project

5.2 Recommendations
5.2.1 Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
5.2.2 Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
5.2.3 Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

**Annexes**

- MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
- MTR evaluative matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)
- Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection
- Rating Scales
- MTR mission itinerary
- List of persons interviewed
- List of documents reviewed
- Co-financing table (if not previously included in the body of the report)
- Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
- Signed MTR final report clearance form
- *Annexed in a separate file:* Audit trail from received comments on draft MTR report

- *Annexed in a separate file:* Relevant midterm tracking tools (*METT, FSC, Capacity scorecard, etc.)*

## Annex – 3: Present status of area under conservation

**Table A: Newly identified dolphin hot spots**

| Name of Hotspot | Segment Length (km) | | | Area (km2) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Inside WS | Outside WS | Total | Inside WS | Outside WS | Total |
| Sela-Supati | 143 | 15.5 | 158.5 | 75.1 | 38.8 | 113.9 |
| Sibsa | | 102 | 102 | - | 54.5 | 54.5 |
| Puntey | 92.9 | - | 92.9 | 58.7 | - | 58.7 |
| Passur | 50.7 | 81.2 | 131.9 | 26.3 | 56.4 | 82.7 |
| Baleshwar Estuary | | 82.3 | 82.3 | - | 24.7 | 24.7 |
| **Total** | **286.6** | **281** | **567.6** | **160.1** | **174.4** | **334.5** |
| WS = Wildlife Sanctuaries | | | | | | |

**Table B: Newly identified semi-hotspots, which are recommended to managed as buffer area**

| Name of Semi-hotspot | Segment Length (km) | Area (km2) |
|---|---|---|
| Marjat | 87.7 | 170 |
| Mahmuda-Malancha | 102 | 60.7 |
| Arpangassia | 133 | 92.1 |
| Puntey | 74.3 | 88.3 |
| **Total** | **397** | **411.1** |

**Table C: Newly identified Dolphin hotspots (in ha.)**

| Name of Hotspots | Area (ha.) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Inside WS | Outside WS | Total |
| Sela-Supati | 7510 | 3880 | 11390 |
| Sibsa | | 5450 | 5450 |
| Puntey | 5870 | | 5870 |
| Passur | 2630 | 5640 | 8270 |
| Baleshwar Estuary | | 2470 | 2470 |
| Total | 16010 | 17440 | 33450 |
| WS = Wildlife Sanctuaries | | | |

Area of existing 3 Dolphin sanctuaries: **1,070 ha**.
Newly identified area (inside the Wildlife Sanctuaries, which are already declared as PA): **16,010 ha**.
Newly identified area (outside the Wildlife Sanctuaries) proposing for declared as PA (from Passur river site): **2,200 ha.**
Newly identified semi-hotspots or buffer area (which is already declared as buffer area of the Sundarbans WS) : **41,100 ha.**
**Presently total area under conservation: 60,280 ha (17080 ha. PA + 2,200 ha. proposed + 41,100 ha. buffer area)**

*Ref: Identifying the Dolphin Hot-spots in Southwestern Bangladesh, EPESIIAEP Project, 2018, Table 4.2 Pp. 34*

# Annex – 4: Capacity development scorecard (as per the ProDoc, Annex 10, Pp. 93)

***Table A: Capacity development scorecard***

| Strategic Area of Support | Capacity Level | Indicator | Scores | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **Worst (Score 0)** | | **Marginal (Score 1)** | | **Satisfactory (Score 2)** | | **Best (Score 3)** | |
| 1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programmes | Systemic | There is a strong and clear legal mandate for integrating biodiversity into economic sector activities | There is no legal framework for biodiversity integrating into production sector activities | | There is a partial legal framework for biodiversity integration into economic sector activities, but it has many inadequacies | | There is a reasonable legal framework for biodiversity integration but it has a few weaknesses and gaps | 2 | There is a strong and clear legal mandate for biodiversity integration into economic sector activities | |
| 1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programmes | Institutional | There is a multi-sectoral institutional mechanism responsible for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into economic sector | There is no multi-sectoral institutional mechanism responsible for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into production sector activities. | 0 | There is a multi-sectoral institutional mechanism responsible for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into production sector activities but there is no clear strategy to this end | | There is a multi-sectoral institutional mechanism responsible for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into production sector activities, and there is an initial strategy to this end | | There is a multi-sectoral institutional mechanism responsible for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into production sector activities, and there is a regularly updated strategy developed through wide stakeholder participation | |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | Systemic | There are adequate skills for integrating biodiversity into economic sector activities | There is a general lack of skills | | Some skills exist but in largely insufficient quantities to guarantee effective biodiversity integration | 1 | Necessary skills for effective biodiversity integration into economic sector activities do exist but are stretched and not easily available | | Adequate quantities of the full range of skills necessary for effective biodiversity integration into production sector activities are easily available | |

| Strategic Area of Support | Capacity Level | Indicator | Scores | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Worst (Score 0) | | Marginal (Score 1) | | Satisfactory (Score 2) | | Best (Score 3) | |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | Systemic | There is an oversight mechanism with clear responsibility to monitor and enforce biodiversity integration into economic sector activities | There is no oversight at all | | There is some general oversight on environmental compliance but it lacks capacity to specifically monitor and enforce compliance with biodiversity considerations | 1 | There is a reasonable oversight mechanism in place providing for regular review of biodiversity considerations but it lacks transparency (e.g. is not independent, or is internalized) | | There is a fully transparent oversight mechanism in place providing for regular review of biodiversity considerations | |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | Institutional | Economic sector institutions have regularly updated, biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines prepared with effective participation of land users | Economic sector institutions do not have biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines | 0 | Economic sector institutions have biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines, but these are not developed through consultations with land users | 1* | Economic sector institutions have biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines, developed through consultations with land users, but there is no process for regular review and updating of the plans | | Economic sector institutions have biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines, developed through consultations with land users, and there is a process for regular review and updating of the plans | |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | Institutional | Biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines are implemented in a timely manner effectively achieving their objectives | There is very little implementation of biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines | 0 | Biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines are poorly implemented and their objectives are rarely met | 1* | Biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines are usually implemented in a timely manner, though delays typically occur and some objectives are not met | | Biodiversity-friendly good practice guidelines are implemented in a timely manner effectively achieving their objectives | |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | Institutional | Economic sector institutions in the project landscape are able to mobilize sufficient funding, and human and material resources to effectively implement the biodiversity mainstreaming | Economic sector institutions typically are severely under-funded and have no capacity to mobilize sufficient resources | | Economic sector institutions have some funding and are able to mobilize some human and material resources but not enough to | 1 | Economic sector institutions have reasonable capacity to mobilize funding or other resources but not | | Economic sector institutions are able to adequately mobilize sufficient quantity of funding, human and material | |

