  

**Protected Area Management and Illegal Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Ethiopia**

**REPORT OF THE MIDTERM REVIEW**

 

 

Prepared by: Nyawira Muthui and Tesfaye Yimer December, 2020

# Project Summary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project  | Protected Area Management and Illegal Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Ethiopia  |
| UNDP Project ID  | 5609 |
| GEFSEC PROJECT ID | 9157 |
| Evaluation Time Frame  | October 2020 to December 2020 |
| Date of Evaluation Report | 7th Dec 2020 |
| Region  | Africa |
| Country  | Ethiopia |
| GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program | Biodiversity Focal Area, Global Wildlife Programme |
| Implementing Partner  | UNDP |
| Lead Executing Partners | Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) |
| Other Executing Partners | Ethiopia wildlife Conservation Authority and Ethiopia Biodiversity Institute |
| Evaluation team members  | Veronica Nyawira Muthui (Team Leader)Tesfaye Yimer – Team Member |
| Acknowledgements | The Reviewers recognize and thank the Headquarters and Field staff members of the Ethiopia Wildlife Conservation Authority and the Ethiopia Biodiversity Institute, the Project Management Unit (PMU) and the UNDP Country Office for the efficient and professional organizational support they provided during this review. The Project Manager (Arega Mekonnen), the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (Behailu Mekonnen) and the Program Specialist (GEF) in UNDP Ethiopia Country Office (Wubua Mekonnen), Programme Associate Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development (Tihitina Girma), Wardens of Chebera Churchura, Mago and Omo National Parks (Adane Tsegaye, Nuru Yimer and Gambul Buni, respectively), and the Head of Cultural Tourism and Sport Office in the Southern Region (Takele Tesfu) deserve a special mention for the professional manner in which they facilitated the MTR process. Thanks also go to the Project Technical Advisor (Professor Julian Bayliss), Woreda Administrators, the many scouts, the communities and other partners involved in the implementation of the project for the information provided during the review. Ato Andualem Motti is gratefully acknowledged for the safe transportation across the vast project areas. |

Table of Contents

[Project Summary 1](#_Toc58230007)

[1 Executive Summary 6](#_Toc58230008)

[2 INTRODUCTION 15](#_Toc58230009)

[2.1 Purpose of the MID-TERM REVIEW 15](#_Toc58230010)

[2.2 Scope & Methodology 15](#_Toc58230011)

[3 Project Description and Background Context 20](#_Toc58230012)

[3.1 Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope 20](#_Toc58230013)

[3.2 Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted 21](#_Toc58230014)

[3.3 Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites 22](#_Toc58230015)

[3.4 Project implementation arrangements 24](#_Toc58230016)

[3.5 Main stakeholders and Project Partners 25](#_Toc58230017)

[3.6 Project timing and milestones 25](#_Toc58230018)

[4 Findings 26](#_Toc58230019)

[4.1 Project Strategy 26](#_Toc58230020)

[4.2 Progress Towards Results 37](#_Toc58230021)

[4.3 Progress towards outcomes analysis 39](#_Toc58230022)

[4.4 Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective 49](#_Toc58230023)

[4.5 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management - SATISFACTORY 49](#_Toc58230024)

[4.6 Sustainability 53](#_Toc58230025)

[5 Conclusions and Recommendations 57](#_Toc58230026)

[5.1 Conclusions 57](#_Toc58230027)

[5.2 Lesson learnt 59](#_Toc58230028)

[5.3 Recommendations 59](#_Toc58230029)

[6 List of Annexes 61](#_Toc58230030)

[6.1 Annex 1 - MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes) – available on request 61](#_Toc58230031)

[6.2 Annex 2: MTR Inception Report – available as a separate document, on request 61](#_Toc58230032)

[6.3 Annex 3 Schedule of Travel and meetings 61](#_Toc58230033)

[6.4 Annex 4: Names of individuals consulted during the MTR 63](#_Toc58230034)

[6.5 Annex 5: List of Documents reviewed - coming 63](#_Toc58230035)

[6.6 Annex 6: Signed Ethics Form and MTR Clearance Form 63](#_Toc58230036)

[6.7 Annex 7: Maps of the Project Areas 64](#_Toc58230037)

[6.8 Annex 8: Theory of Change Diagram 65](#_Toc58230038)

[6.9 Annex 9: Updated Stakeholders and Partnerships Tables 66](#_Toc58230039)

[6.10 Annex 10: Detailed analysis of project achievements per Prodoc Indicators 71](#_Toc58230040)

List of Tables

[Table 1: MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table 11](#_Toc58230041)

[Table 2: Key Project Milestones at CEO Endorsement and MTR 25](#_Toc58230042)

[Table 3:Project Objective, Outcomes, targets and indicators 27](#_Toc58230043)

[Table 4: Assumptions and their effects on project implementation and achievements 29](#_Toc58230044)

[Table 5: Staff Plan and Existing Staff in the Three NPs Visited by the MTR Team 44](#_Toc58230045)

[Table 6: Updated Project Financing Table 50](#_Toc58230046)

[Table 7: Recommendations 59](#_Toc58230047)

List of Figures

[Figure 1: Steps in the Mid-Term Review Process 16](#_Toc58230048)

[Figure 2: Delivery on Objective Level Indicators 38](#_Toc58230049)

[Figure 3: Delivery Against Outcome 1 Indicators 40](#_Toc58230050)

[Figure 4: Delivery on Prodoc Indicators under Outcome 2 42](#_Toc58230051)

[Figure 5: Delivery on Prodoc Indicators under Outcome 3 45](#_Toc58230052)

[Figure 6: Delivery on Prodoc Indicators for Outcome 4 47](#_Toc58230053)

List of Boxes

[Box 1: Progress towards results rating scale 17](#_Toc58230054)

[Box 2: Gender mainstreaming actions listed in the project document 36](#_Toc58230055)

[Box 3: Principles of UNDP Capacity Scoring System 44](#_Toc58230056)

**Acronyms and Abbreviations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AWF | African Wildlife Foundation |
| BES | Babille Elephant Sanctuary |
| BFF | Born Free Foundation |
| CCNP | Chebera Chuchura National Park |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora |
| CRGE | Climate-Resilient Green Economy (referring to Ethiopia’s Plan) |
| EBI | Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute |
| ECU | Environmental Crime Unit |
| EOP | End of project (often referring to the targeted results to be achieved by that stage of theproject) |
| EWCA | Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (formerly EWCO, Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation |
|  | Organisation) |
| FSP | Full Sized Project |
| FZS | Frankfurt Zoological Society |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GEFSEC | Global Environment Facility Secretariat |
| GIZ | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (formerly GTZ and DED) |
| GMP | General management plan |
| GWP | Global Wildlife Program |
| HQ | Headquarters |
| HWC | Human-wildlife conflict |
| IWT | Illegal Wildlife Trade |
| KfW | Formerly KfW Bankengruppe. KfW is a German government-owned development bank, based in Frankfurt. Its name originally comes from Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau |
| KSNP | Kafta Shiraro National Park |
| LE | Law enforcement |
| M&E | Monitoring & evaluation |
| METT | Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (referring to the GEF tracking tool for monitoring the effectiveness of management of protected areas) |
| MNP | Mago National Park |
| MOU | Memorandum of understanding |
| NISS | National Intelligence and Security Service |
| NP | National Park |
| NTFP | Non-timber forest products |
| NYZS | New York Zoological Society |
| ONP | Omo National Park |

# Executive Summary

***Project Information Table***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project  | Protected Area Management and Illegal Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Ethiopia  |
| UNDP Project ID  | 5609 |
| GEFSEC PROJECT ID | 9157 |
| Evaluation Time Frame  | October 2020 to December 2020 |
| Date of Evaluation Report | 7th Dec 2020 |
| Region  | Africa |
| Country  | Ethiopia |
| GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program | Biodiversity Focal Area, Global Wildlife Programme |
| Implementing Partner  | UNDP |
| Lead Executing Partners | Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) |
| Other Executing Partners | Ethiopia wildlife Conservation Authority and Ethiopia Biodiversity Institute |

#### Brief Project Description

1. The Protected Area Management and Illegal Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Project (EMEPAS) is a six-year USD 90,705,976 investment, with the GEF contributing USD 7,294,495 while UNDP contributes USD 200,000. The project was designed to address the twin challenges driving biodiversity loss in the country and the region; ineffective management of Protected Areas and a thriving illegal trade in wildlife products and live animals. The project addresses the barriers to improved PA management, namely: Limited functional consistency among environmental agencies; Inadequate/weak capacity for law enforcement and PA management; Insufficient conservation legislation; Marginalisation and limited knowledge of the environment sector. It is part of the GEF Programmatic Approach to Prevent the Extinction of Known Threatened Species and falls under the GEF ProgrammeGlobal Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development (9071).
2. The objective of the project is to build Ethiopia’s capacity for biodiversity conservation through increased effectiveness of protected area management (METT) and implementation of measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching. The objective will be achieved through the implementation of three interrelated components and four outcomes. The components are: i) Protected area management and biodiversity conservation: ii) Implementation of anti-trafficking measures: iii) Landscape approach to forest and agro-biodiversity conservation. The project is being implemented in the areas and National Parks that hold the majority of the remaining elephant populations in the country. These are the Omo-Mago-Chebera Churchura landscape, the Babille Elephant Sanctuary and the Kafta- Shiraro NP. Implementation of the six-year project started in 2018; operational closure is scheduled for September 2023.

#### Project Progress Summary

1. The project has made significant progress towards the overall objective, surpassing end of project targets on two indicators, delivering end of project targets on two indicators, and well on the way to delivering end of project targets on three indicators. It is however unlikely to reach mid-term targets for one indicator (increase in METTS) even by the end of the project (Fig 2 and Annex 10). Expenditure to date (cumulative General Ledger delivery) against total approved amount (in Prodoc) is 4,233,220 (56% of the total budget), with approximately 75% of the work programme delivered. Despite the COVID-19 related delays, the cumulative General Ledger delivery against expected delivery as of 2019-2020 is 88.73%. However, co-finance mobilization is at a low 36.1%.
2. As detailed in Annex 10, key deliverables that have boosted capacity for PA management and combating illegal wildlife trade include conclusion of international agreements on IWT control with five countries, review of the legal instruments and finalization of recommendations to improve the legislation and establishment of two regional task forces on IWT control . Although the signing of the five international agreements has been delayed by the restrictions on travel due to the COVID-19 outbreak, is expected that these will be signed in due course. The number of illegally killed wildlife has declined significantly, even though eight elephants were killed in a remote part of Mago NP at the height of COVID-19 related restrictions in patrolling. The ivory was recovered although the poachers are yet to be apprehended.
3. An achievement of note is the new demarcation of Omo National park with which includes the restoration of the elephant migratory corridor with Mago NP, which had been subsumed by the sugar estate. This has established a possible transboundary park with South Sudan. The demarcation was undertaken in a highly participatory process, and led to an increase of the NP area to 4775km2 (38% increment), providing more habitat for Elephants and other big mammals/cats. Other key achievements include:
* Review of the Wildlife Act (Proclamation to Provide for the Development, Protection and Utilization of Wildlife).
* Site Based Management Plans (3 complete, 2 will be completed by EOP).
* Establishment of the Environmental Crime Unit and a Canine Unit at the Bole International Airport (ongoing).
* Two Regional and several Woreda- level IWT task forces.
* Bi-partite agreements on collaboration on combating IWT and poaching between Ethiopia and its neighboring countries:, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, (South Sudan), Eritrea, and Djibouti.
* Website promoting the work that the project does, disseminating results to a wider audience, raising the profile of the project sites as potential nature-based tourism sites

#### Summary of conclusions

1. The MTR has reached the following evidence-based conclusions:
* The project is highly relevant to PA management and conservation of wildlife in Ethiopia, with benefits to neighbouring countries (Eritrea and South Sudan migratory herds of elephants).
* The project is meeting a felt need – very limited capacity within the PA and biodiversity conservation institutions and stakeholders, thereby targeting a serious threat to conservation.
* Project implementation is on track, indicating a well-functioning institutional arrangement, collaboration and coordination of all relevant stakeholders - congratulations to the UNDP, PMU, EWCA and EBI.
* The project has spent about 58% of total budget, and has delivered about 75% of the project strategy.
* The notable delay is the disbursement of micro credits to community groups, caused by a lack of an adequate vehicle to do manage micro-finance in UNDP-GEF projects. An alternative has been identified – groups have been organized in cooperatives through which the funds will be disbursed in this quarter.
* Although COVID-19 caused disruptions in project activities, this has not had an overall negative impact in the delivery of project results, and no cost-neutral extension is necessary.
* Project has increased the capacity and raised the profile of EWCA. EWCA has become a stronger entity which is central to the decision-making process for protected area management and combatting wildlife crime.  This will benefit its entire spectrum of work.
* The project has high level political support: the Prime Minister visited CCNP, the ex-Prime Minister visited the ONP. They both provided guidance on the improvement of the park management. One of three initiatives proposed to develop nature-based tourism destinations by PM Abiy is Chebera Churchura. The foundation established by ex-prime minister and ex-first lady has started preparatory works to strengthen the Omo valley NP managements.
* Project has undertaken donor mapping and is using the findings to mobilize additional financial resources and partnerships. This needs to continue; in particular get into partnerships and mobilize resources to expand the incentives for community conservation, including systems for the management of HWC.
* At 36.1% mobilization, co-finance expenditure is lower than expected at MTR. This is however probably due to inadequate monitoring of co-finance expenditure, which the PMU needs to do more diligently to provide better figures at terminal evaluation.
1. The project has tackled threats identified during the project development; however, threats remain, which could easily compromise the sustainability of the project results and impacts. Despite the increase in capacity as a result of the project, capacity required for the effective management of National Parks and dealing with wildlife crimes and illegal trafficking of wildlife and their products still remains inadequate. The NP staff noted that poachers and their networks of traffickers probably still stronger capacities than NP staff (IT communications, arms, networks). The project needs to build partnerships with other organizations to help address these threats.
2. Incentives for community participation are still inadequate: The National Parks are surrounded by poor communities highly dependent on natural resources, with limited alternatives. The project is likely to benefit about 5% of these communities, hence will not provide adequate incentives. The project is set to demonstrate community beneficiation for upscaling by government and other development partners. Government funding for local development remains inadequate, hence there is need to continue the current effort to identify and utilize innovative partnerships to raise further funds to address all remaining threats, including providing incentives for community conservation. A mechanism for compensating damages from human wildlife conflicts should be identified and implemented. A working relationship should be developed between the WB Progreen project and the UNDP GEF project and EWCA to improve livelihoods in the communities surrounding these parks.
3. The National Parks are caught up in the vicious cycle of inadequate investment in infrastructure development, low levels of tourism (as a result of a lack of site-based promotion and tourist facilities), very low levels of revenue generation, hence limited government allocation to their management. All sites should be able to gain revenue through properly managed nature-based tourism.

#### Lessons learnt

1. The MTR finds the following lessons generated from the review of the documents and consultations with the project stakeholders:
2. **Lesson 1: Integrated law enforcement initiatives are cost effective measures of tackling poaching and IWT:** As protected areas are not islands, there is a high degree of interaction of these areas with the different land use types and the communities living around. Protected areas may affect or be affected as a result of this interaction. Therefore, the park management should not act alone as it is unlikely to sustain conservation without the active involvement of other partners. The Multi Stakeholders engagement platforms such as project steering committee and Environmental Crime Unit are enhancing the effectiveness of combating poaching and IWT. It is through such effort that the ivory from eight elephants killed in Mago PA has been recovered from the poachers.
3. **Lesson 2: The power of public and policy makers’ education on biodiversity conversation**: The assessment highlighted the power of electronic medias’ like TV and radio, and stakeholders’ dialogues towards changing the perception of the general public, the executive bodies and the policy makers -at national and local level -on the astatic values, and socio-economic benefits of wildlife. An example is the federal government commitment in developing the Chebera Churchura NP and vicinities-without making any substantial change on the existing land use - to make it more attractive for visitors and to help the people get employment opportunity and income from it. The engagement of the government officials and the local people on the protection of the PA has also shown improvement overtime due to the serious of workshops and trainings organized on the issues associated with biodiversity loss and benefits of conservation.

#### Recommendations

1. The MTR offers the following recommendations.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation** | **Implementer** |
| 1. The GMPs, ILM plans and the Regional Natural Resources Management Agreements prepared with the project assistance could result in sustainable management of the wildlife Pas, combating poaching and IWT and upscaling community beneficiation if they are effectively implemented. The resources requirements of these plans can’t be addressed by the project. These demand coordinated resource mobilization effort, building on the recent donor mapping, the partnerships identified at project design and potential private public partnerships. Additional effort is required, including lobbing the government to allocate more to conservation finance, including tourism development to increase revenue generation from the NPAs and conservation.
 | Project Steering Committee (PSC) |
| 1. The project should expand partnerships to include other relevant institutions, in particular local community based organizations to address community participation and the private sector for establishing tourism infrastructure
 | PMU with support of the PSC |
| 1. The Federal government should upscale the best practice of the SNNRP Regional Government – giving the relevant communities 30% of Park generated revenues
 | EWCA supported by PSC |
| 1. **Linking Conservation with Livelihood:** Besides the law enforcement activities, awareness creation and livelihood activities should be strengthened to ensure the wider community, the brokers, traders and poachers who depends on income from wildlife and resources within the park are supporting the protection activities. Livelihood losses of the indigenes people that are linked with PA should be properly compensated to ensure community ownership and sustainable management of PAs. This can be addressed; for instance, by supporting IGAs, decreasing people dependent on natural resources by creating more tourism related employments, increasing people dropping out from pastoralism and farming (e.g. education and employment in other sector), and constructing protective fencing to decrease the human-wildlife conflict in CC. The revenue sharing experience of SNNPR should also be adapted by EWCA to ensure that people living around PA ma6naged by the federal government are getting some income from tourist activities. To make it more effective; however, the allocated resources from revenue sharing initiative should be directly managed by community structures and used for activities that directly address the needs of the people.
 | PSC |
| 1. Establish task forces in all districts that are adjacent to the PAs, and creating a multi stakeholder platforms that coordinates district level taskforces to share information, reduce the impact of illegal wildlife poaching and hunting practices and ensure sustainable management of PAs
 | PMU supported by PSC |
| 1. Risk assessment was weak at the project design stage, is missing critical risks and risk management tools related to local communities (including indigenous peoples management plan). It is necessary to update the risk assessment and formulate (at the very least) an Indigenous Peoples’ Plan (IPP) and an Environment and Socio Impact Management Plan (ESMP). These tools will be critical in sustaining the project results and impacts
 | PMU supported by PSC |
| 1. Gender mainstreaming – the gender analysis is superficial – include in-depth analysis and mainstreaming
 | PMU |
| 1. Provide facilities/amenities and IT connectivity in the NPs Hqs –WASH – inexpensive, complemented with a culture of maintenance
 | EWCA supported by PSC |
| 1. Improve facilities and infrastructure development within and around the park such as increasing road network, improving transport services, lodges, social infrastructures like safe water, irrigation facilities, livestock veterinary services, schools to improve the effectiveness of the patrolling activities and make the PAs more accessible and attractive to tourists
 | EWCA supported by PSC |
| 1. Monitor co-finance expenditure more diligently
 | PMU |

