



## UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

### TERMS OF REFERENCE / INDIVIDUAL CONTRACT

#### UNDP-GEF Midterm Review International Consultant

<b>Project name:</b>	Sustainable natural resource and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity
<b>Post title:</b>	International Consultant for the Midterm Review (MTR) of full-sized UNDP-GEF project
<b>Type of contract:</b>	Individual Contract (IC)
<b>Assignment type:</b>	International Consultant
<b>Country / Duty Station:</b>	Home Based with one mission of minimum 10 working days to Uzbekistan (not including weekends)
<b>Expected places of travel (if applicable):</b>	Tashkent and Kashkadarya regions
<b>Languages required:</b>	English
<b>Starting date of assignment:</b>	12 September 2019
<b>Duration of Contract:</b>	28 days
<b>Payment arrangements:</b>	Lump-sum contract (payments linked to satisfactory performance and delivery of results)
<b>Administrative arrangements:</b>	Travel and logistics arrangements will be made by the UNDP CO in accordance with all UNDP rules and procedures.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *full-sized* project titled “*Sustainable natural resource use and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity*” (PIMS#00090383) being implemented jointly with the *State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental protection (Goscomecology)*. The project started on *21 September 2017* 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-Financed Projects](#)

#### 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The project was designed to *support improved and effective management of protected areas as well as sustainable use and management of mountain pastures and forests, and biodiversity conservation in two snow leopard landscapes (Western Tian Shan and Pamir Alay) of Uzbekistan.*

*Project Goal, Objective, Outcomes and Outputs/activities*

*The project objective is “To enhance the conservation, and sustainable use, of natural resources in the biodiverse high altitude mountain ecosystems of Uzbekistan”.*

*In order to achieve the project objective, the project is structured into four components, with each component comprising a complementary suite of two to three outputs.*

*Component 1: Landscape level planning and management decision-making. The first component will enhance the quality of information on key ecosystems, habitats and species of the high altitude mountains that are home*

to snow leopard and prey populations. Information collected under this component will be used to support sectoral land use planning and decision-making in these mountainous regions. Work under this component will be focused around two key areas of project support: (i) Improve the quality of environmental information for state cadastre in the snow leopard distribution range (Output 1.1); and (ii) Enhance the state of knowledge on snow leopard and prey populations (Output 1.2).

Component 2: Strengthening key biodiversity areas. The second component will seek to expand, and build the management capacity of the core conservation zones and high conservation value forests located within the two targeted snow leopard landscapes. Outputs and activities in this component will be directed at securing the conservation security of the key snow leopard and prey migration corridors within the two snow leopard landscapes. Work under this component will be focused around three key areas of project support: (i) Strengthen the conservation tenure, and improve the management effectiveness, of the core conservation zones in Ugam-Chatkal National Park (Output 2.1); (ii) Extend, and improve the conservation security of, Gissar Strict Nature Reserve (Output 2.2); and (iii) Enhance community involvement in, and beneficitation from, the protected areas (Output 2.3).

Component 3: Sustainable economic development incentives for communities. The third component will seek to encourage more sustainable levels of use of the high altitude pastures and indigenous forests located within the two targeted snow leopard landscapes. Outputs and activities under this component will contribute to improving the ecological integrity and productivity of forest and grassland habitats in the snow leopard landscapes. Work under this component will be focused around two key areas of project support: (i) Incentivise the adoption of more sustainable pasture management practices (Output 3.1); and (ii) Reverse the trend of unsustainable forest use in, and degradation of, natural forests (Output 3.2).

Component 4: Promoting cooperation and collaboration. The fourth component will promote improved cooperation and collaboration in the conservation of snow leopard and their ecosystems. It is envisaged that more integrated planning, stronger cooperative governance structures and improved institutional and individual capabilities of all partner agencies and institutions will improve the collective national capacity to conserve and sustainably use snow leopards, their prey and their ecosystems. Work under this component will be focused around two key areas of project support: (i) Improve inter-agency coordination in conservation, monitoring and enforcement (Output 4.1); and (ii) Strengthen the capacity for trans-boundary planning and management (Output 4.2).