| Strategic Area of Support | Capacity Level | Indicator | Scores | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Worst (Score 0) | | Marginal (Score 1) | | Satisfactory (Score 2) | | Best (Score 3) | |
| | | mandate | | | effectively implement their biodiversity mainstreaming mandate | | always in sufficient quantities for effective implementation of their biodiversity mainstreaming mandate | | resources to effectively implement their biodiversity mainstreaming mandate | |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | Individual | Human resources in economic sector institutions in the project landscape are well qualified and motivated to mainstream biodiversity concerns into sectoral plans | Human resources (HR) are poorly qualified and unmotivated | | HR qualification is spotty, with some well qualified, but many only poorly and in general unmotivated | 1 | HR in general reasonably qualified, but many lack in motivation, or those that are motivated are not sufficiently qualified. | | Human resources are well qualified and motivated | |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | Individual | There are appropriate systems of training, mentoring, and learning in place to maintain a continuous flow of new staff with the capacity to mainstream biodiversity | No mechanisms exist | 0 | Some mechanisms exist but unable to develop enough and unable to provide the full range of skills needed | 1** | Mechanisms generally exist to develop skilled professionals, but either not enough of them or unable to cover the full range of skills required | | There are mechanisms for developing adequate numbers of the full range of highly skilled professionals able to mainstream biodiversity in territorial plans | |
| 3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders | Systemic | Conservation of biodiversity and its mainstreaming has the political commitment they require | There is no political will at all, or worse, the prevailing political will runs counter to the interests of biodiversity mainstreaming into sectoral plan | | Some political will exists, but is not strong enough to make a difference | 1 | Reasonable political will exists, but is not always strong enough to fully support biodiversity mainstreaming | | There are very high levels of political will to support biodiversity mainstreaming | |
| 3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders | Systemic | Biodiversity-conservation considerations have the public support they require | The public has little interest in and there is no significant lobby for it | 0 | There is limited support for the biodiversity-conservation considerations | | There is general public support for Biodiversity-conservation considerations | | There is tremendous public support in the country for Biodiversity-conservation consideration | |
| 3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all | Institutional | Economic sector institutions establish the partnerships needed to achieve biodiversity | Economic sector institutions operate in isolation | 0 | Some partnerships are in place but there are significant | | Many partnerships in place with a wide range of | | Economic sector institutions establish effective | |

| Strategic Area of Support | Capacity Level | Indicator | Scores | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Worst (Score 0) | | Marginal (Score 1) | | Satisfactory (Score 2) | | Best (Score 3) | |
| stakeholders | | mainstreaming objectives | | | gaps, and existing partnerships achieve little | | agencies, NGOs etc, but there are some gaps, partnerships are not always effective and do not always enable efficient achievement of biodiversity mainstreaming objectives | | partnerships with other agencies and institutions, including provincial and local governments, NGO's and the private sector to enable achievement of biodiversity mainstreaming objectives in an efficient and effective manner | |
| 4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge | Systemic | Economic sector institutions have the biodiversity information they need to develop and monitor biodiversity in the project landscape | Information is virtually lacking | | Some information exists, but is of poor quality, is of limited usefulness, and is not always available at the right time | 1 | Much information is easily available and mostly of good quality, but there remain some gaps in quality, coverage and availability | | Economic sector institutions have the biodiversity information they need to develop and monitor sectoral plans | |
| 4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge | Individual | Individuals working on sectoral planning work effectively together as a team | Individuals work in isolation and don't interact | | Individuals/sectors interact in limited way and sometimes in teams but this is rarely effective and functional | 1 | Individuals interact regularly and form teams, but this is not always fully effective or functional | | Individuals interact effectively and form cross-disciplinary functional teams | |
| 5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate, report and learn | Systemic | Sectoral Stakeholder Committee monitors the state of biodiversity mainstreaming in the project landscape | There is no dialogue at all | | There is some dialogue going on, but not in the wider public and restricted to specialized circles | 1 | There is a reasonably open public dialogue going on but issues that particularly magnify the conflict between economic activities and biodiversity considerations are not discussed | | There is an open and transparent public dialogue about the state of biodiversity mainstreaming | |
| 5. Capacity to monitor, | Institutional | Economic sector institutions have | There are no mechanisms for | | There are some mechanisms | 1 | Reasonable mechanism | | Institutions have | |

| Strategic Area of Support | Capacity Level | Indicator | Scores | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Worst (Score 0) | Marginal (Score 1) | Satisfactory (Score 2) | Best (Score 3) |
| evaluate, report and learn | | effective internal mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning on biodiversity integration | monitoring, evaluation, reporting or learning | for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning but they are limited and weak | s for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning are in place but are not as strong or comprehen sive as they could be | effective internal mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning |
| **Color Code:** | | **Baseline Level** | | **Mid-term level** | | |

* The project has successfully developed biodiversity friendly sectoral guidelines for five economic sector (fisheries, tourism, maritime traffic, industrial development and aquaculture.

** The project has successfully deliver capacity development training for conservation staff on SMART patrolling.

**Table B: Quantitative summary of total possible score**

| Strategic area of support | Total Possible Score | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Systemic | Institutional | Individual | Total |
| 1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programme | 3 | 3 | - | **6** |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | 6 | 9 | 6 | **21** |
| 3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders | 6 | 3 | - | **9** |
| 4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge: | 3 | - | 3 | **6** |
| 5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate and report and learn at the sector and project levels | 3 | 3 | - | **6** |
| **Total** | **21** | **18** | **9** | **48** |

**Table C: Quantitative summary of baseline level score**

| Strategic area of support | Baseline Level Score | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Systemic | Institutional | Individual | Total |
| 1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programme | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | 2 | 1 | 2 | **5** |
| 3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| 4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge: | 1 | 0 | 1 | **2** |
| 5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate and report and learn at the sector and project levels | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| **Total** | **6** | **1** | **3** | **10** |