***Table 1: MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **MTR Rating** | **Achievement Description** |
| Project Strategy | N/A | * The project strategy was based on a thorough and detailed analysis of the threats to wildlife and biodiversity conservation in Ethiopia and the barriers to improving protected areas are ineffective at reaching their objective of protecting biodiversity, ecosystem services and ecological processes.
* Though the outcome statements could have been more precise, indicating timelines and core delivery of the project, this is corrected by the use of simple, SMART indicators and targets.
* The project design was based on a thorough analysis of assumptions than of risks; the majority of the assumptions were largely relevant, straightforward and monitored throughout the implementation period. Furthermore, none of the assumptions have proven to be incorrect so far, and there are no notable changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document. The project design is therefore relevant to the national quest to reducing poaching and illegal wildlife trade and advance sustainable use of natural resources. Indeed, the MTR finds that the project strategy is highly relevant to the conservation, green growth and local livelihoods agendas.
* Generally, the project strategy was informed by perspectives of stakeholders and beneficiaries who would be affected by project decisions, who could affect the outcomes, and those with the relevant information and co-finance resources
* Though a gender strategy informed project design, not all gender issues were adequately integrated or mainstreamed in the implementation strategy
* Inadequate Protected Area/Biodiversity Conservation Finance and inadequate engagement of broader communities in conservation remain threats to PA and combating IWT and poaching
 |
| Progress Towards Results | Objective Achievement: SATISFACTORY | * The project has made significant progress towards the overall objective, surpassing end of project targets on two indicators, delivering end of project targets on two indicators and well on the way to delivering end of project targets on three indicators. It is however unlikely to reach mid-term targets for one indicator (increase in METTS) even by the end of the project (Fig 2 and Annex 10).
* key deliverables that have boosted capacity for PA management and combating illegal wildlife trade include conclusion of international agreements on IWT control with five countries, review of the legal instruments and finalization of recommendations to improve the legislation (specify which) and establishment of two regional task forces on IWT control (name the regions)
 |
| Outcome 1 HIGHLY SATISFACTORY | * Has exceeded the mid-term targets for the two Prodoc indicators, and one additional indicator adopted during project implementation
* It has delivered three of the five General Protected Area Management Plans (against an MTR target of one); and the trained 300 staff members (against an MTR target of 200). The proportion of successful prosecutions of wildlife crimes has risen to 70% (against an MTR target of 60%).
 |
| Outcome 2 HIGHLY SATISFACTORY | * Has exceeded the mid-term targets for the two Prodoc indicators the
* The proportion of successful prosecutions of crimes related to wildlife trafficking at national level (measured annually) has risen to 75%, against an MTR target of 60% and the capacity scores (using UNDP capacity scoring system) has increased to 49%, against the MTR target of 39%.
* Key deliverable under the outcome include establishment of two Regional Task Forces, establishment of an Environment Crime Unit (ECU), roll out of a country-wide awareness raising programme and training for the CITES scientific and management authorities
 |
| Outcome 3 MODERATELY SATISFACTORY | * Exceeded end of project target for one indicator, reached the end of project target on four indicators, exceeded MTR target on one indicator (which is well on the way to be delivered by the end of the project). However, it has not reached MTR targets on two important indicators.
* Key deliverables are two approved landscape management plans covering an area of 50,000ha, five natural resources use agreements, facilitated the development of twenty six small sustainable businesses and identified three new value chains. It has established 100 ha of demonstration sites for agro biodiversity conservation
* The low value grants are yet to be disbursed any funds and hence there has been no increase in household incomes
 |
| Outcome 4: HIGHLY SATISFACTORY | * It has exceeded MTR targets for both indicators; it has a functional participatory M&E system that provides lessons – shared widely via local, national and international fora, including a website.
 |
| Project Implementation & Adaptive Management | SATISFACTORY | * NIM modality adopted has not changed. There is clear role sharing in among the implementing partners
* The National Project Steering Committee (PSC) has remained effectively engaged, guiding the project at the policy level;
* Project implementation has been in line with the Project document and will not require an extension despite the disruptions of COVID-19 pandemic
* The project finances are managed in line with the guidelines of UNDP and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC)
* Expenditure is at 56% with about 75% of the project strategy delivered;
* Co-finance of USD 30,007,500 has been mobilized against a total $ 83,211,481 (36.1%), although stakeholder engaged has remained in line with the project plan, Civil society organizations and private sector should be brought more on board.
 |
| Sustainability | MODERATELY UNLIKELY | * All the risks identified at project design are still valid; additional risks linked to the fact that the project area is inhabited by many tribes and indigenous people need to be added and risk mitigation measures formulated
* The core products of the project are plans and new institutions. Although the Government maintains commitment to financing these plans and the project has started resource mobilization, still inadequate PA/BD finance and inadequate engagement of communities pause financial, institutional and socio-economics risks to sustainability.
 |

# INTRODUCTION

## **Purpose of the MID-TERM REVIEW**

1. This mid-term review (MTR) was conducted to assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes, identify early signs of project success or failure and specify any necessary changes required in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR was carried out in accordance with the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects (reflected in the Terms of Reference in Annex 1). The MTR covers four areas of the project: namely, Project Strategy; Results Framework/Log-frame; Progress towards Results and; Project Implementation and Adaptive Management. The information presented in the MTR Report will feed into the GEF IEO (Independent Evaluation Office), UNDP IEO, and other UNDP databases for aggregation and analysis.

## **Scope & Methodology**

1. The review was undertaken in a participatory approach through the steps outlined in Figure 1, described in detail in the MTR Inception Report (Annex 2) and in line with the Terms of Reference (Annex 1).
2. **Preparation and Inception:** This step included meetings with UNDP and the PMU to discuss the programme of work, gather the relevant documents, agree on a list of stakeholders to be consulted and finalize the evaluation questions. It also included an examination of the project’s theory of change, as the basis for determining whether the context has changed since project design. The outcome of these consultations culminated in the MTR Inception Report (Annex 2).
3. **Data Gathering:** Data was gathered using a combination of desktop research, focused group discussions, in-depth interviews (face-to-face, and by zoom and Skype) and physical observation of results on the ground (the schedule of travel and meetings is in Annex 3). These steps were necessary to cross-reference and triangulate data reported in the project reports with information provided by the respondents and observations in the field. Data on gender was cross-checked with the project gender strategy, which was formulated at the start of the implementation process. Every effort was made to ensure that both men and women (and youth) participated in all meetings and focused group discussions. However, this was done in full recognition of the fact that there is a structural gender-based bias in the Protected Area Management, which is dominated by men. The evaluation questions included questions on gender issues, regardless of the gender of the respondent.
4. **Site Visits and Physical Observations:** The evaluators visited three National Parks in the Omo River Basin – Omo, Mago and Chebera Churchura and held in depth discussions with 138 people (9.4% women – List of names in Annex 4). At each site, the reviewers observed the progress of the activities related to the management of the parks and held structured group discussions with the members of the Anti-trafficking Task Forces, community groups and technical staff of the Ethiopia Wildlife Conservation Agency (EWCA) and the Ethiopia Biodiversity Institute (EBI) responsible for wildlife and biodiversity conservation in the project areas. Although the structured interviews took place in open fora with groups largely consisting of men, facilitation methods applied ensured that the few women and youth present had an opportunity to respond to each of the discussion questions. During the course of these visits, the consultants visually verified, as far as possible, project outputs reported via project reports such as wildlife crime protection structures (regional and local level Task Forces, Environmental Crime Unit), buffalo and other wildlife. At the end of the mission, the consultants presented the preliminary findings to the project team (UNDP, EWCA and EBI), via Zoom. This provided yet another avenue for triangulation, generating additional information and/or validating the findings. The Comments Review Tracker (available separately) summarizes the comments received and the responses.

### **Desk review of documents**

The key documents reviewed are contained in Annex 5. They include the Project Information Form (PIF), UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Project Document, the Project Inception Report, the two Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), Minutes of the Project Board Meetings, UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results (SESP), six monthly progress and monitoring reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams, audit reports, updated Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), UNDP oversight mission reports, financial and administration guidelines used by Project Team, technical and other reports produced by the project. The document review provided a basis for the analysis and enabled the determination of the project contribution to national development programs, plans and policies. The review of UNDP and GEF documents was necessary to establish linkages of the project with the umbrella programmes, such as United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), Country Programme, the GEF Global Wildlife Programme (GWP) and other GEF Strategic Objectives.

***Figure 1: Steps in the Mid-Term Review Process***

Preparation and Inception

Implementation, data gathering

Analysis and Report writing

Validation, report finalization

**Scoping meetings**

**Theory of change review**

**Document/ methodology review**

**Inception report**

**In-depth document review**

**Semi-structured discussions**

**Field visits and observations**

**Harmonizing field data & review**

**Analysis and report writing**

**Draft Report**

**Validation meeting & feedback**

**Final Report**

hw

### **Evaluation Rating Criteria**

1. The main dimensions of project performance that were rated are: outcomes, quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), quality of implementation and execution, and sustainability (environmental, social, financial and institutional). Project performance was reviewed and rated using the standard rating scales set out in the GEF IEO (2017) and UNDP (2017) guidelines (see Box 1 for a summary). The primary reference points for assessing performance were the indicators and targets set in the Strategic Results Framework, with consideration given to contextual factors. The actual evaluation was guided by the issues outlined below:
2. **Project Strategy (Project design and Results Framework/Logframe):** The MTR examined the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions; reviewed the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document; reviewed the relevance of the project strategy and assessed whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results; checked if lessons from other relevant projects were properly incorporated into the project design; examined how the project addresses country priorities and reviewed country ownership. The MTR also reviewed decision-making processes to determine if the planning phase took the 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; and, the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design.

***Box 1: Progress towards results rating scale***

|  |
| --- |
| **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”. **Satisfactory (S)** -- The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings. **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** -- The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings. **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)** -- The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings. **Unsatisfactory (U)** -- The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets. **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. C. Project Implementation & Adaptive Management |

1. **On Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:** The MTR reviewed the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets; undertook comparison and analysis of the GEF Tracking Tools at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review; identified remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project; reviewed the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identifying ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.
2. **On Management Arrangements:** The MTR reviewed overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document, determined if changes have been made and if they are effective. It assessed if responsibilities and reporting lines are clear and if decision-making is transparent and undertaken in a timely manner. Further, it reviewed the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partners along with the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP).
3. **On project implementation,** the review assessed if there have been delays in project start-up and implementation, identifying the causes and examining if any challenges have been addressed adequately; it also examined if work-planning processes are results-based, and if changes have been made to the original logframe and if it is being used as a management tool.
4. **On finance and co-finance** - the review assessed; i) Whether strong financial controls have been established that allow the project management team to make informed decisions regarding the budget at any time, and allow for the timely flow of funds and the payment of satisfactory project deliverables; ii) Variances between planned and actual expenditures; iii) Whether the project demonstrates due diligence in the management of funds, including annual audits; iv) Any changes made to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions; v) Whether co-finance has been delivered in accordance with expectations laid out in the project document, and if the Project Team has made effort to pursue delivery of co-finance.
5. **On stakeholder engagement***,* the review assessed whether the project management team developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders; whether local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project and continue to have an active role in project decision-making; whether public awareness has been created to support the project and how stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributes to the progress towards achievement of project objectives.
6. **On reporting and Communication,** the review assessed whether adaptive management has been adopted, and how related changes have been reported by the Project Team and shared with the Project Board; how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) and how these have been shared with the Project Board and other key stakeholders. In addition, it assessed how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners and incorporated into project implementation.
7. **On risks to sustainability**, the review assessed the adequacy of the risk assessment at project design, and the adequacy of risk mitigation measures. It also reviewed **financial risks to sustainability,** assessing the likelihood of financial and economic resources being available once the GEF assistance ends, and examining the opportunities for financial sustainability and additional factors needed to create an enabling environment for continued financing.
8. **On socio-economic risks to sustainability**, the MTR assessed whether there are social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes; whether there is a 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; whether lessons learned are being documented continually; and whether successful aspects of the project are being transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future.
9. **On institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability**, the MTR assessed; whether the country’s legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize project benefits; whether the project has in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project’s closure; whether the project has developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date; and how the project identified and involved champions (i.e. individuals in government and civil society) who can promote sustainability of project outcomes; and whether the project leadership have the ability to respond to future institutional and governance changes (i.e. foreseeable changes to local or national political leadership) – thus can the project strategies effectively be incorporated/mainstreamed into future planning?
10. **On environmental risks to sustainability**, the MTR assessed whether there are environmental factors that could undermine and reverse the project’s outcomes and results, including factors that have been identified by project stakeholders.
11. **Conclusions and Recommendations:** The MTR offers evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings. Recommendations made are succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. Ratings along the objectives will be provided in accordance with the guidelines in Box 1.

### **Responding to comments:**

1. All comments from the stakeholders were addressed as summarized in Response Tracker (available as a separate document).

### **Ethics**

1. This evaluation was conducted without bias, in accordance with the UNEG *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators* (signed Evaluation Consultants Code of Conduct Agreement attached in ***Annex 6).*** The confidentiality of stakeholders was ensured and consultation processes were appropriately contextualised and culturally-sensitive, with attention given to issues such as gender empowerment and fair representation for vulnerable groups, wherever possible. Whilst every effort has been made to reflect the inputs of stakeholders fairly and accurately in this Report, the evaluation ratings, conclusions and key recommendations are those of the reviewers, and are not binding on any individual or institutional stakeholder.

### **Limitations of the MTR**

1. The project covers the landscapes encompassing i) the Omo-Mago-Chebera Chuchura NPs, ii) the Babille Elephant Sanctuary and iii) the Kafta Shiraro NP (see Annex 7 for maps). The MTR consultants visited only the Omo-Mago-Chebera Chuchura NPs, still a large landscape that straddles the Omo River in its southward journey into Lake Turkana in Kenya. It was difficult to travel to the Babille and Kafta Shiraro NPs in the North due to distances and Covid-related challenges. It is deemed that the Southern Parks are fully representative of the whole project area. In addition, the findings findings were cross referenced with other documents such as the PIR, the M&E plan, the minutes of the Project Board meetings, financial and audit reports as well as technical publications of the project.
2. The Omo-Mago-Chebera Chuchura NPs are surrounded by 7 tribes, with distinctly different languages. Discussions with local communities and some scouts required several layers of interpretation, from a local language to the National language of Amharic and onto English, and vice versa. In addition to prolonging meeting times, the multiple interpretation introduced a risk of distortion of information. Fortunately, most of the project activities and results are at the National Parks level[[1]](#footnote-1). The MTR consultants do not therefore consider that the challenge interfered with the accuracy or the quality of the of the findings in any significant way.

### **Structure of the MTR Report**

1. The MTR Report is in line with the UNDP-GEF Evaluation guidelines. In Chapter 1, the first page presents the details of the project. This is followed by an executive summary, highlighting the key findings, evaluation ratings, lessons learnt and recommendations. Chapter Two – Introduction – presents the purpose and objectives of the MTR, the scope and methodology. Chapter Three presents the project description, background and context. Chapter Four presents the evaluation findings, while Chapter Five presents the conclusions and recommendations. Annexes are found in Chapter Six.

# Project Description and Background Context

## **Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope**

1. The project (EMEPAS) is a six-year investment with a total budget of USD 90,705,976. The GEF contributes USD 7,294,495 while UNDP contributes USD 200,000. The project was designed to address the twin challenges driving biodiversity loss in the country and the region; ineffective management of Protected Areas and a thriving illegal trade in wildlife products and live animals. Piloted in five National Parks that still host elephants, lions and cheetahs, the project aims to build the country’s capacity for biodiversity conservation through increased effectiveness of protected area management and implementation of measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching. Implementation of the six-year project started in 2018; operational closure is scheduled for September 2023. Implementation is led by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC), spearheaded by the Ethiopia wildlife Conservation Agency and the Ethiopia Biodiversity Institute. It is implemented in close collaboration with selected communities surrounding the five National Parks and their local governments (Woredas and Kebelles). UNDP Country Office with support from UNDP/GEF Regional Coordination Unit provides quality assurance for project implementation. Project monitoring and evaluation is conducted by the project team and the UNDP country office in accordance with established UNDP and GEF procedures for the GEF-6 cycle.
2. Countering illegal wildlife trade (IWT) and preventing the degradation of the Ethiopia’s biodiversity resources contributes directly to the conservation and the low carbon green growth aspirations of the country, as reflected in all the important policies and strategies of the country. The project contributes to the implementation of the Environmental Policy of Ethiopia, the Wildlife Development, Conservation and Utilization Regulations of 2008 and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP), helping to bridge the policy/legislation – implementation gap. One output contributes directly to the country’s commitments under Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). It also contributes towards the implementation of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) the Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE), and contributes to meeting the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as follows: Goal 1 Ending poverty: Goal 2 - Food security Goal 8 Decent work and economic growth Goal 12 Sustainable consumption and production patterns Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts: Goal 15 Life on land: Goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions: and Goal 17 Means of implementation and partnerships. The project is part of the19-country USD 131 million Global Wildlife Programme, with which it shares experiences and lessons.

## **Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted**

1. The Theory of Change of the Project (Annex 8) identified high international demand for wildlife products, poverty of local communities, coupled with absolute dependence on natural resources, and weak institutions as the key drivers (**root causes)** of poaching, illegal wildlife trade (IWT) and habitat degradation in Ethiopia. It further identified five overarching **barriers** that derail the effort of relevant stakeholders - Protected Area Managers, Biodiversity conservation groups and surrounding communities – from tackling these root causes, thereby removing the threats to these critical natural resources. The five barriers, as written in the Prodoc are:
* *Limited functional consistency among environmental agencies*. Although many of the protected areas are severely degraded, the management effectiveness (METT) is low. The baseline scores for the METT for the five pilot PAs for this project are (out of a potential total score of 100): Omo NP: 13, Mago NP: 15, CCNP: 30, Babille: 13, Kafta Shiraro NP: 46). The Ethiopia Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), the organization with the mandate to manage wildlife and federal protected areas in country has been shifted among different ministries and at different levels ten times over the past three decades. Furthermore, there is inadequate and inineffective collaboration, coordination and connection among the relevant PA and biodiversity conservation stakeholders including: i) park managers and the regional, zonal and woreda authorities, ii) the management systems in the protected areas, and iii) park managers and the law enforcement authorities. The weak collaboration had given rise to a new threat - large-scale agricultural developments within the Omo-Mago National Parks that threaten to undermine their ecological integrity and functionality.
* *Inadequate/weak capacity for law enforcement and PA management*. The baseline values for the capacity assessment using the UNDP capacity Scoring system (summarized in Box 2) was 29%. Institutions lack resources, tools and materials, skills and logistics required for PA management. their tasks optimally. EWCA has only relatively recently improved the effectiveness of their engagement with other organizations and institutions associated with law enforcement such as the police, the prosecutor’s offices, magistrates and other people in the judiciary.
* *Insufficient conservation legislation*. Although Ethiopia has policies and legislation that broadly supports conservation and PA management, there is still room for improvement. Relevant stakeholders do not always understand, or access information regarding applicable laws, making it difficult to contribute to law enforcement – especially among the practitioners in the vicinity of protected areas and in the transit points. In particular, there are clear legislative barriers related to: i) the application of international PA frameworks without analysis of the validity or applicability of such approaches in the context of Ethiopia – coupled with the perception that the higher the status conferred to any given area, the better, ii) the legislation has on numerous occasions proved to be a barrier to contextually appropriate pilot work that might, if tried, have led to more effectively managed protected areas (including, for example, seeking agreements with local communities for access to and use of natural resources within protected areas), and iii) the inability to adapt to some of the recent shifts in conservation thinking and paradigms.
* *Marginalisation and limited knowledge of the environment sector*. Despite the recognition of the importance of wildlife, biodiversity and natural resources in the CRGE, the environment sector and the protected areas management still remain marginalized, and are inadequately prioritized in the political process. Large sections of society still lack awareness of the importance of conservation, and struggle to link conservation to livelihoods. Conservation and agro-biodiversity value chains are inadequately developed, fuelling the perception that conservation is not supportive of local economic development.

