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Terminal Evaluation Report

of the UNDP-GEF-Snow Leopard Trust (SLT) Project:

“Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation”

GEF Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	
Implementing Partner: Snow Leopard Trust (SLT)	
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Region & Country: Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan Kazakhstan, Tajikistan	Evaluation Timeline: May to August 2020
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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

APR	Annual Progress Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BD	Biodiversity
CBD	Convention in Biological Diversity
CDR	Combined Delivery Report (Atlas report)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EU	European Union
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GSLEP	Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Program
GTI	Global Tiger Initiative
GTF	Global Tiger Forum
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
ICSD	Intergovernmental Commission on Sustainable Development
M	Million(s)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum Of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NSLEP	National Snow Leopard and Ecosystems Priorities
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PA	Protected Area
PAWS	Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards
PB	Project Board
PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PPR	Principal Project Representative
PTC	Project Technical Committee
RPC	Regional Project Coordinator
SBAA	Standard Basic Assistance Agreement
SLT	Snow Leopard Trust
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USD	United States Dollar

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DISCLAIMER

This report is the work of an independent Evaluator and does not necessarily represent the views, or policies, or intentions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), of the SLT, and/or of the Governments of Central Asian Countries.

1. Main Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons¹

1.1. Background - Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the UNDP-supported-GEF-financed-Snow Leopard Trust (SLT)-executed Project: “*Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation*”. This TE was performed by an Evaluator - Mr. Jean-Joseph Bellamy - on behalf of UNDP.

Table 1: Project Information Table

Project Title:	<i>Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation</i>		
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5413	PIF Approval Date:	June 12, 2014
GEF Project ID:	5886	CEO Endorsement Date:	June 22, 2016
Atlas Project ID:	00102964	Project Document (ProDoc) Signature Date (date project began):	February 7, 2017
Country:	Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan Kazakhstan, Tajikistan	Date Project Manager hired:	August 2017
Region:	Central Asia	Inception Workshop date:	December 8, 2017
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Midterm Review date:	N/A
GEF-5 Strategic Program:	BD-1 and BD-2	Planned closing date:	December 31, 2019
Trust Fund:	GEF-5	If revised, proposed closing date:	December 31, 2020
Executing Agency:	Department of the Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Environment, Trade, Labor and Tourism		
Project Financing	at CEO endorsement (USD)	at Completion (USD)	
(1) GEF Grant	1,000,000	1,000,000	
(2) UNDP	400,000	?	
(3) SLT	600,000	?	
(4) Government of Kyrgyzstan	900,000	?	
(5) Government of Tajikistan	700,000	?	
(6) Other Partners	1,596,000	?	
(7) Total co-financing [2 to 6]	4,196,000	?	
Project Total Cost [1+7]:	5,196,000	?	

The snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*) is an apex predator and global flagship species that has an extremely large habitat range inhabiting mountain ecosystems spanning 12 countries and around 1.8 million km² across central and south Asia. Population size is estimated to be between 3,500 to 7,000 individuals in the wild and it is classified as Endangered in the IUCN Red List. Populations in Central Asia are estimated to be: 100-110 in Kazakhstan; 300-350 in Kyrgyzstan; 180-220 in Tajikistan; and 30-45 in Uzbekistan. It is a culturally, ecologically, and economically an important symbol of healthy high-mountain ecosystems.

The snow leopard's mountain ecosystems are characterized by high, rugged steep terrain dissected by cliffs, ridges, and gullies and dominated by shrubs and grasses. This habitat is cold, dry, and harsh, and only parts of this habitat can support snow leopards. Though these mountain ecosystems in Central and South Asia are sparsely populated, they also contribute to human wellbeing; they support a wide range of ecosystem services such as water provision, grazing for livestock, mineral resources, medicinal supplies and products, cultural traditions and spiritual values, and inspiration for tourism and recreation.

Snow leopards are protected by national laws in all 12 countries - including the target Central Asian countries. All range countries have promulgated various laws designed to accord protection to biodiversity and areas of

¹ Conclusions and Recommendations are in Chapter 1 with a brief background section. It is structured as an Executive Summary but also a stand-alone section presenting the highlights of this final evaluation. It could be easily printed out separately for wider distribution. If translation is available, it is proposed to translate this chapter and include the translation version in this report.

high biodiversity conservation value in the form of protected areas. Central Asian countries have relatively strong legislation to protect snow leopard and its habitats. Snow leopard conservation is also the responsibility of key institutions. In Kazakhstan, the key government organization responsible for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species is the Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of Agriculture.; in Kyrgyzstan, it is the State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry; in Tajikistan, it is the Committee for Environmental Protection; and in Uzbekistan, it is the State Committee for Nature Protection of Uzbekistan.

Nevertheless, snow leopards and their ecosystems are endangered and face a variety of threats that vary in intensity and prominence among the range countries. It includes prey reduction due to poaching; illegal trade and poor law enforcement due to remote landscapes; retaliatory killing by local communities occurring when their livestock are killed by snow leopards; habitat fragmentation and degradation especially due to large-scale infrastructure development; weak transboundary cooperation; limited human and financial capacity for conservation and weak conservation policies and institutions; and climate change.

While there were several initiatives that address snow leopard conservation issues in individual range countries, these efforts were not adequately coordinated particularly at the level of transboundary landscapes to ensure a systematic and effective strategy. Efforts to design and implement inter-governmental strategies and programs for conservation of snow leopards and other endangered species in transboundary areas were limited. Actual transboundary conservation programs and transboundary cooperation of enforcement agencies for protection of snow leopard and other endangered species were needed in Central Asia.

The long-term solution was to put in place an effective and coherent strategy and process for coordinating national and global efforts, sharing knowledge and monitoring impacts to secure national and transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems. However, three inter-related barriers have been impeding this long term solution from emerging:

- Absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes;
- Absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success;
- National and global snow leopard ecosystem protection programs have been drafted but are not currently funded.

The project was designed to address these barriers. Its aim is to strengthen transboundary cooperation for the conservation of snow leopards and their mountain ecosystems in the four Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). The objective of the project is *"to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia."* It is to be achieved through the delivery of three expected outcomes and 9 outputs:

- **Outcome 1:** Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems;
- **Outcome 2:** Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries;
- **Outcome 3:** Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems.

The project is supported by UNDP and GEF. It is funded by a grant from the GEF of USD 1,000,000, contributions of USD 400,000 from UNDP, USD 900,000 from the Kyrgyz government, USD 700,000 from the Tajik government, USD 600,000 from Snow Leopard Trust, and USD 1,596,000 from Other Partners. The total financing of the project is USD 5,196,000. The project was approved by GEF on June 22, 2016 and started on February 7, 2017. The project duration was 3 years, but the project was extended by 11 months to be completed by December 31, 2020. It is implemented in accordance with the UNDP-NGO implementation modality; the Executing Agency is the Snow Leopard Trust (SLT).

This TE report documents achievements of the project and includes four chapters. Chapter 1 presents the main conclusions, recommendations and lessons; chapter 2 presents an overview of the project; chapter 3 briefly describes the objective, scope, methodology, evaluation users and limitations of the evaluation; chapter 4 presents the findings of the TE; and relevant annexes are found at the back of the report.

1.2. Conclusions

Project Formulation

a) The project was well formulated, presenting a coherent *Project Results Framework*, good management arrangements, but an ambitious stakeholder involvement plan.

The project strategy is a good logic model. It detailed a clear set of planned activities, which were expected to lead to the achievement of a set of nine outputs, three outcomes and one objective. The management arrangements were well planned and adequate for the implementation of such a regional project. They provided clear roles and responsibilities for all parties including clear reporting lines of authority. The project was executed by the Snow Leopard Trust (SLT) under the UND-NGO Implementation Modality and governed by a signed *Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA)*. A PMU was set up in Bishkek to provide day-to-day management and coordination function for project activities. A Project Board was established to provide high-level guidance and oversight to the project. Additionally, a Project Technical Committee was to review the technological aspects of the project. These arrangements resulted in several “*checks and balances*” mechanisms to identify implementation issues and address them.

Regarding the planned stakeholder participation, an extensive list of project stakeholders (over 115 organizations/individuals!) was identified during the formulation phase and mechanisms were planned to engage them. However, when considering that it was a three-year project with a GEF grant of USD 1M and focusing on 4 target countries in Central Asia, the stakeholder involvement plan was too ambitious to establish a good participation, collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders in implementing project activities; which was key to ensure a good uptake of project achievements in each Central Asian countries.

b) The geographical scope of the project changed between the PIF stage and the final approved project but no documentation explaining this change was available.

The initial strategy presented in the Project Identification Form (PIF) was to support the GSLEP process and the implementation of the NSLEPs of the 12 GSLEP member countries focusing on transboundary snow leopard landscapes with the objective of strengthening the conservation of at least 4 transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems (Tian Shan, Altai, Himalayas, and Pamir). It was planned as a global project targeting the snow leopard range countries in Central Asia, East and South Asia. Then, following the full formulation of the project, this scope was reduced to a regional project stating clearly that the direct GEF funding will only go to four Central Asian countries. The overall *Project Results Framework* was kept much of the same but focusing on Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and on one pilot (instead of four) transboundary snow leopard landscape: Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan landscape. The process to develop the project took over 2.5 years (June 2014 to February 2017) and no documentation was available on this change of geographical scope.

c) This project has been part of an overall strategy to strengthen the conservation of snow leopards and their ecosystems and landscapes.

This regional project was designed in the context of the GEF-6 Programmatic Approach on Illegal Wildlife Trade. It was anticipated that the coordination of interventions to maximize opportunities for sharing lessons learned and methodologies and benefiting from inter-agency collaborations would be pursued under the GSLEP Steering Committee and its Secretariat (based in Bishkek), both created in 2015 and following the *Bishkek Declaration on Snow leopard (2013)*. The foundation of GSLEP is 12 individual National Snow Leopard and Ecosystems Priorities (NSLEPs). These NSLEPs were developed to incorporate priorities and activities to be implemented to meet national goals and, collectively, to meet the overarching global goal of conserving snow leopard population. The project was formulated within this regional context of the GSLEP initiative and its related NSLEPs, bringing needed financial resources to implement these NSLEPs in the 4 Central Asian countries. It is also part of a GEF portfolio of 5 projects to support snow leopard conservation in Central Asia representing a total GEF investment of over USD 23.5M.

Project Implementation

d) The project hired world-known experts who delivered high quality tools and instruments.

The short-term consultants who intervened in project activities were world-known specialists with high level technical expertise. SLT was able to identify and hire some of the best experts in snow leopard/wildlife conservation and in high mountain landscape management in the world. All provided excellent technical outputs and, together, the project produced a set of high quality products such as a database on illegal wildlife trade; a methodology on *Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS)* with guidelines and manuals; a manual to assess prey population; guidelines for climate smart management planning; a study on economic valuation of ecosystem services from snow leopard landscapes; etc.

e) Despite adequate planned management arrangements with “checks and balances”, they did not pan out as anticipated during the implementation.

Despite good management arrangements planned at the outset of the project and a plan to involve stakeholders, they did not work as anticipated and were not able to engage key stakeholders in Central Asian countries enough. Opportunities for stakeholders to meet have been few and far between. The PTC did not function as anticipated, and the PB met only twice in 2019, mostly to discuss the request of a no-cost time extension. The issue of a limited engagement of stakeholders has not been debated by the PB. No other particular events have been organized to engage stakeholders in project activities. It resulted in a limited national ownership which hampered the uptake of NSLEPs in each country as well as the institutionalization of several methodologies and guidelines developed by this project such as the *Climate Smart Management Planning Guidelines* and the *Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS)* methodology. The lack of meeting in 2018 and the decision not to conduct a mid-term review prevented this issue to be better recognized and acted upon.

f) The plan to measure the performance of the project was good, including a good set of indicators and targets. However, monitoring and reporting the progress of the project was too focused on activities and deliverables reached during the reporting period.

The M&E plan was a good monitoring framework to measure the performance of the project with a good mix of 11 quantitative and qualitative SMART indicators with clear targets. It is a relatively simple tool and the collection of monitoring information is much of a continuum of project activities. For instance, the project worked in developing a monitoring system to measure the snow leopard population. Once this is in place, the system itself should provide the requested time-series information to measure the population of snow leopard over time (indicator #1). It is clear that if all targets are met, the project would be a success and the four Central Asian countries would have a greater capacity – including the institutionalization of tools, guidelines and methodologies – for the conservation of snow leopard ecosystems, including transboundary landscapes.

However, the focus of monitoring and reporting progress has been much on activities conducted and project deliverables as opposed to reporting progress against the expected results. Key progress reports were quarterly narrative progress reports produced by SLT. They focused mostly on activities conducted and deliverables produced. There are well presented, and they represent a good summary of what the project has done/produced in term of activities and deliverables; but they fall short of producing information to measure the progress of the project against the set of indicators and targets.

g) The GEF grant (USD 1M) will be expended at the completion of the project with some variances against the allocated budgets per outcome.

The GEF grant financing this project will be completely expended by December 2020. However, some variances were noted when comparing budget vs. actual disbursements for each outcome. More project expenditures were expended for outcome 3 (+43%) and less on outcome 1 & 2. Financially, the project disbursed more than planned on activities to develop an effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems than to develop the capacities of key stakeholders for an effective transboundary cooperation and develop a snow leopard monitoring framework.

Project Results

h) The project has delivered high quality tools and instruments to improve the conservation of snow leopards.

The project delivered high quality outputs, consisting mostly of tools and instruments to be used by key organizations responsible for the conservation of snow leopards in Central Asian countries and other country members of GSLEP. These tools and instruments are top-notch products integrating leading-edge knowledge on snow leopard conservation; they include methodologies, manuals, guidelines, training courses, recommendations, strategies, etc. Most of these tools and instruments exist in both languages - English and Russian; there are ready for uptake by GSLEP countries.

i) Despite these high quality outputs, the project is falling short of achieving its targets.

The success of the project was much focus on what and how well the four Central Asian countries would have replicated/scaled-up these tools and instruments, institutionalized them in their appropriate organizations and developed the required capacity in using/implementing these tools and instruments including the allocation of required resources (human and financial resources). The measurement of the performance of the project was much focused on measuring the uptake of project outputs such as model systems developed and *operationalized* in at least 2 countries; *improve capacity*, i.e. of national agencies, by at least 30%; at least 2 countries *approved/adopted* common monitoring indicators/framework; etc. High quality outputs have been produced but they were mostly developed by the project with limited involvement of key organizations from target countries. It resulted in a limited ownership of these outputs in the four Central Asian countries and for the most part, these outputs are still without national-based custodian organizations. The uptake of these outputs by these countries is limited and almost no institutionalization of these outputs within key organizations in each country has taken place so far.

j) The Project has been relevant for the region and for all GSLEP member countries (12).

The timing of the project was good; it was developed in the context that snow leopards and their ecosystems are endangered throughout their range and face a variety of direct and indirect threats. Several initiatives had been addressing snow leopard conservation issues in individual range countries; however, these efforts were not adequately coordinated, particularly at the level of transboundary landscapes. The long-term solution was to put in place an effective and coherent strategy and process for coordinating efforts, sharing knowledge and monitoring impacts to secure national and transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems in the Central Asian region. However, three inter-related barriers impeding this long term solution from emerging: (1) absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes; (2) absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success; and (3) national and global snow leopard ecosystem protection programs have been drafted but are not currently funded. The project concept emerged from this context and its focus has been, since its outset, on addressing these barriers. It provided critical financial resources and expertise to address transboundary landscapes issues.

Sustainability

k) There are risks to the sustainability of project achievements.

For the most part, the sustainability strategy defined at the outset of the project relies mostly on the uptake of project achievements by key organizations in the 4 Central Asian countries. Yet, the engagement of stakeholders in project activities has been weak, resulting, so far, in a limited national ownership of project results. Today, key stakeholders in Central Asian countries, particularly Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, have a limited knowledge of what the project achieved; hence the first step would be to disseminate this knowledge and make sure these achievements are known and ready to be replicated/scaled-up. Yet sustainability of these achievements will not only be a matter of transferring these tools and instruments to the relevant organizations; it will require adequate institutional capacities and adequate human and financial resources allocated to the relevant organizations in each country. As it is well known, not an easy feat to do!

1.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this terminal evaluation, the following recommendations are suggested.

Recommendation 1: It is recommended to ensure that all tools and instruments developed with the support of the project be readily available online and in Russian language.

Issue to Address

The project has developed several high quality tools and instruments to be used by key organizations responsible for the conservation of snow leopards. So far, there is a limited uptake of these tools and instruments. However, considering that these tools and instruments are part of the response to needs from relevant organizations responsible for the conservation of snow leopards, time will come when these tools and instruments will be in demand. It is critical that they are all made available online and in Russian language. It is acknowledged that most of them are already or will be soon available in Russian language; this recommendation is to confirm the need to have them **all** translated and made available at all times in the future.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended to focus on communicating and disseminating outputs of the project during the remaining period of implementation.

Issue to Address

Several relevant tools and instruments have been developed with the support of the project and are ready to be replicated and scaled-up throughout Central Asia but also in other GSLEP countries. However, there is still little awareness about the project, and what it produced throughout Central Asian countries; particularly in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. To maximize the chance of good uptakes, it is recommended to start first with the promotion of the available tools and instruments through communications and dissemination of these knowledge products and how they can be transferred in national snow leopard conservation frameworks. It may include the organization of a regional seminar inviting representatives from public sector, civil society and private sector from Central Asian countries, focusing on the technical level; the completion of the GSLEP website as a public repository of the knowledge produced by the project; the dissemination of newsletters in Russian language throughout Central Asia countries; etc.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended to focus on the uptake of project outputs by Central Asian countries, and how they can be transferred in national snow leopard conservation frameworks.

Issue to Address

The project produced high quality tools and instruments to improve the conservation of snow leopard, but it is falling short of achieving its targets which are focus on how well the four Central Asian countries have replicated/scaled-up these tools and instruments, institutionalized them in their appropriate organizations and developed the required capacity in using/implementing these tools and instruments including the allocation of required resources (human and financial resources). It is recommended that the project made a special effort in dialoguing with representatives in the four Central Asian countries to promote these tools and instruments and help them to internalize them in their respective snow leopard conservation programmes, including the development of appropriate structures, procedures and mechanisms.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended to conduct a “tour” of Central Asian countries to disseminate tools and instruments developed with the support of the project.

Issue to Address

If the COVID-19 situation subsides and travelling to Central Asian countries is allowed, it is recommended to organize a “tour” of Central Asian countries to disseminate tools and instruments with the objective of maximizing the transfer of knowledge generated by the project to these countries and promote the regional role of GSLEP. All relevant organizations in each country should be invited to get involved/contacted through meetings, workshops or seminars as appropriate.

Recommendation 5: It is recommended to develop a “Roadmap for the Way Forward” for improving regional cooperation and collaboration among Central Asian countries; including sustaining GSLEP as a governance mechanism to coordinate the implementation of snow leopard conservation priorities.

Issue to Address

The project is ending in December 2020. It has developed some good tools and instruments but also supported/strengthened the GSLEP initiative, a regional alliance of all snow leopard range countries (12) to save the snow leopard and its mountain ecosystems. So far, there is a limited uptake of these tools and instruments by relevant organizations in Central Asian countries; yet the project is closing in a few months. It

is recommended to develop a “roadmap” to identify future directions for improving the regional cooperation and collaboration among Central Asian countries and globally; and also for sustaining GSLEP as a governance mechanism to coordinate the implementation of snow leopard conservation priorities.

Recommendation 6: It is recommended to develop a concept note for a regional approach to conserve snow leopards; particularly in transboundary landscapes and ensuring that it is endorsed by Central Asian Countries through the ICSD or other regional mechanisms.