**Table D: Quantitative summary of Mid-term level score (only updated information on Strategic area of support – 2)**

| Strategic area of support | Mid-term Level Score | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Systemic | Institutional | Individual | Total | Percentage of total score |
| 1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programme | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | No updated information |
| 2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 33 |
| 3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | No updated information |
| 4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge: | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | No updated information |
| 5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate and report and learn at the sector and project levels | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | No updated information |
| **Total** | **6** | **2** | **4** | **12** | |

## Annex – 5: Link of publicized project related news and stories in few national dailies and televisions

**Prothom Alo Feature**
https://www.prothomalo.com/pachmisheli/article/1567680/%E0%A6%A1%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%AB%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%A8%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%AE%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BE%E0%A7%9F?fbclid=IwAR3Kt6eXxscAQpJYWwH4rfxgQFjOZwCP2ZgbcTQDi8NZj8sVa8NQBnxt8tU

**Daily Star feature**
https://www.thedailystar.net/star-weekend/news/journey-boat-dolphins-1661176

**Daily Star online news**
https://www.thedailystar.net/environment/wild-life/10-day-long-dolphin-fair-kicks-off-in-khulna-bangladesh-1656031

**UNB News**
http://www.unb.com.bd/category/Bangladesh/dolphin-fair-kicks-off-in-khulna-to-raise-awareness-on-its-conservation/5726?fbclid=IwAR0JxaTepDgrWze_htxGFQWiCwgll2IXj5vfFBv_8uxhlRK11lN1oLwtV4w

**Ekhushey TV online news**
https://www.ekushey-tv.com/%E0%A6%A1%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%AB%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%A8-%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%82%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%95%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%B7%E0%A6%A3-%E0%A6%AC%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B7%E0%A7%9F%E0%A7%87-%E0%A6%9C%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%9A%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%A4%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%A4%E0%A6%BE-%E0%A6%AC%E0%A6%BE%E0%A7%9C%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%A4%E0%A7%87-%E0%A6%96%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%BE%E0%A7%9F-%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%95-%E0%A6%AE%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BE/55178

**Daily Jonokontho**
http://web.dailyjanakantha.com/details/article/382566/%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%95-%E0%A6%AE%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BE-%E0%A6%89%E0%A6%A6%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%AC%E0%A7%8B%E0%A6%A7%E0%A6%A8/

**Channel i TV news**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=Ra9r7rCFgKU

**Khulna Times**
http://khulnatimes.com/%E0%A6%96%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%BE%E0%A7%9F-%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%95-%E0%A6%AE%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BE-%E0%A6%89%E0%A6%A6%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%AC%E0%A7%8B%E0%A6%A7/

**New Age**
http://www.newagebd.net/article/55070/dolphin-fair-in-khulna-to-raise-awareness-on-conservation

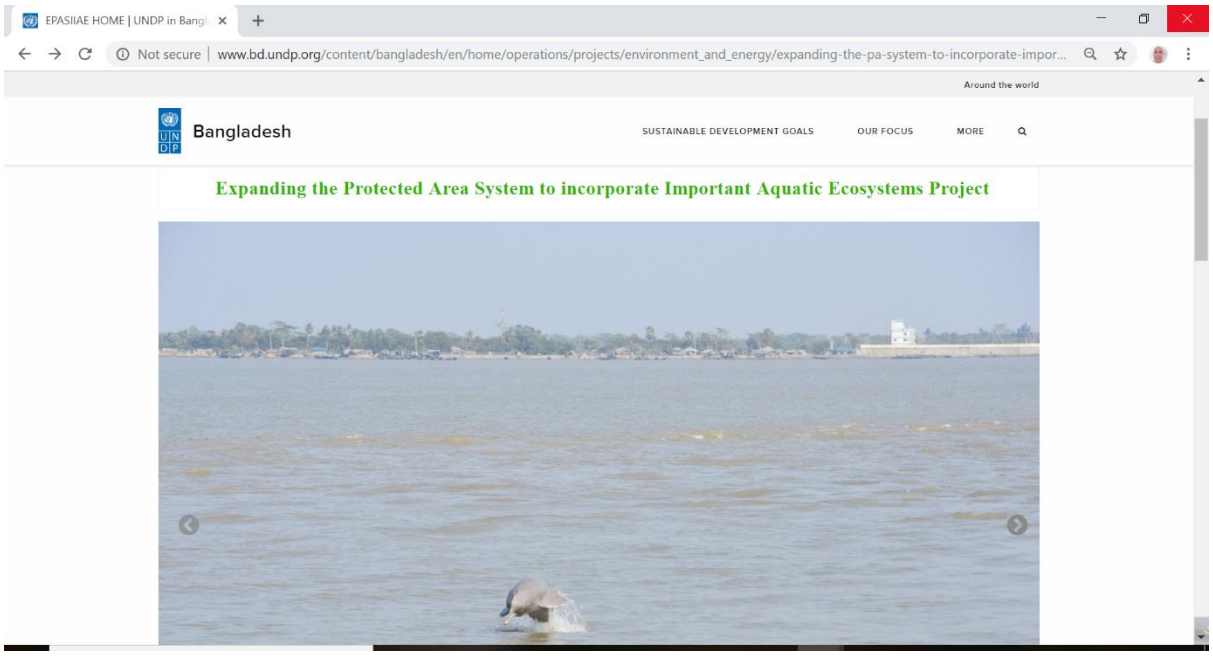
**The Financial Express**
https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/national/dolphin-fair-begins-in-khulna-1541327438