The project implementation period is 2017-2022. The time is based on activities that will provide implementation of best practices, their assessment and primer dissemination of recommendations on their replication in other similar regions of Uzbekistan. Building of sufficient capacity and practical know-how within essential state institutions and local authorities will take too long to allow project sustainability. One of the main lessons learned by UNDP and other development partners in Central Asia in the last 15 years is that to change and reform existing institutions and mind-sets is an extremely time consuming process if it is to be achieved effectively. This has been a clear lesson from most of UNDP and other development actors' initiatives in the area and a key reason for many projects to not achieve the full results expected. Thus it is of paramount importance that in the project a realistic timeframe for the systematic implementation of the various project activities is planned in order to mitigate this risk. This is an additional reason why the timeframe of 5 years has been considered necessary.

The project budget planned for the period of implementation is in table below. The actually used donors' funds are indicated by UNDP and GEF (6, 509,863\$).

Total resources required	31,509,863\$
Total allocated resources (grants)	6, 509,863\$
- UNDP	300,000\$
- GEF	6, 209,863\$
- Government (in-kind)	25,000,000\$
In-kind Contributions	0\$

*The project will instigate institutional change with the true understanding and support of the institutions themselves for the change to be effective and sustainable. The major aim of the project is to build the experience, know-how and technical capacity of key national, regional and district level institutions so that they themselves are better able to understand and deliver change that responds to the evolving natural resources use situation in Uzbekistan. This is the most significant factor in making such institutions sustainable and continuing to be sustainable despite inevitable climate and economic “shocks” that may occur in the future.*

*The project activities are implemented under coordination of Goscomecology of Uzbekistan, as the national implementation agency of the project. Goscomecology is responsible for regulatory framework related to ecology, environmental protection and biodiversity use and conservation. Ministries and agencies of the country are involved in the project implementation through a mechanism of interactions through Goscomecology and are represented with members of the national Project Board (project steering committee) (the list is indicated below).*

### **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 and 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 approach<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to (*GEF Operational Focal Point, Goscomecology, State Committee on Forestry, State Committee for Land Resources, Geodesy, Cartography and State Cadaster, Academy of Sciences, regional and district authorities, rural communities, , and other national and international nature conservation NGOs*); executing agencies, senior officials and task team/component field coordinators, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to (*Tashkent and Kashkadarya Regions of Uzbekistan*), including the project sites.

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.

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<sup>1</sup> For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

<sup>2</sup> For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

## 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.

### Results Framework/Logframe:

- 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.

## ii. Progress Towards Results

### Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the logframe 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 <sup>3</sup>	Baseline Level <sup>4</sup>	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target <sup>5</sup>	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment <sup>6</sup>	Achievement Rating <sup>7</sup>	Justification for Rating
<b>Objective:</b>	Indicator (if applicable):							
<b>Outcome 1:</b>	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							

<sup>3</sup> Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards

<sup>4</sup> Populate with data from the Project Document

<sup>5</sup> If available

<sup>6</sup> Colour code this column only

<sup>7</sup> Use the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

<b>Outcome 2:</b>	Etc.							
<b>Etc.</b>								

**Indicator Assessment Key**

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In the causal pathways of a project, its outputs are expected to lead to its intended outcomes. Although achievement of outcomes is not certain, most UNDP-GEF projects may be expected to achieve the targeted outcomes at implementation completion. The evaluators should, therefore, assess the progress toward the expected outcomes. They should also assess the factors that may affect outcome achievement, e.g. project design, project’s linkages with other activities, extent and materialization of co-financing, stakeholder involvement, etc.

Outcome ratings will take into account the outcome achievements of the projects against its expected targets. Project outcomes will be rated on three dimensions:

- a. **Relevance:** Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes?
- b. **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the project’s actual outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes?
- c. **Efficiency:** Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects?

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.

Progress to Impact<sup>8</sup> Analysis:

It is usually too early to assess the long-term impacts of the project at the project mid-term. This said, some evidence on progress towards long-term impacts, and the extent to which the key assumptions of the project’s theory of change hold, may be available and it may be feasible to assess and report on the progress. The evaluators should also assess the extent to which the progress towards long-term impact may be attributed to the project.

The evaluators should report the available qualitative and quantitative evidence on environmental stress reduction (e.g. GHG emission reduction, reduction of waste discharge, etc.) and environmental status change (e.g. change in population of endangered species, forest stock, water retention in degraded lands, etc.). When reporting such evidence, the evaluator should note the information source and clarify the scale/s at which the described environmental stress reduction is being achieved.

The evaluators should cover project’s contributions to changes in policy/ legal/regulatory framework. This would include observed changes in capacities (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information (laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc.). Contribution to change in socioeconomic status (income, health, well-being, etc.) should also be documented.