Issue to Address

Beside this project, most existing initiatives to improve the conservation of snow leopards and their ecosystems are nationally based. It is recommended to develop a concept note for a regional approach to conserve snow leopards and strengthen the management of high mountain landscapes, particularly transboundary landscapes, under the GSLEP leadership. This concept note should be developed with full involvement of representatives from each Central Asian country and seek the support of potential funding initiatives, including GEF/World Bank under the “*Global Wildlife Program*” and the possibility to allocate/commit GEF-STAR allocations to this emerging project. Once the concept note is endorsed by GSLEP, it should be presented to the ICSD or similar regional mechanisms to gain political weight as a regional project.

1.4. Lessons Learnt

Several lessons learned are presented below. There are based on the review of project documents, interviews with key informants and analysis of the information collected for this evaluation:

- Management arrangements for a regional project need to strongly engage key national-based government entities.
- A regional project should establish clear partnership arrangements with each country/relevant organization to secure the uptake of project achievements and the replication/scaling-up in each country.
- A regional project needs to include small national-based components as incentives to increase the coordination and cooperation between all stakeholders.
- Limited ownership by national government entities at the design/formulation stage leads to limited national ownership of project results.

1.5. TE Ratings and Achievement Summary Table

Below is the rating table as requested in the TORs. It includes the required performance criteria rated as per the rating scales presented in Annex 10 of this report. Supportive information is also provided throughout this report in the respective sections.

Table 2: TE Ratings and Achievement Summary Table

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	Rating	2. IA & EA Execution	Rating
M&E design at entry	S	Quality of UNDP Implementation	MS
M&E Plan Implementation	S	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	MS
Overall quality of M&E	S	Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	MS
3. Assessment of Outcomes	Rating	4. Sustainability	Rating
Relevance	R	Financial resources	ML
Effectiveness	MS	Socio-political	L
Efficiency	MS	Institutional framework and governance	ML
Overall Project Outcome Rating	MS	Environmental	L
		Overall likelihood of sustainability	ML

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT²

1. The snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*) is an apex predator and global flagship species that has an extremely large habitat range inhabiting mountain ecosystems spanning 12 countries and around 1.8 million km² across central and south Asia. Population size is estimated to be between 3,500 to 7,000 individuals in the wild and it is classified as Endangered in the IUCN Red List. Populations in the target countries are estimated to be: 100-110 in Kazakhstan; 300-350 in Kyrgyzstan; 180-220 in Tajikistan; and 30-45 in Uzbekistan. It is a culturally, ecologically, and economically important symbol of healthy high-mountain ecosystems.
2. The snow leopard's mountain ecosystems are characterized by high, rugged steep terrain dissected by cliffs, ridges, and gullies and dominated by shrubs and grasses. At lower elevations, the terrain may be partly covered by coniferous forest. Throughout however, the habitat is cold, dry, and harsh, and only parts of this habitat can support snow leopards. Though these mountain ecosystems in Central and South Asia are sparsely populated, they also contribute to human wellbeing; they support a wide range of ecosystem services such as water provision, grazing for livestock, mineral resources, medicinal supplies and products, cultural traditions and spiritual values, and inspiration for tourism and recreation.
3. Snow leopards are protected by national laws in all of the 12 countries - including the target Central Asian countries. All range countries have promulgated various laws designed to accord protection to biodiversity and areas of high biodiversity conservation value in the form of protected areas. Central Asian countries have relatively strong legislation to protect snow leopard and its habitats. Snow leopard conservation is also the responsibility of key institutions in all 12 countries, including in the target Central Asian countries. In Kazakhstan, the key government organization responsible for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species is the Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of Agriculture. In Kyrgyzstan, the State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry is the key governmental organization responsible for snow leopard conservation. In Tajikistan, the Committee for Environmental Protection is the main governmental body responsible for protection of biodiversity, including endangered species. In Uzbekistan, the State Committee for Nature Protection of Uzbekistan is the leading governmental structure for biodiversity conservation.
4. All 12 range countries are also signatories to the Bishkek Declaration on the Conservation of Snow Leopards (2013). This Declaration launched the Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP), which aims to establish a comprehensive, collaborative range-wide effort that unites range country governments, non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, local communities, and the private sector to conserve snow leopards and their valuable high-mountain ecosystems. Under this initiative, a high level Steering Committee was established as well as a Secretariat to coordinate programme implementation.
5. Nevertheless, snow leopards and their ecosystems are endangered throughout their range and face a variety of direct and indirect threats that vary in intensity and prominence among the range countries. It includes prey reduction due to poaching; illegal trade and poor law enforcement due to remote landscapes which undermine conservation efforts; retaliatory killing by local communities sometimes occurring when their livestock are killed by snow leopards; habitat fragmentation and degradation especially due to large-scale infrastructure development; weak transboundary cooperation; limited human and financial capacity for conservation and weak conservation policies and institutions; and climate change.
6. While there were several initiatives (at national and global levels) that address snow leopard conservation issues in individual range countries, these efforts were not adequately coordinated particularly at the level of transboundary landscapes to ensure a systematic and effective strategy. Efforts to design and implement inter-governmental strategies and programs for conservation of snow leopards and other endangered species in transboundary areas were limited. Despite the existence of two transboundary agreements on environmental protection and biodiversity conservation between Central Asian countries, the value of these agreements for protection of snow leopard transboundary populations and ecosystems is low due to their very generalised nature and absence of action plans to bring these treaties to particular conservation

² Information in this section has been summarized from the project document.

actions. Actual transboundary conservation programs and transboundary cooperation of enforcement agencies for protection of snow leopard and other endangered species were needed in Central Asia.

7. Indeed, a common objective of all Central Asian countries' national action plans to protect snow leopard ecosystems is to strengthen transboundary collaboration including through the establishment of landscape-level transboundary conservation areas, the promotion of study exchanges between PAs of both adjacent and regionally linked range countries and addressing knowledge gaps through joint research and monitoring.

8. The long-term solution was to put in place an effective and coherent strategy and process for coordinating national and global efforts, knowledge sharing and monitoring impacts to secure national and transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems particularly in the Central Asian region. Such improvements would enable range countries to address these issues and accrue tangible environmental, economic and social benefits from conservation and utilization of their natural resources. However, three inter-related barriers have been impeding this long term solution from emerging:

- Absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes;
- Absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success;
- National and global snow leopard ecosystem protection programs have been drafted but are not currently funded.

9. As a response, the project was designed to address these barriers. Its aim is to strengthen transboundary cooperation for the conservation of snow leopards and their mountain ecosystems by strengthening the recently established *Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP)* and its global coordination mechanism (*GSLEP Secretariat*) thereby supporting the range countries to develop and implement their own *National Snow Leopard and Ecosystems Priorities (NSLEPs)*. The project focuses on the four Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) where it will build capacity for effective transboundary cooperation. One transboundary snow leopard landscape, the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan landscape, which is shared between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan was selected as the project's pilot landscape for testing and demonstrating innovative transboundary cooperation approaches and tools developed by the project. The objective of the project is "*to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia.*" It is to be achieved through the delivery of three expected outcomes and 9 outputs (*see more detailed about the project strategy in Annex 1*):

1. **Outcome 1:** Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems;
2. **Outcome 2:** Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries;
3. **Outcome 3:** Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems.

10. This is a project supported by UNDP and GEF. It is funded by a grant from the GEF of USD 1,000,000, contributions of USD 400,000 from UNDP, USD 900,000 from the Kyrgyz government, USD 700,000 from the Tajik government, USD 600,000 from Snow Leopard Trust, and USD 1,596,000 from Other Partners. The total financing of the project is USD 5,196,000. The project was approved by GEF on June 22, 2016; it started on February 7, 2017; the inception workshop was held in Bishkek on December 8, 2017; and the project duration was 3 years, but the project was extended by 11 months to be completed by December 31, 2020. It is implemented in accordance with the *NGO implementation modality*. The implementing partner is the Snow Leopard Trust (SLT) and the implementing entity is the GSLEP Secretariat.

3. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

11. This terminal evaluation - a requirement of UNDP and GEF procedures - has been initiated by UNDP Kyrgyzstan, the Commissioning Unit and the GEF Implementing Agency for this project. This review provides an in-depth assessment of project achievements and progress towards its objective and outcomes and recommendations for other similar UNDP-supported and GEF-financed projects in the region and worldwide.

12. This assignment has been conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic; the defining global health crisis of our time and the greatest challenge we have faced since World War Two. The virus has spread to every

continent except Antarctica and all countries are racing to slow the spread of the virus by testing and treating patients, carrying out contact tracing, limiting travel, quarantining citizens, and cancelling large gatherings such as sporting events, concerts, and schools. We are in uncharted territory. Across the world, businesses are closing, and people are losing jobs and income, with no way of knowing when normality will return. Within this context, UNDP has already been hard at work, focusing on three immediate priorities: supporting the health response including the procurement and supply of essential health products under WHO's leadership; strengthening crisis management and response; and addressing critical social and economic impacts. In the meantime, the GEF and its Partners have continued the implementation of their work programme using more online and remote communication means to conduct their business.

13. Regarding the assignment at hand, UNDP and the Government of Kyrgyzstan decided to proceed with the TE following local guidelines with regards to precautions against the spread of COVID19. The Evaluator has conducted the assignment remotely from his home in Ottawa, Canada, using communication tools as a way to minimize epidemiologic risks. He conducted his interviews using communication tools such as phone, Skype, Zoom or other appropriate means. Each interview was prepared by the Evaluator; using the Interview Protocol (*see Annex 6*) to collect evaluative evidence required by the assignment. For interviews conducted with Kyrgyz-based interviewees, the Evaluator was supported by an Interpreter/Translator, who led the interviews in the appropriate language and interpreted/translated the discussion for the Evaluator. Regarding interviews outside of Kyrgyzstan, appropriate solutions were found to conduct these interviews (*see additional remarks on conducting remote evaluations under COVID-19 in Annex 9*).

3.1. Objectives

14. The objective of this Terminal Evaluation (TE) is to promote accountability and transparency, to assess and disclose the extent of project accomplishments against the expected objective and outcomes and how they contribute to the achievements of GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits, to assess the efficiency of the project implementation modality including its management arrangements, to analyze the sustainability of activities supported by the project, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project and aid in the overall enhancement of future UNDP programming.

3.2. Scope

15. As indicated in the TORs (*see Annex 2*), the scope of this TE was to conduct an assessment of achievements of project results and the extent to which the project has successfully carried out adaptive management, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of future UNDP programming. The Evaluator framed the evaluation effort using the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as defined and explained in the *UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*. Under each of these criteria, evaluation questions were identified and compiled in an evaluation matrix (*see Annex 3*).

16. The scope of this evaluation is divided into three parts in accordance with the TORs and the *Guidance for Conducting Terminal Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*. A summary of the scope of this TE is presented below:

I. Project Design and Formulation:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions;
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results;
- Review the project's objectives and outcomes/components and how feasible they can be reached within the project's time frame;
- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe indicators and targets;
- Review how the project addresses country priorities;
- Review country ownership;
- Review management arrangements and decision-making processes;
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design;

- Assess how gender aspects are integrated into the project design;
- Review UNDP comparative advantage;
- Review linkages between the project and other interventions within the sector.

II. Project Implementation

- Review how adaptive management was implemented during the implementation of the project;
- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the project document;
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s);
- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation;
- Review how Results-Based Management is being implemented;
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool.
- Consider the financial management of the project, including cost-effectiveness;
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions;
- Review the decision making processes to align financing priorities and annual work plans?
- Review the monitoring tools currently being used and the project progress reporting function as well as the feedback loop for adaptive management;
- Review project partnerships arrangements;
- Review stakeholder's participation and country-driven project implementation processes;
- Review project communications;

III. Project Results

- Review the progress made against the logframe indicators and the end-of-project targets;
- Assess the stakeholders' ownership of project achievements;
- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed at the time of TE;
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective;
- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date;
- Assess risks to sustainability in term of financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks.
- Review and possibly identify ways in which the project can further expand its achievements;

3.3. Methodology

17. The methodology that was used to conduct this TE complies with international criteria and professional norms and standards; including the norms and standards adopted by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the *Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*.

3.3.1. Overall Approach

18. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF and as reflected in the UNDP “*Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*”, and the UNEG Standards and Norms for Evaluation in the UN System. The evaluation was undertaken in-line with GEF principles which are: *independence, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethical, partnership, competencies/capacities, credibility and utility*. The process promoted accountability for the achievement of project objective and outcomes and promoted learning, feedback and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its Partners.

19. The evaluation adopted a *Utilization Focused Evaluation (UFE)* approach, which was predicated on maximizing the practical value of the evaluation to project stakeholders. The TE was planned and conducted in ways that enhanced the likely utilization of both the findings and of the process itself to inform decisions and improve performance of the project. Using this approach, the Evaluator did not make decisions independently of the intended users, but he rather facilitated decision-making amongst the people who will use the findings of the terminal evaluation.

20. The Evaluator developed evaluation tools in accordance with UNDP and GEF policies and guidelines to ensure an effective project evaluation. The evaluation was conducted, and findings were structured around six major evaluation criteria; which are also the six recently revised internationally accepted evaluation criteria set out by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)³. There are:

- *Relevance* is the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.
- *Coherence* is the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.
- *Effectiveness* is the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.
- *Efficiency* is the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.
- *Impacts* is the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.
- *Sustainability* is the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.

21. In addition to the UNDP and GEF guidance for evaluating projects, the Evaluator applied to this mandate his knowledge of evaluation methodologies and approaches and his expertise in environmental management, including the application of multilateral environmental agreements in national environmental frameworks. He also applied several methodological principles such as (i) *Validity of information*: multiple measures and sources were sought out to ensure that the results are accurate and valid; (ii) *Integrity*: Any issue with respect to conflict of interest, lack of professional conduct or misrepresentation were immediately referred to the client; and (iii) *Respect and anonymity*: All participants had the right to provide information in confidence.

22. The evaluation was conducted following a set of steps presented in the table below:

Table 3: Steps Used to Conduct the Evaluation

I. Review Documents and Prepare Inception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Start-up teleconference/finalize assignment work plan ▪ Collect and review project documents ▪ Draft and submit Inception Report ▪ Prepare interview schedule 	III. Analyze Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-depth analysis and interpretation of data collected ▪ Follow-up interviews (where necessary) ▪ Draft and submit draft evaluation report
II. Collect Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual Interviews with key Stakeholders ▪ Further collect project related documents ▪ Debriefings / Presentation of key findings 	IV. Finalize Evaluation Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Circulate draft report to UNDP-GEF, SLT, and relevant stakeholders ▪ Integrate comments and submit final Evaluation Report

23. Finally, the Evaluator signed and applied the “*Code of Conduct*” for Evaluation Consultants (*see Annex 4*). The Evaluator conducts evaluation activities, which are *independent*, *impartial* and *rigorous*. This TE clearly contributed to learning and accountability and the Evaluator has personal and professional integrity and was guided by *propriety* in the conduct of his business.

3.3.2. Evaluation Instruments

24. The evaluation provides evidence-based information that is *credible*, *reliable* and *useful*. Information was mined from project documents, as secondary information, and as primary information obtained through data-gathering activities conducted for this evaluation; most prominently key informant interviews. Using several evaluation tools and gathering information from different types of stakeholders at different levels of

³ OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation, *Better Criteria for Better Evaluation : Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use*

management, the information collected was triangulated⁴ through the concept of “multiple lines of evidence” to validate findings. To conduct this evaluation the following evaluation instruments were used:

Evaluation Matrix: An evaluation matrix was developed based on the evaluation scope presented in the TORs, the project log-frame and the review of key project documents (*see Annex 3*). This matrix is structured along the six evaluation criteria and includes all evaluation questions; including the scope presented in the guidance. The matrix provides overall directions for the evaluation and was used as a basis for interviewing people and reviewing project documents.

Documentation Review: The Evaluator conducted a documentation review from Canada (home office). In addition to be a main source of information, documents were also used as preparation for interviewing Stakeholders. A list of documents was identified during the start-up phase and further searches were done through the web and contacts. The list of documents to be reviewed were completed once the data collection phase was concluded (*see Annex 5*).

Interview Protocol: Based on the evaluation matrix, an interview protocol was developed (*see Annex 6*) to solicit information from stakeholders. As part of the participatory approach, the Evaluator ensured that all parties viewed this tool as balanced, unbiased, and structured.

List of Stakeholders to be Interviewed: A list of Stakeholders to be interviewed was constituted during the preparatory phase of this TE (*see Annex 7*). This list was reviewed to ensure that it represents all project Stakeholders. As the assignment progressed forward, additional stakeholders have been identified to be interviewed. On this basis, dates and time slots for interviews were planned in advance with the objective of ensuring a broad scan of Stakeholders’ views during the data collection phase.

Key Informant Interviews: Stakeholders were interviewed, ensuring that a proper balance of men and women were selected (*see Annex 7*). The semi-structured interviews were conducted using the interview protocol adapted for each interview. All interviews were conducted remotely using phone, Skype, Zoom or other communication platforms with some follow up using emails when needed. Confidentiality was guaranteed to the interviewees and the findings were incorporated in the final evaluation report.

Achievement Rating: The Evaluator rated project achievements using the “TE Ratings” guidance provided in the TORs. It included a six point rating scale to measure progress towards results and project implementation and adaptive management and a four point rating scale for sustainability (*see Annex 10*).

25. This terminal evaluation report documents the achievements of the project; it includes 4 chapters. Chapter 1 presents the main conclusions, recommendations, lessons learned and ratings; chapter 2 presents an overview of the project; chapter 3 briefly describes the objective, scope, methodology, and limitations of the evaluation; and chapter 4 presents the findings of the evaluation. Relevant annexes are found at the back end of the report.

3.4. Limitations and Constraints

26. The approach for this terminal evaluation is based on a planned level of effort of 20 days. It comprises an effort of 8 days to collect evaluative evidence through documents and interviews of stakeholders. Within the context of these resources, the Evaluator was able to conduct a detailed assessment of actual results against expected results and successfully ascertains whether the project has met its main objective - as laid down in the project document - and whether the project initiatives are, or are likely to be, sustainable after completion of the project. The Evaluator also made recommendations for any necessary corrections and adjustments to the overall project work plan and timetable for reinforcing the long-term sustainability of project achievements.

27. Due to COVID-19, this TE has been conducted remotely. Interviews were conducted online through videos when possible or audio when the internet bandwidth was limited. Despite that it is not as efficient as face-to-face interviews, the Evaluator was able to collect evaluative evidence and triangulate the collected information to ascertain how well the project has met its expected targets.

⁴ **Triangulation:** The use of three or more theories, sources or types of information to verify and substantiate an assessment. By combining multiple data sources, methods, analyses or theories, evaluators seek to overcome the bias that inevitably comes from single informants, single methods, single observations or single theories. (DFID, *Guidance on Evaluation and Review for DFID Staff*, London. 2005)

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS

28. This section presents the findings of this TE adhering to the basic structure proposed in the TORs and as reflected in the UNDP project evaluation guidance.

4.1. Project Formulation

29. This section discusses the assessment of the formulation of the project, its overall design and strategy in the context of Central Asia.

4.1.1. Analysis of Project Results Framework

30. The *Strategic Results Framework* identified during the design phase of this project presents a good and clear set of expected results. No changes were made to the *Strategic Results Framework* during the inception phase. The review of the objective and outcomes indicates a good logical “chain of results” – Activities → Outputs → Outcomes → Objective. Project resources have been used to implement planned activities to reach a set of expected outputs (9), which contributed in achieving a set of expected outcomes (3), which together contributed in achieving the overall objective of the project. This *Strategic Results Framework* also includes - for the objective and each outcome - a set of indicators with baseline and target values to be achieved by the end of the project. These indicators and targets have been used to monitor the performance of the project.