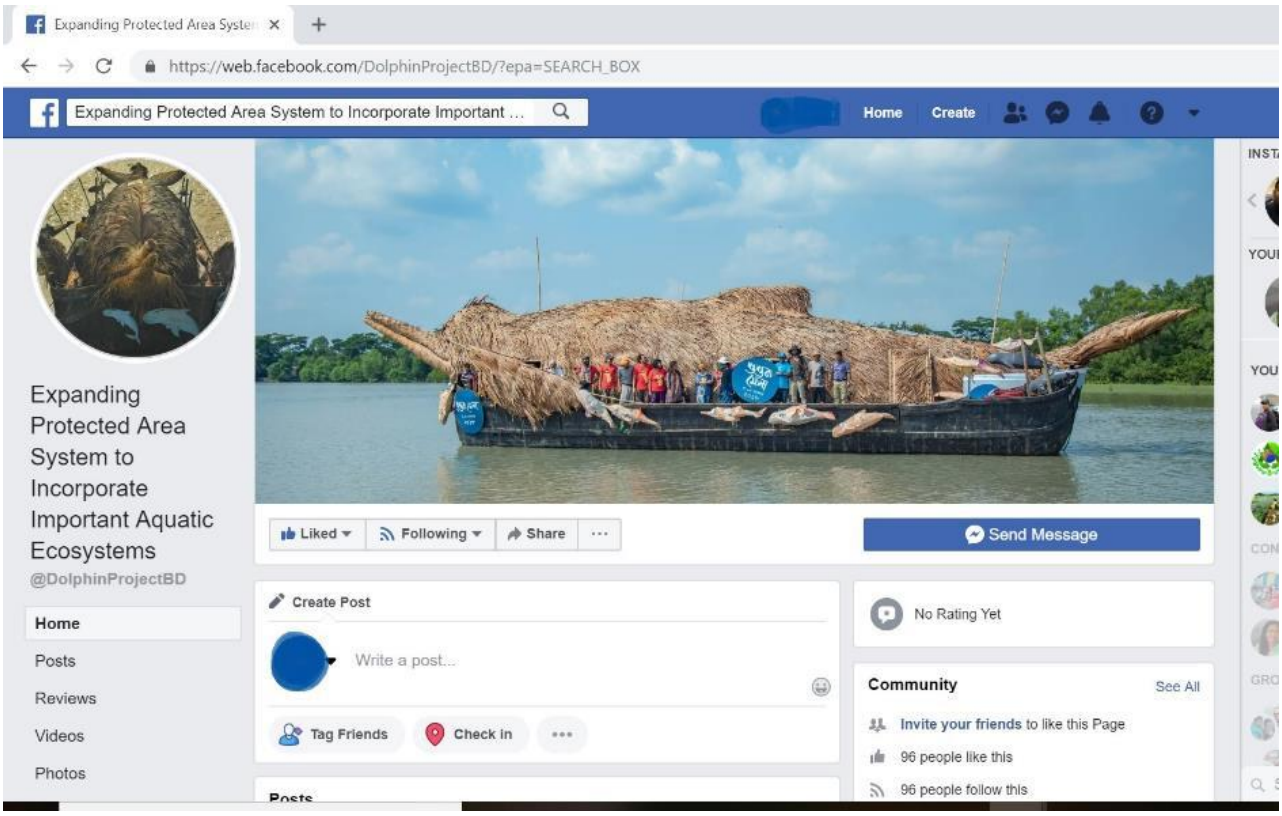
**UNDP webstories**
http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2018/11/04/dolphin_conservation_awareness_sundarbans.html

**Channel i news**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-6birW2cQQ&feature=share

**Dhaka tribune**
https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/dhaka/2018/10/25/speakers-urge-govt-to-declare-dolphin-flagship-aquatic-animal

# Annex – 6: Snaps of project webpage and social media page



# Annex – 7: Management Committees

**Project Steering Committee (PSC)**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1) Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests | - Chairperson |
| 2) Additional Secretary, Administration, MoEF | - Member |
| 3) Additional Secretary, Development, MoEF | - Member |
| 4) Chief Conservator of Forest, Forest Department | - Member |
| 5) Director General, Department of Eriviroillnent | - Member |
| 6) Representative, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock | - Member |
| 7) Representative, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management | - Member |
| 8) Representative, Ministry of Water Resources | - Member |
| 9) Representative, Ministry of Shipping | - Member |
| 10) Representative, Department of Fisheries | - Member |
| 11) Representative, Bangladesh Fish Research Institute | - Member |
| 12) Representative, Bangladesh Water Development Board | - Member |
| 13) Representative, Bangladesh Metrological Department | - Member |
| 14) Representative, Bangladesh Coast Guard | - Member |
| 15) Representative, Mongla Port Authority | - Member |
| 16) Representative, Forest, Fisheries & Livestock Wing, Planning Commission | - Member |
| 17) Representative, Programming Division, Planning Commission | - Member |
| 18) Representative, ERD, Ministry of Finance | - Member |
| 19) Representative, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance | - Member |
| 20) Representative, IMED, Ministry of Planning | - Member |
| 21) Representative, Department of Agriculture Extension, Ministry of Agriculture | - Member |
| 22) Representative, Bangladesh Fishery Research Institute | - Member |
| 23) Representative of NEC-ECNEC & Coordination Wing, Planning Division | - Member |
| 24) Deputy Chief, Planning, MoEF | - Member |
| 25) Representative of UNDP, Bangladesh Country Office | - Member |
| 26) Assistant Chief Conservator of Forest, Development Planning Unit, FD | - Member |
| 27) Two Representatives from Civil Society Organizations | - Member |
| 28) Deputy Commissioners (DCs) from respective districts of the project sites | - Member |
| 29) National Project Director of the Project | - Member |
| 30) Concerned Senior Assistant Chief/ Assistant Chief, MoEF | - Member Secretary |

**Project Implementation Committee (PIC)/Project Board (PB):**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 ) Chief Conservator of Forests | - Chair |
| 2) Deputy Secretary, Forests, MoEF | - Member |
| 3 ) Deputy Chief, Planning, MoEF | - Member |
| 4) Representative, Forest, Fisheries & Livestock Wing, Planning Commission | - Member |
| 5) Representative, Programming Division, Planning Commission | - Member |
| 6) Representative of NEC-ECNEC & Coordination Wing, Planning Division | - Member |
| 7) Representative, IMED, Ministry of Planning | - Member |
| 8) Representative, ERD, Ministry of Finance | - Member |
| 9) Representative, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance | - Member |
| 10) National Project Director (NPD) | - Member |
| 11 ) Representative, Department of Fisheries | - Member |
| 12) Representative, Bangladesh Fish Research Institute | - Member |
| 13) Selected members of Co-Management Committees | - Member |
| 14) Representatives from Local communities | - Member |
| 15) Representatives from NGOs (if necessary) | - Member |
| 16) Representative of UNDP Bangladesh | - Member |
| 17) Concern Desk Officer, FD | - Member Secretary |

# Annex – 8: Recommendation for revision of the indicators and corresponding baseline and EOP target

*Recommendation for revision of indicators and corresponding baseline and EOP target*