## **Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites**

1. The objective of the project is to build Ethiopia’s capacity for biodiversity conservation through increased effectiveness of protected area management (METT) and implementation of measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching. The objective will be achieved through the implementation of three interrelated components and four outcomes. The components are: i) Protected area management and biodiversity conservation: ii) Implementation of anti-trafficking measures: iii) Landscape approach to forest and agro-biodiversity conservation
2. Under component 1, the project will *demonstrate* how effective management of protected areas in Ethiopia can be achieved via targeted improvement of law enforcement in protected areas which harbour elephants and big cats, the key species targeted by the Global Wildlife Programme (GWP) are found. The component will focus strongly on site-level activities and will develop Park Management Plans, based on detailed, participatory situation analysis of each of the five NPs. It will develop action plans to mobilize required resources to implement the management plans and Standard Operations Plans to guide the day-to-day work of PA mangers. It will undertake targeted capacity building of law enforcement for partnerships around each of the selected PAs.
3. Component 2 will implement anti-trafficking measures to improve national and local capacity to combat IWT. The improved law enforcement will lead to successful prosecutions of arrestees and, therefore, an increased deterrent to perpetrators of wildlife crimes. The project will develop a framework for countering illegal wildlife trafficking and trade, bringing together relevant actors at the national and regional levels. It will undertake an analysis of all applicable laws and legislation to identify and fill relevant gaps. It will establish and equip an Environmental Crime Unit with a mandate to collect intelligence, carry out investigations and gather evidence for prosecuting perpetrators of wildlife crimes. It will upgrade the storage and management of confiscated wildlife products (including ivory) and enhance the effectiveness of the country’s CITES authorities.
4. **Component 3** will demonstrate the use of *landscape approach to forest and agro-biodiversity conservation* to improve livelihoods and provide incentives for biodiversity conservation to the local communities. It will therefore demonstrate the value of agro-biodiversity for the country and specifically for people living in the vicinity of the five pilot protected areas. The project will develop landscape level plans based on detailed mapping of forest and agro-biodiversity resources. It will determine the value of forest and agro-biodiversity products and identify value chains that can support economic development at the local level. It will then provide seed funding to operationalize selected value chains to incentivise community participation and engagement in PA management and conservation. It will also set up demonstration farms for conservation of genetic diversity and promote learning.
5. Component 4 will encourage national and international stakeholders to participate in the project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and will systemize lessons learned from the implementation. Lessons learnt from the project via active participation of all stakeholder groups in the project implementation and M&E will be made available nationally and internationally to facilitate the global fight against illegal wildlife trade.
6. ***Project areas***. The project is being implemented in the areas and National Parks that hold the majority of the remaining elephant populations in the country. These are the Omo-Mago-Chebera Chuchura landscape, the Babille Elephant Sanctuary and the Kafta Shiraro NP (see maps in Annex 7).
7. The Omo-Mago-Chebera Chuchura landscape is in the South of the country, and is straddled by the Omo River. It has three National Parks namely Omo, Mago and Chebera Churchura, all gazetted by the Southern Nations and Nationalities People's Region (SNNPR), and managed by the SNNPR Bureau of Culture and Tourism, except Omo NP, which is managed by EWCA. Connectivity of the three NPs, critical for wildlife conservation in the landscape, had been interrupted by commercial agriculture (sugar belt) in the Omo NP. Fortunately, the elephant migratory corridor has been restored in the 2019 re-demarcation, supported by the project.
* The 2,936km2 *Omo National Park* was established in 1968 as a “proposed” National Park. It was re-demarcated by the SNNPR in 2005 and in 2019 (to restore migratory corridor). The NP lies in a complex area with eight ethnic groups living in the area. Threats include poaching of wildlife and grazing by domestic livestock and, more recently, large areas of the park have been appropriated for commercial agriculture (specifically sugar plantations) and the infrastructure associated with this has created a barrier to movement of wildlife and exposed it to illegal killings.
* The 1,190km2 *Chebera Churchura National Park* (CCNP) was established in 2004 and is believed to contain the largest number of elephants (430), highly threatened by poaching. Other threats to the area include expansion of subsistence agriculture and unsustainable use of natural resources. CCNP experiences high levels of human-elephant conflict resulting in perceived injustices, high economic loss and loss of life among people living in its vicinity.
* The 1,942km2 *Mago National Park* (MNP) was established in 1970 as a “proposed” National Park, and “re-demarcated” in 2003 to take into account various anthropogenic pressures. The park is threatened with overgrazing and illegal killing of wildlife – with the elephant population declining by 52% since the 1980s.
1. The 6,900km2 Babille Elephant Sanctuarywasestablished in 1970. Located in the semi-arid areas of the east of the country, the Federally managed NP is host to an estimated population of 250 elephants, highly threatened by poaching and high levels of illegal wildlife trade. Probably driven by its proximity to other illegal wildlife trade routes, the NP is the source of the majority traded products and animals (including lions, cheetahs and a number of antelope species) smuggled through the Ethiopian borders and the alleged destination is the Middle East. Like CCNP, communities around the park report high levels of human-elephant conflict resulting in high economic loss and loss of life and driving a perception of injustice.
2. The2,176km2 Kafta Shiraro **NP** hosts the northern-most population of elephants (estimated at 300 animals), which occasionally cross over to Eritrea. The Federally managed NP was originally established as a wildlife reserve, was upgraded to a national park in 2007 and formerly gazetted in 2015. The area is threatened with habitat loss as a result of frequent fires, and corridor obstruction by irrigation schemes, settlement and agricultural expansion.

## **Project implementation arrangements**

1. The management arrangement for the project is described in the UNDP Prodoc. The 6-year project is nationally implemented (NIM) by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MOEFCC), which provides a National Project Director and a Project Management Unit (PMU). The PMU is housed in rented office space in a mutually convenient but neutral location for the EWCA, EBI and UNDP-CO. The PMU consists of a Project Manager, responsible for day to day management of the project, a part time technical advisor responsible for technical assistance to the project, a Project Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and a Project Accountant. Under the overall leadership of the MoEFCC, EWCA oversees the implementation of Components One and Two (the components on protected areas and anti-trafficking, respectively), while the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI) is responsible for implementation of Component Three.
2. The UNDP CO is responsible for: (i) providing financial and audit services to the project; (ii) assisting with the recruitment of technical experts; (iii) overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets; (iv) appointment of independent financial auditors and evaluators; and (v) ensuring that all activities, including procurement and financial services, are carried out in strict compliance with UNDP and GEF procedures.
3. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) provides policy guidance and overall coordination of the project. The PSC has the responsibility to ensure that the project remains on course to deliver the desired outcomes, maintaining technical quality and building on necessary synergies between the different components of the project with other Government initiatives, including programs funded by the GEF. The PSC is chaired by Dr. Ayele Hagena, the Director for Legal Affairs and Policy Directorate in the Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission. It has representatives from EWCA and the protected areas, EBI, UNDP, a representative from the judiciary, representatives from the Regional governments (SNNPR), a representative the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the donor community (KfW, BFF, GIZ, and African Parks). Representatives from the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), Federal Serious Crime Unit, Customs Authorities, and the judiciary were dropped from the PSC during the inception period and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism was brought on board. The PSC should ensure that the project is focused on achieving its outputs and that the project adopts a cost-conscious approach. It therefore provides policy, political and technical support to the project. As such, it ensures the consistency of the project objectives with national policies and initiatives, evaluates and approves work plans and budgets. The PSC meets twice a year to discuss work plans and annual budgets, evaluate on-going actions, and validate the annual project reports being prepared.

## **Main stakeholders and Project Partners**

1. The project is implemented closely with relevant stakeholders in wildlife management and biodiversity conservation. The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority and the Biodiversity Institute work closely with the regional wildlife and forestry institutions together with other international agencies, NGOs, other government institutions and communities to achieve the goal of wildlife conservation. Project design recognized partnerships as critical to the success of the project and to the long-term sustainability of impacts at all levels. The list of stakeholders identified via a stakeholder analysis undertaken during the project formulation (and reported in the Prodoc) include those listed below (detailed in Annex 9). The project is actively collaborating with on-going projects and programmes, sharing lessons and experiences leveraging funding and avoiding duplications. In particular, the project is part of the Global Wildlife Programme, which generates lessons and provides a platform for learning and exchange of experiences (<https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GWPBrochureMay2018WEB.pdf>)

## **Project timing and milestones**

1. The project concept (PIF) was approved in 2015; project design took two years with a CEO endorsement (approval by the GEF Secretariat) issued in June 2017. Although two years is slightly long for the project design period, all other milestones are on target (Table 2), and despite the year-long disruption due to COVID-19 restrictions, the project is expected to be on target.

***Table 2: Key Project Milestones at CEO Endorsement and MTR***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Project Dates** | **Project Dates** | **MTR comments** |
| PIF Approval Date | Jun 4, 2015 |  |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Jun 9, 2017 | Project development took two years, slightly slower than timing for similar projects |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | Oct 4, 2017 | Four months after CEO endorsement, well within timing for similar projects |
| Date of Inception Workshop | Mar 6, 2018 | Five months Project Document Signature Date, well within timing for similar projects |
| Expected Date of MTR | Dec 9, 2020 | The MTR started in Oct and is on track to be completed by Dec 2020 |
| Expected Date of TE | Jul 4, 2023 | Despite the year-long disruption due to COVID-19 restrictions, the project is expected to be on target |
| Original Planned Closing Date | Oct 4, 2023 |
| Revised Planned Closing Date |  | Not expected |

# Findings

## **Project Strategy**

### **Project Design: Analysis of LFA/Results Framework (Project logic /strategy; Indicators)**

1. The MTR finds that the project strategy was based on a thorough and detailed analysis of the threats to wildlife and biodiversity conservation in Ethiopia and the barriers to improving protected areas management, making them ineffective at reaching their objective of protecting biodiversity, ecosystem services and ecological processes. The core problem addressed by the project is to reverse the loss of biodiversity, particularly elephants and the big cats. The baseline assessment underpinning the project design reported that: a) the country lost about 90% of the elephant population since the 1980s[[2]](#footnote-2) ; having disappeared completely from at least 6 of the 16 areas in which elephants were found in the early 1990s; b) the Grevy’s zebra *Equus grevyi* population declined by 93% over a 23-year period (1,600 to 110 from 1980 to 2003); c) Similar declines in numbers and range (although with less precise datasets) have been observed for many species, including, for example, Ethiopian wolf *Canis simensis*, African wild ass *Equus africanus*, Swayne’s hartebeest *Alcelaphus buselaphus swaynei* and mountain nyalas *Tragelaphus* *buxtoni;* d) killing of animals is driven by many complex factors, including for subsistence use and buffer during famines, exacerbated by insecurity during periods of political uncertainties/unrest and transitions in government, when protected areas become easy prey (infrastructure and killings of wildlife); e) the country is considered a transit route for ivory (and other commodities) and trade in live animals. Ethiopia scored 40% on the “Elephant Trade Information System” for law enforcement in 2012 – due in part to confiscation of 6.1 tons of ivory at the Bole International Airport and elsewhere. Trade in live animals, particularly cubs of big cats (such cheetahs, *Acinonyx* *jubatus*) happens through the eastern borders to supply markets in the Middle East. The baseline assessment reported that an estimated 98 cheetah cubs were smuggled to the Middle East in 2016 alone. Other products, including leopard skins were smuggled into Sudan. Fortunately, the country still has wildlife numbers worth conserving. For example, there an estimated 1,850 elephants still occur in the country in up to 10 populations, of which 5 are partially trans boundary.
2. The MTR finds that the project document is supported by detailed background documents, baseline information, research findings as well as experiences from other projects in the Global Wildlife Programme and biodiversity conservation in the country, the region and globally.

#### Were outcomes, targets and indicators smart?

1. The strategic results framework for the project was assessed against “SMART” criteria and gender sensitivity/responsiveness: thus, are they sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound, and are the indicators and targets gender segregated?
2. The MTR finds that although the outcome statements could have been more precise, indicating timelines and core delivery of the project, this is corrected by the use of simple, SMART indicators and targets (Table 3). On gender segregation, some indicators and the associated targets could have specified men and/or women for better monitoring of gender responsiveness of the project, including: a) Indicator 1C (Number of regional IWT Task forces established) should specify the target gender composition of the task forces; b) Mandatory Indicator 2 (Number of direct project beneficiaries: although it states that both men and women would benefit (Number of local people (male/female) in project areas benefiting from engagement in CBNRM, the targets do not specify the proportion, hence the assumption is that the benefit would be on 50:50 basis. However, without being specific about what CBNRM activities would be supported by the project, it is difficult to make a judgement on the feasibility of reaching an equal number of men as women since there is no gender analysis of the division of labour along gender lines; c) Indicators 3 and 4 of Component 3 (Total number/area of small sustainable businesses developed by local people – recipients of microcredit schemes – and average percentage of household income increase of recipients of microcredit schemes in the project areas, respectively ) should provide target levels by gender; d) Although outcome 4 mentions gender mainstreaming, there is no indicator of the extent to which gender is actually mainstreamed.

***Table 3:Project Objective, Outcomes, targets and indicators***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators**  | **Baseline**  | **MTR target**  | **EOP target**  |
| **Project Objective**: To build Ethiopia’s capacity for biodiversity conservation through increased effectiveness of protected area management and implementation of measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching  |
| **Mandatory Indicator 1.** *IRR Output 2.5 indicator 2.5.1:* Extent to which national legal, policy, and institutional frameworks are in place for conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems. |
| A) Number of international agreements on IWT control signed  | Zero  | One  | Four  |
| B) Number of legislation documents strengthened37  | Zero Baseline is current state of legislation  | Amendment(s) to legislation drafted and submitted to the government, as necessary, following analysis of gaps and inconsistencies in legislation  | Amendment(s) are in the process of approval (or approved) by the government  |
| C) Number of regional IWT Task forces established  | Zero  | One (SNNPR)  | Two (SNNPR & Somali region)  |
| D) Presence of wildlife derivatives management system  | No system in place  | System in place and functioning  | System in place, functioning and audited  |
| **Mandatory Indicator 2.** Number of direct project beneficiaries: - Number of local people in project areas benefiting from engagement in CBNRM (male/female)  | Zero  | 600  | 1,200  |
| **Indicator 3.** Number of flagship species poached  |
| a) Proportion of illegally killed elephants38 (total number of dead elephants in parentheses)  | Omo NP: 139 (*n* = 1) Mago NP: 1 (*n* = 6) CCNP: 1 (*n* = 7) Babille: 1 (*n* = 5) KaftoShiraro: 1 (*n* = 6)  | Omo NP: 0.5 Mago NP: 0.5 CCNP: 0.5 Babille: 0.5 Kafto Shiraro: 0.5  | Omo NP: 0.2 Mago NP: 0.2 CCNP: 0.2 Babille: 0.2 Kafto Shiraro: 0.2  |
| b) Number of Big Cats (specifically lions, cheetahs and leopards) seized (at project sites per unit effort40)  | Omo NP: 0 Mago NP: 0 CCNP: 0 Babille: 1 (leopard) Kafto Shiraro: 0  | It is possible that the number will *increase* at the time of the MTR because of increased successful efforts (at least a 300% increase in seizures)  | Demonstrated decline in seizures per unit effort as deterrent impact takes effect at least a 300% decline from peak seizure rates).  |
| **Indicator 4**. METT for PAs | Omo NP: 13 Mago NP: 15 CCNP: 30 Babille: 13 Kafto Shiraro: 46 | Omo NP: 62 Mago NP: 61 CCNP: 62 Babille: 60 Kafto Shiraro: 68 | Omo NP: 83 Mago NP: 84 CCNP: 81 Babille: 82 Kafto Shiraro: 84 |
| **Component One**: Protected area management and biodiversity conservation: **Outcome One**: Improved protected area management effectiveness delivers enhanced protection in the targeted protected areas |
| **Indicator 1**. Number of PAs that have up-to-date management plans approved by the government and under implementation  | Zero: No management plans (although “abbreviated” management plans are under development for Kafta Shiraro NP and CCNP)  | One  | Five: Management plans for five protected areas formulated, approved and being implemented leading to demonstrable improvement in management (management systems in place and in use; staff trained and training being used; appropriate tools and technologies in place and in use)  |
| **Indicator 2.** Proportion of successful prosecutions of wildlife crimes in PAs and surrounding areas (measured annually)  | Baseline data only for CCNP: Other baseline to be established in YR1 of project41  | Of the cases that are presented in courts, at least 60% result in convictions with appropriate sentences  | Of the cases that are presented in courts, at least 90% result in convictions with appropriate sentences  |
| **Component Two**: Implementation of anti-trafficking measures: **Outcome Two**: Strengthened national and local capacity for conservation of endangered fauna and flora through implementation of anti-trafficking measures  |
| **Indicator 1**. Proportion of successful prosecutions of crimes related to wildlife trafficking at national level (measured annually)  | No baseline data; baseline to be established in YR1 of project  | At least 60% of IWT cases presented in court leading to convictions with appropriate sentences  | >95% of IWT cases presented in court leading to convictions with appropriate sentences  |
| **Indicator 2.** Capacity of government agencies on IWT control as indicated by customized UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard  | 29%  | 10% increase across all possible scores  | A 20% improvement across all possible scores  |
| **Indicator 1**. Approved landscape/ ecosystem level plans - Total ha covered by approved ILM plans  | Zero: Plans and agreements do not exist  | One, covering 15,000ha  | Two. Approved plans in place and being implemented, covering 50,000ha  |
| **Component Three**: Landscape approach to forest landscape and agro-biodiversity conservation: **Outcome Three**: Improved conservation of forestry and agro-biodiversity resources through a landscape approach based on community-based natural resource management |
| **Indicator 2**. Natural resource use agreements with stakeholders – including local and indigenous communities  | Agreements do not exist  | Two agreements with communities and indigenous people in place and being implemented  | Four agreements with communities and indigenous people in place and being implemented  |
| **Indicator 3.** Total number/area of small sustainable businesses developed by local people – recipients of microcredit schemes  | Zero  | 10  | 35  |
| **Indicator 4**. Average percentage of household income increase of recipients of microcredit schemes in the project areas  | Baseline to be determined on selection of recipients of microcredit schemes  | Household income increased by at least 15% above baseline  | Household income increased by at least 30% above baseline  |
| **Indicator 5**. Area (ha) of demonstration farm(s) protecting rare and valuable genetic agro-biodiversity  | Zero  | At least one area of 50ha  | At least 100ha  |
| **Component Four:** Knowledge Management, Gender mainstreaming, and M&E - Outcome Four: Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming, are used to fight poaching and IWT, and promote community based conservation nationally and internationally |
|  **Indicator 1**. Number of the project lessons used in development and implementation of other conservation projects  | 0  | 2  | 5  |
| **Indicator 2**. Number of national and international organizations that participate in the project M&E and provide feedback to the Management Team  | The members of the PB  | At least 6  | At least 10  |

#### Assumptions and risks

1. The MTR finds that project design was based on a more thorough analysis of assumptions than of risks. The majority of the assumptions were largely relevant, straightforward and monitored throughout the implementation period. Furthermore, none of the assumptions have proven to be incorrect so far, and there are no notable changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document. Table 4 summarizes the assumptions and their trajectory at MTR, with projections on how the trajectory is likely to affect project results and impacts.