31. The project was developed in the context that snow leopards and their ecosystems are endangered throughout their range and face a variety of direct and indirect threats that vary in intensity and prominence among the range countries. While there were several initiatives (at national and global levels) that address snow leopard conservation issues in individual range countries, these efforts were not adequately coordinated particularly at the level of transboundary landscapes to ensure a systematic and effective strategy. Efforts to design and implement inter-governmental strategies and programs for conservation of snow leopards and other endangered species in transboundary areas were limited. Transboundary cooperation of enforcement agencies for protection of snow leopard and other endangered species were needed in Central Asia. The long-term solution was to put in place an effective and coherent strategy and process for coordinating national and global efforts, knowledge sharing and monitoring impacts to secure national and transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems in the Central Asian region. However, three inter-related barriers have been impeding this long term solution from emerging: (1) absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes; (2) absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success; and (3) national and global snow leopard ecosystem protection programs have been drafted but are not currently funded. As a response, the project was designed to address these barriers.

32. The logic model of the project presented in the *Strategic Results Framework* is summarized in table 4 below. It includes one objective, three outcomes and nine outputs. For each expected outcome and the objective, targets to be achieved at the end of the project were identified.

Table 4: Project Logic Model

Expected Results	Targets at End of Project
Project Objective: To strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes that ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus in Central Asia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No decline (in SL population) from baseline: Kazakhstan: 100-110; Kyrgyz Republic: 300-350; Tajikistan: 180-220; Uzbekistan: 30-45• 1 Transboundary Snow leopard landscapes with active conservation/ cooperation programme• Reduction in poaching and maintain zero cases of retaliatory killing of snow leopards• Habitat loss reduced and quality snow leopard habitat maintained
Outcome 1 - Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Toolkit available through on-line platform• Model systems (SL crime enforcement) developed and operationalised in at least 2 countries

Expected Results	Targets at End of Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Output 1.1: Tools, methods and guidelines for effective transboundary cooperation developed, tested and made available to stakeholders ● Output 1.2: Training materials and methods developed and disseminated, including through an on-line platform ● Output 1.3: Effective enforcement mechanisms developed and introduced to enforcement agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved capacity indicated by an increase of at least 30% over baseline (i.e. a (Capacity Scorecard) score of 30 = 31%)
<p>Outcome 2 - Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Output 2.1: Common monitoring indicators and methods for snow leopard landscapes and populations developed, tested and disseminated ● Output 2.2: Spatial database for monitoring and management of one transboundary landscape is developed ● Output 2.3: Sustainable landscape management measures are identified and presented to stakeholders for implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At least 2 (Countries using approved/adopted common monitoring indicators/framework) ● 1 (transboundary snow leopard landscapes with sustainable management measures agreed to reduce key threats) ● 20% (baseline 0 women in the pilot landscape directly benefiting from new sustainable management measures - Kyrgyz part) ● 2% (baseline 0 women in the pilot landscape directly benefiting from new sustainable management measures - Kazakhstan part)
<p>Outcome 3 - Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Output 3.1: Global coordination mechanism for technical support, resource development and knowledge-sharing is strengthened ● Output 3.2: Global and national tools for financing snow leopard ecosystem conservation developed, piloted and shared ● Output 3.3: Private sector dialogue platforms established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 20% increase on the baseline score ● 25-30% increase on the baseline (Level of financing for GSLEP Secretariat and at least 2 national programmes (NSLEPs)) (at least 5% of which from private sector) - Baseline: GSLEP Secretariat: \$93,300 p.a.; Kazakhstan: \$123,857 p.a.; Kyrgyzstan: \$252,857 p.a.; Tajikistan: \$34,286 p.a.; Uzbekistan: \$107,000 p.a

Source: Project Document.

33. The review of the *Project Results Framework* and the overall strategy detailed in the project document when compared with the initial strategy presented in the Project Identification Form (PIF) reveals a key difference in the overall strategy of the project. The intention of the project detailed in the PIF was that “*the project was designed in line with the needs and gaps identified under a multi-stakeholder process in developing the GSLEP, and to stimulate the implementation of the individual NSLEPs with particular focus on transboundary snow leopard landscapes.*” The project was to strengthen the conservation of snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems in “*at least 4 transboundary landscapes (Tian Shan, Altai, Himalayas, and Pamir).*” In the final project document, which became the guiding tool for implementing the project, the focus was less on all GSLEP countries (12) and more on a smaller geographical reach stating that the “*direct GEF funding will only go to these four Central Asian countries.*” The overall strategy is much similar in term of expected outcomes, but the focus was reduced to the four Central Asian counties (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan). The emphasis on Central Asian countries was added throughout the project document and instead of focusing on 4 transboundary landscapes, only one pilot snow leopard transboundary landscape was selected: the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan pilot landscape.

34. The change of this geographical scope is documented in the “*GEF Secretariat Review of the Project.*” At the PIF review stage, the GEF Secretariat commented on this project as a global project: “*The snow leopard range countries in Central Asia, East and South Asia area all eligible for GEF BD finance.*” However, the review done at the CEO endorsement stage commented that following discussions during the development of the project, it was “*now a regional project, focused in the four countries of Central Asia.*” Furthermore, a comment was added in the review-sheet to “*Please revise the project objective and clarify this project is focused on Central Asia region.*” The Evaluator was not able to find out the rationale for this change of scope but it was visibly the result of negotiations, which took a long time to be finalized. The PIF was approved on June 12, 2014 and the project document was only approved by the GEF on February 7, 2017; over 2.5 years later.

35. During the project inception phase, the focus detailed in the project document was reviewed and confirmed. The project was to address “*drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia.*” Furthermore, “*the project will specifically target four Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz*

Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), with approaches being piloted in one transboundary snow leopard landscape: the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan landscape (39,500 km²) which is shared between the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan.” It was anticipated that “the project will achieve its objective by gathering, developing and making available best practices to support transboundary actions for snow leopard ecosystem conservation, establishing a common monitoring framework and strengthening global coordination mechanisms.” Finally, it was also anticipated that the results would be relevant for the four countries of Central Asia but also for all 12 snow leopard range countries.

36. The overall project – its rationale, its strategy, its proposed management structure – as detailed in the project document was reviewed during an inception workshop held on December 8, 2017 in Bishkek. No changes were made to the strategy and Stakeholders reconfirmed the relevance of this project to address existing barriers and contribute to the long-term solution to put in place an effective and coherent strategy and process for coordinating national and global efforts, sharing knowledge and monitoring impacts to secure national and transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems in the Central Asian region.

37. Given this change of scope, the detailed review of the project formulation conducted for this evaluation revealed a project strategy with a good logic model. It presented a clear set of planned activities, which were expected to lead to the achievement of a set of expected results (*see Annex 1*). It is also part of a strategy to support Central Asian countries to conserve their snow leopard landscapes with this project focusing more specifically on transboundary landscapes.

4.1.2. Assumptions and Risks

38. Risks and mitigations measures were identified during the formulation phase of the project and presented in the project document as well as entered into the UNDP-Atlas system. There are presented in the table below.

Table 5: List of Risks and Mitigation Measures Identified at the Formulation Phase

Project Risks	Rating	Mitigations
1. Methodological outputs of the project will not be adopted at national level	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will develop methodologies based on global best practice and will follow the recommendations of the Bishkek Declaration. Methodologies will be developed in full consultation with government and international experts. Special capacity building campaign will be implemented to support outreach of the tools developed. The methodological frameworks will be adjusted to be compatible with existing national monitoring and planning standards.
2. The period of the project may be too short to result in improvements in transboundary cooperation including securing of required financing	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project should develop a sustainable exit plan with GSLEP (which will live on after the project) to ensure that the tools and approaches developed will continue to be embedded and applied by the range countries. The project will include an active program of dissemination of the project outputs, including capacity building and development of sustainable financing. The focus of Component 3 on strengthening the operations and sustainability of the GSLEP Secretariat will ensure continued investment beyond the end of project.
3. The project resources are too limited when compare to the ambitious objective	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the involvement of collaborating partners for providing additional financing during implementation. In particular the project will interact seamlessly with related national GEF financed and other initiatives which will deliver on the ground implementation.
4. Climate change may exacerbate the existing threats while also directly impacting the fragile snow leopard ecosystem thereby adversely affecting conservation dividends achieved by the project in the long term	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With climate change, snow leopard ecosystems are expected to be impacted in different ways including altitudinal changes, habitat and prey species distributional changes, etc. These impacts have a potential to shift, shrink, and fragment snow leopard ecosystems and change practices of local communities. The project's approach of moving away from a PA centric approach to secure transboundary snow leopard landscapes will provide a framework for habitat connectivity and for integration of PAs within a sustainably managed production landscape.

Project Risks	Rating	Mitigations
5. Limited capacity within Wildlife agencies in the concerned range countries may limit or delay project implementation and / or completion	Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is primarily about capacity building and providing tools to assist these agencies. One of the primary strategies of the project is to enhance staff and institutional capacities by building on existing capacities and related initiatives such as the leadership development previously led by the World Bank Institute. In addition, the project will engage relevant staff and institutions in all relevant activities, for example in the mapping of transboundary landscapes, compilation and analysis of best practices on sustainable management of land and natural resources in transboundary landscapes, tackling wildlife crime, etc.
6. Disagreements among range countries on focussing actions on the Tian Shan transboundary landscape may delay delivery of related outputs	Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the GSLEP's action plan to advance the implementation of the programme, 23 landscapes including transboundary ones have already been identified and approved by the Steering Committee, including 4 in Central Asian countries. The Sarychat / Northern Tian Shan is an important transboundary landscape that has been identified through these processes (see Appendix 4). These discussions have been conducted in a fully consultative way with decisions made on a consensus basis. Criteria for the selection of the project pilot landscape were developed and have been followed. The State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry in the Kyrgyz Republic has confirmed the selection of the proposed pilot landscape, and other stakeholders had no objections about selected area.

Source: Project Document.

39. The review indicates that these six (6) risks are essentially covering all risks linked to the implementation of the project. It includes the risks that the methodological outputs may not be adopted by the recipient countries; that the project resources and timeline be too limited; that the limited capacity of national wildlife agencies may delay the implementation of project activities; and that disagreements among target countries may delay the delivery of project outputs. It also includes the climate change risk as an externality to the project and which may exacerbate the existing threats impacting the snow leopard ecosystems.

40. The UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) applied during the project formulation did not identify any significant environmental or social risks associated with the proposed project. It was anticipated that the project would contribute positively towards conserving ecosystem quality in the critical mountain ecosystems inhabited by snow leopards, which in return would ensure that important ecosystem services provided by these landscapes are maintained to the benefit of people and biodiversity.

41. In addition, key assumptions were made at the formulation stage of the project. It was recognized that in order to ensure the stability of the global snow leopard population, there is a need to strengthen capacities of target countries for transboundary conservation of snow leopards and to address the drivers of existing and emerging threats to snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes. To develop these capacities, target countries need to have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools (including a common monitoring framework), and strong global coordination mechanisms for transboundary cooperation, including available sustainable financing. Moreover, additional detailed assumptions were made in the *Strategic Results Framework (SRF)* as part of the mitigation measures to manage each risk. These assumptions were reviewed during the inception phase and no change were made.

42. As the executing agency of the project, SLT underwent a *CSO Capacity Assessment* in April 2016. The objective of this assessment was to review the capacity and risk assessments of SLT to ensure that it has the technical and administrative capacity to assume the responsibility for mobilizing and applying effectively the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs of the project. This assessment included two main areas and seven sub-areas: Part 1. Assessing CSO Commitment to the UNDP Principles of Participatory Human Development and Democratic Governance (Legal status and history; Mandate, policies and governance; Constituency and external support); and Part 2. Assessing CSO Capacity for Project Management (Technical capacity; Managerial capacity; Administrative capacity; Financial capacity). The result of the assessment was “Satisfactory” for six elements and “Moderately Satisfactory” for Management Capacity.

43. The Evaluator noted that risk management was not specifically mentioned as a management function in the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA); though the project document – which SLT was to implement - contains a review of project risks and how risks should be mitigated. Furthermore, during the implementation

of the project, risks identified during the formulation of the project were not specifically reported in progress reports. Risks were assessed properly during the formulation of the project; however, as it will be discussed in subsequent sections of this report, some of these risks should have been monitored closer and used as a project management tool to assess the progress made (or in some cases the lack of progress made). One example is the fact that the project has had little impact in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. A regular review of this related risks could have help to identify the issues and find solutions to address them.

4.1.3. Linkages between the Project and Other Interventions

44. This regional project was designed in the context of the GEF-6 Programmatic Approach on Illegal Wildlife Trade as proposed to be delivered through the “*Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development*.” It was anticipated that the coordination of interventions would be pursued both at governance level through the GTI Council and the GSLEP Steering Committee, and at technical level through the GSLEP Secretariat to maximize opportunities for sharing lessons learned and methodologies and benefiting from inter-agency collaborations.

45. The GTI Council was re-structured in 2015 - following the World Bank decision to stop supporting the GTI Secretariat - with two arms for implementation: The Global Tiger Forum (GTF) for tigers based in Delhi, and the Global Snow Leopard Environmental Program (GSLEP) for snow leopards based in Bishkek. These initiatives - uniting 20 governments and their partners in high-profile collective action to conserve these predators and their landscapes - are based on 2 political declarations: The St. Petersburg Declarations on Tiger Conservation (2010) and the Bishkek Declarations on Snow leopard (2013). The key roles of the GTI Council include generating political will and advocating for conservation; coordinating global support to the programs; mobilizing resources; enabling convergence and connectivity; and building alliances.

46. The Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP), is an alliance of all snow leopard range countries (12), non-governmental organizations, multi-lateral institutions, scientists and local communities, united by one goal: saving the snow leopard and its mountain ecosystems. In March 2015, key decisions were taken to establish the GSLEP governance and institutional mechanisms. It included the creation of an Inter-Ministerial GSLEP Steering Committee comprising representatives of all range countries (12); and the establishment of a GSLEP Secretariat based in Bishkek and responsible for supporting the implementation of NSLEPs.

47. GSLEP seeks to address high-mountain development issues using the conservation of the charismatic and endangered snow leopard as a flagship. It has identified a total of 24 landscapes to be secured for snow leopards across the cats’ range with the goal of protecting 20 of these 24 landscapes by 2020. Secure snow leopard landscapes are defined as those that contain at least 100 breeding age snow leopards conserved with the involvement of local communities, support adequate and secure prey populations, and have functional connectivity to other snow leopard landscapes, some of which cross international boundaries.

48. The foundation of GSLEP is 12 individual National Snow Leopard and Ecosystems Priorities (NSLEPs). These NSLEPs were developed to incorporate priorities and activities to be implemented to meet national goals and, collectively, to meet the overarching global goal of conserving snow leopard population. Range countries have been supported by international organizations to develop these NSLEPs through five areas addressing particular issues transcending national boundaries and going beyond the capacity of any one country. They included wildlife law enforcement; knowledge sharing; transboundary cooperation; engaging with industry; and research and monitoring.

49. The project was formulated within this regional context of the GSLEP initiative and its related NSLEPs. The 12 snow leopard range countries, including the four Central Asian countries, endorsed a comprehensive, long-term global snow leopard conservation program through the 2013 Bishkek Declaration and prepared their respective NSLEPs. It was noted during the formulation phase of this project that there was a major funding gap for both the GSLEP coordination function (Secretariat) and the implementation of NSLEPs; particularly in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

4.1.4. Lessons from other Relevant Projects/Initiatives

50. The project was also developed based on achievements, best practices and lessons learned of a large number of on-going and completed initiatives in Central Asia funded by GEF and other development partners, including several NGOs. It includes:

- NABU Project "*Conservation of Biodiversity in the transboundary region Mountains of Northern Tien Shan*", 2014-2016
- NABU Project "*Snow Leopard anti-poaching brigade in Kyrgyzstan*", 2015-2018
- NABU Project "*Snow Leopard Rehabilitation Center in Central Tien Shan*", 2015-2018
- NABU Project "*Camera-trapping of snow leopards in Tien Shan Mountains*"
- SLT/SLF Project "*Conservation of Snow Leopard in Central Tien Shan*", 2015-2018
- WWF Project "*Conservation and Adaptation in Asia's High Mountain Landscapes and Communities*", 2012-2015
- ABCK's project in Kazakhstan funded by Carlsberg company "*Distribution, population number and limiting factors for snow leopard in Dzhungar Alatau*"
- Panthera project in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan "*Study of snow leopard spatial ecology and monitoring of snow leopard populations and its prey species*" 2015-2018

51. In addition to these projects which were completed or soon to be completed when this project was formulated, the formulation team identified a series of relevant GEF-financed initiatives in the Central Asian region. It included 5 initiatives in Kyrgyzstan, 4 in Kazakhstan, 4 in Tajikistan and 2 in Uzbekistan. For each of these initiatives, the relations to snow leopard conservation were identified and this project was to work closely with each one of them. The regional project would provide technical coordination and advice, as well as harmonised tools, guidelines, mechanisms and training, and it would seek opportunities to improve synergies between these national projects. Then, as national implemented projects, it was anticipated that these projects would be field implementers of key results from this regional project.

52. This project would also demonstrate anti-poaching and patrolling to improve enforcement in Kyrgyzstan as part of developing the capacity to manage and conserve the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape. Finally, a feedback loop was anticipated through lessons from the implementation of these national projects, which would inform the design of related outputs on best-practice guidelines and handbooks, monitoring framework, transboundary landscape management and improving enforcement mechanism, and resource development.

4.1.5. Planned Stakeholder Participation

53. During the Project Preparation phase (PPG), a detailed stakeholder analysis was conducted. It included consultations with over 60 persons in Central Asian countries and with the international expert community during the period May to July 2015. These consultations led to the identification of key stakeholders and their anticipated roles in the implementation of this regional project. These consultations were also an opportunity for developing an agreement on the project outcomes and outputs as well as the main activities to be implemented. The project document was circulated to key stakeholders in May 2015 and a final review was conducted in June 2015. It was noted that these consultations took place as follow up consultation to establish the GSLEP and NSLEPs. Finally, this analysis was succinctly documented in the project document in a table listing all key stakeholders and their respective anticipated roles.

54. A total of over 115 organizations were identified as key stakeholders. It included 10 organizations under the category: Intergovernmental organizations, conventions and multilateral agencies; 18 governmental organizations, including 2 in Kazakhstan, 2 in Kyrgyzstan, 2 in Tajikistan, 4 in Uzbekistan, and the others are national governments from the other 8 GSLEP range countries; 4 academic and research institutions; 7 International NGOs; 3 National NGOs; 3 private sector entities; and over 70 local level stakeholders, including about 50 hunting concessions.

55. On the basis of this analysis, a "*Stakeholder Involvement Plan*" was developed and was included in the project document as Part IV. Using the list of key stakeholders discussed above, the project formulation team developed a plan listing the anticipated role of each stakeholder under each outcome and output (*see Annex 8*). This plan also included several mechanisms to engage these stakeholders; mostly through the Project Board

and a Project Technical Committee. Furthermore, the participation of stakeholders was to be encouraged with a participatory and transparent decision-making process, capacity development, communication and the formalization of transboundary governance structures.

56. The review of the planned stakeholder participation indicates that an extensive list of project stakeholders was identified during the formulation phase. All key stakeholders involved in the conservation and management of snow leopard landscapes/ecosystems are part of this list. Mechanisms were planned to be put in place to engage these stakeholders. However, when considering that it was a three-year project with a GEF grant of USD 1M and focusing on 4 target countries in Central Asia, one wonders how feasible it was to establish a good participation, collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders in implementing project activities. It was an ambitious stakeholder involvement plan with an elevated risk that if there was a limited engagement of stakeholders it may impact the effectiveness of project achievements. Several interviews of national stakeholders conducted in the 4 Central Asian countries confirmed that this engagement has, indeed, been too limited. Furthermore, they also mentioned that meetings and other opportunities to exchange have been few and far between and that the project should have put more emphasis on networking with national-based institutions and engage them in project activities.