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<sup>8</sup> See Annex 1, “Impact Assessment Related Definitions” of the document Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations for Full-sized Projects”.

Where the environmental and social changes are being achieved at scales beyond the immediate area of intervention, the evaluators should provide an account of the processes such as sustaining, mainstreaming, replication, scaling up and market change, through which these changes have taken place. The evaluators should discuss whether there are arrangements in the project design to facilitate follow-up actions, and should document instances where UNDP and the GEF promoted approaches, technologies, financing instruments, legal frameworks, information systems, etc., were adopted/implemented without direct support from, or involvement of, the project. Evidence on incidence of these processes should be discussed to assess progress towards impact.

When assessing contributions of GEF project to the observed change, the evaluators should also assess the contributions of other actors and factors. The evaluators should assess merits of rival explanations for the observed impact and give reasons for accepting or rejecting them. Where applicable, the evaluators are encouraged to identify and describe the barriers and other risks that may prevent further progress towards long-term impacts.

The evaluators should document the unintended impacts – both positive and negative impacts – of the project and assess the overall scope and implications of these impacts. Where these impacts are undesirable from environmental and socio-economic perspectives, the evaluation should suggest corrective actions.

### **iii. Project Implementation, Execution, and Adaptive Management**

The assessment of the implementation and execution of UNDP-GEF full size projects will take into account the performance of UNDP and project executing entities (EAs) in discharging their expected roles and responsibilities. The performance of these agencies will be rated using a six-point scale (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory).

Quality of Implementation: Within the GEF partnership, UNDP, as a GEF Agency, is involved in activities related to a project's identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation of detailed proposal, approval and start-up, oversight, supervision, completion, and evaluation. To assess performance of UNDP, the evaluators will assess the extent to which the agency delivered effectively on these counts, with focus on elements that were controllable from UNDP's perspective. The evaluator will assess how well risks were identified and managed by UNDP.

Quality of Execution: Within the GEF partnership, the EAs are involved in the management and administration of the project's day-to-day activities under the overall oversight and supervision of the GEF Agencies. The EAs are responsible for the appropriate use of funds, and procurement and contracting of goods and services to the GEF Agency. To assess EA performance, the evaluators will assess the extent to which it effectively discharged its role and responsibilities.

#### 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, Reporting, 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?
- 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.

#### 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?

#### 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.

#### Risk Management

- 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.

#### Safeguard and Gender Mainstreaming:

- Environmental and Social Safeguards: The evaluator will assess whether appropriate environmental and social safeguards, including those on mainstreaming of gender concerns, were addressed in the project's design and implementation. It is expected that a GEF project will not cause any harm to environment or to any stakeholder and, where applicable, it will take measures to prevent and/or mitigate adverse effects.

- Gender Concerns: The evaluator will determine the extent to which the gender considerations were taken into account in designing and implementing the project. The evaluator should report whether a gender analysis was conducted, the extent to which the project was implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits, and whether gender disaggregated data was gathered and reported on beneficiaries. In case the given GEF project disadvantages or may disadvantage women, then this should be documented and reported. The evaluator should also determine the extent to which relevant gender related concerns were tracked through project M&E.

#### **iv. Sustainability**

The mid-term review will assess the likelihood of sustainability of outcomes at project termination and provide a rating. The assessment of sustainability will weigh risks to continuation of benefits from the project. The assessment should identify key risks and explain how these risks may affect continuation of benefits after the project ends. The analysis should cover financial, socio-political, institutional, and environmental risks. The overall sustainability of project outcomes will be rated on a four-point scale (Likely to Unlikely) based on an assessment of the likely incidence and magnitude of the risks to sustainability. Higher levels of risks and magnitudes of effect, imply lower likelihood of sustainability. 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, Lessons, and Recommendations**

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.<sup>9</sup>

Lessons should be summarized and based on direct experience from the project, while including generalized statements that have broader applicability to other projects with UNDP's portfolio,

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. Recommendations should include a specific timeframe for the recommendation to be completed, and the specific target audience for the recommendation. 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.

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<sup>9</sup> Alternatively, MTR conclusions may be integrated into the body of the report.



The MTR report should include a maximum of approximately 15 recommendations.