***Table 4: Assumptions and their effects on project implementation and achievements***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Assumption  | How it panned out | Impact on the results |
| Project objective level assumptions |
| In order to achieve the project objective and to contribute to the long-term desired effect (goal), it is assumed that the government will use project Outputs to improve legislation and institutions, develop international cooperation, and provide funding beyond the life of the project to sustain all operations to counter wildlife crime at a site-, regional-, and federal level. | The MTR finds evidence that the government is using project outputs – notably – the 3 PA Management Plans, regional Task Forces (SNNPR & Somali region), information generated via baseline assessment and situation analysis reports to amend legislation on IWT, with two legal documents amended and submitted for approval for the legislative organ; Worenda- level multi-stakeholder IWT task forces to control and IWT as well as raise awareness of the importance of wildlife in local development; knowledge gained via training of staff of the PAs and the improved METT and UNDP Institutional Capacity Scores to improve day to day management of the Parks. International cooperation has been improved via the negotiation process for the five bi-lateral agreements. Signing of the drafts has been delayed by COVID. Furthermore, EWCA officials reported that there is high commitment to allocate budgetary resources by the government to support implementation of the PA plans post project. Recognizing the inherent limitations of such funding, the government, with the assistance of the project has embarked on mobilization of additional funding, with the first step being a donor mapping (with a report). two proposals have been prepared out of this process, raising close to 200,000 Euros. | The actions taken so far demonstrate high level of ownership of the project by the government, which, if continued, will go a long way in sustaining project impacts. The greatest threat to sustainability of the impacts still remains the inherently low levels of budget provision to protected area management, despite the knowledge of their potential contribution to green growth and improvement of livelihoods. None of the five Pas receive 20% of the finances required to implement the draft management plans annually. The current effort to mobilize additional resources should be bolstered.  |
| In order for local people to realize benefits from CBNRM, it is assumed that they would have economic and security interest in the development of CBNRM, and that the Government would support development of CBNRM | CBNRM is under component 3. Implementation is under way with landscape plans being developed, to be supported by community agreements. Funds for financing businesses are yet to be disbursed. Although the MTR team spoke to very few community members, it was starkly clear that they are interested in partnering with the authorities to address access to natural resources, poverty and human wildlife conflicts. CBNRM is recognized as a critical tool for incentivising community participation in sustainable natural resources management and development – as it is mainstreamed in several productive sector policies – such as agriculture.  | All the NPs targeted by the project are surrounded by poor communities, highly dependent on natural resources, which is a key threat to the NPs and wildlife.The agreements signed and the planned disbursement of Low Value Trust Fund will cover about 5% (N=29,596) of the households around the NPs. The project does not have adequate resources to implement the Landscape Plans. It is likely that the project has raised expectations for CBNRM that it cannot meet, especially as its approach covers very limited areas (value chains). The major principles of CBNRM include being people-focused, being participatory, being holistic, building on strengths, using a partnership approach, being sustainable and being dynamic. The project. Even though the project is projected to deliver 100% of its plan, this is likely to be the proverbial drop in the ocean, in the face of the necessity for incentives for effective community participation in conservation, threatening the sustainability of the impacts. |
| In order to reduce poaching incidents and volume to trade in illegal wildlife products, it was assumed that the following an increase in the number of seizures, the deterrent effect will take effect and will, ultimately, lead to a decline in the number of seizures and animals killed by poachers. | The project has reported an overall decline in poaching incidents of all wildlife, with the exception of elephants in the Mago NP and Babile Sanctuary, and general illegal acts in the Babile Sanctuary. Although eight elephants were killed in remote corners of Mago NP during the COVID-19 induced reduction of patrols, the ivory was recovered and 2 of the poachers arrested. The reduction in incidents is probably linked to higher levels of awareness (the awareness raising strategy has been rolled out effectively) combined with more intense and participatory anti-poaching operations, which have been consistently conducted in collaboration with the local law enforcement agents and the communities. Babile faces higher challenges due to its location (densely populated surroundings). | On track to deliver results – however, there is need to roll out a CBNRM programme to provide a broader range of incentives to a higher percentage of the communities surrounding all the NPs.  |
| In order for the project outputs to lead to higher Management Effectiveness, it is assumed that the PAs will use and implement management plans and managementsystems manuals and use new skills acquired. The government will provide sufficient funding to PAs during and then beyond the life of the project for effective management plan implementation.  | As described above, the MTR found evidence that the government and the management of the PAs are using the project outputs and the skills acquired to improve PA management – even as these are being delivered. EWCA and the Biodiversity Institute confirmed that the government will continue to support the implementation of the management plans. | As explained above, the challenge is the inherently low levels of budgetary allocation for PA management compared to the needs. The project has already engaged in a process of mobilizing additional funds for implementing the management plans and financing CBNRM work around the parks – this effort needs to be scaled up in partnership with global initiatives such as the Biodiversity Finance. There is also need to increase revenue generation from the PAs, through the development of tourism infrastructure and revenue sharing programmes, via private sector engagement programmes.  |
| In order for the improved protected area management effectiveness to deliver enhanced protection in the targeted protected areas, it is assumed that * EWCA and regions will approve MPs
* Government will allocate resources to implement MPs, including for maintenance and depreciation of infrastructure and equipment
* Capacity and institutional space to implement
* Barriers to implementation removed
 | The MTR finds that * EWCA and regions have approved the MPs that are finalized and will continue to do so as others get to the final stages.
* Government commitment to allocate will allocate resources to implement MPs, including for maintenance and depreciation of infrastructure and equipment remains high.
* That the project outputs constitute a capacity boost to manage NPs.
* The project outputs have addressed some of the barriers to combating IWT and PA management .
 | * Approval of the MPs by EWCA and the regions is a pre-condition for the project to deliver results and sustainability of the impacts.
* Similarly the government’s commitment to provide resources to finance the implementation of these plans is a pre-condition. As argued previously, although this commitment remains high, it is unlikely that the budgetary allocations can fully finance the MPs. Current effort to mobilise further resources needs to be boosted.
* Although the project outputs have tackled barriers to combating IWT and PA management, the project effort is small compared to the magnitude of the threats. Effort is in place to increase resources.
 |
| In order for the project outputs to lead to successful prosecutions of wildlife crimes in PAs and surrounding areas, it is assumed that:* the law enforcement agencies take wildlife crime seriously enough to allocate time and resources
* Government will provide enough funding to implement IWT control
* Assumes that seizures lead to arrests, presentation of well documented cases (with sufficient evidence) at court and the conviction of perpetrators
* Government agencies will use project Outputs to increase their capacity on IWT control
 | * The MTR finds that the law enforcement agencies take wildlife crime seriously enough to allocate time and resources – demonstrated by expressed commitment to the wildlife monitoring and IWT task forces at all levels, and the creation of the Environment Crime Unit
* As argued above, commitment by Government to provide enough funding to implement IWT control remains high
* Incidents of poaching and IWT seem lower due to awareness and capacity created by the project
* Government agencies have demonstrated the use of project outputs to increase their capacity on IWT control
 | This group of assumptions are preconditions for the success of the project. Indeed, the project has activities to address the issues linked to the assumptions. |
| In order for project outputs to lead to improved conservation of forestry and agro-biodiversity resources through a landscape approach based on community-based natural resource management, it was assumed that: * Agreement can be reached on use of land within and surrounding selected PAs
* Government will approve landscape/ ecosystem level plans
* Government will agree to allow natural resource use by local communities and indigenous people within and surrounding PAs
* Local people will see livelihood benefits from implementation of ILM plans
* Local people have economic and social interest to develop CBNRM systems, sustainable agriculture and forestry
* Local communities will readily take up microcredit schemes
* Government will be willing to acquire the land for the demonstration farms
* AgroBD farm(s) will be sustainably managed following closure of the project
 | * Agreement has been reached on use of land within and surrounding selected Pas, in the form of 5 natural resources agreements. However, these agreements are “Good will statements” without a description of the mechanisms for their implementation (which would be agreed in the landscape plan?)
* There is no indication that the Government will not approve landscape/ ecosystem level plans
* Local communities and indigenous people will utilize natural resource within and surrounding PAs without government approval as long as there are no alternatives and law enforcement is still weak (as argued above, although the project will deliver on the plan, the capacity it builds is still far short of the requirement to be fully capacitated).
* Local people have expressed full interest in accruing livelihood benefits from implementation of ILM plans, engaging in CBNRM and sustainable agriculture and forestry and willingness in take up microcredit schemes. The only issue is the small magnitude of those who can benefit from these measures compared to the total population living around the NPs (5%).

The assumptions that Government will be willing to acquire the land for the demonstration farms and that they would be sustainably managed following closure of the project should be preconditions. They are so fundamental to the success of the project and sustaining the impact on demonstration of agroBD conservation that they need to be budgeted activities. |
| In order for lessons generated by the project through participatory M&E, including gendermainstreaming, to be used to fight poaching and IWT, and promote community-based conservation, it was assumed that: * Other stakeholders would be interested in the lessons learned by this project
* Other stakeholders would be interested to participate in the project M&E
* Government of Ethiopia welcomes broad participation of organizations in M&E activities
 | MTR finds that: * The interest of other stakeholders in the lessons learned by this project is secured by the Global Wildlife Programme, to which it is a part; as well as the networks of other GEF, UNDP, GIZ, etc. projects and programmes. The project has implemented an awareness raising programme and recently established a website, both contributing to generating interest in the lessons, and communicating them.
* Although the project has an M&E system, it is not clear how other stakeholders are currently participating in its monitoring and evaluation practically.
 | The outcome statement encompasses gender mainstreaming but there is no further reference to gender or its mainstreaming in the assumptions. Together with the finding of the MTR that gender mainstreaming is still weak in the project (see section on gender below), there is need to highlight assumptions related to the success of gender mainstreaming and lessons on it.The project internal M&E system is clear – there is need to engage other stakeholders in practical ways to participate in M&E |

#### Project Relevance

1. The MTR finds that the design adopted by the project to respond to the four barriers i.e. the three components with four outcomes and the program of work described in section 1.1 of this MTR report is relevant to the national quest to reducing poaching and illegal wildlife trade and advance sustainable use of natural resources. Indeed, the MTR finds that the project strategy is highly relevant to the conservation, green growth and local livelihoods agendas. These facts are embedded in the project document, which clearly identifies linkages between project results and national sector development priorities and plans such as: a) the Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE); b) the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP); c) the National Elephant Action Plan. It is the view of the MTR team that building capacity of the institutions responsible for protected area management a cost route to combating poaching and IWT.
2. The project was designed over a two yearyear period (2015-2017) with a Project Preparatory Grant (PPG) that allowed in-depth participatory consultation with the majority of stakeholders active in conservation in the country over the past twenty years. Discussions and decisions on the project strategy were informed by detailed baseline analysis on a series of themes critical to IWT, PA management and community issues. These reports have continued to be available to the project implementers. The design was also informed by lessons generated by the international conservation and anti-IWT community including Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and Wildlife Conservation Society. It was also informed by lessons generated by projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), including those under the Global Wildlife Programme (GWP) under implementation in Mozambique, Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan and Tanzania.
3. The MTR therefore concludes that generally, the project strategy was informed by perspectives of stakeholders and beneficiaries who would be affected by project decisions, who could affect the outcomes, and those with the relevant information and co-finance resources. However, the views of local civil society organizations and the communities surrounding and dependent on the resources around the NPs were inadequately solicited. Although community groups are increasingly brought on board in the planning and implementation of the landscape plans and agreements on natural resources management, there doesn’t seem to be an avenue or forum for engaging local level civil society, who could be relevant in facilitating livelihood activities (such as the low value grants).

#### Were relevant gender issues raised in the project design?

1. A gender analysis was conducted during the project formulation[[3]](#footnote-3) and the information used to design a gender strategy. The gender analysis raised the pertinent gender issues, among them: a) the Protected Areas Management profession is dominated by men, with the exception of the judiciary which has a few female staff members; b) access to natural resources is highly influenced by gender roles in the rural areas; c) participation of women in integrated land management projects/programmes tends to be low, due to (inter alia) the double work burden – where they are largely responsible for nurturing and productive work, prevailing patriarchal culture, low levels of education, lower self-esteem, lack of experience, and lack of labour resources. The analysis acknowledged that low participation of women in such projects leads to loss of their valuable views, insights, perspectives, knowledge and concerns. The gender strategy outlined a series of actions to ensure gender would be mainstreamed in the project (Box 2), particularly in the implementation of outcome 3 – which targets livelihood activities. An additional gender mainstreaming strategy was formulated in 2019[[4]](#footnote-4). Outcome 4 mentions gender mainstreaming (Knowledge Management, Gender mainstreaming, and M&E). However, it lacks a specific output on gender work, and does not have indicator on gender mainstreaming either. In addition, the MTR finds that although the project has a gender strategy in place which raises pertinent gender issues, there is no evidence of its use in the implementation process. The Park staff had not received training on gender and there seems to be a focus on including women in project activities wherever possible, which is only part of gender mainstreaming. In addition, the second gender mainstreaming strategy does not seem to add value to the original one, and both lack a costed gender mainstreaming action plan that can be monitored.

***Box 2: Gender mainstreaming actions listed in the project document***

|  |
| --- |
| * Empower women by involving them in intelligence networks, in the shaping of attitudes and in law enforcement processes
* There will be a strong focus on gender within Component Three, with an emphasis on providing microcredit loans to female led households, and/or to households that apply for loans with activities that have an emphasis on female-led activities (e.g., collection of fuel wood, water and/or NTF products) – as they relate to the value chain for agro-biodiversity products. As a result, women leadership will be enhanced
* All awareness creation activities will specifically target women and encourage them to take responsibilities including for engagement with the authorities with respect to natural resource management, illegal killing of wildlife and illegal trafficking in wildlife products and live animals.
* Where possible and where they exist, women’s organizations will be targeted for involvement and capacity development
* Women leadership in the natural resource management agreements that will be negotiated (Output 3.2) will be encouraged
* To the extent feasible, landscape planning and implementation will have local women community mobilizers who would be involved in social mobilization to encourage greater participation of women from local communities.
* Awareness and communication campaigns with a specific gender focus (Output 2.9).
* Capacity building programs for the Landscape Planning and Implementation teams on gender equality and gender analysis
* Periodic reviews of the portfolio and highlight of best practices in mainstreaming gender in the project.
* Documentation of gender roles in the management of resources in the selected pilot areas
* Use of gender-sensitive indicators and collection of sex-disaggregated data for monitoring project outcomes and impacts.
* Encouragement of qualified women applicants for positions, including social mobilizers under the project as per UNDP rules and regulations.
 |

## **Progress Towards Results**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project Objective:** To build Ethiopia’s capacity for biodiversity conservation through increased effectiveness of protected area management and implementation of measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade and poaching | **Attainment of objective**  |
| Highly Satisfactory |

1. The project has made significant progress towards the overall objective, surpassing end of project targets on two indicators, delivering end of project targets on two indicators and well on the way to delivering end of project targets on three indicators. It is however unlikely to reach mid-term targets for one indicator (increase in METTS) even by the end of the project (Fig 2 and Annex 10). As detailed in Annex 10, key deliverables that have boosted capacity for PA management and combating illegal wildlife trade include conclusion of international agreements on IWT control with five countries, review of the legal instruments and finalization of recommendations to improve the legislation (specify which) and establishment of two regional task forces on IWT control (name the regions). Although the signing of the five international agreements has been delayed by the restrictions on travel due to the COVID-19 outbreak, is expected that these will be signed in due course. The number of illegally killed wildlife has declined significantly, even though eight elephants were killed in a remote art of Chebera Churchura NP at the height of COVID-19 related restrictions in patrolling. The ivory was recovered although the poachers are yet to be apprehended. An achievement of note is the demarcation of Omo National park with the restoration of the elephant migratory corridor which had been subsumed by the sugar estate. This has established a transboundary park with South Sudan. The demarcation was undertaken in a highly participatory process, and led to an increase of the NP area to 4775km2 (38% increment), providing more habitat for Elephants and other big mammals.