4.1.6. Planned Replication Approach

57. Replicability of project achievements was mentioned in the project document as part of the long-term sustainability strategy of project achievements. It was anticipated that these achievements will be made available regionally and globally for replication through the dissemination of project results, lessons learned and experiences including demonstration of best practices. Dissemination of results will be achieved mostly through the GSLEP's website; GSLEP fora, including the one organized in 2017 in Bishkek; and the participation in international fora, including CBD events. It was also anticipated that the demonstration activities in the of *Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan* pilot landscape would allow cross-learning between countries as well as replication and up-scaling of project achievements to accelerate the dissemination of best practices and lead to more cost-effectiveness. Finally, it was mentioned that the up-scaling potential of the project was significant in the 4 target countries as well as in almost 600,000 km² out of the total 1.8M km² representing the area of the 24 snow leopard landscapes identified.

58. The review conducted for this evaluation indicates that this planned replication approach was not convincing. It does not provide enough details on how this knowledge and experience would be disseminated after the end of the project; particularly in Central Asia but also in the other GSLEP countries. The basic concept of this approach was based on the assumption that the project would be successful; this in turn would catalyze greater interest among other donors, enhancing financial sustainability of project outcomes; then by building capacity of stakeholders, the project would ensure the continued implementation of project outcomes, and the replication of successful models outside the pilot transboundary landscape and the four Central Asian countries. Additionally, tools, mechanisms, guidelines and methodologies developed by the project were not tested through field implementation activities, interacting and impacting local communities. It is a simplistic approach, relying solely on the success of the project and on the dissemination of knowledge, which, to be replicated, depends heavily on the good engagement and participation of stakeholders in each country. During the last few months of implementation, a greater focus on the dissemination of project outputs is recommended through direct contacts in the 4 Central Asia countries and through other electronic means (websites, newsletters, etc.) to other GSLEP countries.

4.1.7. UNDP Comparative Advantage

59. UNDP has country offices in all 4 Central Asian countries. Its interventions in these countries is governed by the provisions included in the *UNDP Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA)*, which has been signed with each government in the early 90's. As part of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), UNDP interventions are guided by *Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs)* also summarized in *Country Programme Documents (CPDs)*. These UNDP plans/programmes are aligned with country-based United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), which are generally five-year plans formulated by UN agencies in close collaboration with national governments and which are well aligned with national priorities and national development strategies of each country and the Sustainable Development Goals. Overall, the UN System is well positioned to support the implementation of national priorities by offering a

clear business case as a preferred and non-political partner for national governments and by engaging on issues that other development partners may not.

60. As it was described in the project document, UNDP had a comparative advantage in being adequately equipped to address challenges of both environmental conservation and sustainable development. At the time of the formulation of this project, a large portfolio of biodiversity conservation projects managed by UNDP and financed by the GEF were underway in Central Asian countries and across all other GSLEP countries (8). Protected area management, planning and financing have been part of UNDP's work in these countries and globally. UNDP brought experience from these projects and the project has contributed to addressing the broad strategic objective of UNDP's "*Biodiversity and Ecosystems Global Framework 2012-2020*", which seeks to harness the positive opportunities provided by biodiversity and natural ecosystems, as a catalyst for sustainable development.

61. UNDP was also the implementing agency for the majority of GEF investment in snow leopard conservation projects with an approximate value of around USD 55M. Snow leopard conservation projects in Central Asia - including this regional project - are well aligned with UNDP programmes in each country, supporting related national biodiversity, natural resources and forest management priorities.

4.1.8. Management Arrangements

62. The management arrangements planned at the onset of the project included:

- *GEF Implementing Agency*: UNDP served as the GEF implementing agency for the project.
- *Executing Agency*: The Snow Leopard Trust (SLT) acted as the executing agency in accordance with the NGO Implementation Modality. This arrangement was operationalized through a *Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA)* between UNDP and SLT that was signed on August 2, 2017. This agreement laid out roles and responsibilities of each Party for implementing the project. As described in section 4.1.2, SLT underwent a *CSO Capacity Assessment* in April 2016 to ensure that it has the technical and administrative capacity to assume the responsibility for mobilizing and applying effectively the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs of the project. Within the context of this PCA, SLT assumed the overall management responsibility and accountability for the implementation of the project; using its own procedures or alternatively by adapting UNDP procedures if needed.
- *Principal Project Representative (PPR)*: UNDP Country Office in Kyrgyzstan acted as the PPR. It was responsible for project oversight and assurance; and was accountable to the GEF for the use of GEF funds and reporting to GEF Secretariat on all aspects of the project as identified in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. The UNDP Regional Hub in Istanbul (IRH) also provided a semi-independent quality assurance mechanism and ensured additional regional coordination and oversight.
- *Project Board (PB)*: A PB was constituted at the policy and upstream management level to provide high-level guidance and oversight to the project. It was co-chaired by the Chair of GSLEP - who is the Director of SAEPF - and by the UNDP PPR. Members included GSLEP Focal Points from the four target central Asian countries, SLT, as well as managers of GSLEP Secretariat and key international partner organisations (WWF, NABU, Panthera, etc.). GSLEP Secretariat was to act as the secretary to the PB. The PB was responsible for high-level management decisions and guidance required for implementing the project, including recommendations and approval of annual work plans and revisions. It was planned that the PB would meet at least once a year.
- *Project Technical Committee (PTC)*: The planned arrangements for the PTC was to be chaired by the Head of the GSLEP Secretariat and to be composed primarily of technical experts from the participating countries and partner organisations. The PTC was to meet at least once a year, prior to each PB meetings. The responsibility of the PTC was to ensure that planned activities are technically sound and in line with the strategy of the project. It was also responsible to promote inter-institutional coordination, review and endorse proposals for transboundary agreements, review and endorse TORs for consulting tasks and assist in the selection of project consultants, review consulting reports/deliverables and provide feedback on them; and finally submit

recommendations on any matter to the PB.

- *SLT-Project Management Unit (SLT-PMU)*: A PMU was established by SLT located with the GSLEP Secretariat in Bishkek. It has provided day-to-day management and coordination function for project activities, including day-to-day project issues and requirements. The PMU was responsible to ensure a high degree of transnational and inter-institutional collaboration (international and regional organizations and donors) and was responsible for the production of various UNDP-GEF progress and financial reports. An oversight was provided by SLT. The PMU has been headed by a *Regional Project Coordinator (RPC)*.
- *Regional Project Coordinator (RPC)*: The RPC has been responsible for the coordination, monitoring and reporting of project activities. This position was recruited by SLT and has been funded at 20% (1 day per week) of a full time equivalent from the GEF project management budget line. The RPC has been supported by a Project Assistant, who was responsible for the management of project funds and expenditures, M&E and maintaining project records. This position was also recruited by SLT and was funded at 60% (3 days per week) of a full time equivalent from the GEF project management budget line.
- *Part time Consultants/Experts*: As required the project implementation team hired technical expertise to provide technical support for the different components of the project and create knowledge products as needed.

63. The management arrangements were well planned/detailed in the project document and were adequate for the implementation of such a regional project. They provided clear roles and responsibilities for all parties including clear reporting lines of authority. The project was executed by the Snow Leopard Trust (SLT) under the NGO Implementation Modality and governed by a signed Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) defining roles and responsibilities of each Party. A PMU was set up in Bishkek to provide day-to-day management and coordination function for project activities. A Project Board was established to provide high-level guidance and oversight to the project. Additionally, a Project Technical Committee was to review the technical aspects of the project. When considering the above, several mechanisms were in place to provide “*checks and balances*” on the implementation of the project.

64. However, despite this good management arrangements, the Evaluator found that these arrangements did not work as anticipated and were not able to engage key stakeholders in Central Asian countries. Opportunities to meet have been few and far between. The review did not find any record of PTC meetings nor other activities of this committee. Regarding the PB, following the project inception workshop held in Bishkek in Dec. 8, 2017, the PB met only twice in 2019: a PB was held on October 24, 2019 in New Delhi on the margins of the Fourth Steering Committee meeting of GSLEP; and a virtual PB meeting took place on December 27, 2019 to discuss the plan for 2020 and finalize the decision to request a no-cost time extension. These 2019 meetings focused mostly on the request of a no-cost time extension of the project for 6 months to August 2020⁵. Once the request had been approved, the PCA with SLT was amended accordingly. In conclusion, the limited engagement of stakeholders through these management arrangements has not been conducive for maximizing the uptake of NSLEPs in each country as well as several methodologies and guidelines developed by this project such as the *Climate Smart Management Planning Guidelines* and the *Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS)* methodology. As discussed in other section of this report, the impact of the project in Central Asian countries – particularly in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is limited.

4.2. Project Implementation

65. This section discusses the assessment of how the project has been implemented. It assessed how efficient the management of the project was and how conducive it was to contribute to a successful project.

4.2.1. Adaptive Management

66. The project has been implemented under the NGO Implementation Modality. UNDP remained the GEF Implementing Agency, but the execution of the project was given to the international NGO: Snow Leopard

⁵ Following the request for a no-cost time extension for 6 months submitted at the end of 2019 and due to COVID-19, the final decision approved for a no-cost time extension of the project is now December 31, 2020.

Trust (SLT). Following a *CSO Capacity Assessment* of SLT conducted in April 2016, a *Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA)* was signed on August 2, 2017 between UNDP and SLT. This agreement laid out roles and responsibilities of each Party for implementing the project. Additionally, as discussed in section 4.1.8, adequate management arrangements were planned, including “checks and balances” mechanisms to ensure an implementation of the project in line with the strategy detailed in the project document.

67. The review conducted for this evaluation indicates that the technical expertise of experts who intervened in the project has been very high. SLT was able to identify and hire some of the best experts in snow leopard/wildlife conservation and in high mountain landscape management in the world. All provided excellent technical outputs and, together, the project produced a set of high quality products such as a database on illegal wildlife trade; a methodology on *Population Assessment of the World’s Snow Leopards (PAWS)* with guidelines and manuals; a manual to assess prey population; guidelines for climate smart management planning; a study on economic valuation of ecosystem services from snow leopard landscapes; etc.

68. However, despite the technically solid products delivered by the project, the Evaluator found that a missing part in the overall implementation of the project was the limited engagement of stakeholders, particularly national stakeholders from Central Asian countries and as a result the limited national ownership of project results in these countries. The project implementation team have used adaptive management to find ways to engage these stakeholders and develop national ownership of project results but to no avail. Electronic communications did not work well to establish an informal regional network among Central Asian partners. The only mechanism that has worked is the organization of international seminars/workshops under the umbrella of GSLEP where all 12 countries met to review and discuss key aspects of snow leopard conservation such as illegal wildlife trade, snow leopard identification, snow leopard monitoring, etc. These events were well attended but they were too few and far between to be able to make a difference in stakeholder engagement, national ownership and ultimately uptake of project results.

69. The assessment conducted for this evaluation revealed that few parameters may have prevented a good engagement of stakeholders and a good national ownership of project results. They include possible language barriers. The main communication language used among GSLEP countries is English; yet the main language used among Central Asian countries is Russian. It could hamper the development of collaboration and cooperation among GSLEP countries. Geographical distances may have also played a role. Despite the project based in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan as one of the 4 Central Asian countries and the relative proximity of these countries, the connection by car or plane among the 4 capitals is still not too convenient and is an impediment for developing good inter-country cooperation and collaboration. Finally, the fact that the project decided not to conduct a Medium-Term Review, may have prevented the project decision-makers to obtain an independent review on the progress made by the project, identify possible bottlenecks and/or issues to be addressed, and identify corrective measures where needed with the time to implement these measures.

70. Nevertheless, some collaboration and cooperation activities took place under this project. One of the most promising inter-country cooperation has been the contribution of the project in the development of a Trans-boundary MOU for snow leopard and ecosystem conservation between the 4 Central Asian countries. This MOU has been under development for some time but it is now ready to be signed by all 4 Parties: Ministries of Environment, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan; State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic; Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan; and State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It brought these 4 countries together to draft an MOU focusing on snow leopard conservation and the sustainable use of transboundary high mountain landscapes. It was supposed to be signed in October 2019 on the margin of the Intergovernmental Commission on Sustainable Development (ICSD) meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The current plan is to have it signed later in 2020.

71. Despite that this type of transboundary approaches have been slow in developing in the Central Asian region, the Evaluator noted that recent political development in this region may indicate a new era for more and better cooperation among Central Asian countries. At a November 29, 2019 meeting, Central Asian Leaders made a Declaration to “*develop forms and mechanisms for the development of cooperation in the areas of trade, economy, investments, transport and transit, agriculture, industrial cooperation, **protection of environment**, energy, water resources, tourism, science and culture.*”

4.2.2. Partnership Arrangements

72. As discussed in Section 4.1.5, an extensive list of stakeholders/partners was identified at the formulation stage of this project. Based on good consultations at the outset of the project, roles and responsibilities were identified as well as opportunities to ensure the long-term participation of all these stakeholders. From this point of view, it was an ambitious project to work with so many organizations located throughout Central Asian countries. Furthermore, as discussed in section 4.1.8, management arrangements were also designed in such a way to provide mechanisms for engaging key stakeholders, particularly nationally-based stakeholders; the Project Board and the Project Technical Committee were the two main instruments to contribute to the engagement of key stakeholders.

73. However, the impact of this strategy to involve key stakeholders in the project and develop national ownerships in the 4 target countries has been limited. It was confirmed by interviews conducted with stakeholders based in these countries. The involvement of most stakeholders is mostly limited to the participation to regional/international events organized by GSLEP. Some knowledge related to snow leopard conservation has been transferred through this mechanism, but the uptake of this project results in each target countries has been very limited so far. The only exception seems to be in Kyrgyzstan, whereby the government is in the process to institutionalize the *Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS)* approach.

74. The Evaluator also found that beside the *Stakeholder Involvement Plan* detailed in the project document, no partnership arrangements were developed - particularly with key stakeholder organizations in Central Asian countries – to ensure the engagement of these stakeholders. Yes, key stakeholders (including the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of Kyrgyzstan and the Committee of Environmental Protection in Tajikistan) signed-off on the project document when it was submitted to GEF for funding; yes representatives from key stakeholder organizations from the 4 target countries participated to PB and GSLEP Steering Committee meetings; but no further partnership arrangements were made with these organizations to lay out the uptake expectations of project results in each countries. The lack of further partnership arrangements detailing these expectations contributed to, so far, the limited uptake of project results in Central Asian countries.

4.2.3. Project Finance

75. As indicated earlier, the allocation, administration, monitoring and reporting on project resources have been executed by SLT and guided by the *UNDP-NGO Implementation Modality*. As discussed previously, SLT was selected to be the Executing Agency of the project. A *CSO Capacity Assessment* of SLT was conducted in April 2016, to ensure that SLT has the technical and administrative capacity to assume the responsibility for mobilizing and applying effectively the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs of the project. On this basis, a *Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA)* was signed on August 2, 2017 between UNDP and SLT detailing roles and responsibilities of each Party for the implementation of the project.

76. As a result of this arrangement, financial management of the GEF grant has been the responsibility of SLT. The transfers of funds to SLT were based on the *Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)* rules and modalities⁶ prevailing in Kyrgyzstan. SLT has been managing the project funds in accordance with its financial rules and regulations, monitoring expenditures and maintaining fiscal oversight of all expenditures. Financial records are consolidated into the UNDP-ATLAS system as the accounting and financial system for all UNDP projects. Then, based on the financial information input, the Atlas system can produce financial reports - Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs) – showing financial information broken down by line items such as local consultant fees, travel tickets, printing and publications, utilities, etc. and presented by project outcome (called Activity in the Atlas system).

⁶ The HACT framework is a risk-based management tool, used by UN Agencies, that supports closer alignment of development aid with national priorities, moves to strengthen national capacities for management and accountability, and with the ultimate objective of gradually shifting to national systems. It serves as a simplified set of procedures on requesting funds, disbursing funds, providing assurance, reporting on funds as a way to effectively manage risks, reduce transaction costs and promote sustainable development in a coordinated manner.

77. At the outset of the project, the total financial resources to finance the project were USD 5,196,000, of which USD 1,000,000 (19%) was the funding grant from GEF, USD 400,000 as cash co-financing from UNDP, USD 600,000 in-kind co-financing from SLT, USD 900,000 in-kind co-financing from the government of Kyrgyzstan, USD 700,000 in kind co-financing from the government of Tajikistan, and USD 1,596,000 in-kind co-financing from other Partners (NABU, Panthera, FFI, and WWF-US).

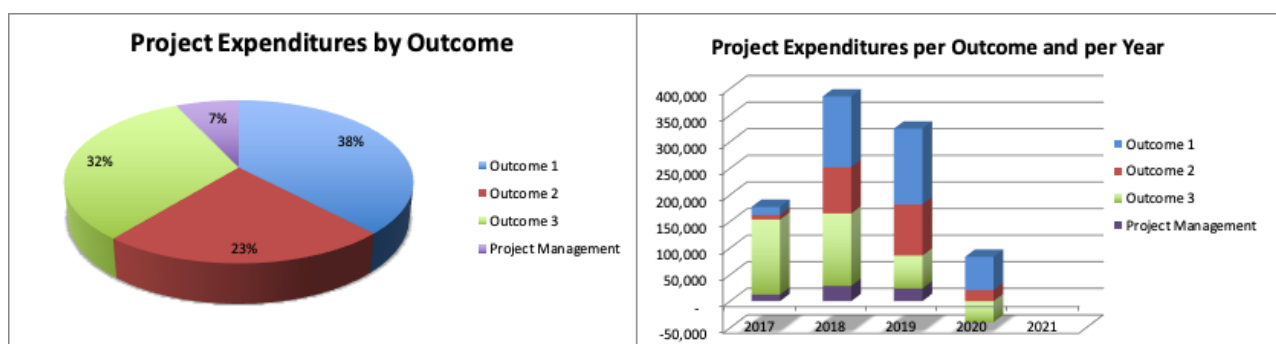
GEF-Grant

78. The review of financial records as recorded in the UNDP Atlas system indicates that by end of June 2020, USD 931,133 have been expended, which is over 93% of the entire GEF grant (USD 1M). As of July 1, 2020, with a remaining budget of USD 68,867, it is expected that 100% of the GEF grant will be expended by the end of project in December 2020. The breakdown of project expenditures by outcome and by year is presented in the table below.

Table 6: Disbursement Status of GEF Grant (in USD)

Component	Budget (USD)	2017	2018	2019	2020 ⁷	Total (USD)	Outcome Exp./ Total Exp.
Outcome 1	399,091	15,348	133,396	142,641	62,558	353,943	38%
Outcome 2	300,000	8,725	86,648	96,209	20,900	212,481	23%
Outcome 3	210,000	141,114	136,417	61,911	-39,400	300,041	32%
Project Management	90,909	12,278	28,591	23,798	-	64,668	7%
TOTAL	1,000,000	177,464	385,052	324,559	44,058	931,133	100%

Sources: UNDP Atlas Financial Reports (Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs) to June 2020).