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Revised Indicator | Baseline level | Revised baseline level | End of the Project (EOP) Target | Revised End of the Project (EOP) Target | Justification |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Objective:** To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local communities especially the fishers. | a) Extent of aquatic environment of the Sundarbans brought under effective conservation planning and management framework | | a) 0 ha | | a)102,000 ha<br><br>(Existing: 1017+New:51, 000+Buffer: 50,000) | 80,000 ha.<br><br>(30,000 ha. sanctuaries + 50,000 ha. buffer area) | Revised the EOP target |
| | b) Population status of the following critical species remain stable or increases:<br>Ganges freshwater dolphin<br>Irrawaddy dolphin | | b)Ganges:225<br>Irrawaddy:451 | | b) Remain stable or increase by project end | | No change |
| **Outcome 1:** Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved | **Indicator 1:** Improved management effectiveness PAs as measured and recorded by Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) | | 46 out of 300 | | Increase in METT scores (at least around 70 out of 300) by 30 percent by year 5 | | No change |
| | **Indicator 2:** Biodiversity-friendly Sectoral Guidelines prepared and implemented leading to effective integration of biodiversity considerations into economic sector practices | | 0 | | At least 5 Sectoral Guidelines (Fisheries, Tourism, Maritime traffic, industrial development and Aquaculture prepared and adopted. | | No change |
| | **Indicator 3:** Effective and functioning cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder institutions | | 0 | | 2 | | No change |

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Revised Indicator | Baseline level | Revised baseline level | End of the Project (EOP) Target | Revised End of the Project (EOP) Target | Justification |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (including conservation, livelihood and production) established at regional and national level. | | | | | | |
| | **Indicator 4:** Number of representatives from the key government sectors trained in effective management of aquatic biodiversity | | 0 | | Conservation Sector -100 Economic Sector – 100 | | No change |
| | **Indicator 5:** Reported mortality of dolphins by entanglement in nets and vessel hit. | **Indicator 5:** Reported mortality of dolphins in the Sundarbans by entanglement in nets, vessel hit and other cause | 90 reports in 2013 | 9 mortality per year[4] | 50% reduction by EOP | Reduce the mortality 4 per year by EOP | Revised the indicator and corresponding baseline value |
| | **Indicator 6:** Improvement in Systemic Level Indicators of Capacity Development Scorecard<br><br>1. Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies, programme<br>2. Capacity to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes<br>3. Capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders<br>4. Capacity to mobilize information and knowledge<br>5. Capacity to monitor, evaluate and report and learn at the sector and project levels | | <br><br>20<br><br>25<br><br>15<br><br>20<br><br>10 | | <br><br>30<br><br>30<br><br>25<br><br>30<br><br>20 | | No change |
| **Outcome 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in | **Indicator 7:** Number of fishers in the project area using sustainable fishing gear as evidenced by mesh | **Indicator 7:** Percentage of fishers leave the harmful fishing (using harmful gear) around the 3 | 0 | 0 | 30% of fishers follow the mesh size norms set up by the project | 60% of fishers leave the harmful fishing by | Revised the indicator and EOP target |

[4] From 2007 to 2013 (6 years) total 52 Dolphin mortality recorded in the Sundarbans area, average mortality rate is 9 per year (ProDoc, Para 58. Entanglement of dolphins in the fishing gear, Pp 23)

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Revised Indicator | Baseline level | Revised baseline level | End of the Project (EOP) Target | Revised End of the Project (EOP) Target | Justification |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation | size | sanctuaries area | | | by project end | EOP | |
| | **Indicator 8:** Amount of resources flowing to local communities annually from community based ecotourism activities Indicator | **Indicator 8:** Number of ecotourism initiative developed by the community and private tour operator | 0 | 0 | USD 0.1 million by year 5 (target value to be re-confirmed during the 1st year of the project) | 10 initiatives by EOP | Revised the indicator and EOP target |
| | **Indicator 9:** Number of people shifting to alternative income generating options that reduce pressure on biodiversity | | 0 | | At least 700 (including 250 women) by EOP | | Revised the EOP target (Ad the gender based target) |
| | **Indicator 10:** Number of people sensitized on aquatic biodiversity conservation particularly that of cetaceans | | 0 | | 3000 by year 3 and 5000 by project end | | |
| Both in Outcome – 1 and 2 | | **Indicator 11:** Percentage of female members in the different conservation committee (EMS, Dolphin Conservation Team) | 0 | | | 30% of female members by EOP | New indicator and EOP |
| | | **Indicator 12**: Percentage of female members in the project supported AIG groups | | | | 30% of female members by EOP | New indicator and EOP |

# Annex – 9: Completed and planned activities of the project

*Completed and planned activities of the project as per Outcomes and Outputs*

| Outcomes | Outputs | Conducted Activities by 2018 | Planned activities in 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome 1:** Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved. | **Output 1.1:** Knowledge generation and dissemination system improves decision making related to the management of aquatic habitats and sustainable use of resources in the protected areas and buffer zones | i) Identifying knowledge and research gap regarding natural resources and biodiversity conservation of the Sundarbans.<br>ii) Prepare biodiversity-friendly sectoral guidelines for at least Fisheries, Tourism, Maritime traffic, industrial development and Aquaculture sectors.<br>iii) Conduct Shusuk Mela and other outreach activities | i) Printing & distribution of poster, brochures, conservation book printing<br>ii) Setting Digital signboards<br>iii) Community awareness programmes, school programmes, conducting shushuk mela, workshop/seminars, international dolphin day observance, exposure visit for student/teachers, exposure visit for conservation sector staff etc. |
| | **Output 1.2:** New and additional areas to be managed as Protected Areas and buffer areas identified, notified and capacities developed among conservation and economic sector staff for strengthening the management effectiveness of biodiversity conservation efforts. | i) Identification of new additional areas in the Sundarbans to be managed as protected areas and buffer areas for dolphin conservation<br>ii) Capacity Building of Conservation and Economic Sector Staff<br>iii) Regular monitoring and surveillance of the PA (SMART Patrolling) | i) Training Module preparation & conducting training on Cetacean biology and behavior for conservation sector staff, economic sector staff & communities, Module preparation conducting training on SMART patrolling for conservation sector staff<br>ii) Regular monitoring and surveillance of the PA (SMART Patrolling)<br>iii) Conduct KAP survey |
| | **Output 1.3:** Support provided to the implementation of Management Plans of | i) Preparation of Community Based Resource Management Plan for the Management Plans for new Protected Areas/ Buffer | i) Management plan implementation activities like providing diesel |