***Figure 2: Delivery on Objective Level Indicators***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective level Indicator** | **MTR Target** | **EOP Target** | **Delivered** |
| Number of international agreements on IWT control signed  | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Number of legislation documents strengthened | Amendments drafted | Submitted for approval | Done  |
| Number of regional IWT Task forces established  | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Presence of wildlife derivatives management system  | System in place and functioning | System functioning & audited | System being put in place |
| Number of local people in project areas benefiting from engagement in CBNRM  | 600 | 1200 | 1500 |
| Proportion of illegally killed elephants | 0.5 for all | 0.2 for all | 0.46 |
| Number of Big Cats killed at project sites | 300% decline | 300% decline | 200 % decline |
| METT for PAs (Kafta Shiraro, Babile, Chebera, Mago, Omo) | 62, 61,62, 60, 68 | 84, 82, 81, 84, 83 | 37, 33, 50, 39, 32 |

1. The MTR finds that the target for the METT scores are too high, given the low baseline scores (Kafta Shiraro - 46, Babile Sanctuary - 13, Chebera Churchura - 30, Mago - 15 and Omo -13). Furthermore, it is difficult to attribute the change in METT scores to project outputs due to the fact the baseline and updated METT tables only provide scores, without the relevant explanations for any of the scoring. This needs to be addressed for the terminal evaluation to reach an evidence-based judgement. Indeed, it is unlikely that the set of capacity building interventions can increase the capacity to the very high end of project targets. Indeed, the MTR found that despite the intervention of the project, there remains many challenges to NP management and combating IWT, including: i) shortage of scouts – none of the NPs have the required number of scouts; b) there is very limited infrastructure in the NPs including footpath and access roads, causing serious transportation problems within NPs; c) None of the NPs have adequate means of transport (few vehicles, no motor cycles), exacerbating the patrolling problems; d) there are limited amenities in the NPs services such as potable water, electricity or internet connectivity; e) poachers, brokers and traders are reported to be better armed, networked and organized than the scouts in sites like Mago NP; f) while the wildlife crime protection structures at the Woreda level are reported to be effective in enhancing the participation of relevant stakeholders at the local levels, Deacha and Gofa districts are not included in this intervention, although they are adjacent to CC NP. Furthermore, quarterly task force monitoring and review meetings at the Woreda level have been interrupted by Covid-19 related restrictions, leading to a lax in the patrolling of NPs, and linked to the poaching of eight elephants in Mago NP.
2. Community benefits fall short of expectations and needs; although the number of expected beneficiaries has been exceeded, this constitutes less than 5% of the population living around the NPs and highly dependent on natural resources. The benefits from the project are very limited and there are still no viable alternatives that provide broad incentives for community participation in conservation while improving livelihoods. There is serious human-wildlife conflict especially in Chebera Churchura NP with recent reports of loss of human lives and crops. While the NPs managed by the Regional governments share 30% of revenues with communities, total revenues are very small, especially since the COVID-19 outbreak. The NPs managed by the Federal Government have no revenue sharing provisions.

## **Progress towards outcomes analysis**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Outcome One: Improved protected area management effectiveness delivers enhanced protection in the targeted protected areas | Attainment of Outcome |
| Highly Satisfactory  |

1. The project has delivered significant results under outcome 1, exceeding the mid-term targets for the two Prodoc indicators, and one additional indicator adopted during project implementation (on number of staff members trained on relevant subjects) (Fig 3 and Annex 10). It has therefore delivered three of the five General Protected Area Management Plans (against an MTR target of one); and the trained 300 staff members (against an MTR target of 200). The proportion of successful prosecutions of wildlife crimes has risen to 70% (against an MTR target of 60%). Achievements per output are summarized below.
2. Output 1.1 - PA management plans are developed and supported for initial implementation – in addition to the demarcation and expansion of Omo National park (see above), the project undertook three assessments per site, which provided basic ecological and socio-economics information for the three completed General Management Plans. They are: Biodiversity assessment and habitat mapping, situation analysis/needs assessment and threat assessment. Management plans have been completed for Kafta Shiraro (KSNP), Mago and Chebera Churchura National Parks. Review of these long term (10-year) and short term (3 years) plans indicated that the documents are comprehensive with clear vision, management objectives with a focus on strengthening park resource base, management and integrated development and stakeholders’ engagement including ensuring community participation and benefits. The GMP of Omo National Park is currently under formulation while that of Babile Elephant Sanctuary is set to start as soon as the demarcation is still completed. The project supports the implementation of the completed GMPs. In this regard, a tourism development and management strategy with a comprehensive tourist guidebook and a wildland fire management plan have been developed for KSNP.
3. Output 1.2 - Tools and systems for PA management developed and initial operationalization supported. The project has produced a detailed Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) Manual providing guidance on various law enforcement, ecological monitoring, human resource management and administration, financial management, management of infrastructure and fixed assets and use of equipment and tools. More than 60 PA staff have been trained in the use of the SOP. In addition, 25 experts have been trained on GIS and remote sensing while another four have been given a month-long training on wildlife capturing and relocation. The latter took place in Tanzania.
4. Output 1.3: Site level law enforcement initiatives are supported - The project has launched and equipped multi-stakeholder platforms at Kebele level for collaboration in law enforcement, tackling poaching and illegal wildlife trade. Constituted by members from the local administrators, police, judiciary and community representatives, these kebele level law enforcement task forces have been equipped with materials and equipment necessary for law enforcement operations –including a Toyota Land cruiser, tents, sleeping bags, and uniforms. The members have been trained on law enforcement. They have been facilitated to conduct quarterly review meetings, albeit currently disrupted by COVID-19 related restrictions. In addition, 170 (25 female) wildlife rangers have been trained on law enforcement, while about 8,000 federal police and regional police (not gender segregated) received training on wildlife and illegal trade and trafficking. The project has embarked on improvement on communications technology for the task forces and NPs, which is expected to be fully developed by the end of the project.

***Figure 3: Delivery Against Outcome 1 Indicators***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome One Indicators** | **MTR Target** | **EOP Target** | **Delivered** |
| No of PAs with approved GMPs and being implemented | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Proportion of successful prosecutions of ***wildlife crimes*** in PAs and surrounding areas  | 60% | 90% | 70% |
| Number of staff capacitated staff (not in Prodoc) |  | 200 | 300 |

1. Despite the excellent performance by the project, challenges remain in shifting management effectiveness and delivering enhanced protection in the targeted protected areas. As argued earlier, the implementation of the GMPs will require significant increase in financial resources allocation to the conservation sector and NPs. With the current low levels of revenue generation from these NPs (due to limited infrastructure for tourism), it remains to be seen whether the resources from the Government, which has expressed full commitment to financing PA management, will be adequate. In addition, the NPs are still seriously under equipped and under staffed (Table 5; most of the NPs visited had just one vehicle (provided by the project) and generally under 50% of the staff positions are filled. With the poor road infrastructure, patrolling the NPs and combating poaching is still a huge challenge, especially given that the poachers are believed to be better equipped and armed than the task forces and the PA management. In addition, the community participation in conservation is still hindered by inadequate incentives and an absence of alternatives, thus the threat from natural resources extraction is yet to be adequately tackled. However, it is noted that several upcoming initiatives and projects such as the integrated community and tourism development programmes of PM Abiy Gebeta Lehager in Chebera Churchura; former PM Hailemariam and first lady Roman in Omo, Mago and Chebera Churchura; Action for Development (AFD) in Omo; and EWCA in Chebera Churchura are also contributing further for the implementation of the GMP. This effort needs to be upscaled.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Outcome 2: Strengthened national and local capacity for conservation of endangered fauna and flora through implementation of anti-trafficking measures | Attainment of Outcome |
| Highly Satisfactory  |

1. The project has delivered significant results under outcome 2, exceeding the mid-term targets for the two Prodoc indicators (Fig. 4 and Annex 10). The proportion of successful prosecutions of crimes related to ***wildlife trafficking*** at national level (measured annually) has risen to 75%, against an MTR target of 60% and the capacity scores (using UNDP capacity scoring system) has increased to 49%, against the MTR target of 39%. Key deliverable under the outcome include establishment of two Regional Task Forces, establishment of an Environmental Crime Unit (ECU), roll out of a country-wide awareness raising programme and training for the CITES scientific and management authorities. Achievements per output are summarised below.
2. Output 2.1 International cooperation on IWT control is supported: Bilateral agreements on cooperation of illegal wildlife trafficking across the borders have been concluded with five members of the Horn of Africa Countries Wildlife Network (HAWEN) under the IGAD; namely, Somalia, Djibouti, South Sudan, Sudan and Kenya. The signing of the agreements has been delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The project is working with the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) to reduce the illegal trade and trafficking of Cheetah cubs from Ethiopia to Somaliland.
3. Output 2.2 Proposals to strengthen the (existing) National IWT Steering Committee are developed: The project facilitated the functioning of the national IWT controlling task force, which constitutes of: Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority, the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, the Customs Authority, the Attorney General, the National Security, the Ethiopian Airlines and the Federal Police Commission. The National IWT Steering Committee has clear mandate and TOR and operates at full capacity. The project further trained federal police (law enforcement officers) and custom staff (for intelligence and inspection officers). Training was held in the areas of: 1) National wildlife laws 2) International conventions on wildlife like CITES, 3) Smuggling techniques of wildlife and wildlife products, 4) Species and specimen identification. 198 (82% males) males received the training. The project reported that increased collaboration in this team significantly increased seizures, arrests of criminals and convictions.
4. Output 2.3 Establishment of IWT Task Forces in pilot regions is supported: the project has established and operationalized two IWT Task Forces in the Southern Ethiopia Regional State and for the Somali Regional States. They are mandated to strengthen Regional inter-agency collaboration, investigation, enforcement, reducing demand and expanding international cooperation in tackling wildlife crime offences and to benefit citizens. They have been provided with clear terms of reference and have signed signed agreements with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority and the respective members of the taskforces.
5. Output 2.4 Legislation guidance for law enforcement agencies is developed: An analysis of all applicable laws for prosecuting illegal activities in the vicinity of protected areas and IWT cases (including all aspects of wildlife crimes, illegal killing of wildlife and trafficking live animals and wildlife products) was undertaken. In addition to identifying gaps and making recommendations for addressing the gaps, a hand book was produced, describing all applicable laws and the circumstances in which the different laws may be applied. The handbook is being printed, with a plan to train relevant stakeholders on it, and to distribute 500 copies to protected area authorities, police, customs authority, prosecutors and magistrates.
6. Output 2.5 Establishment and functionality of an Environmental Crime Unit within the Federal Serious Crime Unit is supported: The unit has been established and its mode of function, roles and responsibilities been agreed. It is mandated to counter environmental crime offences by strengthening inter-agency collaboration, enforcement, reducing demand and expanding international cooperation in tackling the environmental crime offences through effective use of prevention, intelligence analysis and enforcement. The ECU members are the Customs Authority, the Attorney General, the Federal Police Commission, Addis Ababa Police Commission and the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority. Members of the ECU have officially been assigned and the sit of unit is within the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority headquarter

***Figure 4: Delivery on Prodoc Indicators under Outcome 2***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Proportion of successful prosecutions of crimes related to ***wildlife trafficking*** at national level (measured annually)  | At least 60% presented and successfully  | At least 95% presented and successfully  | 75% |
| Change in Capacity Scores-(UNDP system) | Average 39% | Average 49% | 49%  |

1. Output 2.6 Management system for wildlife products and live animals that are confiscated, seized and/or collected in the field is developed: In collaboration with the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI), the project has proposed a gold standard storage system for confiscated products, building on best practices in the region (Kenya) and internationally. Relevant staff have been trained on the effective management of the storage system while an actual storage system is under construction at the Chebera Churchura National Park. The project is working in partnership with the wildlife rescue Centre at Holeta, which provides sanctuary for confiscated live animals from the different parts of the country. The rescue center is managed by the Born Free Foundation.
2. Output 2.7: Management system for wildlife products and live animals that are confiscated, seized and/or collected in the field is developed: In collaboration with the CITES Secretariat, the project conducted training for members of the IWT Steering Committee, regional authorities who are working on Forest and wildlife resources, the Addis Ababa University, protected area warden and federal law enforcement agencies and a delegate from Somalia Mogadisho. It also supported the study of CITES species population (lion, leopard, the grevey’s zebra, the African wild ass, leopard, tortoise and the colobus monkey) and used the information to update their current status in Ethiopia. The study influenced the decision for the country to lift the quota restriction of leopard and tortoise during the Conference of Parties (COP 18) meeting in Geneva in August 2019.
3. Output 2.8 An information campaign to increase public knowledge and responsiveness regarding wildlife and wildlife crime is implemented: The project used printed and electronic media and conferences to advocate for better protection of endangered species and enhance community and policy makers’ awareness on wildlife protection, law and management. Specifically, TV and radio with about 40 to 65 million regular audiences in Ethiopia respectively have been used to broadcast information on wildlife conservation in five languages (Amharic, Oromiffa, Tigrigna, Somali and Afar). In addition, policy and local level conferences on wildlife policy and strategy in Ethiopia, challenges and opportunities of wildlife conservation and community engagement issues were organized in the presence of indigenous communities, policy makers and federal and local level stakeholders
4. Despite the impressive performance, there still remains huge challenges in the capacity for NP management and combating wildlife crimes. While a 20% increase in UNDP capacity scores is impressive, it is still short of what is required to effectively manage the PAs and combat wildlife crimes. The MTR finds that there is high staff turnover with 71% and 31% of the approved positions currently vacant in Omo and Mago NPs (respectively) (Table 5). Besides it is difficult for the MTR to confirm the increment in the capacity scores since the baseline and updated capacity assessment reports are unavailable. The UNDP capacity scoring system is comprehensive (summary in Box 3) and one requires these reports to reach an evidence-based judgement. These documents need to be availed to the terminal evaluation to confirm the achievement on the indicator. Indeed, NPs staff reported challenges related to low level of staff benefit packages (e.g. staff development (education and training), salary and hardship allowance), insecurity (e.g. ethnic conflicts, killing of scouts), limited access or unavailability of basic infrastructures, facilities and services (footpath and main road, vehicles, medical service, accommodation, telephone, internet, electricity, protective items including firearm, patrol equipment, etc.). Furthermore, the NP cannot meet the required allocation of one scout per 10Km2 of NP area.

***Table 5: Staff Plan and Existing Staff in the Three NPs Visited by the MTR Team[[5]](#footnote-5)***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Staff category  | Approved position | Existing staff  |
| Administration and technical staff | Scout | Total | Administration and technical staff | Scout | Total |
| CC | 24 | 51 | 75 | 23 (8F) | 51 | 74(8F) |
| Mago | 12 | 63 | 75 | 10 (1F) | 42(1F) | 52(2F) |
| Omo | 38 | 103 | 140 | 14 (4F) | 39 (6F) | 43 (8F) |
| **Total**  | **74** | **216** | **290** | **47 (13F)** | **122 (5F)** | **169 (18F)** |

***Box 3: Principles of UNDP Capacity Scoring System***

|  |
| --- |
| The UNDP Capacity scoring system provides a systematic analysis of desired capacities against existing capacities in five strategic capacity areas (below) at the individual institutional and systemic levels. The strategic capacity areas for the project would be: 1. Capacity to ***conceptualize and formulate*** policies legislations strategies and programs to improve Protected Area management and to implement measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching;
2. Capacity to ***implement*** policies legislation strategies and programs to improve Protected Area management and to implement measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching;
3. Capacity to ***engage and build consensus*** among all stakeholders to improve Protected Area management
4. and to implement measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching;
5. Capacity to ***mobilize information and knowledge*** to improve Protected Area management and to implement measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching;
6. Capacity to ***monitor evaluate report and learn*** to improve Protected Area management and to implement measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching.

The detailed capacity assessment method is described here and detailed assessment found here Capacity scoring system found here - <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/environment-energy/www-ee-library/mainstreaming/monitoring-guidelines-of-capacity-development-in-gef-operations/Monitoring%20Capacity%20Development-design-01.pdf>) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcome three: Improved conservation of forestry and agro-biodiversity resources through a landscape approach based on community-based natural resource management** | Attainment of Outcome |
| Moderately Satisfactory  |

1. The project has delivered significant results under outcome 3, exceeding end of project target for one indicator, reaching the end of project target on four indicators, exceeding MTR target on one indicator (which is well on the way to be delivered by the end of the project). However, it has not reached MTR targets on two important indicators. The project thus has delivered two approved landscape management plans covering an area of 50,000ha, it has delivered five natural resources use agreements, it has facilitated the development of twenty-six small sustainable businesses and identified three new value chains. It has also established 100 ha of demonstration sites for agro biodiversity conservation (Fig 5 and Annex 10). However, it has not disbursed any funds (loans or grants) to community organizations/businesses and hence there has been no increase in household incomes. Achievements under each output are summarized below:

***Figure 5: Delivery on Prodoc Indicators under Outcome 3***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 3 Indicator** | **MTR Target** | **EOP Target** | **Delivered** |
| Approved landscape/ ecosystem level plans  | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Ha under approved ILMPs | 15,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| Natural resource use agreements with stakeholders – local and indigenous communities  | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| No of small sustainable businesses developed by local people  | 10 | 35 | 26 |
| Average % of household income increase of recipients of microcredit schemes | 15% | 30% | 0% |
| Ha of demonstration farms protecting rare and valuable genetic ABD  | 50 ha | 100 ha | 100 ha |
| New value chains on ABD/NTFP |  | 3 | 3 |
| Microcredit funds released for CBNRM | 300,000 | 600,000 | 0 |

1. Output 3.1 Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) plans are developed: Two ILM plans covering a land mass of 50,000 ha have been developed and approved for selected buffer zones in CC NP and Babile. A review of the ILM plans show high quality plans based on a thorough assessment of the resources, constraints and opportunities for improvements. Implementation of the plans has started via provision of hand tools (material and equipment) and inputs to support selected households to implement priority activities of the ILM. In this regard, 30,000 hectares of critically degraded land/sites have been rehabilitated by planting of over 240,000 seedlings, raised and distributed to households. They include rare, fruit, and indigenous and fodder tree species, this was supported by dissemination of awareness raising programs.
2. Output 3.2. Stakeholder agreements on access to and use of natural resources within and surrounding each selected PA developed: Under this output, the project has facilitated a participatory formulation and approval (by signature) of five natural resources management plans (one per PA). Signed between the implementing institution and local communities/woreda and kebele leaders, these agreements are based on national and customary (community) laws. Extensive awareness raising and training events are undertaken annually as part of the implementation process.
3. Output 3.3: Value chains for forestry and agro-biodiversity products are developed and presented to the local communities for implementation: the project undertook an assessment of value chains and identified twelve products on which value chains can be expanded. These are live livestock trade (cattle and goats), bamboo, kidney beans, honey, avocado, mango, groundnuts, sesame seeds, frankincense, piper capense, cardamom, ginger, enset, maize, banana, khat and chilli.
4. Output 3.4 Microcredit schemes for local communities are developed and implemented: the project plans to disburse US$ 600,000 in microcredit schemes to selected local communities who live inside each project site (within 15,000 ha). This has been delayed as the mechanism for disbursing the funds described in the Prodoc was unworkable at the project level. A new system – Low Trust Grants disbursed through cooperatives - has been agreed and the funds are projected to be disbursed in the course of 2012. Twenty-six cooperatives have been established (about five at each project site), with a membership of about 1,300 individual households (50% women). Although the registration of the cooperatives and certification by the cooperative promotion offices are yet to be completed, each cooperative has produced a business plan and the members are contributing a registration fee and a share capital of Birr 700 (US$ 19). Further, the local governments allocated lands freely. For instance, Kuri beekeeping group/cooperative has got three hectares of land that have good vegetation coverage and near to water sources for the establishment of the site.
5. Output 3.5 Demonstration farm(s) for the conservation of agro-biodiversity are established: three demonstration farms were established at Gudumu and Neda Safer Project Site (CCNP), Fedis and Midega Districts project site (BES) and Kurie and Bitsemal project site (MNP). The farms serve as the gene bank to conserve rare and valuable genetic stock to be planted (and consequently conserved/preserved) in the agro biodiversity farms. It is these farms that supplied the more than two hundred (200) species of medicinal plants and over 240,000 seedlings of rare, fruit, and indigenous plant species used to rehabilitate 30,000 ha of degraded lands under output 3.1.
6. Despite the delivery of outputs and indicators, there are additional challenges. The ILM plans and the demonstration sites don’t have cost recovery mechanism or committed budget from the government, and they are not connected to community-based management systems to ensure that the identified management interventions and value chains will be operationalized. It is particularly unclear how the beneficiaries will improve access to financial facilities, take up small businesses, improve/uptake energy efficient technologies, develop tourism infrastructure and promote tourism. The implementation of the ILM plans and the effectiveness of the ILM and demonstration sites in terms of conserving the natural resources and providing the required community education, demonstration and direct benefits require follow up, and documentation. Besides the issue of generating additional resources and sustaining the current work without the project resources needs some discussion among the implementing partners and the government stakeholders at regional, district and community level.
7. The viability of the small businesses needs to be carefully considered before the investments are made. For instance -- a Breakeven Point (BEP) analysis of the draft business plan prepared by Kuri beekeeping group in Baka Dawla Arri District in Omo Zone, shows that the enterprise can reach breakeven point through production/collection, and marketing of about 23 Quintal of crude honey and wax within two years. This is achievable given the huge honey production potential in the target area and the local, national and international market for the products. However, the BEP analysis was calculated by considering an investment cost of Birr 56,060 (US$ 1,550) for fixed costs. The question is: Is this investment cost large enough to fulfil the infrastructure (e.g. office and office furniture that is one of the minimum requirement to get registration certificate from cooperative promotion office, as well as beehive shades, honey storage) and equipment (modern and traditional beehives, extraction facilities, smoker, knife, brush, plastic and honey jar/containers, and protective clothes like veil, bee suit, gloves and boots, etc.) needs of the business? If the actual fixed cost is high, the BEP unit of production should be increased and the groups/cooperatives are required to stretch more and have big production/collection and marketing targets to achieve their survival and profit targets.
8. As argued earlier, the proportion of those to benefit from the economic benefits associated to PA management and combating IWT is small, especially for the indigenous peoples. Even when the planned livelihood interventions are implemented in the two Kebeles targeted per NP, these are too few; Omo NP has 19 kebeles with a population of 36,129 people; Mago NP has 24 kebeles with a population of 55,835; Chebera Churchura has 26 kebeles with a population of 53,105. Although employment (e.g. scouts) was cited as key benefit, only so many can be employed, and the adoption the proposed change to set Grade ten certificate as minimum requirement for scouts will put the benefit out of reach of many given the low levels of education in the seven tribes surround the NPs. While this requirement is deemed necessary to increase the pay for the scouts, 99% (N=39) of the scouts in Omo NP do not meet the requirement, and could lose their jobs.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcome 4:** Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming, are used to fight poaching and IWT, and promote community-based conservation nationally and internationally | Attainment of Outcome |
| Highly Satisfactory  |