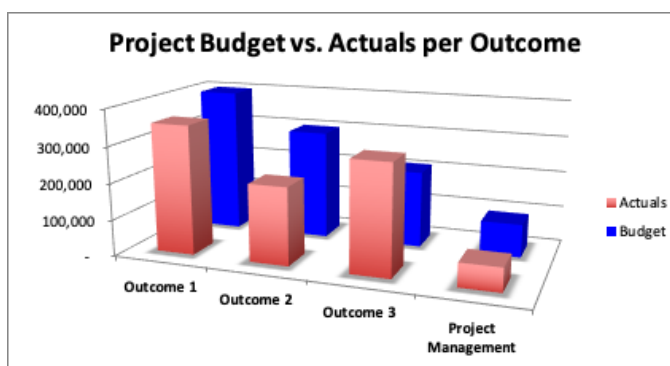
79. The financial figures presented above indicate that so far 38% of the total GEF grant has been expended on outcome 1 that is “Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems”. Another 23% of the total GEF grant was expended on outcome 2 that is “Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries”; and 32% was expended on outcome 3 that is “Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems”. The remaining expenditures (7%) were expended on project management.

80. These financial figures indicate a disbursement of the GEF grant that are aligned with the implementation timeline of the project: 19% were expended in 2017, 41% in 2018, 35% in 2019 and 5% in 2020, the last year of the project. Since its inception, the project has disbursed a monthly average of just over USD 23,000.

81. When comparing the actual expenditures per outcome to the original budget per outcome developed during the formulation of the project, some deviations can be observed. So far, project expenditures recorded under outcome 1 are USD 45,148 under the initial budget (-11%); expenditures recorded under outcome 2 are

⁷ Financial figures for 2020 are from Jan. to June 2020

USD 87,519 under the initial budget (-29%); expenditures recorded under outcome 3 are USD 90,041 over the initial budget (+43%); and project management expenditures are USD 26,241 under budget (-29%). These figures show that when compare with the budgets for each expected outcome, more project expenditures were allocated to outcome 3 (+43%) and less on outcome 1 & 2. It means that financially, the project emphasized more activities to develop an effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems than to develop a snow leopard monitoring framework and develop the capacities of key stakeholders for an effective transboundary cooperation. The Evaluator did not find any documentation on these budgets vs. actual figures variances.



82. The review of the budget details presented in the project document reveals that USD 329,500 (about 33% of the GEF grant) were allocated for the provision of technical expertise through international consultants and service contracts. A further USD 85,600 (9% of the GEF grant) was allocated for national consultants to provide technical support for the implementation of project activities.

83. The review of AWP budgets against the yearly actual expenditures (GEF grant) indicates significant variances from year to year. As indicated in the table below, the project underspent every year: only 50% of the budget was expended in 2017; 89% in 2018, 74% in 2019 and so far only 39% in 2020.

Table 7: Annual Work Plans versus Actual Expenditures (GEF grant)

Years	AWP Budgets	Actual Expenditures	% Spent
2017	356,984	177,464	50%
2018	433,353	385,052	89%
2019	437,483	324,559	74%
2020	112,924	44,058	39%

Sources: Project AWPs, UNDP-Atlas CDR Reports and SLT financial report for Jan. to June 2020

84. These figures show that despite a relatively small budget (USD 1M) for such a regional project, the project implementation team had difficulties to meet its own yearly expenditure targets.

85. Finally, a HACT audit of this regional project has been conducted in 2019 for the period August 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018. The Auditors concluded that *“the Combined Delivery Reports present fairly, in all material respects, the actual eligible expenditure reported for the projects for the period from 1 August 2017 to 31 December 2018 in conformity with the applicable contractual conditions; and the project funding provided by UNDP has, in all material respects, been used in conformity with the applicable contractual conditions.”*

Co-financing / Parallel Financing

86. The co-financing and parallel financing commitments at the outset of the project totaled the amount of USD 4,196,000 and represents 81% of the total financing required for implementing the project. Furthermore, 52% of this co-financing commitments is either in-kind or cash co-financing and 48% is parallel co-financing. The table below indicates the breakdown of these commitments. It shows that 21% of these co-financing commitments were from the government of Kyrgyzstan, 17% from the government of Tajikistan, 14% from SLT, and 48% from parallel co-financing Partners. These amounts indicated in the table below were all the object of co-financing letters confirming these commitments at the outset of the project.

Table 8: Co-financing Status

Partner	Type	Commitments (USD)	Actuals (USD)
SLT	In-kind	600,000	715,000
Government of Kyrgyzstan	In-kind	900,000	?
Government of Tajikistan	In-kind	700,000	?
UNDP	Parallel	400,000	?
NABU	Parallel	616,000	?
Panthera	Parallel	300,000	?
Fauna and Flora International (FFI)	Parallel	80,000	?
WWF-US	Parallel	600,000	?
Total (USD)		4,196,000	-

Source: Project Document and information collected from the project management team.

87. As of the time of this terminal evaluation, only actual co-financing figures from SLT were available, indicating a co-financing amount of USD 715,000 or 119% of the commitment made by SLT at the outset of the project. Regarding other co-financing contributions - in kind, in cash and parallel, no reported figures were found by the Evaluator.

88. Despite that no reporting was available on these other co-financing commitments, the Evaluator confirmed that Partners have contributed some in-kind and parallel resources to the implementation of this project. It is particularly true for the government of Kyrgyzstan through its State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry that has participated in the implementation of the project as well as continuing its commitment to support the GSLEP Secretariat based in Bishkek.

89. Overall, it was not possible to measure more accurately these other co-financed amounts during this evaluation; however, their involvement in project activities such as PB and GSLEP meetings, workshops, overseeing the planning and implementation of project activities and a general commitment of these organizations to the conservation of snow leopard and their high mountain landscapes are a testimony to their in-kind contribution.

4.2.4. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Approach

90. A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan was developed during the formulation of the project in accordance with UNDP and GEF procedures and has been executed by SLT. A total indicative cost of USD 96,000 was budgeted for this plan, representing almost 10% of the total GEF grant. This plan listed monitoring and evaluation activities to measure the performance of the project, including a mid-term review (to be done internally) and a terminal evaluation. The plan was based on the *Strategic Results Framework* that included a set of performance monitoring indicators along with their corresponding sources of verification. No changes were made to this M&E Plan during the inception phase.

91. A summary of the operating modalities of the M&E plan is as follows:

- A set of 11 *Performance Indicators* with their respective baselines and 11 targets by the end of the project were identified and documented in the *Strategic Results Framework*. They have been used to monitor/measure the performance of the project at the objective and outcomes level and this information has been reported in annual progress reports;
- An *Inception Workshop* was planned to assist all partners to fully understand and take ownership of the project and review the entire project strategy including its monitoring and evaluation, as well as finalize the first Annual Work Plan (AWP). This workshop was held on December 8, 2017 in Bishkek. No changes were made to the project implementation strategy at this workshop. It concluded with the decision of creating an e-group to further discuss best practices, concerns and challenges pertaining to the project's implementation. An *Inception Workshop Report* was

prepared to summarize the inception phase of the project, including the discussions held at the inception workshop.

- The SLT-PMU had the responsibility to produce progress reports documenting/measuring the progress made by the project for any given period and to report the progress made by the project to the Project Board. The reporting function has included two main types of progress reports:
 - *Quarterly Progress Reports*: These quarterly reports, also called Narrative Reports, served as brief overviews of some key project activities and progress during the reported quarter.
 - *Annual Project Reviews / Project Implementation Reviews (APR/PIRs)*: These reports are both UNDP and GEF requirements, following specific guidelines. They are annual progress report measuring the progress made by the project during the past year and overall since its inception. They include a review of the development objective, measuring the progress made - using the performance indicators - to achieve the overall expected objective and outcomes; and a review of the implementation measuring the progress made during the past year;
- *Combining Delivery Reports (CDRs)*: These reports, produced by the UNDP Atlas system, are summaries of project expenditures issued quarterly but also as needed. They also contain a risk log to track project risks and their mitigative measures.
- *Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation*: The project was to be subjected to a mid-term review and a terminal evaluation. The mid-term review was to review the progress made by the project against the expected results and identify recommendations for adaptive management as needed. The Evaluator noted that no mid-term review has been conducted. Regarding the terminal evaluation (this report), it is focusing on the delivery of the project's results as initially planned, at impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental benefits/goals and provides recommendations for follow-up activities.
- *Project Publications*: Publications were seen as a key method of crystallizing and disseminating results and achievements of the project. These publications may be scientific or informational texts in the form of journal articles, multimedia publications, etc.
- *Learning and Knowledge Sharing*: Results from the project were to be disseminated within and beyond the project intervention zone through existing information sharing networks and forums; including a two-way flow of information between this project and other similar projects.
- *Branding and Visibility*: Full compliance was required with UNDP's Branding Guidelines and the GEF's Visibility Guidelines, including the use of the UNDP and GEF logos. For other agencies and project partners that provide support through co-financing, their branding policies and requirements should be similarly applied.
- *Financial Audit*: Audits were to be conducted by the legally recognized auditor of UNDP Kyrgyzstan office, in accordance with UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules and applicable Audit policies.

92. The set of indicators to measure the progress of the project at the objective and outcomes level was reviewed by the Evaluator. The project was approved with a set of 11 indicators, which were presented in the *Strategic Results Framework* with their respective baselines and targets to be achieved by the end of the project. No changes were made to these indicators during the inception phase. The list of indicators and their respective targets are presented in the table below:

Table 9: List of Performance Indicators

Project Outcomes	Indicators	Targets
Project Objective: To strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes that ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus in Central Asia.	1. Snow leopard populations in the 4 project countries	• No decline from baseline: Kazakhstan: 100-110; Kyrgyz Republic: 300-350; Tajikistan: 180-220; Uzbekistan: 30-45
	2. Transboundary Snow leopard landscapes with active conservation/ cooperation programme	• 1

Project Outcomes	Indicators	Targets
	3. Level of key threats in pilot transboundary landscape (poaching, retaliatory killing, habitat destruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in poaching and maintain zero cases of retaliatory killing of snow leopards Habitat loss reduced and quality snow leopard habitat maintained
Outcome 1 - Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output 1.1: Tools, methods and guidelines for effective transboundary cooperation developed, tested and made available to stakeholders Output 1.2: Training materials and methods developed and disseminated, including through an on-line platform Output 1.3: Effective enforcement mechanisms developed and introduced to enforcement agencies 	4. Global knowledge toolkit available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toolkit available through on-line platform
	5. SL crime enforcement guidance and mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model systems developed and operationalised in at least 2 countries
	6. Level of institutional capacity for transboundary snow leopard ecosystem conservation as indicated by Capacity scorecard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved capacity indicated by an increase of at least 30% over baseline (ie. a score of 30 = 31%)
Outcome 2 - Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output 2.1: Common monitoring indicators and methods for snow leopard landscapes and populations developed, tested and disseminated Output 2.2: Spatial database for monitoring and management of one transboundary landscape is developed Output 2.3: Sustainable landscape management measures are identified and presented to stakeholders for implementation 	7. # Countries using approved/adopted common monitoring indicators/framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2
	8. # transboundary snow leopard landscapes with sustainable management measures agreed to reduce key threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1
	9. # women in the pilot landscape directly benefiting from new sustainable management measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% (baseline 0 Kyrgyz part) 2% (baseline 0 Kazakhstan part)
Outcome 3 - Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output 3.1: Global coordination mechanism for technical support, resource development and knowledge-sharing is strengthened Output 3.2: Global and national tools for financing snow leopard ecosystem conservation developed, piloted and shared Output 3.3: Private sector dialogue platforms established 	10. Capacity of, and satisfaction with, GSLEP coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% increase on the baseline score
	11. Level of financing for GSLEP Secretariat and at least 2 national programmes (NSLEPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25-30% increase on the baseline (at least 5% of which from private sector) – Baseline: GSLEP Secretariat: \$93,300 p.a.; Kazakhstan: \$123,857 p.a.; Kyrgyzstan: \$252,857 p.a.; Tajikistan: \$34,286 p.a.; Uzbekistan: \$107,000 p.a.

Source: Project Document and PIRs

93. These 11 indicators were identified to measure the progress of the project toward its outcomes and objective. They have been used to report progress made in the APR/PIR reports. The review of these indicators and their respective targets reveals that they are SMART⁸ indicators with clear targets. It is a good set of indicators that was used to measure how well the project was progressing. With clear targets, it makes them unambiguous indicators that are specific, measurable, available and relevant for the project in a timely manner.

94. The M&E plan is a good monitoring framework to measure the performance of the project with a good mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative indicators give a clear measure of things and are numerically comparable. They also provide an easy comparison of a project progress over time and are easy

⁸ SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound.

to monitor and do not require too much resources to collect data. Qualitative indicators measure the degree of capacity developed such as skills developed for relevant stakeholders, procedures and mechanisms developed within relevant institutions and measure the relevance of the enabling environment in place (laws, policies and programmes). They depict the status of a situation in more qualitative terms.

95. Among these indicators, the Evaluator noted the use of a capacity scorecard to measure the progress made to develop the institutional capacity for transboundary snow leopard ecosystem conservation (indicator #6) and the need to conduct a survey of all GSLEP member countries to assess the capacity of and satisfaction with the GSLEP coordination (indicator #10). More discussion on these indicators is in section 4.3.1 below.

96. Overall, this is a good monitoring framework, focusing clearly on results and providing information on the performance of the project. With 11 indicators and targets, it is also a relatively simple tool and the collection of monitoring information is much of a continuum of project activities. For instance, the project worked in developing a monitoring system to measure the snow leopard population. Once this is in place, the system itself should provide the requested time-series information to measure the population of snow leopard over time (indicator #1). The project was to focus on piloting sustainable management measures in a transboundary snow leopard landscape. Again, once the pilot is completed the data is available (indicator #8). It is clear that if all targets are met, the project would be a success and the four Central Asian countries would have a greater capacity – including tools, guidelines and methodologies – for the conservation of snow leopard ecosystems, including transboundary landscapes.

97. The review of progress reports, including quarterly narrative reports, indicates that the focus of reporting progress has been much on activities conducted and project deliverables as opposed to reporting progress against the expected results; i.e. less focus on reporting progress using these indicators against the set targets. Only two APR/PIRs were produced for the periods July 2017 to June 2018 and July 2019 to June 2020. They are the only progress reports where progress was reported against these indicators/targets. The other quarterly narrative reports report progress made by the project mostly in term of activities conducted and deliverables produced. There are well presented, and they represent a good summary of what the project has done/produced in term of activities and deliverables. It is a good addition to the reporting mechanism, but it falls short of producing information to measure the progress of the project against the set of indicators and targets.

4.2.5. Contribution of UNDP and Implementing Partners

98. The contributions of UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency and of SLT as the Executing Agency in implementing the project was marginally satisfactory. They supported the implementation of the project in their respective area of responsibility. However, despite a good project design, an extensive list of stakeholder to engage in the implementation of the project, good planned management arrangements including “checks and balances” mechanisms, and a good monitoring framework to measure the performance of the project, the impact of the project in the four Central Asian countries has been limited; mostly due to a lack of engagement of key stakeholders based in these countries.

99. The lack of engagement of key stakeholders and, as a consequence, a limited national ownership and a limited uptake of project achievements in the four Central Asian countries, particularly in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are a recurrent theme throughout this terminal evaluation. Everything was in place to be a successful project, including excellent expertise mobilised by the project. The project produced topnotch deliverables; however, so far there is a limited uptake of these deliverables and a big “selling job” remains to be done in the four Central Asian countries to sustain these achievements over the long-term.

100. As discussed in section 4.1.8, the planned management arrangements provided the project with “checks and balances” mechanisms to review, assess and correct when necessary. By design, UNDP was to play a role of quality assurance over the implementation of the project, ensuring that the required qualities for project activities were fulfilled. Overall, UNDP was to backstop the implementation of the project. The PB was a good mechanism to review the progress and raise issues when needed, and the PTC was supposed to gather technical experts from the participating countries to review the technical aspects of planned project activities. However, despite these procedures as backstopping mechanisms, this review concluded that they did not work. The Evaluator did not find any information reported on the issue of a limited engagement of stakeholders and the risk of a limited country uptake, hence a limited long-term sustainability of project achievements.

4.3. Project Results

101. This section discusses the assessment of project results, what are the remaining barriers limiting the effectiveness of the project, how efficient was the project to deliver its expected results, and how sustainable and replicable these achievements will be over the long-term.

4.3.1. Overall Achievements/Results

102. As presented in Sections 4.1, the project has been implemented through three (3) outcomes. The implementation progress is measured through a set of 11 indicators, each one with its respective target(s) to be achieved by the end of the project. Below is a table listing key results achieved by the project against each expected outcome, using the corresponding targets to measure the progress made. Additionally, a color “*traffic light system*” code was used to represent the level of progress achieved by the project.





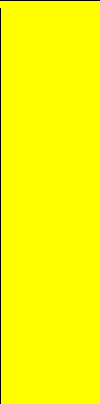
	Target achieved
	On target to be achieved
	Not on target to be achieved

Table 10: List of Achievements vs. Expected Outcomes and Targets

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results	TE Assess.
Outcome 1 - Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output 1.1: Tools, methods and guidelines for effective transboundary cooperation developed, tested and made available to stakeholders Output 1.2: Training materials and methods developed and disseminated, including through an on-line platform Output 1.3: Effective enforcement mechanisms developed and introduced to enforcement agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toolkit available through on-line platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSLEP website www.globalsnowleopard.org has been overhauled and developed into a bi-lingual (English and Russian) knowledge hub of resources on various aspects of global and transboundary cooperation for snow leopard conservation. The website navigation framework has been developed in order to collate and easily facilitate sharing of resources including major publications, meeting information, resolutions and statements, recommendations, and training materials. The website includes a Resource Center and Capacity Building Center with Genetics Manual, Snow Leopard Survey Manual, Wild Prey Survey (Double Observer) Manual, PARTNERS Principles Toolkit for Community Based Conservation, Guides and training modules for designing and modeling snow leopard survey data, PAWS Guidelines, Principles and Recommendations for Tourism in Snow Leopard Habitat, and Climate-smart management planning guidelines. The GSLEP website is also being upgraded to feature access to a GIS database for monitoring of snow leopard populations, ecosystems and socio-economics. Through this interface, stakeholders will be able to upload relevant datasets for GIS mapping and reporting. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model systems (SL crime enforcement) developed and operationalised in at least 2 countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A collaborative global agreement was made by the snow leopard range countries at the Third Meeting of the GSLEP Steering Committee to harmonize relevant sections of national laws dealing with poaching and illegal wildlife trade across range countries, address the issue of illegal demand and markets for wildlife parts and derivatives, and share information that they have gathered on poaching and illegal wildlife trade. This is an unprecedented agreement and an important step in a collaborative transboundary and global approach to monitoring and ultimately curbing the illegal wildlife trade in snow leopard and prey species parts and derivatives. A draft document reviewing wildlife trade legislation in the four project countries 	