| Outcomes | Outputs | Conducted Activities by 2018 | Planned activities in 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | new PAs and buffer areas to address existing and emerging threats to aquatic biodiversity particularly the cetaceans | areas | fuel supply to patrol camps & mentoring GPS based data collection & monthly reporting<br>ii) Conduct study for identifying Dolphin population<br>iii) Setting boundaries of the PAs with floating buoys, declaration of new Protected Areas for dolphins & buffer zone mapping & declaration, Rescuing and Treatment of Injured Dolphin, providing for forest boat repair<br>iv) Eastablishment of National Technical Group, Regional Cross Sectoral Committee and Formation of Dolphin Response/Conservation Team & their capacity building |
| | **Output 1.4** Monitoring and evaluation framework and replication strategy developed for effective aquatic PA management specifically for the Sundarbans and other aquatic ecosystems across the country | i) Conduct Mid-term review of the project | i) Terminal evaluation of the project |
| **Outcome 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation | **Output 2.1** Community based resource management plan prepared, capacities developed and financial support extended for operationalizing sustainable resource use practices and conservation of aquatic biodiversity | i) Preparation of the Community Based Resource Management Plan<br>ii) Baseline study of expanding the protected area system to incorporate important aquatic ecosystems project | i)Capacity building of communities to implement Community Based Resource Management Plan<br>ii)Implementation activities of Community Based Resource Management Plan<br>iii)Conduct a gender analysis study |
| | **Output 2.2** Strategies for alternate income | i) Livelihood support for the marginal community around the | Livelihood support for the marginal |

| Outcomes | Outputs | Conducted Activities by 2018 | Planned activities in 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | generation and livelihood diversification developed and implemented leading to reduced dependence on natural resources. | PA | community around the PA |

## Annex – 10: ToR of the Mid-term Evaluation

# UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference

Standard Template 1: Formatted for attachment to UNDP Procurement Website

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *medium*-sized project titled *Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems Project* (PIMS 4620) implemented through the Bangladesh Forset Department, Ministry of Environment, Forest and climate Change which is to be undertaken in *2018*. The project started on the 30.06.2015 and is in its third year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting* Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Finance Projects (http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf).

### 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Project Title:** Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Important Aquatic Ecosystems

Sponsoring Ministry/Division: Ministry of Environment and Forests

Implementing Agency: Forest Department & Implementing Co-partner : UNDP

Partner Organization(NGO): IUCN-CNRS and Community Development Centre(CODEC) Bangladesh

The project was designed to achieve the following goals and objectives:
**Goal:** Contribute to the sustainable management of important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans. Objectives:

(i) Introduce an effective management system in the existing Protected Areas established for dolphin conservation in the Sundarbans;
(ii) Expand the coverage of dolphin protected areas in and around the Sundarbans;
(iii) Enhance alternative livelihood options for local fisher folk to reduce their dependency on aquatic resources;
(iv) Enrich knowledge and information base of aquatic habitats in the region.
(v) Provide sectoral policy recommendation for aquatic ecosystem friendly practices.

**OUTCOME 1:** Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved.

**OUTCOME 2:** Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation

**Project Implementaiton Period**

*Date of Commencement:* 01 July 2016

*Date of Completion*: 31 December 2019

**Justification of the project:**

The project will assist the country in 'pursuing environment friendly development' and thus contribute to progress towards implementing the country's Perspective Plan or Vision 2021.

The project will contribute to achieve the country's goals and objectives of the 7th Five year plan (2016- 2020) as it will assist in implementation of the Forestry Sub-sector strategy "Due importance will be given to the Sundarbans Mangrove Forest for its biodiversity conservation. Different measures will be taken to conserve and protect wildlife...." and Fishery Sub-Sector strategy "Establish and maintain fish and wetland sanctuaries which will comprise complete ban on fishing in certain eco-sensitive areas like Sundarbans....". The project will also help in achieving the following key objective of the 7th Five Year Plan relating to climate change, environment and disaster management:

To ensure no new extinctions of globally and nationally threatened species (through the followings):

i. Conserve and protect the eco-system for bio-diversity and overall environmental stability
ii. Initiate actions with regard to obligations under international treaties and conventions regarding conservation of biodiversity regional, and global biodiversity problems.

The project is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal-14 'sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development'. It will contribute to achieve the following targets of the goal.

Target- 14.2 : By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans. Target- 14.4 : By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics. Target-
14.5 : By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.

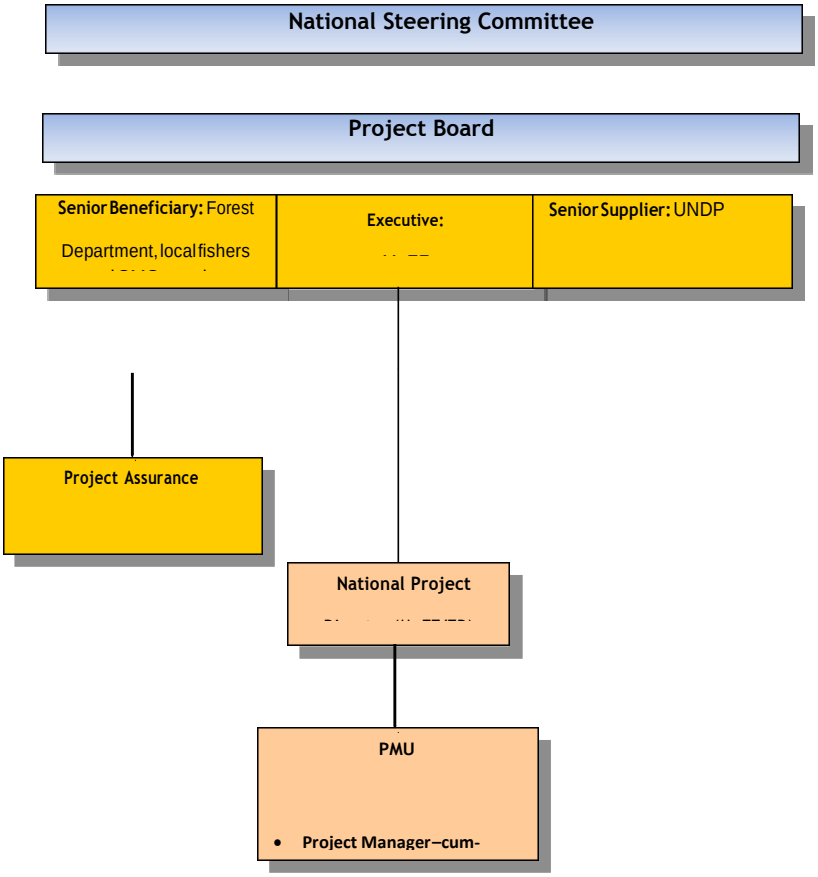
The The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is the UN System's coherent and collective response for addressing inequalities in Bangladesh. The project is aligned with the UNDAF's pillar five 'Climate Change, Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction and Response'

**Implementing arrangement:**

The project will be executed according to UNDP's National Implementation Modality (NIM), as per

the NIM project management implementation guidelines agreed by UNDP and the Government of Bangladesh.