1. The project has delivered significant results under outcome 4, exceeding MTR targets for both indicators (Fig. 6 and Annex 10). Achievements per output are summarised below:

***Figure 6: Delivery on Prodoc Indicators for Outcome 4***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 4 Indicator** | **MTR Target** | **EOP Target** | **Delivered** |
| Number of the project lessons used in development and implementation of other conservation projects  | 2 | 5 | 4  |
| Number of national and international organizations that participate in the project M&E and provide feedback to the Management Team  | At least 6 | At least 10 | 7 (more if we count members of local task forces |

1. Output 4.1. M&E provides sufficient information for adaptive management, gender mainstreaming, and learning via active participation of key stakeholders in the project implementation: The project has an M&E system which is being used to monitor the project and its impacts. More than 10 organizations and taskforces are involved in the M&E, via the Project Steering Committee. They include the Born Free Foundation, UNDP, EWCA and EBI, and regional and local level government and community structures. They participate in field and desk monitoring and review of the project performance, review and reflection sessions, peer reviews and knowledge sharing. On gender – a gender strategy was formulated and applied especially in the implementation of the landscape management under component 3. As argued in Section x above, mainstreaming gender is constrained by the fact that protected area management is male dominated and the strongly paternalistic cultures of the rural communities around the project areas are slow to penetrate; in some places even women do not accept the notion of gender equity. The project needs to train all its stakeholders on gender to promote understanding and therefore begin to mainstream it.
2. Output 4.2. Lessons learned from law enforcement strategies and community-based conservation, including gender mainstreaming, are shared on national and international levels: The project has made four documentaries based on project experiences on establishing and management of multi stakeholder platforms for conservation and law enforcement, community awareness creation and engagement on PA planning and management as well as preparation of NP related management plan, integrated law enforcement plan and operational guidance preparations have been made which are available on Youtube (link). These themes are not yet common practice in Ethiopia and the lessons have potential to be scaled up and institutionalized by EWCA and its national and regional stakeholders in the 98 wildlife protected areas (23 national parks, 1 wildlife sanctuary, 6 wildlife reserves, 25 controlled hunting areas, 5 biosphere reserves and 8 community conservation areas) that constitutes the protected area estate of the country. This scaling up has not yet started. Besides there were external project communication and knowledge sharing channelled through annual conferences organized by the Global Wildlife Program where the Project Manager and indigenous peoples participate. Furthermore, awareness raising programme has been implemented partly aired via regional radio and television stations. The website (<https://ethiopias-elephants.com/>) initiated by the project has already linked to other partner websites (Global Wildlife Programme, UNDP). MTR finds the website easy to navigate and informative.

## **Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective**

1. The discussion on remaining barriers to better PA management and combating of IWT has been integrated into the achievement under each outcome in Section 4.3 above. They can be summarised as: Inadequate financing for the full implementation of the plans developed by the project (GMPs, ILMs) and the natural resources management agreements, operationalization of the value chains, provision of alternative livelihoods and incentives for a broader community engagement in conservation. This is still exacerbated by low METT and Capacity Scores (under UNDP Capacity scoring system – thus still less that required capacity to manage NPs effectively), tourism development and revenue generation from conservation.
2. Although in general NPs are underfunded in Ethiopia, the respondents from Omo and Mago NPs expressed the view that these NPs receive significantly lower support (budgetary allocation) than the rest of the NPs, e.g. the Bale and Semen NPs. They suggested that government allocation to the NP should be based on the size of NPs and the risks level (such as insecurity).
3. **Structural challenge that could affect the effective management of NPs:** NPs that have trans-boundary nature (e.g. Omo national park bordering Kenya) are directly managed by EWCA (federal level institution), and NPs demarcated within one national regional state and have no trans-boundary nature (e.g. Mago and Chebera Churchura in Southern Nation National Regional State (SNNPR) are administered by national regional states. Respondents to the MTR reported that despite the efforts to harmonize the operational modalities (e.g. aligning monthly salary of the regionally and federal level managed NPs scouts) and work relationship (e.g. EWCA supporting regional NPs technically and project project-based support), the NPs managed at regional level are less connected with EWCA and NPs managed by EWCA don’t get much attention by the regional states.

## **Project Implementation and Adaptive Management - SATISFACTORY**

### **Management Arrangements**

1. MTR Finds that no changes made to the NIM modality at design and that responsibilities and reporting lines have been clear and effective, with decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner. Indeed, all stakeholders agreed that EWCA and EBI have been very effective in execution of the project, and have formed highly effective partnerships with the Zonal and Woreda governments. Furthermore, UNDP has provided timely and quality support and guidance.
2. There is clear role sharing in among the implementing partners - EBI is responsible for component 3 while EWCA is responsible for the overall coordination of implementation and specifically components 1, 2 and 4. The PMU receives technical and monitoring support from UNDP. Furthermore, the National Project Steering Committee (PSC) has remained effectively engaged, conducting regular review meeting, taking and documenting minutes, and the committee is said to be supportive in addressing emerging issues and challenges.

### **Work planning**

1. The MTR finds that project implementation has been in line with the Project document (Table 2). Slight delays have occurred due to COVID-19 pandemic. This has delayed the establishment of the Canine centre, signing of regional agreements and some training. There has been considerable delay in the disbursement of micro credits to the communities, with good reason, and a solution has been found. The risk rating of the project has been adjusted to High; which triggered additional work planned to be completed before June 2021. This includes the formulation of an Indigenous Peoples Plan, Livelihoods Action Plan, Stakeholder Engagement Plan to complement the already existing Park Management Plans and a Grievance Redress Mechanism. MTR confirms the necessity of these additional risk management tools and agree with the PIR recommendation to undertake comprehensive review of the SESP. The project is however expected to recover the time lost without necessity to get into a cost neutral extension. Furthermore, work-planning processes are participatory and sufficiently results-based, with the results framework/ logframe being used as an effective management tool - it has not been changed.

### **Finance and co-finance**

1. The total cost of the project is USD 83,211,481, out of which the GEF contribution is USD 7,494,495 (Table 6). Expenditure to date (cumulative General Ledger delivery) against total approved amount (in Prodcoc) is 4,233,220 (56% of the total budget), with approximately 75% of the work programme delivered. Despite the COVID-19 related delays, the cumulative General Ledger delivery against expected delivery as of 2019-2020 is 88.73%. Co-finance realization is at a low 36.1%. however, the low value may be due to inadequate monitoring of co-finance rather than actual slow delivery. The PMU should improve the monitoring of co-finance to provide updated and more accurate figures at terminal evaluation.

***Table 6: Updated Project Financing Table***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source of Funds** | **At CEOR US$** | **At MTR US$** | **Percentage** |
| PARALLEL CO-FINANCING |   |   |   |
| UNDP TRAC resources |  200,000  |  65,500  |  33  |
| GEF |  7,494,495  | 4,233,220 |  56.4  |
| **(1) Total funds administered by UNDP** |  **7,694,495**  |  **4,298,720**  |  **55.9**  |
| **PARALLEL CO-FINANCING** |
| GoE (EWCA) |  30,868,725  |  12,250,000  | 39.7% |
| GoE (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute) |  3,161,356  |  1,223,500  | 38.7% |
| IGAD/EU/HoAREC |  6,380,000  |  | 0.0% |
| KfW |  21,267,000  |  15,000,000  | 70.5% |
| GIZ |  12,234,400  |  | 0.0% |
| Born Free Foundation |  1,500,000  |  500,000  | 33.3% |
| Frankfurt Zoological Society |  1,800,000  |  734,000  | 40.8% |
| Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) |  1,000,000  |  | 0.0% |
| African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) |  5,000,000  |  300,000  | 6.0% |
| **(2)  Total co-financing** |  **83,211,481**  |  **30,007,500**  | **36.1%** |

1. The project finances are managed in line with the guidelines of UNDP and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC). The instituted financial management system ensured that project expenditure adhered to the approved work plans and budgets. The project was audited in 2018 and 2019 by Debebe and Mekonnen Audit Service Partnership and Tafesse, Shisema and Ayalew Certified Audit Partnership, respectively. The project received a favorable opinion in both audits. Indeed, both audits confirmed that all project funded activities were derived from the work plans. Financial reports were routinely prepared and shared in the formats agreed upon. The project has mobilized additional co-finance of US$ xxx.
2. Financial management has ensured cost effectiveness in the following ways: the project adopted both GoE and UNDP financial management systems as appropriate; it worked closely with relevant stakeholders within wildlife management, BD conservation and livelihood support in the country thereby reducing the risk of duplication and redundancy – and – raising additional co-finance; the project design was based on lessons, and continues to benefit from these lessons, of the Global Wildlife Programme and associated older UNDP-GEF projects; co-finance is being used strategically to help the objectives of the project – e.g. the GiZ and UNIQUE/NABU in CC; and, the project Team works closely with co-finance partners leading to alignment of co-finance with the project objectives (give example).

### **Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems**

1. The MTR finds the quality of the M&E system at entry was high, which has made its implementation fit in with the project partner institutions. M&E is made easy by facts that the indicators and targets were SMART and project has a dedicated Senior M&E Officer. Project currently uses the Project Results Framework, PIR, six monthly work plans and reports and physical observations as M&E tools. Because of its simplicity, the M&E system fits well with the EWCA, EBI and UNDP M&E tools and systems. The MTR received a lot of information from the M&E system and concludes that the M&E system is cost-effective, inclusive and participatory. There has not been any challenge related to the budget he budget provided by the project for M&E.

### **Stakeholder engagement**

1. As reported in Sections 2.5 (Project Stakeholders) and 3.1 (Project Strategy and Relevance), the project was designed on the basis of a participatory stakeholder consultation, allowing for the design to draw on important lessons in the field of biodiversity conservation, PA management and combating IWT and poaching. During the project design phase, two elaborate plans were developed to guide stakeholder engagement and optimising synergise with partners: a) the stakeholder engagement plan (SHEP) and b) the partnership collaboration plan. The MTR finds that both documents continue to guide stakeholder engagement and contribution of partners. Updated copies of these documents are found in Annex 9 while highlights are summarized below:
2. The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority has moved to the newly created Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission (EFCC), which has similar mandates as the former host – the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MoEFCC). The new Commission also houses the GEF Operational Focal Point and continues to be an active stakeholder, for the benefit of both the project and the Commission. Although EWCA moved out of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport, it continues to collaborate on matters related to tourism development. The ministry of finance and economic cooperation continues to hold the authority to approve the project document, approve annual work plans, monitor implementation and is also member of the project steering committee. The Federal Police Commission is the key partner of EWCA and the project with regards to law enforcement in controlling the illegal wildlife trade and trafficking and is a member of the IWT SC and also the ECU that has been established by the project.
3. At the community and Woreda level, the multi-stakeholder task forces (Regional IWT Task Force) and Woreda and Kebele IWT Task Forces) bring together Federal, Regional and Local government as well as community representatives who hold quarterly meetings to discuss PA management and monitor efforts to combat poach and illegal wildlife trade. The project has facilitated several multi-stakeholder dialogues, additionally bringing the private sector on board. This was demonstrated in particular during the negotiated re-demarcation of the NPs (Omo, Mago and Chebera Churchura NPs, Babile). Indeed, the Omo Kuraz government affiliated sugar company- which had grabbed part of the Omo PA land for farming, canal construction and sugar production infrastructure development participated in the stakeholders’ dialogue and re-establishment of the elephant migratory corridor – which led to expansion of the Omo NP. The Steering Committee of the project remains engaged in the project overall policy-level management. Dialogue on illegal wildlife trade and trafficking and the establishment of the Environmental Crime Unit was done with the involvement of the federal police, attorney general, Ethiopian airlines, customs office, national intelligence security, wildlife authorities, regional offices is said to be in good progress and achieving results.
* Unfortunately, the following partners are inadequately engaged in multi stakeholders platforms (e.g. as steering committee or task force members), weakening opportunities for further resources mobilization, research and advocacy, addressing the livelihood and social needs of people living around NPs, and sustainability of the results: i) Civil society including national and international NGOs at the grassroots level, who could implement income generating activities; ii) GEF Small Grants Programme which could complement the work of community conservation; iii) UN Women Ethiopia Office who could support with the gender mainstreaming and economic empowerment programmes for women; iv) The private sector who could invest in infrastructure development for tourism in the NPAs.
1. Regardless of the above, the MTR finds evidence
* The PMU has developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders – leading to additional financial resources such as i) the existing project - UNIQUE/NABU working in the area of adaptation to climate change; ii) Upcoming projects – Prime Minister Abiy’s initiative on Gebeta Lehager, Hailemariam and Roman Foundation, the African Finance Development project in Omo, and the Africa Elephant Fund support to EWCA. Indeed, the project enjoys high level support and country-driven processes, with local and national government stakeholders strongly supporting its objectives. The Prime Minister and his cabinet members pay regular visits to CC NP while the ex-Prime Minister visited Omo and Mago NP this year. Both events raised the profile of EWCA and conservation.
* Local and national government stakeholders participates in project decision-making via the Project Board and their participation in Legal Enforcement at the Park level (quarterly patrols and meetings) – albeit disrupted by COVID 19. This contributes to cost effective project implementation and avenues for sustainability of the results
* Participation and public awareness: The project has a budget and workplan, which it has implemented on awareness raising. This has increased stakeholder involvement and public awareness - contributed to improved protection of wildlife and reduction in illegal wildlife trade and trafficking.
* Implementation has followed the project design closely and many of the partnerships have been activated and utilized
* Important areas of collaboration and partnerships include (borrowed from the 2020 PIR):
1. Law enforcement in PAs where local government law enforcement agents involved in protecting the project sites from illegal activities - including the district administrations, judiciaries, tourism officers, natural resource and agricultural officers, militia
2. Combating illegal wildlife trade and trafficking: involvement of the federal police, attorney general, Ethiopian airlines, customs office, national intelligence security, wildlife authorities, regional offices, militia.
3. Agro-biodiversity conservation through community based natural resources management; regional administrations, local government authorities, and indigenous communities
4. The donor mapping report provides an excellent and useful analysis of strategic partners and potential donors with clear guidance on engaging them.