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results	TE Assess.
		<p>with analysis and suggestions on making more cohesive is currently in progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of model systems, this project has also helped develop the first-ever centralized database as a repository for all wildlife crime incidents involving snow leopards, and initiated an information sharing process for all range countries. A network of partners has been formed to facilitate the exchange of information and contribute to an exhaustive international dataset pertaining to wildlife crime of snow leopards. A standard operating protocol was also initiated to collect data from online sources (media, social media, e-commerce sites) using web scrapes and add these data into the database. The database currently holds 332 incidents of crime from 19 countries. Information on at least 897 snow leopard individuals has been captured as well as instances of over 30 other species linked with the trade of snow leopards. Probabilistic frameworks have been deployed on information from the database to identify trends and patterns. The first annual GSLEP IWT report was created and shared in December 2019 with GSLEP partners. A web interface with dashboard has been created for the database for access and use by all snow leopard range countries and is being integrated into the GSLEP website. • Initiated mechanisms for annual Central Asia CITES workshops/meetings. Meetings were held in Bishkek, and UNDP Kyrgyz office and SAEPP took the initiative to continue these meetings periodically. Depending on availability of funds within range countries, especially since this will be part of the action plan for the transboundary MoU, the meetings will be re-convened starting 2021 after Covid-19. • The action plan for the transboundary MoU between Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan contains a thematic component about illegal wildlife trade coordination within country and between MoU partners. Once the MoU is endorsed and operationalized, these mechanisms will be operational in all four countries. • Finally, within Kyrgyzstan, in collaboration with INTERPOL, we have built a corps of 12 national Trainers to help administer IWT enforcement trainings within Protected Areas in Kyrgyzstan. A meeting was also held with INTERPOL and IWT stakeholders in Kyrgyzstan to develop a National Environmental Security Task Force and task force strategy, and regular meetings endorsed by the Ministry. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved capacity indicated by an increase of at least 30% over baseline (ie. a (Capacity Scorecard) score of 30 = 31%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through support from INTERPOL, a set of 12 officials have been trained as trainers in the Kyrgyz Republic in wildlife crime scene investigation. These trainers have conducted training for at least 3 protected areas in northern Kyrgyzstan reaching 74 frontline PA personnel. • Organized a training of 24 conservationists representing NGOs from 5 snow leopard range countries, including 4 from Kyrgyzstan in October 2019 focusing on local livelihoods and development needs in snow leopard conservation • The goal of the training was to develop Trainers on the PARTNERS Principles for Community-Based Conservation, a best-practices training module 	

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results	TE Assess.
		<p>endorsed by GSLEP recommendations. PARTNERS Principles contains an 8-step guide for helping conservationists engage local communities long-term, and work with communities to respond to livelihood and development needs. Trainers have since hosted trainings on PARTNERS Principles locally and regionally for frontline practitioners, including 50 rangers from the Forestry Department, members of the Nature Watch Program in China, and members of Snow Leopard Conservation Foundation in Mongolia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held workshops to support the PAWS initiative: one in Mongolia (May 2018), one in Kyrgyzstan (July 2018), and two in China (August 2018). • Initiated at least 26 capacity building initiatives supporting at least 183 people on methods and theory about snow leopard monitoring protocols. 	
<p>Outcome 2 - Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 2.1: Common monitoring indicators and methods for snow leopard landscapes and populations developed, tested and disseminated • Output 2.2: Spatial database for monitoring and management of one transboundary landscape is developed • Output 2.3: Sustainable landscape management measures are identified and presented to stakeholders for implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 (Countries using approved/adopted common monitoring indicators/ framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated, and received unanimous endorsement for a common monitoring framework from all range countries under the initiative Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS). • A panel consisting of 3 renowned population statisticians, 6 snow leopard ecologists and one representative of the high level steering committee of the GSLEP Program has been constituted by the Steering Committee of the GSLEP program represented by the Environment Ministers of the snow leopard range countries. An action plan for PAWS has been prepared and the snow leopard range countries -- including the four project countries -- have agreed to develop in-country frameworks for implementing the initiative. • Finalized tools for designing camera trapping surveys using state of the art algorithms and completed training manuals for general introduction to distribution and abundance studies for rare species; both available on the GSLEP website. • A 3-day long training module on species distribution and monitoring was created and piloted in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia based on the spatially largest dataset collected ever, using primary evidence of presence of snow leopards. • GSLEP also organized a national planning workshop specifically for Kyrgyzstan, during which government and all other NGOs working on snow leopard conservation in Kyrgyzstan were invited to coordinate efforts of all stakeholders and ensure standardization of methods. A multi-NGO sampling design was created for Kyrgyzstan, as well as standardization and protocols for surveys and data collection. An MoU was signed among major stakeholders agreeing to complete snow leopard populations assessments of Kyrgyzstan's Western Tien Shan (roughly 40,000 sq km of snow leopard habitat); The survey designs have been prepared and a preliminary interview-based occupancy survey conducted to prioritize sampling efforts. Further surveys have been delayed due to procedural issues with local funding partner and COVID19 related constraints. • In a major boost towards protecting and conserving snow leopards, India's Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched the First National Protocol on Snow Leopard population enumeration based on PAWS training, 	

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results	TE Assess.
		<p>tools, and recommendations. Surveys using PAWS guidelines have been completed across the entire state of Himachal Pradesh, and work is underway in the remaining States.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A conservation monitoring manual based on threat reduction assessment framework has been prepared and is currently under review. The manual provides hands-on guidance on monitoring conservation programs based on quantitative and qualitative estimation of threats to biodiversity. • Tajikistan has also initiated the process of using the PAWS methodology and has requested GSLEP support to train their rangers and officials in PAWS procedures. They aim to implement surveys following the training. Two officials from Tajikistan are already registered to be trained on camera trapping for population assessment of snow leopards in the upcoming joint training program developed by GSLEP & SLN, starting July 2020. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 (transboundary snow leopard landscapes with sustainable management measures agreed to reduce key threats) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended a workshop in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (July 2018) focused on establishing transboundary cooperation between the four project countries for the sustainable management of two snow leopard landscapes: Western Tien Shan and Alay-Gissar. Follow-up comments from the GSLEP Secretariat on the proposed transboundary MOU and action plan were submitted to UNDP Uzbekistan and government representatives. The plan was officially release at World Mountain Forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan 2018 by the Director of SAEPF. • In October 2018, GSLEP representatives traveled to Astana, Kazakhstan to meet with various government and agency representatives from the Committee of Forestry & Wildlife, UNDP and the Institute of Zoology to discuss the GSLEP program and advance discussions regarding the development of landscape management plans for Kazakhstan's two snow leopard landscapes identified under the GSLEP initiative. Meeting outcomes included agreements to 1) establish a Working Group that will facilitate and prepare at least one landscape management plan in Kazakhstan, 2) identify which landscape will first be the focus of the management planning process 3) develop a broad work plan for the landscape management planning process, and 4) develop a budget for the landscape management planning process, and identify potential sources of funding. • In February 2019, a meeting was organized by UNDP in partnership with the Government of Tajikistan in Khujand on trans-boundary cooperation for snow leopard conservation. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on development of the trans-boundary MoU for collaboration in snow leopard conservation. Project prepared presentations for various sessions during the conference on behalf of the GSLEP Secretariat. • Currently, as mentioned above, a draft of the MoU for the transboundary landscape is ready. A joint action plan for the landscape, shared by all four countries, is also ready. • In December 2019, GSLEP Secretariat in coordination with the Department on Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas of the SAEPF, Government of Kyrgyz 	

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results	TE Assess.
		Republic, completed the draft short Strategy Document specifically for the Kyrgyz Central Tien Shan Landscape. Facilitated by GSLEP Secretariat, the shorter version of the Management Plan has been approved by the Order of the SEAPF Director. The longer Management Plan has been revised and submitted to the SAEPF. Worked on the budget for the Central Tien Shan Landscape Plan, based on which funding is being sought from various donor partners. Prepared a draft work plan for the implementation of the Management Plan in 2020 and submitted to SAEPF. Working with SAEPF to develop an implementation mechanism for the landscape management plan.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% (baseline 0 women in the pilot landscape directly benefiting from new sustainable management measures - Kyrgyz part) • 2% (baseline 0 women in the pilot landscape directly benefiting from new sustainable management measures - Kazakhstan part) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned in the previous indicator, the management plans for the Central and Northern Tien Shan Landscapes are not at the level of implementation yet. As they are finalized and implemented, the sustainable management measures that characterize these management plans will directly benefit women in the landscapes. • Within key portions of the Central Tien Shan landscape, NGOs are working to develop community-based livelihood programs that meet sustainable management guidelines. A conservation-linked handicraft program is underway and engaging 49 women as crafters. Women are able to directly earn income through the program (over \$350 USD/participant in 2019). Women also benefit from upskilling, conservation awareness, and engagement as program leaders. Communities have also been supported to construct a total of 20 predator-proof corrals; the reduction in livestock losses is an important benefit to women (in recognition of research showing that women tend to suffer more from loss of livestock than men). • In Kazakhstan, initiated collaboration with the NGO in charge of managing their trans-boundary landscape in order to develop the landscape management plan. The leader of the NGO is a woman, and we will be working with her to ensure women's participation following the approved management planning guidelines. These guidelines have a section clearly focused on community-based development and the participation of women, recognizing that "all women play a large role in livestock rearing and management," and indicating that gender-sensitive planning and inclusive interventions are critical to project success. 	
Outcome 3 - Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 3.1: Global coordination mechanism for technical support, resource development and knowledge-sharing is strengthened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% increase on the baseline score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GSLEP Program and Secretariat are currently staffed with consultants and seconded experts. The third and fourth Steering Committee meetings of the GSLEP Program issued joint statements, unanimously and equivocally appreciating the performance of the GSLEP Secretariat in following up on implementation of the Bishkek Declaration 2017 and other tasks delegated to it by the Steering Committee. Furthermore, in the Issykkul Statement coming out of the third Steering Committee meeting, the range countries agreed to second officials within their respective countries to support the Secretariat. • Worked with legal advisors develop a functionally appropriate structure for the Secretariat that can 	

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results	TE Assess.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Output 3.2: Global and national tools for financing snow leopard ecosystem conservation developed, piloted and shared ● Output 3.3: Private sector dialogue platforms established 		provide it greater independence and enable resource mobilization. Appropriate staffing and management systems for the Secretariat were developed in consultation with key partners. We also secured appropriate office space and equipment to allow for the efficient functioning of the Secretariat.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 25-30% increase on the baseline (Level of financing for GSLEP Secretariat and at least 2 national programmes (NSLEPs)) (at least 5% of which from private sector) - Baseline: GSLEP Secretariat: \$93,300 p.a.; Kazakhstan: \$123,857 p.a.; Kyrgyzstan: \$252,857 p.a.; Tajikistan: \$34,286 p.a.; Uzbekistan: \$107,000 p.a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A GSLEP financing policy document was created under the Thematic Recommendations developed in 2017. The GSLEP Steering Committee requested a financing plan for the Secretariat, and at the New Delhi meeting in 2019, countries requested a roadmap for GSLEP financing beyond this project. Both are in development. ● The NGO, Snow Leopard Trust, key technical advisor to the GSLEP Secretariat, will be investing at least \$200,000 USD to maintain the Secretariat and GSLEP program over the next three years, with support from global partners. Additionally, 80% of costs for the New Delhi, China, and Kazakhstan GSLEP meetings in 2018 and 2019 were borne by the host countries/host organizations. Prior to these meetings, majority of costs were paid directly by GSLEP or its funding partners, and this project. This has established a precedent and can act as a long-term strategic funding mechanism for GSLEP convenings. We currently have indications from Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Bhutan, and Russia that they want to organize or host GSLEP meetings in the near future, once the Covid-19 pandemic is passed. ● Following the initiation of this project, range countries also approved programs in support of snow leopard conservation under their GEF6 funds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kazakhstan: \$8 million USD with \$24 million co-financing (2017-2022) ● Kyrgyzstan: \$3.9 million USD with \$16.5 million in co-financing (2017-2022) ● Pakistan: \$4.6 million USD with \$12.9 million co-financing (2017-2021) ● Afghanistan: \$2.6 million USD with \$9 million co-financing (2016-2019) ● Tajikistan: \$4 million USD with \$19 million co-financing (2016-2021) ● Additionally, Government of Kyrgyzstan has approved \$3.5 million for support of their NSLEP under GEF7. ● Additionally, a major funding strategy for the GSLEP initiative, national programs, and landscape management planning and implementation was developed for the GEF Asia Big Cats program. The snow leopard range countries unanimously supported this proposal to address national snow leopard ecosystem priorities and a regional programmatic layer focused on global support themes. The proposal was not funded under GEF7 but will be resubmitted for GEF8. ● A 20 million Euro proposal was submitted by GSLEP Programs technical partners, UNDP and SLT to the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Government to protect terrestrial biodiversity and promote climate resilient development through the conservation of snow leopard landscapes and related biodiversity conservation activities. The proposal, if 	

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results	TE Assess.
		<p>approved, would support funding overlapping with 7 NSLEPs, of which Kyrgyzstan is one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted with a project being implemented by UNEP in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The program, funded from Luxembourg, seeks to improve wildlife management approaches, restore fauna, and address the effects of climate change on mountain residents in Central Asia and other regions. The project seeks close cooperation and coordination with GSLEP Program and other snow leopard conservation programs in Kyrgyzstan. Several outcomes from the on-going project, including monitoring toolkits, conservation led development strategies, climate smart management planning, and sharing best practices between countries, are proposed in the project as a result of our team's constant engagement. The GSLEP team provided advice and support to Government of Kyrgyzstan to help identify priority landscape and align the upcoming project with the on-going activities and protocols. The project will bring approximately 1.5 million Euros each to support the NSLEPs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Participated in strategic meetings in support of GSLEP program, specifically to facilitate trans-boundary cooperation and conservation finance, including a High Level Development Forum "Accelerating Reforms for Sustainable Development" in Bishkek, November 19, 2019; the National Climate Forum: Post Paris Agreement and Civil Society on December 17, 2019, organized by the Green Alliance; Symposium on Trade of Kyrgyz Organic Products on December 18, 2019 that was organized by the Embassy of India and Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic; the Conference "Prospects for the Development of the Private Sector" held during the Green Economy Week in the Kyrgyz Republic, November 14; and the UNDP organized, regional CITES meeting regarding assistance from GSLEP towards implementation of CITES provisions in Central Asia. Developed national tools for financing snow leopard ecosystem conservation and innovative financing for biodiversity conservation. In 2019, supported a competition, organized by Green Alliance for Sustainable Development, Center for Climate Financing (CCF), and Snow Leopard Foundation in Kyrgyzstan, for the best project concepts for sustainable development and green economy. Forty-five applications were submitted (25 by women) and 31 selected for presentation by a committee of experts represented by Green Alliance, Center for Climate Finance and Snow Leopard Trust. The best project proposals were selected and will become a part of the project portfolio that will be shared with the state and donor organizations for the possibility of funding. Surrounding this activity, staff of GSLEP Secretariat have also worked on researching options in the creation of a green development investment fund, and Kyrgyz law on creation of investment funds, public foundations and their structures and compositions; they also reviewed other options of providing funds for green business proposals, such as bank loans through the KyrSEFF program. 	

Source: Adapted from project progress reports and information collected through interviews

103. The review of project achievements indicates mixed results. Overall, the project is not fully on track to

meet all of its expected results by its completion date in December 2020. However, the project delivered high quality outputs. Most of them are tools and instruments to be used by key organizations responsible for the conservation of snow leopard in Central Asian countries and other country members of GSLEP. These tools and instruments are top-notch products composed of methodologies, manuals, guidelines, training courses, recommendations, strategies, etc. Most of these tools and instruments exist in both languages - English and Russian; there are ready for uptake by GSLEP countries.

104. A summary list of these tools and instruments is presented below:

- Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS): Action plans, training workshops, guidelines and manuals;
- Design and implementation of surveys in Kyrgyz compliant with PAWS processes;
- Illegal Wildlife Trade Database, network and processes;
- Ecotourism Principles and Recommendations;
- Climate Smart Management Planning Guidelines along with advice documents;
- PARTNERS Principles training toolkit and manual;
- Training module on species distribution and monitoring;
- Snow leopard population data analysis cheat sheets;
- Snow leopard identification evaluation toolkit;
- Prey population assessment manual;
- Economic valuation of ecosystem services from snow leopard landscapes;
- Balanced Acceptance Sampling (using Halton's Iterative Partitioning) and other methodological cheat sheets for designing surveys;
- SMART adaptation to snow leopard landscapes including possible use of drones for monitoring snow leopard prey and anti-poaching patrolling;
- Green Economy Strategy Document;
- Trans-boundary MOU for snow leopard and ecosystem conservation between Central Asian countries;
- GSLEP website including Resource and Capacity Center;
- Conservation Monitoring Guideline;
- Development of Snow Leopard Genome;
- MOUs with entrepreneurs and businesses;

105. In addition, the project also supported management planning activities in Central Tien Shan landscape.

106. Through GSLEP, it also supported the organization of fora, seminars and other events. Several key events were concluded with *Declarations* stating the way forward. It includes:

- Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Forum (2017)
- Bishkek Declaration (2017)
- Thematic Background Papers for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation Forum Policy Recommendations
- Issyk-Kul Statement (2018)
- Shenzhen Consensus for snow leopard conservation (2018)
- New Delhi Statement (2019)
- CITES Training workshops in Bishkek bringing representatives and frontline staff from Central Asian range countries

107. The area where the project is falling short is the degree of which the four Central Asian countries have replicated/scaled-up these tools and instruments, institutionalize them in their appropriate organizations and develop the required capacity in using/implementing these tools and instruments including the allocation of required resources (human and financial resources). Most of project indicators/targets focus on this; hence the main reason for the rating of *marginally satisfactory*. The measurement of the performance of the project was much focused on measuring the uptake of project outputs such as model systems developed and *operationalized* in at least 2 countries; *improve capacity*, i.e. of national agencies, by at least 30%; at least 2 countries *approved/adopted* common monitoring indicators/framework; etc.

108. In addition, as discussed in section 4.3.3 below, there were missed opportunities to better cooperate and collaborate with the four nationally-based snow leopard projects in Central Asian countries. Some of these

tools and instruments if not all could have been scaled-up through these projects and contribute to the harmonization of management approaches at the regional level when it comes to monitoring methodologies, surveying and collecting data. Additionally, through cooperation among projects, cost-saving may have occurred by pooling resources together for certain activities such as identifying management planning guidelines, conducting economic valuation of snow leopard landscapes, etc. Together, the GEF grants to finance these five projects totals USD 23.5M.

109. Nevertheless, SLT and GSLEP Secretariat are currently, for the most part, still the custodians of these tools and instruments. The project is ending this year but GSLEP and SLT stay on and are fully committed to continue to work on the conservation of snow leopard and their landscapes. The tools and instruments developed with the support of the project will not “end up on a shelf”. There will be central to any GSLEP and SLT activities promoting snow leopard conservation in the region and other GSLEP countries. The Evaluator also noted that benefitting from being based in Kyrgyzstan, some uptake of these project achievements has already taken place within the Kyrgyz government, particularly over the last year. Dialogues with other Central Asian countries is continuing and more uptake is expected in the coming months and further ahead. However, this scenario also implies that GSLEP Secretariat will be sustainable in the medium and long-term.

Review of Capacity Indicators

110. As discussed in section 4.2.4, one indicator is to use a capacity scorecard to measure the progress made to develop the institutional capacity for transboundary snow leopard ecosystem conservation (indicator #6). The assessment was conducted for the 4 target countries at the beginning of the project. The total aggregated score was 23 out of a maximum of 93 or 25% of the maximum score. The breakdown of this score shows that the lowest score was in the M&E area (13% of the maximum score) and the highest score was the capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programmes relating to transboundary cooperation for snow leopard ecosystems (44%). The score results established at the beginning of the project are presented in the table below.

Table 11: Scorecard on Capacity Results

Capacity Results	Score at beginning of project	Score at end of project
CR 1: Capacity to conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programmes relating to transboundary cooperation for snow leopard ecosystems	4/9 (44%)	?/9
CR 2: Capacities to implement policies, legislation, strategies and programmes related to transboundary cooperation for snow leopard ecosystems	12/48 (25%)	?/48
CR 3: Capacities to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders	3/12 (25%)	?/12
CR 4: Capacities to generate, access and use information and knowledge	2/9 (22%)	?/9
CR 5: Capacities to monitor and evaluate	2/15 (13%)	?/15
Total:	23/93 (25%)	?/93

111. Measuring capacity developed with the support of a project is not a straightforward process and it is done through this type of proxy indicators measuring processes, which in turn indicates the degree of improved capacities. Unfortunately, this scorecard has not been used by the project implementation team. The plan was to use this scorecard at the mid-term point and at completion of the project. Therefore, no end of project scores were provided to the Evaluator; which prevent a more complete measurement of how much capacities were improved.