***Project Organogram, Management Structure and Responsibilities***




**Stakeholders of the project:**

The main stakeholders of the project are Bangladesh Forest Department and local fishermen. The industries, tour oprators, maritife traffics are the other stakeholders. In and around the project area.

Project site

Irrawaddy Dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*) and Ganges dolphin (*Platanista gangetica)* are tow of the globally

significant species and are threatened in their general distribution areas across the globe. However, the Sunderbans and its surrounding areas still support healthy populations of the two species. Yet unsustainable fishery, increasing maritime traffic, tourism, vessel collision, unplanned economic development, poaching, land-use change, climate change etc. are making the aquatic ecosystems of the Suundarbans more and more vulnerable. Therefore, the Sundarbans has been identified as implementation site for the project to ensure long term survivability of the two species at global scale.

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy, its risks to sustainability.

## 4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach1 ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.2 Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to (Banglaesh Forest Department, local community and fishers, tour operators, maritime traffic); executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR team expected to conduct field missions to (Khulna and Bagerhat,Satkhira), including the following project sites (Mongla, Dhangmari, Chandpai, saronkhola).

The final MTR report should describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

## 5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

*i. Project Strategy*

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results

as outlined in the Project Document.

- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of
- *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

*ii. Results Framework/Log-frame:*

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe indicators and targets, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

*iii. Progress Towards Results*

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the log-frame indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP- Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of
-

progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "Not on target to be achieved" (red).

**Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)**

| Project Strategy | Indicator[3] | Baseline Level[4] | Level in 1st PIR (self-reported) | Midterm Target[5] | End-of-project Target | Midterm Level & Assessment[6] | Achievement Rating[7] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Objective :** To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local communities especially the fishers. | Indicator (if applicable): a) Extent of aquatic environment of the Sundarbans brought under effective conservation planning and management framework<br>b) Population status of the following critical species remain stable or increases: Ganges freshwater dolphin Irrawaddy dolphin | a) 0 ha<br><br>b) 225<br>451 | | | a) 102,000 ha<br><br>b) Remain stable or increase by project end | | |
| **Outcome 1:** Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threaten | **Indicator 1:** Improved management effectiveness PAs as measured and recorded by Managem | 46 out of 300 | | | Increase in METT scores (at least around 70 out of 300) by 30 percent by year 5 | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ed species of cetaceans conserved | ent Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) | | | | | | |
| | **Indicator 2:** Biodiversity- friendly Sectoral Guidelines prepared and implemented leading to effective integration of biodiversity considerations into economic sector practices<br><br>**Indicator 3:** Effective and functioning cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder institutions (including conservation, | 0<br><br>0<br><br>0 | 0 | 2<br><br>Conservat ion Sector -100 Economic Sector – 100 | At least five Sectoral Guidelines (Fisheries, Tourism, Maritime traffic, industrial development and Aquaculture prepared and adopted. | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | livelihood and production) established at regional and national level.<br><br>**Indicator 4:** Number of representatives from the key government sectors trained in effective management of aquatic biodiversity<br><br>**Indicator 5:** Reported mortality of dolphins by entanglement in nets and vessel hit. | 90 reports in 2013 | | 50% reduction by year project end | | | |
| **Outcome 2:**<br><br>Community- based ecosystems management systems in place to support | **Indicator 6:** Indicator 6: Number of fishers in the project area using sustainable fishing gear as evidenced by mesh | 0 | | 30% of fishers follow the mesh size norms set up by the project by | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| aquatic biodiversity conservation | size | | | project end | | | |
| | 7: Amount of resources flowing to local communities annually from community based ecotourism activities **Indicator** | 0 | | USD 0.1 million by year 5 (target value to be re-confirmed during the 1st year of the project) | | | |
| | **8:** Number of people shifting to alternative income generating options that reduce | 0 | | At least 500 fishers by year 3 and 700 by | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | pressure on biodiversity **Indicator 9:** Number of people sensitized on aquatic biodiversity conservation particularly that of cetaceans | 0 | | project end 3000 by year 3 and 5000 by project end | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Etc.** | | | | | | | |

**Indicator Assessment Key**

| Green= Achieved | Yellow= On target to be achieved | Red= Not on target to be achieved |
|---|---|---|

In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

*iv. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management*

Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision- making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and

recommend areas for improvement.

- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any
- changes made to it since project start.

Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.

- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications:

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

*v. Sustainability*

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

*Conclusions & Recommendations*

- The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.[8]
- Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

*Ratings*

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for (*Project Title*)

| Measure | MTR Rating | Achievement Description |
|---|---|---|
| **Project Strategy** | N/A | |
| **Progress Towards Results** | Objective:<br>To build capacity to manage the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and also expand their operational coverage (new protected areas and buffer areas) while still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | |
| | Outcome 1<br>Important aquatic ecosystems of the Sundarbans supporting the globally threatened species of cetaceans conserved | |
| | Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Outcome 2<br>Community-based ecosystems management systems in place to support aquatic biodiversity conservation<br>Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | |
| | Outcome 3<br>Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) | |
| | Etc. | |
| **Project Implementation & Adaptive Management** | (rate 6 pt. scale) | |
| **Sustainability** | (rate 4 pt. scale) | |

## 6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately 25 days starting 15 November to 25 Decmebr 2018, and shall not exceed one month from when the consultant is hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

| TIMEFRAME | ACTIVITY |
|---|---|
| 05/11/18 | Application closes |
| 10/11/18 | Select MTR Team |
| (15/11/18) | Prep the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents) |
| (18/11/18) 02 days | Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report |
| (19/11/18) 02 days | Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission |
| (21/11/18) 07 days | MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits |
| (29/11/18) | Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission |
| (05/12/18) 05 days | Preparing draft report |
| (10/12/18) 02 days | Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report/Finalization of MTR report |
| (15/12/18) | Preparation & Issue of Management Response |
| (25/12/18) | Expected date of full MTR completion |

Options for site visits

should be provided in the

Inception Report. Before

the MTR mission:

Complete the tracking tool prior to commencing the MTR mission, and share it with RTA for review.