### **Reporting and Communication**

1. On reporting, the MTR finds that the project utilizes the Project Steering Committee (PSC) for key decisions, well documented and reported via the minutes of the meetings and PIRs. The project has produced a long list of technical reports, capturing and reporting on key activities, including Park Management Plans, Donor mapping report, Gap analysis on Wildlife management legal Framework, threat analysis of the various PAs, Capacity development workshops reports, etc. The project produces high quality PIRs. In addition, it is in the process of capturing lessons (active on-going consultancy to capture lessons from three projects, including this one) to be documented and shared with key partners and internalized by partners.
2. On communications, the stakeholders at the local, zonal and national levels reported that internal communication on project matters is regular, effective and inclusive. Indeed, the MTR finds evidence that the communication with stakeholders has contributed to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and it has generated additional investments that will contribute to n the sustainability of project results (several proposals have been written and generated some funding). External project communication and knowledge sharing channeled through annual conferences organized by the Global Wildlife Program where the PM and indigenous peoples participate.
3. A series of five documentaries have been made on community-based management of natural resources and ILM which are available on YouTube (link); Awareness raising programme implemented partly aired via regional radio and television stations; Guidance manuals on a series of subjects – NPs operations, identifying and disrupting “supply chain” of poaching and IWT within and around the parks, utilizing canine units at the airports; Cases being tried in courts. A Project website (<https://ethiopias-elephants.com/>), already linked to other partner websites (Global Wildlife Programme, UNDP). The MTR finds the website easy to navigate and informative

## **Sustainability**

### **Risks identified at project design and their evolution during project implementation**

1. The social and environment screening procedure (SESP) identified six risks during the project design, assessing their probability and impacts and identifying risk mitigitaking. The table below assess the evolution of the risks during the project implementation and offers comments on the impacts of the evolution on the project results and their sustainability.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk in the Prodoc** | **Rating**  | **Situation at MTR** |
| Limited institutional capacity to manage PAs effectively and to counter IWT effectively | Probability - 4,Impact - 4 High | The risk remains valid. The project is well implemented, METT and capacity scores have improved, but as argued elsewhere, the improvement is not enough to sustain project results and impacts. Low capacities still remain a barrier to improved PA management and combating IWT and poaching. |
| Resource allocation by GoE to ensure efficient and effective implementation of project and to ensure sustainability of processes that the project initiates and impacts that the project may have remains a high risk  | Probability - 4,Impact - 4 High | The risk remains valid. As argued elsewhere, the project has delivered many plans (PA General Management Plans, Integrated Landscape Management Plans, Natural Resources Management Agreements,) and created new institutions (Environment Crimes Unit, Regional Task Forces, Woreda IWT task teams). The real project impacts will be realized when these plans are fully implemented. Although the government remains committed to provide financial resources through the budgetary processes, these NPs have historically received inadequate funds to implement their regular programmes of work. For example with the project intervention, majority of the NPs still have one vehicle, low staffing levels, poor road network, inadequate tourism facilities, hence very low to no revenues generated from the PA many lack resources to undertake day-to-day PA management. The project has embarked on additional resources mobilization to support government budgets to implement the plans; however, until such funds have been mobilized, inadequate PA finance still remains a risk to sustaining the project impacts, hence inadequate capacities still remain a threat to conservation and combating poaching and IWT. |
| The situation in Ethiopia during the PPG phase culminated in a State of Emergency (Oct 2016).  | Probability - 2,Impact - 4 Moderate | The state of emergency was lifted; but there is new conflicts in the country. Although these are not in the project areas, the potential for restrictions related to conflicts remain a valid risk.  |
| Ethiopia’s land-use policies currently do not encompass the identification, selection and appropriation of suitable areas for development (including conservation and/or natural resource management)  | Probability - 3,Impact - 3 Moderate | Even though awareness has been raised, the wildlife management legal framework reviewed, and the profile of EWCA improved, this risk still remains. However, the MTR notes that the project secured the Omo NP elephant migratory corridor - 25Km already cleared rangeland & 5Km rangeland which had been allocated for Omo Kuraz sugar enterprise. |
| Other development sectors and processes are prioritised above the environment (and particularly the conservation) sector – which results in low levels of funding, staffing and political leverage  | Probability - 5,Impact - 3 Moderate | Risk remains. As explained in the sections above, there is a vicious cycle of low allocation of resources to conservation and NPs management, which leads to poor/lack of investment in tourism sector and poor/lack of revenue generation by NPs – and hence low prioritization during budgetary processes.  |
| Climate change may exacerbate dependency on natural resources | Low  | Remains low |

1. The MTR finds that additional risks should have been identified and plans developed to address them, and monitored. The NPs targeted by the project are surrounded by many tribes and indigenous peoples that are highly dependent on natural resources, where poverty levels are high and levels of education low, and largely have strongly paternalistic cultures where gender issues most likely affect the equitable participation in project activities and access to benefits. The project implementation will possibly result in economic displacement (e.g. loss of assets or access to resources due to land acquisition or access restrictions – even in the absence of physical relocation. It may potentially reproduce discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits. There is a risk that the project activities may involve support for employment that may fail to comply with national and international labour standards (i.e. principles and standards of ILO fundamental conventions). The MTR recognizes the decision by PSC to change the project risk rating effort to update the SESP and put in place additional plans to manage the high-risk profile (indigenous peoples’ plan and environment and socio impacts management plan).

#### Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? Socio-economic risks to sustainability

1. The MTR finds mixed results on socio-economics risks to sustainability. On the positive side, there is high levels of stakeholder ownership of the project initiatives and results, particularly by key government agents (EWCA, EBI, Woreda Administrations) and the co-finance institutions as well as those communities engaged in the piloting of landscape and community beneficiation outcomes. Boosted by the extensively rolled out awareness raising strategy that has increase awareness of the importance of conserving wildlife and the dangers of poaching and IWT, the respondents to the MTR questions clearly see that the continued flow of project benefits is in their interest. Lessons are being generated on PA management, community engagement, anti-poaching and combating IWT, which, if the right conditions are availed, are likely to be taken up in the management of the country’s extensive PA estate.
2. On the less positive side, and as argued before, there is need to generate additional resources to fully implement the many plans generated by the project to trigger the more substantive benefits to conservation and communities. The PAs are surrounded by poor communities, highly dependent on natural resources, and the project will provide benefits to about 5% of the communities adjacent to the NPs. While the theory is that the government and other stakeholders should pick up the lessons and replicate the project initiatives broadly, it has been argued above that until these resources are acquired, inadequate conservation finance remains a risk to sustainability. This is exacerbated by the inadequate incentives for community participation in the face of (in some places) serious human wildlife conflict without a compensation mechanism in place. There are very limited revenues available in the 30% share given to communities by the Regional Parks, which is totally absent in the Federal Parks.

####  Institutional Framework and Governance and Financial risks to sustainability:

1. The MTR finds that on the whole, Ethiopia has policies, legal frameworks and governance structures to advance biodiversity conservation; and that the project has significantly improved the environment with institutions and capacities to combat poaching and illegal wildlife trade. The 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index of the Transparency International put Ethiopia as the 96 least corrupt nation out of 180 countries[[6]](#footnote-6). This can be extrapolated to mean that the country has somewhat fair systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place to ensure institutional sustainability of the results. However, the new institutions established by the project need to be supported financially to take hold. As argued elsewhere, there is need to raise additional conservation finance to strengthen the sustainability of the project impacts.

#### Environmental risks to sustainability

1. Driving across the three NPs visited by the MTR, one gets an impression that like the rest of the Savannah ecosystems, these landscapes are facing a biome shift that changes grasslands to woody dominated landscapes, attributable to either habitat degradation, shift in utilization (with reduced grazing due to reduced numbers of large herbivores), altered fire regimes with either uncontrolled or reduced fire incidences or climate change due to the phenomenon observed in Southern Africa where climate change seems to lead to higher levels of woody species growth over grasses – or a combination of all these factors. There is need for further investigations to ascertain whether this is actually the case, with a view to the fact that increasing evidence suggest 3 important facts related to the state of ecosystems and climate change: i) that healthy, bio diverse environments play a vital role in maintaining and increasing the resilience of ecological communities and societies; ii) that diverse, well-functioning ecosystems are better able to adapt to climate change than degraded systems; and that iii) functional connectivity in landscapes is a key aspect of ecosystem resilience. There is need therefore to engage with the science of resilience of ecosystems to better understand the environmental risk to sustainability for this project.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## **Conclusions**

1. The MTR has reached the following evidence-based conclusions:
* The project is highly relevant to PA management and conservation of wildlife in Ethiopia, with benefits to neighbouring countries (Eritrea and South Sudan migratory herds of elephants);
* The project is meeting a felt need – very limited capacity within the PA and biodiversity conservation institutions and stakeholders, thereby targeting a serious threat to conservation.
* Project implementation is on track, indicating a well-functioning institutional arrangement, collaboration and coordination of all relevant stakeholders, congratulations to the PMU, EWCA and EBI, UNDP Country office and RSC.
* The project has spent about 58% of total budget, and has delivered about 75% of the project strategy.
* The notable delay is the disbursement of micro credits to community groups, caused by a lack of an adequate vehicle to do in UNDP-GEF projects. An alternative has been identified – groups been organized in cooperatives through which the funds will be disbursed, starting from the first quarter of 2021.
* Although COVID-19 caused disruptions in project activities, this has not had an overall negative impact in the delivery of project results, and no cost-neutral extension is necessary.
* Project has increased the capacity and raised the profile of EWCA, hence become a stronger entity and central to the decision-making process for protected area management and combatting wildlife crime.  This will benefit its entire spectrum of work;
* The project has high level political support: Prime Minister visited CCNP, the ex-prime minister visited the ONP. They both provided guidance on the improvement of the park management. One of three initiatives to develop tourist destinations by PM Abiy is Chebera Churchura. The foundation established by ex-prime minister and ex-first lady has started preparatory works to strengthen the Omo NP managements.
* Project has undertaken donor mapping and is using the findings to mobilize additional financial resources and partnerships. This needs to continue; in particular get into partnerships and mobilize resources to expand the incentives for community conservation, including systems for the management of HWC.
1. The project has delivered the following:
* Review of the Wildlife Act (Proclamation to Provide for the Development, Protection and Utilization of Wildlife).
* Site Based Management Plans (3 complete, 2 will be completed by EOP).
* Secure Omo NP elephant migratory corridor -30Km previously allocated for Omo Kuraz sugar enterprise. This resulted in net increase of the Omo NP to 4775km2 (38% increment).
* Establishment of the Environmental Crime Unit and a Canine Unit.
* Regional and local IWT task forces.
* Bi-partite agreements between Ethiopia, Somaliland and Djibouti.
* Website promoting the work that the project does, disseminating results to a wider audience, raising the profile of the project sites as potential nature-based tourism sites.
1. The project has tackled threats identified during the project development; however, threats remain, which could easily compromise the sustainability of the project results and impacts. Despite the increase in capacity as a result of the project, capacity required for the effective management of National Parks and dealing with wildlife crimes and illegal trafficking of wildlife and their products still remains inadequate. The NP staff noted that poachers and their networks of traffickers probably still stronger capacities than NP staff (IT communications, arms, networks).
2. Incentives for community participation are still inadequate: The National Parks are surrounded by poor communities highly dependent on natural resources, with limited alternatives. The project is likely to benefit about 5% of these communities, hence will not provide adequate incentives. The project is set to demonstrate community beneficiation for upscaling by government and other development partners. Government funding for local development remains inadequate, hence there is need to continue the current effort to identify and utilize innovative partnerships to raise further funds to address all remaining threats, including providing incentives for community conservation. A mechanism for compensating damages from human wildlife conflicts should be identified and implemented.
3. The National Parks are caught up in the vicious cycle of inadequate investment in infrastructure development, low levels of tourism, very low levels of revenue generation, hence limited government allocation to their management.

#### Summary and overall rating (see details in Table 1)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **MTR Rating** |
| Project Strategy | N/A |
| Progress Towards Results | Objective Achievement: SATISFACTORY |
| Outcome 1 HIGHLY SATISFACTORY |
| Outcome 2 HIGHLY SATISFACTORY |
| Outcome 3 MODERATELY SATISFACTORY |
| Outcome 4: HIGHLY SATISFACTORY |
| Project Implementation & Adaptive Management | SATISFACTORY |
| Sustainability | MODERATELY UNLIKELY |

## **Lesson learnt**

1. The MTR finds the following lessons generated from the review of the documents and consultations with the project stakeholders:
2. Lesson 1: Integrated law enforcement initiatives are cost effective measures of tackling poaching and IWT: As protected areas are not islands, there is a high degree of interaction of these areas with the different land use types and the communities living around. Protected areas may affect or be affected as a result of this interaction. Therefore, the park management should not act alone as it is unlikely to sustain conservation without the active involvement of other partners. The Multi Stakeholders engagement platforms such as project steering committee and units are enhancing the effectiveness of combating poaching and IWT. It is through such effort that the ivory from eight elephants killed in Mago PA has been recovered from the poachers.
3. **Lesson 2: The power of public and policy makers’ education on biodiversity conversation**: The assessment highlighted the power of electronic medias’ like TV and radio, and stakeholders’ dialogues towards changing the perception of the general public, the executive bodies and the policy makers -at national and local level -on the astatic values, and socio-economic benefits of wildlife. An example is the federal government commitment in developing the CC PA and vicinities-without making any substantial change on the existing land use - to make it more attractive for visitors and to help the people get employment opportunity and income from it. The engagement of the government officials and the local people on the protection of the PA has also shown improvement overtime due to the serious of workshops and trainings organized on the issues associated with biodiversity loss and benefits of conservation.
4. **Lesson 3: Appropriateness of designing PA development programmes with specific focus areas**: According to the perception of the project management agency, programmes that provide more focus to specific PAs has comparative advantage than designing and supporting national level programs like the GEF programme that had been implemented between 2008 to 2016. National level programmes; according to them, might not provide comprehensive and focused assistance that provides impact.

## **Recommendations**

1. The MTR offers the following recommendations.

***Table 7: Recommendations***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation** | **Who should implement** |
| * The GMPs, ILM plans and the Regional Natural Resources Management Agreements prepared with the project assistance could result in sustainable management of the wildlife Pas, combating poaching and IWT and upscaling community beneficiation if they are effectively implemented. The resources requirements of these plans can’t be addressed by the project. These demand coordinated resource mobilization effort, building on the recent donor mapping, the partnerships identified at project design and potential private public partnerships. Additional effort is required, including lobbing the government to allocate more to conservation finance, including tourism development to increase revenue generation from the NPAs and conservation.
 | Project Steering Committee (PSC) |
| * The project should expand partnerships to include other relevant institutions, in particular local community based organizations to address community participation and the private sector for establishing tourism infrastructure
 | PMU with support of the PSC |
| * The Federal government should upscale the best practice of the SNNRP Regional Government – giving the relevant communities 30% of Park generated revenues
 | EWCA supported by PSC |
| * **Linking Conservation with Livelihood:** Besides the law enforcement activities, awareness creation and livelihood activities should be strengthened to ensure the wider community, the brokers, traders and poachers who depends on income from wildlife and resources within the park are supporting the protection activities. Livelihood losses of the indigenes people that are linked with PA should be properly compensated to ensure community ownership and sustainable management of PAs. This can be addressed; for instance, by supporting IGAs, decreasing people dependent on natural resources by creating more tourism related employments, increasing people dropping out from pastoralism and farming (e.g. education and employment in other sector), and constructing protective fencing to decrease the human-wildlife conflict in CC. The revenue sharing experience of SNNPR should also be adapted by EWCA to ensure that people living around PA ma6naged by the federal government are getting some income from tourist activities. To make it more effective; however, the allocated resources from revenue sharing initiative should be directly managed by community structures and used for activities that directly address the needs of the people.
 | PSC |
| * Establish task forces in all districts that are adjacent to the PAs, and creating a multi stakeholder platforms that coordinates district level taskforces to share information, reduce the impact of illegal wildlife poaching and hunting practices and ensure sustainable management of PAs
 | PMU supported by PSC |
| * Risk assessment was weak at the project design stage, is missing critical risks and risk management tools related to indigenous and other communities. It is necessary to update the risk assessment and formulate (at the very least) an Indigenous Peoples’ Plan (IPP) and an Environment and Socio Impact Management Plan (ESMP). These tools will be critical in sustaining the project results and impacts
 | PMU supported by PSC |
| * Gender mainstreaming – the gender analysis is superficial – include in-depth analysis and mainstreaming
 | PMU |
| * Provide facilities/amenities and IT connectivity in the NPs Hqs –WASH – inexpensive, complemented with a culture of maintenance
 | EWCA supported by PSC |
| * Improve facilities and infrastructure development within and around the park such as increasing road network, improving transport services, lodges, social infrastructures like safe water, irrigation facilities, livestock veterinary services, schools to improve the effectiveness of the patrolling activities and make the PAs more accessible and attractive to tourists
 | EWCA supported by PSC |

# List of Annexes

Annex 1: MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)

Annex 2: MTR Inception Report – available as a separate document, on request

Annex 3: Schedule of Travel and meetings

Annex 4: Names of individuals consulted during the MTR

Annex 5: List of Documents reviewed

Annex 6: Signed Ethics Form

Annex 7: Maps of the Project Areas

Annex 8: Theory of Change Diagram

Annex 9: Updated Stakeholders and Partnerships Tables

Annex 10: Detailed analysis of project achievements per Prodoc Indicators

*Annexed in a separate file:* Audit trail from received comments on draft MTR report

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

1. The evaluation questions are in the MTR Inception Report.

## **Annex 1 - MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes) – available on request**

## **Annex 2: MTR Inception Report – available as a separate document, on request**

## **Annex 3 Schedule of Travel and meetings**

Work Plan for the MTR Protected Area Management & Illegal Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Ethiopia

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  Activity  | Location  | **Date**  |  | **Remark**  |
| Travel and arrival to Jinka | Jinka  | 21-Oct-20 | Wed | Accommodation to be reserved by the project office to Tesfaye and Veronika  |
| Travel to Omo PA and start the work starting from 2PM |   | 22-Oct-20 | Thursday | KII and FGD with local government, project staff and community, field observation   |
| Field work in Omo PA (to be continued)Travel back to Jinka | Omo PA/ Jinka | 23-Oct-20 | Friday | KII and FGD with local government, project staff and community, field observation  Spend the night in Jinka  |
| Travel to Mago PA and start the work starting from 10AmTravel back to Jinka |  Mago PA/Jinka | 24-Oct-20 | Saturday | KII and FGD with local government, project staff and community, field observation   KII/FGD with zone government stakeholders and spend the night in Jinka |
| Arrival to Wolita town  |  Wolyita  | 25-Oct-20 | Sunday |  Spend the night in Wolita town  |
| Travel to CC PA/Arrival to Tercha | Tercha  | 26-Oct-20 | Monday |  KII/FGD with project staff and spend the night in Chebera town |
| Arrival to CC PA and start the work  |  CC PA  | 27-Oct-20 | Tuesday |  KII and FGD with local government, project staff and community, field observation   |
|  Travel to Jimma town  |  Jimma  | 28-Oct-20 | Wed |  Spend the night in Jimma town  |
|  Travel to Addis Ababa  |  AA | 29-Oct-20 | Thursday |  Arrival in Addis Ababa  |
| Field work in Addis Ababa | AA | 30/31stOct-Nov 1, 20 | Fri-Sunday | KII and FGD with local government, project staff and community, observation of wildlife product warehouse, and wildlife rescue center |
| Summarizing key findings and debriefing meeting on the preliminary findings of the MTE with EWCA and UNDP |  AA | Nov 3 -20 | Tuesday  |   |
| Report  |  | November 30th 20 |  |  |

**Note:** KII and FGD participants includes the representatives of communities including women and youths, and cooperatives living around the PA, scouts, government stakeholders from Kebele to federal levels, tour guides and tourists (if available), committees/units established or strengthened because of the action, private sector actors including Sugar development cooperation and Gilgel Gibe dam administration,

**Observation**- warehouses of wildlife products both by the project and policy stations; any infrastructure developed by the action; Conservation physical structures; wildlife;

## **Annex 4: Names of individuals consulted during the MTR**

## **Annex 5: List of Documents reviewed – coming**

## **Annex 6: Signed Ethics Form and MTR Clearance Form**

**MTR Consultant Agreement Form**

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

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

Name of Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_Veronica Nyawira Muthui \_\_\_\_

Signed at *Leverkusen, Germany,* on 30th Nov 2020 

Name of Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_Tesfaye Yimer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 

Signed at Addis Ababa Ethiopia on 30th Nov 2020

**I also approve this MTR report**

1. Veronica Muthui, signed at Leverkusen on 30th Nov 2020 
2. Tesfaye Yimer , signed at Addis Ababa Ethiopia on 30th Nov 2020 

## **Annex 7: Maps of the Project Areas**



## **Annex 8: Theory of Change Diagram**



Prodoc Figure 1. Threats, root causes and barriers to effectively address poaching, IWT and unsustainable natural resources consumption in Ethiopia and suggested UNDP/GEF strategies