112. Additionally, indicator #10 was also a proxy indicator to measure how well GSLEP was responding to country members expectations and how satisfy these members are. A survey should have been conducted during the inception phase and repeated at the end of the project. Similar to the capacity indicator above, no survey was made available to the Evaluator. Therefore, the Evaluator was not able to assert how much the perception of GSLEP country members has improved during the lifetime of the project.

4.3.2. Attainment of Project Objective / Impact

113. The review of project achievements presented in the previous section 4.3.1 reveals that the implementation was *marginally satisfactory*. As discussed throughout this report, the project has produced a good set of outputs; however, the uptake of these outputs by key organizations in Central Asian countries is still limited. When considering the quality of these outputs and the fact that they respond to real needs, it is anticipated that over time target countries will uptake these outputs and institutionalize them in their respective appropriate entities. The table below presents key results of this project against the objective and its targets.

Table 12: List of Achievements vs. Objective and Targets

Expected Result	Project Target	Results	TE Assess.
Project Objective: To strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes that ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus in Central Asia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No decline (in SL population) from baseline: Kazakhstan: 100-110; Kyrgyz Republic: 300-350; Tajikistan: 180-220; Uzbekistan: 30-45 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status of the global snow leopard population is unknown. Efforts to evaluate and map the current status of key snow leopard populations and habitats to set baselines and indicators were endorsed by the project countries under the Bishkek Declaration on the Conservation of the Snow Leopard (2017 original, reaffirmed in 2019). There have been no reports of catastrophic die-offs or disruptions to snow leopard or prey populations in the four snow leopard project countries, covering the period from project start to current reporting, based on readily available data being collected via a new snow leopard poaching database. The population estimates from Sarychat, one of the long-term snow leopard monitoring sites in the Central Tien Shan Landscape that is surveyed every year, have remained stable during the project's tenure. Thus, to the best of our knowledge, we assume populations are stable against estimated Baseline Levels. Initiated a systematic initiative called Population Assessment of the World's Snow Leopards (PAWS) to provide the first-ever robust snow leopard census, both at a national and global level. At the Third Meeting of the GSLEP Steering Committee at Issykkul in Kyrgyzstan, all snow leopard range countries agreed to participate in PAWS, including the four project countries. PAWS general guidelines were updated/revised and released formally at the 4th Steering Committee meeting of the GSLEP held in New-Delhi, 23-24 October 2019, attended by snow leopard range countries conservationists and partner organizations. Co-organized the International Conference on Snow Leopard Conservation in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan in July 2019. Attended by 60 people from all 12 snow leopard range countries and beyond, the meeting helped review and receive inputs on PAWS guidelines and process outline, and collate valuable information about the status of snow leopard monitoring across the range countries. Key resources and tools have been developed to support range countries in surveys and robust computer modeling of population data in coordination with international experts, including quick reference guides and an online training module with sample code, exercises, and modeling software. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have all agreed to follow the PAWS monitoring framework and are working to initiate surveys. At least 183 stakeholders representing various snow leopard range countries have been trained so far. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Transboundary Snow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A joint statement was issued by the governments of 	

Expected Result	Project Target	Results	TE Assess.
	leopard landscapes with active conservation/cooperation programme	<p>Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to jointly announce the West Tien Shan mountain range as a transboundary landscape for snow leopard conservation. This landscape joined as the 24th GSLEP landscape earmarked for protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The management plan of the Central Tien Shan Landscape in the Kyrgyz Republic has been completed and a stakeholder workshop to provide feedback on the plan is currently being planned. Various meetings have been held to bring in the engagement of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan and advance transboundary collaboration/coordination and action plans. During the international conference held in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan in July 2019 with attendance from all snow leopard range countries, the four Central Asian countries reviewed the action plan for the transboundary MoU with inputs from experts from across the world. Following this, a working meeting on the landscape was held on the margins of the 4th GSLEP Steering Committee (New-Delhi, October 2019) with participation of Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The GSLEP Secretariat provided technical assistance to harmonize the MoU among agencies in Kyrgyzstan and the MoU has since passed Ministerial approval procedures in Kyrgyzstan. GSLEP Secretariat has provided support to the government of Kyrgyzstan to share the agreed draft of the MoU. Now after approving the process with the appropriate ministries and government bodies, a draft MoU is being submitted to the Prime Minister Office of the Kyrgyz Republic in order to release the Government Order. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in poaching and maintain zero cases of retaliatory killing of snow leopards Habitat loss reduced and quality snow leopard habitat maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poaching: Snow Leopard - 0. No new instances of snow leopard poaching have been recorded; using the new snow leopard poaching database Retaliatory killing: Snow Leopard - 0. No new instances of retaliatory killing have been reported from the region. Habitat Destruction: # mines in the area - 1. Total area of the mine - 8-10 km². The mine in the transboundary landscape - listed in the baseline - is still in operation. No new mines have started so far in the known snow leopard landscapes However, although there are no cases of poaching or retaliatory killing to report, there have been reports of about 10 snow leopards captured from the wild and taken to captive facilities as a means to address human-wildlife conflict. In addition to poaching and retaliatory killing, this is a serious concern for conservation. Given the unsustainability of this practice for wild snow leopard populations, we have collaborated with experts to write a policy advice paper and circulated to all range country governments. The paper provides guidelines and best practices for managing human-wildlife conflict to reduce stress and harm to wild snow leopards, and to reduce the need to take cats into captivity. We have also shared on the GSLEP website in Russian and English. 	

Source: Adapted from project progress reports and information collected through interviews

114. When comparing key results above with the objective and the targets established during the formulation of the project, the project has certainly contributed “to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard

ecosystems and landscapes that ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus in Central Asia.” The tools and instruments developed with the support of the project should have a long-term impact on the management of these ecosystems and landscapes and conserving snow leopards. As discussed in the previous section, so far, there is a limited uptake by the 4 target countries, but these tools and instruments are needed. It is mostly a question of time before GSLEP countries uptake them in one form or the other, replicate and/or scale up them.

Remaining barriers to achieve the project objective

115. The rationale of this project was based on addressing three inter-related barriers, which impeded the emergence of the long term solution that is to put in place an effective and coherent strategy and process for coordinating national and global efforts, sharing knowledge and monitoring impacts to secure national and transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems. These three inter-related barriers were: (1) absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes; (2) absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success; and (3) national and global snow leopard ecosystem protection programs have been drafted but are not currently funded.

116. Despite that it is difficult to measure the contribution of the project in removing these barriers, the assessment conducted for this terminal evaluation confirms that project activities contributed in the partial removal of these barriers. As discussed above and in the previous section 4.3.1, the project developed high quality tools and instruments for improving the transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes. In particular the development of the PAWS methodology is a direct response to the second barrier that was the *absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success*. Furthermore, the development of online knowledge resources is also a direct response to the first barrier that was the *absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes*.

117. Once these tools and instruments will be replicated and/or scaled up, these barriers will be much less of an impediment for the implementation of the long term solution. However, the review conducted for this evaluation reveals that the third barrier may be the most challenging one. The GSLEP Secretariat was created in 2015. This entity is part of an overall strategy to address issues affecting the conservation of snow leopards and their landscapes. Under the umbrella of GSLEP, 12 NSLEPs were developed to state national priorities and activities to be implemented for, collectively, meeting the goal of conserving snow leopard population. It is a strategy endorsed by all 12 GSLEP countries; however no financing is attached to these 12 NSLEPs and, despite efforts made by this project, limited progress has been made in this area to identify potential donors.

4.3.3. Relevance

118. As discussed in chapter 4.1, the project was relevant for Central Asian countries. Its timing was good; it was developed in the context that snow leopards and their ecosystems are endangered throughout their range and face a variety of direct and indirect threats. Several initiatives (at national and global levels) had been addressing snow leopard conservation issues in individual range countries; however, these efforts were not adequately coordinated, particularly at the level of transboundary landscapes. Transboundary cooperation of enforcement agencies for protection of snow leopard and other endangered species were needed in Central Asia; but efforts to design and implement inter-governmental strategies and programs for conservation of snow leopards and other endangered species in transboundary areas were limited.

119. The long-term solution was to put in place an effective and coherent strategy and process for coordinating national and global efforts, knowledge sharing and monitoring impacts to secure national and transboundary snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems in the Central Asian region. However, during the formulation of the project, three inter-related barriers, impeding this long term solution from emerging, were identified: (1) absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes; (2) absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success; and (3) national and global snow leopard ecosystem protection programs have been drafted but are not currently funded. The project concept emerged from this context and its focus has been since its outset on addressing these barriers.

120. The formulation of this project was also timely for supporting GSLEP, an alliance of all snow leopard range countries (12), non-governmental organizations, multi-lateral institutions, scientists and local

communities, united by one goal: saving the snow leopard and its mountain ecosystems. In order to reach this goal, GSLEP identified a total of 24 landscapes to be secured for snow leopards across their range with the specific goal of protecting 20 of these 24 landscapes by 2020. A GSLEP Secretariat was created in 2015 to support all GSLEP countries to implement their NSLEPs. Lacking financial resources, the arrival of this project was timely. It provided critical financial resources and expertise to address transboundary landscapes issues.

121. Moreover, the project was conceptualized within the context of several global initiatives to conserve snow leopards. It included the negotiations of the GEF-6 Programmatic Approach on Illegal Wildlife Trade as proposed to be delivered through the “*Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development*” in association with the World Bank, the EU funded “*Larger than Tigers*” initiative; the “*Global Tiger Initiative Council (GTIC)*”; and the Government of Luxemburg-UNEP “*Vanishing Treasures*” initiative. In addition, several projects had been implementing in the region and focusing on snow leopard conservation, including interventions implemented by NABU, an international NGO active in Central Asia. The formulation of this project took place within these initiatives and benefited from the collaboration among these partners. This is also the time when transboundary landscape management issues were recognized as priorities to be addressed. Again, the timing of this project was excellent; it was somewhat limited by the amount available, i.e. USD 1M, but it was a good window of opportunity which was seized by key players involved in the conservation of snow leopard.

122. In the meantime, despite that Central Asian countries were all involved in the GSLEP process as member countries of this alliance to conserve snow leopard, the coordination, cooperation and collaboration among projects with similar objectives in the region were not well detailed nor emphasized in project documents of these projects. In addition to this regional project targeting Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan (3 years started in February 2017 – GEF grant USD 1M), these 4 countries were also successful in getting GEF funding for nationally-based projects to conserve snow leopards. Key figures are as follow:

- ***Kyrgyzstan:*** *Conservation of globally important biodiversity and associated land and forest resources of Western Tian Shan mountain ecosystems to support sustainable livelihoods*, 5 years started in March 2017 – GEF grant USD 4M
- ***Kazakhstan:*** *Conservation and sustainable management of key globally important ecosystems for multiple benefits*, 5 years started in April 2018 – GEF grant USD 8.1M
- ***Uzbekistan:*** *Sustainable Natural Resource and Forest Management in Key Mountainous Areas Important for Globally Significant Biodiversity*, 5 years started in May 2017 – GEF grant USD 6.2M
- ***Tajikistan:*** *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pamir Alay and Tien Shan Ecosystems for Snow Leopard Protection and Sustainable Community Livelihoods*, 5 years started in August 2016 – GEF grant USD 4.2M

123. These projects were all funded by GEF and implemented by UNDP. However, it seems that all of them were designed separately and no emphasis was embedded in their respective designs for developing cooperation and collaboration among them, including seeking synergies among these initiatives bringing together expertise and knowledge. From a regional perspective, it is certainly a missed opportunity.

4.3.4. Efficiency

124. Overall, the efficiency of the implementation of the project has been marginally satisfactory. All management and administrative aspects to implement the project have been well planned, including good management arrangements, good stakeholder analysis, and good M&E monitoring framework. However, as discussed in section 4.2.2, the weak point has been the limited engagement of stakeholders. This engagement has been mostly limited to the participation to several events organized with the support of the project. The engagement/participation of national stakeholders in implementing project activities has been limited and no concrete and specific expectations have been clearly defined in term of national uptake of project outputs.

125. As discussed in section 4.2.1, the project has been executed by SLT through the NGO Implementation Modality. A *Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA)* was signed on August 2, 2017 between UNDP and SLT, following a *CSO Capacity Assessment* of SLT conducted in April 2016 to assess the management capacity of SLT for effectively mobilizing the project resources in order to reach the expected results of the project.

Additionally, adequate management arrangements were planned during the formulation of the project with several “*checks and balances*” mechanisms to ensure an implementation of the project in line with the strategy detailed in the project document and approved by GEF and recipient countries. Furthermore, an extensive stakeholder analysis was conducted during the formulation of the project. The quality of project interventions has been excellent. SLT was able to identify and hire some of the best experts in the world in snow leopard/wildlife conservation and in high mountain landscape management. It resulted in high quality outputs ready to be used/implemented.

126. However, the weak link, which prevented a good success of the project has been the limited engagement of national stakeholders and, as a consequence, the limited uptake of these outputs by the respective Central Asian countries. The project is ending with several high quality outputs; however, most of these instruments are now waiting for an uptake by the 4 target countries.

127. A good example is the *Population Assessment of the World’s Snow Leopards (PAWS)* methodology. It was developed with the support of world-class Ecological Statisticians who brought a necessary statistical approach to the method to monitor the population of snow leopards. It is a state-of-the-art methodology, which when implemented would provide more accurate data on snow leopard population. However, interviews with experts in this area indicates that implementing this methodology would also necessitate a lot of capacity needs to be developed; particularly in statistics. As per one interviewee said, “*adopting this method is not a question of dollars but rather a question of capacity to implement and use the method.*” Despite a low uptake of this methodology at this point in time in Central Asian countries, the Evaluator noted that the government in Kyrgyzstan is in the process of institutionalizing the PAWS methodology.

128. In the meantime, despite the fact that it is always difficult to analyze the cost-benefit of such projects, the review of the use of project resources indicates that they have been efficiently allocated and created good value for money at the output level. It was a USD 1M grant, which has been used to produce several state-of-the-art outputs, which are part of the response to address the three inter-related barriers identified at the formulation stage. The challenge now for the project is to focus on the uptake of these outputs by target countries and also other GSLEP countries.

4.3.5. Country Ownership

129. As discussed in other sections of this report, the national ownership of project achievements has been limited, mostly due to a limited engagement of key stakeholders from target countries in implementing project activities. The project has developed and produced high quality deliverables using excellent international expertise; however, these deliverables (outputs) were mostly developed by the project with limited involvement, beside the GSLEP Secretariat, of key organizations from target countries. Hence, a process which did not contribute much in developing country ownership of these activities.

130. The result is that the status of these deliverables, such as PAWS, illegal wildlife trade database and network; ecotourism principles and recommendations; climate smart management planning guidelines; training module on species distribution and monitoring; snow leopard population data analysis cheat sheets; snow leopard identification evaluation toolkit; prey population assessment manual; economic valuation of ecosystem services from snow leopard landscapes; development of the snow leopard genome; etc. is that there are pending until Central Asian countries will uptake these deliverables and institutionalize them within key organizations in their respective countries.

131. So far, these deliverables are without national-based custodian organizations. Currently, GSLEP as a regional key partner and SLT as an international NGO engaged in the region to participate in the conservation of snow leopard are the main custodians of these deliverables. However, the expected outcomes and objective of the project will only be met once nationally-based key organizations will also become custodians of these deliverables, including the required capacities and resources to use/implement these new measures. Some training activities took place during the lifetime of this project with the participation of national stakeholders; however it will require much, much more activities to develop the required capacities and the governments to mobilize the require additional resources needed to use/implement these new measures.

132. In the meantime, and as discussed in section 4.3.3 above, the project is part of an overall strategy to

improve the conservation of “big cats”; i.e. conservation of snow leopard in this part of the world. All 12 countries members of GSLEP – including Central Asian countries - are committed to the protection and conservation of snow leopard and their landscapes. It is confirmed through several international and regional Declarations such as the Bishkek Declaration (2017), Issykkul Statement (2018), Shenzhen Consensus for Snow Leopard Conservation (2018) and the New Delhi Statement (2019). This project has been a key project to improve the transboundary management of snow leopard landscape. It is an area with critical and urgent needs that is recognized by the emerging Memorandum of Understanding being negotiated among the four Central Asia countries for more collaboration and cooperation. The new measures that were developed by the project do not enjoy yet a good country ownership but as the target countries are moving ahead, these measures should be more widely known and recognized as useful; hoping that over the long term, they will finally be internalized by key organizations in these countries.

4.3.6. Mainstreaming

133. As discussed in section 4.3.8 below, the project has produced a good list of “*public goods*.” However, most project achievements are not yet institutionalized nor mainstreamed within appropriate entities in the 4 Central Asian countries. An extended list of instruments have been developed by the project; including an illegal wildlife trade database and network; ecotourism principles and recommendations; climate smart management planning guidelines; partners principles training toolkit and manual; training module on species distribution and monitoring; snow leopard population data analysis cheat sheets; snow leopard identification evaluation toolkit; PAWS guidelines and manuals; prey population assessment manual; etc. However, most of these valid instruments are in “pending mode” waiting for an uptake from target countries.

134. As discussed in section 4.3.5, currently, the GSLEP Secretariat and SLT are the custodians of project achievements; and both organizations are fully committed to the conservation of snow leopard and their landscapes in the region. However, for the project to meet its expected outcomes and objective, it would need to mainstream and institutionalize these instruments within the appropriate entities in the 4 target countries.

135. For instance, PAWS is a methodology to monitor snow leopard population. It was developed with the support of the project. The ultimate success of this methodology is to be used/implemented in snow leopard countries. First, it will necessitate an accepted transfer of knowledge to appropriate organizations, including the institutionalization/formalization of this new approach. Then, once an appropriate entity would become a new custodian of this methodology, required capacities will need to be developed and additional required resources to be found and mobilized. At this stage the new custodian organization would be able to implement this new methodology and ultimately to report on the population of snow leopard in its area. The same process would need to take place for most of project deliverables such as using the illegal wildlife trade database, introducing the climate smart management planning guidelines, etc. It goes without saying that, before all these instruments developed with the support of the project be mainstreamed and institutionalized, a lot more support is required; including a strong interest/engagement of key stakeholders in the 4 target countries.

136. In the meantime, as discussed in other parts of this report, this project is unique by focusing on transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems. It is a definite complement to other snow leopard conservation projects and programmes under way throughout Central Asian countries but also in other GSLEP countries. The review conducted for this evaluation indicates that there is a strong interest in improving and conserving snow leopard landscapes in the region; including transboundary landscapes. It is mostly a matter of time before an uptake of these instruments by target countries would start and, to maximize the chance of this uptake, it is important that these instruments remain accessible and available at all times in the future.

Mainstreaming of other UNDP Priorities

137. Regarding poverty alleviation – a UNDP priority – the objective of the project is such that it did not have direct links to promote poverty alleviation. It would only be that by improving the transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes over the long term, it may, by extension, have a positive impact to alleviate poverty of communities living in and around these landscapes.

138. Finally, the project management team has ensured that a gender approach was considered throughout the implementation of project supported activities. The project documents stated that despite that the “*project will not be involved in field implementation activities that will affect local communities, inclusive, transparent*

and gender-equitable approaches will be incorporated into all tools, mechanisms and guidelines that the project develops.” It was planned that the project would promote gender mainstreaming and capacity building within its project staff to improve socio-economic understanding of gender issues. The project was also to appoint a designated focal point for gender issues to support development, implementation, monitoring and strategy on gender mainstreaming internally and externally; including facilitating gender equality in capacity development and women’s empowerment and participation in project activities. It was set that all consultation and capacity development activities would be designed to ensure that at least 30% of target participants are women. Furthermore, the gender equality approach included in the formulation of the project was in compliance with the 3 GEF requirements for mainstreaming gender issues in projects.