## 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 “Sustainable natural resource use and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity”**

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
<b>Project Strategy</b>	N/A	
<b>Progress Towards Results</b>	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
<b>Relevance</b>	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
<b>Effectiveness</b>	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
<b>Efficiency</b>	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
<b>Progress Toward Impact</b>		
<b>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Quality of Implementation	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Quality of Execution	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
<b>Sustainability</b>	(rate 4 pt. scale, based on below: no higher than the lowest rating below)	
Financial	(rate 4 pt. scale)	
Socio-economic	(rate 4 pt. scale)	
Institutional Framework and Governance	(rate 4 pt. scale)	
Environmental	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

## 6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately (28 days) over a time period of (4 weeks) starting (September 12, 2019), and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant is hired.

The suggested breakdown of days per task is as follows, although the MTR team is welcome to develop their own workplan for the successful completion of tasks for the MTR:

<b>Task</b>	<b>Expected number of days</b>
<i>Desk review of project documents and completion of inception report</i>	<i>4 days</i>
<i>MTR Mission travel to Uzbekistan</i>	<i>10 days</i>
<i>Follow-ups, additional desk-based data collection, including from other Key Informants (e.g. phone interviews with international consultants, UNDP Regional Technical Advisor, etc.)</i>	<i>2 days</i>
<i>Data analysis and drafting of MTR report</i>	<i>10 days</i>
<i>Finalization of MTR report</i>	<i>2 days</i>

The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
<i>May 31</i>	Application closes
<i>June 30</i>	Select MTR Team
<i>September 2</i>	Prep the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents)
<i>September 12-15</i>	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
<i>September 16-17</i>	Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report
<i>~10 days within period September 17-October 25</i>	MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits; dates to be confirmed in consultation with MTR team.
<i>Last day of MTR mission</i>	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings
<i>November 8</i>	Draft MTR report
<i>November 8-20</i>	UNDP / Project team review of MTR report and provision of feedback.
<i>November 27</i>	Final MTR report based on feedback received, including audit trail of feedback.
<i>optional</i>	Concluding Stakeholder Workshop (not mandatory for MTR team)

Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

## 7. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

<b>#</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>MTR Inception Report</b>	MTR team clarifies and specifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission: September 12	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
<b>2</b>	<b>Presentation</b>	Initial Findings	Last day of MTR mission.	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
<b>3</b>	<b>Draft Final Report</b>	Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission, latest by November 8	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFF
<b>4</b>	<b>Final Report*</b>	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft: November 27	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 the UNDP Uzbekistan office. Prior to approval of the final report, a draft version shall be circulated for comments to UNDP-GEF team (including UNDP RB, Istanbul), government counterparts, including: National Project Coordinator (The State Committee of the Republic Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental protection), Project Manager and UNDP-Uzbekistan Country Office.

The commissioning unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of travel arrangements within Uzbekistan 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.

## **9. TEAM COMPOSITION**

A team of two independent consultants will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one team 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:

- Technical knowledge of and experience with integrated natural resource management issues, including:
  - Effective management of protected areas, including regulatory monitoring and enforcement, such as SMART patrol systems;
  - Conservation and scientific field monitoring of biodiversity;
  - Sustainable forest management;
  - Sustainable land and pasture management, including transhumance;
  - Sustainable rural and natural-resource based livelihoods;
- Experience in the evaluation of international development projects (particularly nature conservation projects), including experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Experience working with UNDP or GEF project-level evaluations;
- Experience working in Central Asia countries, especially in Uzbekistan is an advantage;
- Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 5 years;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and sustainable natural resources use and management; knowledge of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) is an advantage;
- 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 biology, environmental science, natural resources management, or a closely related field. Sound knowledge of sustainable rural development, land management, in particular in mountain areas and capacity development is critical.

## **10. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS**

The service provider will be responsible for all personal administrative and travel expenses associated with undertaking this assignment including office accommodation, printing, stationary, telephone and electronic communications, and report copies incurred in this assignment. For this reason, the contract is prepared as a lump sum contract.

The remuneration of work performed will be conducted as follows: lump sum payable in 2 installments, upon satisfactory completion and approval by UNDP of all deliverables, including the Final MTR Report.

60 % of payment upon approval of the final MTR Inception Report and submission of the draft MTR report,  
40 % upon finalization of the MTR report.

## 11. APPLICATION PROCESS<sup>10</sup>

### Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

- a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#)<sup>11</sup> provided by UNDP;
- b) **CV and a Personal History Form** ([P11 form](#)<sup>12</sup>);
- 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 tickets, 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.