## 7. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

| # | Deliverable | Description | Timing | Responsibilities |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **MTR Inception Report** | MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review | No later than 5 days before the MTR mission | MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | **Presentation** | Initial Findings | d of MTR mission | MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit |
| 3 | **Draft Final Report** | Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes | Within 20 days of the MTR mission | Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP |
| 4 | **Final Report*** | Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report | Within 25 days of receiving UNDP comments on draft | Sent to the Commissioning Unit |

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

## 8. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is UNDP Bnagladesh Country office (In the case of single- country projects, the Commissioning Unit is the UNDP Country Office. In the case of regional projects and jointly-implemented projects, typically the principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the country or agency or regional coordination body – please confirm with the UNDP-GEF team in the region – that is receiving the larger proportion of GEF financing. For global projects, the Commissioning Unit can be the UNDP-GEF Directorate or the lead UNDP Country Office).

The commissioning unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the MTR team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

The Commissioning Unit (CO & PMU) is responsible for coordinating a review of the draft MTR report. The review process is designed to highlight factual errors, omissions, or errors in analysis, and to ensure that the MTR report covers all requirements outlined in the ToR. All stakeholders should be given the opportunity to comment on the draft MTR report and to provide additional information relevant to the MTR team's assessment of results.

The Commissioning Unit will collate comments on the report and send them to the MTR team.

The MTR Team is required to provide an 'audit trail' listing the comments received and how they have or have not been addressed in the final Midterm Review report. The audit trail must be

submitted to the Commissioning Unit with the final draft of the MTR report. In order to protect the rights a confidentiality of persons interviewed, the names of the persons interviewed should not be included in the audit trail and must never be connected to feedback provided.

The Commissioning Unit and the UNDP-GEF RTA are required to sign a clearance form to note their approval of the final MTR report; the report is not considered final without the necessary signatures. This approval signifies that the report has been satisfactorily completed and responds to the ToR.

Management Response:

While the draft MTR report is being circulated for review, the Commissioning Unit and Project Team should draft the management response to the MTR. The purpose of a MTR management response is to outline how the Project Team and other stakeholders, as appropriate, will respond to the recommendations included in the MTR report. In addition, if the Project Team or other stakeholders involved in the project disagree with any of the MTR findings, this should be recorded in the management response.

Prior to their completion, management responses for MTRs should be reviewed and commented on by key project partners including the RTA and the OFP.

The MTR report and management response may be uploaded to the UNDP Evaluation Resources Center but this is not mandatory.

The MTR report (in English) must be submitted to the UNDP-GEF team, for onward transmission to the GEF Secretariat.

The Project Manager is required to brief the Project Board on the main findings and recommendations of the MTR, and to ensure the management response actions are discussed with and approved by the Project Board.

The MTR cycle is not considered complete until the final MTR report and management response have been approved by the Commissioning Unit and the UNDP-GEF RTA.

## 9. TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent consultants will conduct the MTR - one International Team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one National Expert, usually from the country of the project. The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas: *(give a weight to all these qualifications so applicants know what is the max amount of points they can earn for the technical evaluation)*

- Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to (*biodiversity conservation*);
- Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations;
- Experience working in (Asia especially south Asian countries);
- Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and (biodiversity conservation); experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset; A Master's degree in (a discipline relevant to Natural Resource Management(NRM), biodiversity conservation, environmental science, development planning, project management)
- ), or other closely related field.

## 10. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

20% of payment upon approval of the final MTR Inception Report 40% upon submission of the draft MTR report
40% upon finalization of the MTR report

Or, as otherwise agreed between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team.

## 11. APPLICATION PROCESS9

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the template[10] provided by UNDP;
b) **CV** and a **Personal History Form** (P11 form[11]);
c) **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

**Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal:** Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

| ***Criteria*** | ***Weight*** | ***Max. Point*** |
|---|---|---|
| ***Technical*** | 70% | 70 |
| • Experience in designing, implementing, and managing project evaluation, preferably in the field of Protected Area and Aquatic Ecosystems | 20% | 20 |
| • Knowledge in evaluation methodologies and data collection tools | 20% | 20 |
| • Work experience in relevant technical areas specially in the relevant field of Biodiversity, Fisheries, Forest and Environment | 15% | 15 |
| • Experience in evaluating similar GEF Funded Project | 15% | 15 |
| ***Financial*** | 30% | 30 |

**Financial Evaluation: (Total obtainable score – 30)**

All technically qualified proposals will be scored out 30 based on the formula provided below. The maximum points (30) will be assigned to the lowest financial proposal. All other proposals receive points according to the following formula:

$$p = y(\mu/z)$$

Where:

p = points for the financial proposal being evaluated

y = maximum number of points for the financial proposal

μ = price of the lowest priced proposal

z = price of the proposal being

## Annex – 11. MTR Rating Scale

| Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective) | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | Highly Satisfactory (HS) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as "good practice". |
| 5 | Satisfactory (S) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings. |
| 4 | Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings. |
| 3 | Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings |
| 2 | Unsatisfactory (U) | The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets. |
| 1 | Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets. |

| Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective) | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | Highly Satisfactory (HS) | Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as "good practice". |
| 5 | Satisfactory (S) | Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action. |
| 4 | Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action. |
| 3 | Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU) | Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action. |
| 2 | Unsatisfactory (U) | Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. |
| 1 | Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | implementation and adaptive management. |

| Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating) | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | Likely (L) | Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project's closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future |
| 3 | Moderately Likely (ML) | Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review |
| 2 | Moderately Unlikely (MU) | Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on |
| 1 | Unlikely (U) | Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained |

## Annex – 12: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants

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

**MTR Consultant Agreement Form**

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

Name of Consultant: Gianluca Ragusa_____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): International independent consultant_____

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

Signed at Rome_____ *(Place)* on *21 January 2019*_____ *(Date)*

Signature: _____