## **Annex 9: Updated Stakeholders and Partnerships Tables**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Anticipated at project design** | **Reality at MTR** |
| **Project/Programme** | **Synergies and/or relationship with project** | **Collaboration/synergies at MTR** | **Impact on project at MTR** | **Recommendation for the rest of the project duration** |
| CRGE, Government of Ethiopia Policy – the CRGE is one of the principal development policies for the country. It recognises that following a conventional development path results in “unsustainable use of natural resources”. It recognises i) the role that agro-biodiversity (both crops and livestock) play in food security, and ii) the role of biodiversity for its economic and ecosystem services. | The CRGE provides the springboard and framework for this project. Thus, the project has been designed to fit within this framework. | CRGE is being implemented in Ethiopia and mainstreamed in a number of institutions including EWCA | The project contributed in the safeguarding of ecosystems through effective conservation measures in component one and also started agro biodiversity conservation practices in project sites in component three | More synergy and intervention is required to ensure implementation of CRGE projects to work in the project sites |
| On-going UNDP-GEF projects: Mainstreaming Incentives for Biodiversity Conservation in the Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy, and Mainstreaming Agro-biodiversity into the Agricultural Production System of Ethiopia | There are synergies between the project and these other on-going projects and the project managers will meet regularly to ensure that there is a good exchange of information, best practices and lessons. | There are on-going GEF-UNDP projects targeting biodiversity conservation and Agricultural production systems | Experience sharing through different platforms such as the UNDP annual and biannual review meetings | The sharing of experiences need to be continued |
| KfW Biodiversity Programme – in 2013, KfW added the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources as one (of three) pillars of investment in Ethiopia. In the coming years, KfW will be focusing on protected area management and larger capital investments in protected area infrastructure. | As one of the key actors in biodiversity conservation in the country, the project will collaborate and cooperate with KfW. In order to facilitate dialogue and to foster collaboration, i) the selected PAs for this project are *not* currently receiving funding from KfW, and ii) KfW will be invited to be a member of the PB (as the representative of the donor community). Because of the synergies, GIZ’s financing of the protected areas in Ethiopia is considered as co-finance for this project. | The KfW biodiversity program is currently active and supporting protected area management in Ethiopia | Collaboration made on capacity building and awareness creation and sharing of practices on the partners’ forum within EWCA on quarterly basis | The recommendation is to continue the collaboration  |
| GIZ Protection Areas Programme – in parallel with the KfW investment in protected areas, GIZ is also investing in protected areas. The program aims to put institutions charged with the management of protected areas in a position to implement strategies, instruments and measures for the protection and sustainable management of biological diversity on a broad scale. The program will work at local, regional and national level in order to strengthen the capacities for managing selected national parks (NechiSar, Awash, Hallidegh, Borena-Saint National Parks), biosphere reserves and other protected areas and create benefit-sharing mechanisms for the population; and at regional level it will strengthen administrative structures that are responsible for the management of nine protected areas (composed of 5 national parks, two biosphere reserves and two national forest priority areas). | Synergies, coordination and collaboration with the GIZ programme will be assured by including their representative in the PB (as a representative of conservation actors in the country). Because of the synergies, GIZ’s financing of the protected areas in Ethiopia is considered as co-finance for this project. | GIZ protected areas program has been supporting 6 protected areas including a biosphere reserve.  | GIZ is one of the project’s partner by supporting Chebera Churchura National Park and collaborated in law enforcement activities, capacity building and development of general management plan | The GIZ projects are already phased out but there is a chance of extension with great opportunity to work together  |
| Born Free Foundation, Border Point Project – this project is designed to strengthen law enforcement and the role of the criminal Justice in IWT (funded by the UK’s DEFRA). BFF also operates in Babille Elephant Sanctuary on a conservation project that aims to halt or reduce significantly elephant poaching in the Babille Elephant Sanctuary and reduce other anthropogenic pressures at the site. | There are strong synergies between the activities of the BFF and this project: indeed, BFF could apply for implementation of some of the aspects of the project (both Component One – activities in Babille, and Component Two – IWT activities – this would ensure synergy and build on their previous activities in the area). The funding that BFF is using to implement both of these activity sets as co-finance for the proposed project. | Born Free Foundation (BFF): BFF has completed its border point project two years ago. The project in Babile Elephant Sanctuary is also stopped before a year. The rescue centre of confiscated wild animals at Holeta is still managed by BFF and the is partnering with them.  | * Collaboration of law enforcement made in Babile Elephant Sanctuary,
* The results achieved by the border point project helped this project as a spring board to work with various key stakeholders,
* The project is working with the Holeta wildlife rescue center
 | The project will collaboration with the rescue centre and with other future project supported by BFF if any  |
| FZS has been working in Ethiopia in the field of wildlife conservation and supporting protected area management since 2008 and mainly focusing in the protection of the Afro-alpine ecosystem mainly in Bale and Simien Mountain National Parks as well as the community conserved areas of Guassa-Menz and Abune Yoseph. Major activity has been capacity building and provision of logistic for effective running of the protected areas and conducting ecological monitoring of threats in the protected areas. | FZS is a partner mainly in the area of protected area management and capacity building of protected area management based on their many years of experienceworking in the country. They have available experience in this regard and as a co- financing partner to the project (Component One). If and when necessary, technical cooperation and collaboration with FZS will be sought. | FZS has continued its conservation project in the Bale mountains national park in partnership with EWCA and KfW | Experience sharing and in some cases collaboration in capacity building activities in protected area management | The sharing of experience and cooperation need to be enhanced  |
| AWF – this NGO has two programmes of interest to the project – i) a cultural tourism programme in northern Ethiopia (both for the concept and the proximity to Kafta Shiraro NP – one of the proposed project’s selected areas), ii) a “Canines for Conservation” initiative which is attempting to place sniffer dogs at Bole International Airport, and iii) working to train the law enforcement bodies such as the police and judiciary. | Both of AWF’s projects are of significance to the project and the project will have much to learn from their experiences. The PMU will seek to establish good relationships with the AWF staff in Ethiopia to foster this joint learning. | AWF is currently working in the Simien Mountains National Park in partnership with EWCA and KfW | Experience sharing and in some cases collaboration in capacity building activities in protected area management | The sharing of experience and cooperation need to be enhanced |

**The stakeholders identified during PPG phase (including their current mandate and existing roles, and potential involvement in the project)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Anticipated at project design** | **Reality at MTR** |
| **Stakeholder** | **Mandate** | **Roles & responsibility in project** | **Collaboration/synergies at MTR** | **Impact on project at MTR** | **Recommendation for the rest of the project duration** |
| FDRE Ministry ofEnvironment,Forestry andClimate Change(MoEFCC) | MOEFCC was established under proclamation 803/2013 to coordinate and ensure that the environmental objectives provided under the Constitution and the basic principles set out in the environmental policy of Ethiopia are realized. It also ensures participatory environmental management for sustainable development and governs the use of environmental resources by the present and future generations in each sector at each administrative level. It is an agency in the administrative structure of the central government for the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation of Ethiopia’s climate, environmental and forestry policies and programmes. The MoEFCC’s mandate includes coordinating national development efforts with the aim of avoiding duplication among stakeholders and promoting sustainable utilization of environmental resources | **The** MoEFCC is the Ministry in which the GEF OFP sits; as Implementing Partner, it is also the key ministry for the oversight, coordination and implementation of thisproject | MoEFCC is now named as Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission (EFCC) with similar mandates as MoEFCC. The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority is now structured under this government agency | The GEF focal point is within the commission and it is also chairing the project’s steering committee | Closer contact and cooperation is important with this government agency for more support and resource mobilization to sustain results achieved by this project |
| FDRE Ministry of Culture & Tourism | The main mission of the ministry is to study, preserve, develop and promote the cultural wealth and the national tourism attractions of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia and to build the positive images of Ethiopia with a view to adding a sustainable socio-economic and political values with popular and stakeholder’s participation. The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority is under this Ministry. | EWCA is (currently) housed in this ministry and thus falls under its mandate. | Ministry of culture and tourism is now named as the ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport. EWCA has moved out of this ministry and its current mandate is more or less similar with the previous one with the addition of sport issues | The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport is one of the stakeholders for EWCA and the project. Participation in the public awareness and promotional activities are the main impacts to mention | Cooperation activities need to be continued |
| Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation ,Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Ministry ofLivestock and Fisheries | These are other government ministries that responsibilities in different sectors that have some bearing on the project (most pertinently, agriculture – for the large-scale agricultural projects that are being carried out in the vicinity of some protected areas, natural resources and livestock) | The project will ensure contact with these key stakeholders is maintained throughout the project’s implementation and that they are consulted as necessary and included as stakeholders in all consultative forums | All the mentioned ministries are still in their position and full mandate. All of them are key partners for protected area conservation in the country. The ministry of finance is specifically allocate government budget and monitor its utilization in the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority | The ministry of finance and economic cooperation has the authority to approve the project document, approve annual work plans, monitor implementation and is also member of the project steering committee.  | Will continue in the same way as previous |
| FDRE of PoliceCommission(FPC) | The Federal Police Commission was established under proclamation no. 720/2004 based on the principles of non-partisanship, impartial service to the society, and commitment to policingethics, competence and quality of service. The mission of the Federal Police Commission is to contribute to the development and prosperity of the nation by respecting and enforcing respect of the constitution and other laws of the land, preventing crime and criminal threats and ensuring prevalence of peace and security through active participation of the people. It envisages delivery of policing services that match public satisfaction and trust in line with international standards. | Beneficiaries of Component Two. By the virtue of power vested in it by the Government of Ethiopia, the police force is entitled to prevent any crime including environmental crime. The police force will be a prime partner in the implementation of activities to counter IWT and put in place measures to counter trafficking of wildlife and their products/derivatives (Component Two). A high-ranking member of the Federal Police will also serve as a member of the Project Steering Committee. The Federal Police will also house the Environmental Crime Unit (ECU) that will be established under the project (Component Two). | The Federal Police Commission is still in its position and full mandate. This commission is the key partner of EWCA and the project with regards to law enforcement in controlling the illegal wildlife trade and trafficking to  | This commission is the member of the IWT SC and also the ECU that has been established by the project. The project has regular meetings (on quarterly basis). | More involvement of the FDRE police commission is expected to combat IWT |

## Annex 10: Detailed analysis of project achievements per Prodoc Indicators

| **Project Strategy** | **Indicator** | **Baseline Level**  | **Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)** | **MTR Target** | **EoP Project Target** | **Midterm Level & Assessment**  | **Achievement rating** | **Justification for the Rating** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Objective: To build Ethiopia’s capacity for biodiversity conservation through increased effectiveness of protected area management and implementation of measures to reduce Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and poaching | Number of international agreements on IWT control signed  | Zero  | Agreements signed with Djibouti and Somalia | One  | Four  | Five  |  | Bilateral relationship with neighboring countries on cooperation of illegal wildlife trafficking is in good progress and agreement document developed but agreement not signed due to Covid 19 pandemic travel restriction  |
| Number of legislation documents strengthened  | Baseline is current state of legislation  | Two legal documents amended and submitted for approval for the legislative organ  | Amendments drafted | Amendment(s) are in the process of approval (or approved) by the government  | Two legal documents amended and submitted for approval for the legislative organ  |  | Approval of these documents by the end of 2021 is high considering the high level of political commitment by the current PM  |
| Number of regional IWT Task forces established  | Zero  | Two (SNNPR & Somali region) | One (SNNPR)  | Two (SNNPR & Somali region)  | Two (SNNPR & Somali region)  |  | Existence of functional taskforces  |
| Presence of wildlife derivatives management system for wildlife products and live animals that are confiscated, seized and/or collecting in the field is developed | No system in place  | A database for all the confiscated raw ivories and ivory products has been developed at the headquarters. Training and preparation of a Gold Standard storage and management system completed; construction of a Gold Standard confiscated wildlife product storage started in CC NP | System in place and functioning | System in place, functioning and audited  | Implementation in good progress  |  | Training and preparation of a Gold Standard storage and management system completed; construction of a Gold Standard confiscated wildlife product storage started in CC |
| Number of local people in project areas benefiting from engagement in CBNRM (male/female)  | Zero | Identification of feasible livelihood options completed but low value grants not provided to the target end users  | 600 | 1200 | 1500 (727F) |  | Identification, training, and organising end users and business plan preparation for IGAs completed. Activities like disbursement of the Low Value Trust Fund (LVTF) and start-up of the business activities and provision of income not achieved  |
| Proportion of illegally killed elephants (total number of dead elephants in parentheses) | Omo NP: 1 (n = 1) Mago NP: 1 (n = 6) CCNP: 1 (n = 7) Babille: 1 (n = 5) Kafto Shiraro: 1 (n = 6)  | Omo NP = 0.3Mago NP = 0.8 CCNP = 0.2 Babile ES = 0.7 Kafta Sheraro NP = 0.3 | 0.5 for all target NPs | 0.2 for all target NPs | Omo NP = 0.3Mago NP = 0.8 CCNP = 0.2 Babile ES = 0.7 Kafta Sheraro NP = 0.3 |  | There are functional macro and micro level multi-stakeholder platforms. Government stakeholders and community sense of ownership on wildlife protection has improved especially in CC NP. Establishment of ECU has also a contribution for the improvement in the collaborative works and actions  |
| Number of Big Cats (specifically lions, cheetahs and leopards) seized (at project sites per unit effort )  | Omo NP: 0 Mago NP: 0 CCNP: 0 Babille: 1 (leopard) Kafto Shiraro: 0  | Omo NP: 0 Mago NP: 0 CCNP: 1 Babile ES:4 Kafta Sheraro: 0 | 300% decline from peak seizure rates | 300% decline from peak seizure rates | Omo NP: 0 Mago NP: 0 CCNP: 1 Babile ES:4 Kafta Sheraro: 0  |  | ,, |
| METT for PAs | Omo NP: 13 Mago NP: 15 CCNP: 30 Babille: 13 Kafto Shiraro: 46  | Omo NP:48; Mago NP: 54;CCNP: 60;Babile:23; Kafta Shiraro: 65 | Omo NP: 62 Mago NP: 61 CCNP: 62 Babille: 60Kafto Shiraro: 68 | Omo NP: 83 Mago NP: 84 CCNP: 81 Babille: 82 Kafto Shiraro: 84  | Omo NP: 48 Mago NP: 54 CCNP: 60 Babile: 23 Kafta Shiraro: 65 |  | The likely of organizing taskforce meetings and patrolling activities is high because of the lifting of the Covid19  |
| Outcome One: Improved protected area management effectiveness delivers enhanced protection in the targeted protected areas  | Number of PA and wildlife agency staff developed knowledge and skill on effective PA management and law enforcement (not in Prodoc) |  |  |  | 300 | 200 |  |  |
| Number of inter-agency agreement signed and implemented to fight poaching and IWT with participation of target PAs (not in Prodoc) |  |  |  | 5 | 5 |  |  |
| Number of PAs that have up-to-date management plans approved by the government and under implementation | 0 | GMPs of Kafta Sheraro, Chebera Churchura and Mago NPs completed and approved; preparation of the GMP for Omo NP and Babile Elephant Sanctuary will be finalized by the end of 2021 | 1 | 5 | 3 |  | Situation analysis done for Omo NP and GM planning workshop is planned to be organized by the end of October 2020. The preparation of GMP of Babile Elephant Sanctuary is less likely if the reported security is not improved and the demarcation of the ES site is not completed.  |
| Proportion of successful prosecutions of wildlife crimes in PAs and surrounding areas (measured annually) | Baseline data only for CCNP: Other baseline to be established in YR1 of project  | 70% | 60% | 90% | 70% |  | There are functional wildlife crime protection structures from national to local level. The two wildlife related law amendment requested are expected to be approved soon. The newly initiated ECU has also the prospect to strengthen the law enforcement  |
| Outcome two: Strengthened national and local capacity for conservation of endangered fauna and flora through implementation of anti-trafficking measures | Proportion of successful prosecutions of crimes related to wildlife trafficking at national level (measured annually) | NA | 75% | At least 60% presented and successfully  | At least 95% presented and successfully  | 75%  |  | There are functional wildlife crime protection structures from national to local level. The two wildlife related law amendment requested are expected to be approved soon. The newly initiated ECU has also the prospect to strengthen the law enforcement  |
| Capacity of government agencies on IWT control as indicated by customized UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard  | 29% | Increased by 20 %  | 39%  | 49% |  49% |  | The project target is fully achieved but there are still more capacity development needs (infrastructure, equipment, resources for the implementation of GMP, etc…) both for the NPs and stakeholders |
| Outcome three: Improved conservation of forestry and agro-biodiversity resources through a landscape approach based on community-based natural resource management | Approved landscape/ ecosystem level plans | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |  | Please see concern in relation to the effectiveness and sustainability in the narrative descriptions further below  |
| Total area covered by approved ILM plans (ha)  | 0 | 50,000 | 15,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 |  | ,, |
| Natural resource use agreements with stakeholders – including local and indigenous communities | NA | 5 | 2 | 4 | 5 |  | ,, |
| Total number/area of small sustainable businesses developed by local people – recipients of micro-credit schemes | 0 | 26 | 10 | 35 | 26 |  | Small business groups/cooperatives organized but LVTF not provided and livelihood activities not started  |
| Average percentage of household income increase of recipients of micro-credit schemes in the project areas | ND | 0% | 15% | 30% | 0% |  | Disbursement of LVTF not started, and the profitability and enough income generation of the group businesses /cooperatives depends on the comprehensiveness of the assistances like working space, equipment/furniture, raw material, market, etc… and the performance of the organized groups  |
| Area (ha) of demonstration farm(s) protecting rare and valuable genetic agro-biodiversity | 0 | 80 | 50 | 100 | 100 |  | The visited site started providing demonstration service to the community but how to sustain the management of the site after the phasing out of the project is not clear  |
| Number of new value chains for agro biodiversity and forest products are used by local communities to generate sustainable income | 0 |  |  | 3 | 3 |  |  |
| Microcredit funds released for CBNRM | 0 |  | 300,000 | 600,000 | 0 |  | Disbursement of LVTF not started  |
| Outcome four: Lessons learned by the project through participatory M&E, including gender mainstreaming, are used to fight poaching and IWT, and promote community-based conservation nationally and internationally | Number of the project lessons used in development and implementation of other conservation projects | 0 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 4 |  | Four best practices identified but scaling up and replication in non-project areas not started  |
| Number of national and international organizations that participate in the project M&E and provide feedback to the Management Team | The members of the PB | 7 | At least six  | At least ten  | 7 (more if we count members of local task forces) |  | Ongoing activity through involving project stakeholders in regular taskforce field monitoring, joint patrolling, and review meetings. The networking and joint monitoring sessions are expected to be owned and continued by the government at all levels after the phasing out of the project  |

1. Community level activities fall under Component 3 whose implementation was being mobilized at the time of the MTR. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UNDP Project Document. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The gender analysis report does not explain the methodology used to conduct it. Neither does it provide the places visited or people who provided the information. It does not differentiate, in adequate detail, the differences in gender relations in the different communities (tribes) surrounding the NPs. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The 2019 gender mainstreaming strategy makes no reference to the one formulated during the project preparation process. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Source: KII with the NP management [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://tradingeconomics.com/ethiopia/corruption-rank> - accessed on 25th November 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)