All application materials should be submitted to the address *UNDP Uzbekistan office, address: Taras Shevchenko 4 str., 4 Shevchenko st., Tashkent, 100029, Uzbekistan Tel: (99871) 120-3450, Fax: (99871) 120-3485, in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference "Consultant for the project Sustainable natural resource use and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity of Uzbekistan (Mountain Ecosystems) Midterm Review"* or by email at the following address ONLY: [registry.uz@undp.org](mailto:registry.uz@undp.org) by **(time and date)**. Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

**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.

### ToR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team

1. PIF
2. UNDP Initiation Plan
3. UNDP Project Document
4. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
5. Project Inception Report
6. All Project Implementation Reports (PIRs)
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 (Tracking Tool for GEF-6 Biodiversity Projects, including METT scorecards for individual PAs; Land Degradation Focal Area - Portfolio Monitoring and Tracking Tool (PMAT) - GEF-6; Tracking Tool for GEF 6 SFM Projects).
10. Oversight mission reports
11. All monitoring reports prepared by the project
12. Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team

The following documents will also be available:

13. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems

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<sup>10</sup> Engagement of the consultants should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP: <https://info.undp.org/global/popp/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>11</sup>

<https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11\\_Personal\\_history\\_form.doc](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc)

14. UNDP country/countries programme document(s)
15. Minutes of the project “Sustainable natural resource use and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity (Mountain ecosystems)” Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
16. Project site location maps

## ToR ANNEX B: Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report<sup>13</sup>

- i.** Basic Report Information (*for opening page or title page*)
  - 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
  - Acknowledgements
- ii.** Table of Contents
- iii.** Acronyms and Abbreviations
- 1.** Executive Summary (*3-5 pages*)
  - Project Information Table
  - Project Description (brief)
  - Project Progress Summary (between 200-500 words)
  - MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table
  - Concise summary of conclusions
  - Recommendation Summary Table
- 2.** Introduction (*2-3 pages*)
  - 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 (*3-5 pages*)
  - 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 (if any)
  - Project Implementation Arrangements: short description of the Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements, etc.
  - Project timing and milestones
  - Main stakeholders: summary list
- 4.** Findings (*12-14 pages*)
  - 4.1** Project Strategy
    - Project Design
    - Results Framework/Logframe
  - 4.2** Progress Towards Results
    - Progress towards outcomes analysis
    - Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective
  - 4.3** Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
    - Management Arrangements
    - Work planning

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<sup>13</sup> The Report length should not exceed 40 pages in total (not including annexes).

- Finance and co-finance
  - Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Reporting
  - Communications
- 4.4 Sustainability
- Financial risks to sustainability
  - Socio-economic to sustainability
  - Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
  - Environmental risks to sustainability
5. Conclusions and Recommendations (4-6 pages)
- 5.1 Conclusions
- 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
- Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
  - Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
  - Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives
6. 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
  - Ratings 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.*)

### ToR ANNEX C: Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix Template

This Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix must be fully completed/amended by the consultant and included in the MTR inception report and as an Annex to the MTR report.

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<b>Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?</b>			
(include evaluative question(s))	(i.e. relationships established, level of coherence between project design and implementation approach, specific activities conducted, quality of risk mitigation strategies, etc.)	(i.e. project documents, national policies or strategies, websites, project staff, project partners, data collected throughout the MTR mission, etc.)	(i.e. document analysis, data analysis, interviews with project staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.)
<b>Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?</b>			

<b>Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?</b>			
<b>Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</b>			

**ToR ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants<sup>14</sup>**

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ (Place) on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings**

<b>Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)</b>		
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.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>



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.

<b>Ratings for Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management:</b> (one overall rating)		
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 (MU)	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.

<b>Ratings for Sustainability:</b> (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

**ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form**

*(to be completed by the Commissioning Unit and UNDP-GEF RTA and included in the final document)*

<b>Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:</b>	
<b>Commissioning Unit</b>	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____
<b>UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor</b>	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____

**ToR ANNEX G: Audit Trail Template**

*Note:* The following is a template for the MTR Team to show how the received comments on the draft MTR report have (or have not) been incorporated into the final MTR report. This audit trail should be included as an annex in the final MTR report.

**To the comments received on *(date)* from the Midterm Review of the project Sustainable natural resource use and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity (Mountain ecosystems) (UNDP Project ID-PIMS # 00090383-5438)**

*The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft Midterm Review report; they are referenced by institution (“Author” column) and track change comment number (“#” column):*

<b>Author</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Para No./ comment location</b>	<b>Comment/Feedback on the draft MTR report</b>	<b>MTR team response and actions taken</b>