139. The review conducted for this review revealed that gender mainstreaming has been monitored by the UNDP-Kyrgyzstan Gender Focal Point and that the project formulated yearly *Gender Mainstreaming Plan and Budget*. These work plans would list key activities to be implemented during the period focusing specifically on the gender aspects of these activities. It was a way to remind the implementation team to focus on gender issues. Furthermore, progress reports have included a section on “*Progress in Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*” and good reports have been reported in these sections; demonstrating the gender approach implemented by the project implementation team. Few good examples include the inclusion of gender language in the *General Guidelines for Management Planning of Snow Leopard Landscapes* reported in the 2018 PIR; the GSLEP communications strategy has been reviewed and updated for gender responsiveness and outreach to women; and the GSLEP website showcases best practices in snow leopard conservation and mentions programs specific to women and their role in conservation, both examples reported in the (draft) 2020 PIR.

4.3.7. Sustainability

140. The sustainability strategy described in the project document for project achievements was through investments of resources in the improvement of legal and enforcement frameworks, the development of international agreements and transboundary conservation programmes, the development and approval among range countries of a standardized monitoring framework, the provision of guidance to regional development planning documents in the pilot transboundary landscape, the development of a five-year financial strategy for GSLEP, and the establishment of long-term partnerships for snow leopard conservation with the private sector.

141. It was anticipated that these results would have lasting effects for at least 5-15 years after the completion of the project and with a high probability of prolonged government support. It was expected that the successful implementation of these results would catalyze greater interest among other donors, hence enhancing financial sustainability of project outcomes. Additionally, by developing the capacity of stakeholders, the project would ensure continued implementation of project outcomes, and replication of successful models outside the pilot transboundary landscape and the four Central Asian countries. As a result, key organizations in the 4 target countries would become the custodians of these achievements, recognizing the importance of managing a mix of national and transboundary landscapes to secure the long-term survival of the snow leopard and the sustainability of their ecosystems.

142. It is a valid and comprehensive sustainability strategy. However, for the most part this strategy relies mostly on the uptake of project achievements by key organizations in the 4 Central Asian countries. Yet, as discussed in several sections in this report, there is a lack of engagement of stakeholders in the project resulting, so far, in a limited national ownership of project results. Additionally, it is not clear how much capacities have been developed in each country to take over some of these results. Based on interviews conducted for this evaluation, stakeholders in these countries have a limited knowledge about what was produced/delivered by the project; hence the issue of national ownership cannot even be a question at this point. This is particularly the situation in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The first recommended step is to communicate the achievements of the project and how they can be transferred in national snow leopard conservation frameworks. Then, if there are interests in some of these results, national ownership may develop over the medium term.

143. Below is a discussion on potential environmental, institutional, financial, and social risks to sustainability and the related assumptions made.

Socio-economic risk to Sustainability

144. The review identified no expected issues that would result in negative social impacts; there is no socio-economic risk to sustainability. In the worst-case scenario, if the project has a very limited impact, it should not have any negative impact other than the “*business as usual*” scenario would continue and the barriers preventing the improvement of coordination and cooperation in the region would remain. Nevertheless, the project has made some progress. It delivered a series of methodologies, manuals, guidelines, plans, etc. which, if successful in being replicated and/or scaled-up, should have positive impacts on the conservation of snow leopard mountain ecosystems in Central Asia, and by extension are expected to improve local community livelihoods and wellbeing through securing ecosystem services that healthy ecosystems provide as well as involving the private sector through the development of conservation partnerships.

Institutional framework and governance risk to Sustainability

145. As described in the project document, the project’s fundamental approach to sustainability lies in building the underlying institutional capacities in the four target countries and more widely in all GSLEP countries to make more informed decisions, based on best practice approaches, for the conservation of snow leopard ecosystems. The strategy was to equip staff in diverse organizations in these countries such as wildlife authorities, protected area managers, border and customs agencies, and other concerned staff with the knowledge and tools required for implementing a snow leopard landscape management approach in both individual countries but importantly across borders in transboundary snow leopard landscapes. Based on the review conducted for this terminal evaluation, it is the main area of concern for the sustainability of project achievements. As discussed in the following section 4.3.8, the project has produced a set of good “public goods”, however, for the project to be successful, these achievements need to be replicated and scaled-up in the four target countries and beyond in all GSLEP countries. This is the main challenge of the project currently and a focus on this aspect until its end is recommended to maximize the chance that national key organizations update and institutionalize these deliverables in their respective structures, procedures and mechanisms.

Environmental risk to Sustainability

146. The review did not find any environmental risks to the sustainability of project outcomes. The project supports the development and implementation of measures to improve transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems. Ultimately, the achievements of the project that is “*to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes that ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus in Central Asia*”, should have a medium and long-term positive environmental impact over natural resources in the target areas. The implementation of new snow leopard conservation measures as well as protection measures for snow leopard landscapes, should render the management of these ecosystems more sustainable over the long-term.

Financial risk to Sustainability

147. Under outcome 3, the project was expected to develop, pilot and share global and national tools for financing snow leopard ecosystem conservation (output 3.2), including transboundary landscapes. It included the development of a long-term funding strategy for the GSLEP Secretariat. Through the project and its own resources, SLT has supported the development of the GSLEP Secretariat, including the mobilization of the private sector. GSLEP also benefited from the support from GTI the umbrella organization under which GSLEP is. As a regional organization completely focused on snow leopard conservation it is paramount that this organization stays its course and develop its capacity over time. It is a key organization for improving transboundary snow leopard landscapes and there is no real alternative besides re-creating a similar organization. However, at this point in time, despite the work supported by the project, the long-term financing of the GSLEP Secretariat is not secured yet. No large donor(s) has come forward ready to support this organization. In the interim, SLT is committed to continue supporting the GSLEP Secretariat for the next 2 years, while continuing the development of a sustainable financing strategy for the Secretariat with its Partners. From a project point of view, the financial risk is that the GSLEP Secretariat would not be able to self-sustain itself over time and be forced to close. In order to help the future of GSLEP, it is recommended that the project develop a roadmap for the way forward, highlighting critical tasks to undertake in order to keep the subject of developing the financial sustainability of GSLEP on key agendas of various funding instruments such as GEF, World Bank, EU and other bilateral donors.

4.3.8. Catalytic Role

148. The GEF defines the catalytic role of projects as one of the ten operational principles for the development and implementation of the GEF work program. The GEF funds projects in such a way that they attract additional resources, pursue strategies that have a greater result than the project itself, and/or accelerate a process of development or change. It recognizes that its support is catalytic in nature: “*it does not achieve impact on its own but rather in collaboration with its partners, especially through follow-up actions by governments and other agents at different scales*”. The GEF’s catalytic role⁹ is characterized as a three-phased approach consisting of foundational activities, then demonstrations, and finally investments. Within this context, the review of the catalytic role of this project is to consider the extent to which the project has demonstrated: a) the production of a “*public good*”, b) demonstration(s), c) replication, and d) scaling up of the project achievements.

149. Considering the GEF definition of the catalytic role, this project has had a certain catalytic role but mostly focusing on foundational activities. When considering the low budget (USD 1M) and the short timeframe (3 years), the project has produced a good list of “*public goods*” such as an illegal wildlife trade database and network; ecotourism principles and recommendations; climate smart management planning guidelines; partners principles training toolkit and manual; training module on species distribution and monitoring; snow leopard population data analysis cheat sheets; snow leopard identification evaluation toolkit; population assessment of the world’s snow leopards (PAWS) guidelines and manuals; prey population assessment manual; Central Tien Shan management plan; an economic valuation of ecosystem services from snow leopard landscapes; development of the snow leopard genome; etc.

150. However, as stated in the project document, this “*project would not be involved in field implementation activities that will affect local communities*”, its ability to demonstrate these tools, guidelines, manuals, and recommendations has been limited. Most of project deliverables are *public goods* but they would need to be fully tested/demonstrated before they can be fully replicated and scaled-up. At this point in time, it is too early to assess the full potential for replication and scaling up.

151. In the meantime, as discussed in other section of this report, the project has delivered high quality outputs which have started to be replicated and scaled-up. One of them is the PAWS methodology. The government of Kyrgyzstan is already in the process of integrating this methodology into their own instruments to monitor wildlife; Tajikistan expressed an interest in this methodology. Other outputs with potential to be replicated and/or scaled-up include the snow leopard genome, the climate smart management planning guidelines, the recommendations for ecotourism principles and the database on illegal wildlife trade.

152. In conclusion, as the project is coming to its end, it has developed a good list of “*public goods*” and it started to demonstrate the usability of the tools, methods, guidelines, skills and knowledge. It is now at the stage of being replicated and scaled-up throughout Central Asia countries and other GSLEP countries. However, as it was discussed in other sections above, the project lacks a good engagement of stakeholders and as a consequence a limited national ownership. This is the main challenge to move forward for replicating and scaling up project achievements, and, consequently, ensuring their long-term sustainability.

⁹ GEF, March 22, 2013, *Fifth Overall Performance Study of the GEF – First Report: Cumulative Evidence on the Challenging Pathways to Impact*

Annex 1: Project Expected Results and Planned Activities

The table below was compiled from the list of expected results and planned activities as anticipated in the project document. It was used during the assignment by the Evaluator as a succinct summary of what is expected from this project. Progress made against these expected results and expected targets was assessed during this evaluation and reported in the TE report.

Long-term goal: Global snow leopard populations, and their critical mountain ecosystems, are in favourable conservation status.

Project Objective: To strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia.

Intended Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Budget per Outcome	Indicative Activities
Outcome 1 – Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems	Output 1.1: Tools, methods and guidelines for effective transboundary cooperation developed, tested and made available to stakeholders	GEF \$399,091 Co-financing \$2,815,936	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the extent of poaching and illegal transboundary trade of Snow Leopard and other wildlife in the four target countries of the Central Asian Region. Recommend improvements of illegal transboundary wildlife trade control to relevant agencies Prepare and distribute widely an atlas and posters of wildlife species and derivatives involved in illegal transboundary trade in the Central Asian Region Prepare training materials and wildlife derivatives collections (confiscated subjects) for Customs Departments to increase their capacity to control illegal transboundary wildlife trade. Review adequacy of legislation for wildlife trade control, of Snow Leopard and other wildlife in the four target countries of the Central Asian Region and as necessary recommend improvements submitted to relevant agencies Develop agreement templates, mechanisms and guidelines for transboundary cooperation covering inter alia: monitoring and information sharing, research, harmonized management of threats, trans-boundary action plans and reporting. Promote these agreement templates and tools both, bilaterally and multi-laterally through recommendations and appropriate follow-up with the Inter-Governmental Commission on Sustainable Development of Central Asia. Publish a user-friendly handbook based on analysis of lessons learned / best practices (successes & failures) of transboundary cooperation for snow leopards, building also on experience for other endangered species in Eurasia (and globally).
	Output 1.2: Training materials and methods developed and disseminated, including through an on-line platform		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize a comprehensive Training Plan based on a detailed needs assessment for each target group as already achieved by the GSLEP programme, targeting all relevant stakeholders (national in the four countries, plus those in the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan pilot landscape) including public sector organizations, NGOs and private sector. Ensure a high level of gender mainstreaming in the plan to maximize participation of, and benefits to, women. Implement the Training Plan through user-friendly manuals, training workshops, facilitated learning by doing, and exchange visits; including the adoption of the training of trainers approach Monitor closely progress in capacity development in the four range countries using the Capacity Assessment Scorecard

Intended Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Budget per Outcome	Indicative Activities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate materials prepared under Output 1.1. among relevant agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders via the project Website and other on-line resources such as NBSAP Forum and BES-Net.
	Output 1.3: Effective enforcement mechanisms developed and introduced to enforcement agencies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map out the various enforcement mechanisms (regulations, monitoring, apprehending, and prosecution) from the range countries, analyze these in terms of what works and what does not and provide recommendations to improve wildlife crime management effectiveness through a multi-agency approach; focusing on the Customs Departments of the four target countries Collaborate with key partners such as INTERPOL and TRAFFIC to benefit from their immense experience with environmental crime enforcement, in particular taking advantage of INTERPOL's joint initiative on snow leopard protection to enhance law enforcement responses to the poaching of snow leopards in Central Asia. Organize regional and national meetings of Customs Departments, police and border agencies on international cooperation and information exchange to improve illegal wildlife transboundary trade control in Central Asia. Organize specific trainings for Customs Departments on illegal wildlife transboundary trade control, including use of detection dogs for identification of wildlife derivatives and other best practice approaches. Pilot/demonstrate specific measures on the ground in the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan pilot landscape. Arrange coordination meeting of wildlife agencies of Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan to find mechanisms to exchange information and experience on poaching and illegal wildlife trade control. Organize inter-agency agreements for organization of anti-poaching brigades for snow leopard protection involving wildlife agencies, PA inspectors, border guards and hunting outfitters Arrange trainings for relevant agencies/border guards on advanced techniques and inter-agency cooperation for anti-poaching activities using modern technology and intelligence networks. Arrange cooperation between regional wildlife experts and officers of regional Customs and Border Posts for identification of wildlife derivatives discovered.
Outcome 2 – Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries	Output 2.1: Common monitoring indicators and methods for snow leopard landscapes and populations developed, tested and disseminated	GEF \$300,000 Co-financing \$714,016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a common monitoring framework based on a set of universal indicators and standard tools for monitoring snow leopard landscapes (including snow leopard and prey species populations, and ecosystem health) at regional, national (NSLEP) and global (GSLEP) levels. It will be based on a review of different methods being used in each country, plus an analysis of international best practices, plus practical experiences gained during working with relevant stakeholders in the pilot landscape. Finalize the draft monitoring framework based on feedback from range countries and partners (including the Project Technical Committee) and then submit it for approval by all 12 range countries at a workshop to be organized through the GSLEP mechanism in 2016. Once approved, the monitoring framework will feed directly into the monitoring functions of the GSLEP Steering Committee, through a mechanism for periodic data sharing. It will also serve as a key tool for landscape level management planning and reporting in each country. Support the four target countries to embed the common monitoring framework in their national monitoring programmes and institutions. This may be achieved through regional workshops, targeted technical

Intended Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Budget per Outcome	Indicative Activities
			support to national agencies as well as a specific training course for PA staff, wildlife agencies and other relevant organizations of Central Asian countries on monitoring methods of snow leopard and its prey species and habitats (held in the pilot transboundary landscape).
	Output 2.2: Spatial database for monitoring and management of one transboundary landscape is developed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and test a database structure and user-friendly interface which would be advised by the Project Technical Committee and then approved by all range countries. Once approved, the GIS database would be made available to stakeholders and the public via powerful online servers (e.g. ESRI). • Test and demonstrate the application of this spatial database for assessing and monitoring snow leopard populations and ecosystems in the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan transboundary snow leopard landscape, using participatory GIS techniques were necessary and appropriate • Incorporate the database into institutional frameworks at pilot landscape level (e.g. local authorities), as well as providing GIS training on using the GIS database to relevant organizations.
	Output 2.3: Sustainable landscape management measures are identified and presented to stakeholders for implementation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalize the use of the spatial database as a tool for developing sustainable landscape management measures for the pilot landscape and integrate them into local and regional development planning. It will involve a series of local stakeholder events to discuss the baseline environmental and socio-economic situation in the pilot landscape and to obtain a broad understanding of the key drivers of change. Stakeholders will then be supported to develop a common vision and objectives (environmental, social and economic) for the pilot landscape, based upon a range of scenarios derived from the GIS database. Management measures for achieving each of the objectives will then be formulated and agreed for inclusion into local and regional development planning. Issues regarding habitat connectivity resulting from human activities and from climate change will be given high priority. Implementation of the recommendations will be promoted through joint working with national level UNDP/GEF and other partner programmes in the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan transboundary snow leopard landscape.
Outcome 3 - Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems	Output 3.1: Global coordination mechanism for technical support, resource development and knowledge-sharing is strengthened	GEF \$210,000 Co-financing \$642,048	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop for immediate implementation an operational 5-year plan and budget for GSLEP Secretariat coordination activities on conservation and monitoring of snow leopard Priority Landscapes. • Enhance the GSLEP website and communication mechanisms in support of the range countries and partners. • Organized two key GSLEP secretariat international meetings for the 12 range countries. The first, to be held in Year 1 of the project, will be an expert community of practice event to share best practices in transboundary cooperation, and to approve the common monitoring framework. The second, to be held in Year 3 of the project will be a GSLEP Summit of range countries and international partners to evaluate success of National and Global GSLEP programmes, disseminate lessons learned and plan future activities. Both meetings will be largely funded by the project partners with a small share of the GEF funding to support participation of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
	Output 3.2: Global and national tools for financing snow leopard ecosystem conservation developed, piloted and shared		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire an international financing specialist to work alongside a local consultant, to develop a 5-year sustainable funding strategy for GSLEP based upon a feasibility study. • Facilitate the organization of donor coordination and multi-stakeholder consultations including a donor meeting in the second half of the project (including range countries, bilateral and multilateral development agencies, private sector) leading to approval of a long term strategy and commitment to

Intended Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Budget per Outcome	Indicative Activities
			<p>mobilize resources to implement GSLEP and NSLEP actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and make available to range countries guidelines on integrated financing strategies for implementing NSLEPs, considering resource mobilization from a range of sources including government budgetary resources, official donor assistance, private sector and other innovative funding mechanisms (e.g. PES, conservation bonds, biodiversity offsets etc.) • Explore and support the development of a robust GSLEP Funding Strategy which would include fund-raising from diverse sources, with the establishment of a consortium of partners to provide share funding for snow leopard conservation in the selected transboundary landscape, • Build Targeted National portfolios of projects to engage the business sector in SL conservation in Central Asian Countries. • Engage large corporations to support conservation of SL Priority Landscapes • Establish a confederation of Industries for snow leopard conservation in Central Asian countries. This may also involve the creation of a new financial mechanism involving the allocation of a percentage share of annual revenue from hunting concessions to the Snow Leopard Trust. • Establish a sustainable funding mechanism for the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan pilot landscape through a consortium of partners • Conduct a rapid economic valuation of the pilot landscape ecosystem services, leading to a feasibility study for promotion of PES in the project landscape as a sustainable financing tool.
	Output 3.3: Private sector dialogue platforms established		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish dialogue platforms at both national and global levels to engage with private companies that are working in or making use of resources from the snow leopard range, such as mining and hydropower companies, tourism companies, and pharmaceutical companies. • Organize sector specific discussions on links between snow leopard landscapes and ecosystems and private sector operations in order to explore opportunities for private companies to identify and adopt measures that reduce negative impacts on snow leopard ecosystems and to increase resource flows from the private sector to snow leopard conservation actions at national and global levels, using mechanisms such as Payments for Ecosystem Services, Offsetting, and Corporate Social Responsibility contributions. • Prepare targeted national portfolios of projects to engage the business sector in snow leopard conservation in Central Asian Countries and globally, based on assessment of potentials. Based on these portfolios, engage large corporations to support conservation of snow leopard priority landscapes and GSLEP implementation in cooperation with the Global Tiger Initiative which already has much experience in this regard. • Establish a Confederation of Industries for snow leopard conservation in Central Asian countries.
Project Management		GEF: \$90,909 + Co-financing: \$24,000	
Total Budget		GEF: \$1,000,000 + Co-financing: \$4,196,000 = Total Financing: \$5,196,000	

Source: Project Document

Annex 2: Terms of Reference



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR TERMINAL EVALUATION:

Project Title: “Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation”

Functional Title: International Consultant for Terminal Evaluation

Duration: 20 working days during May-June 2020

Terms of Payment: Lump sum payable upon satisfactory completion and approval by UNDP of all deliverables, including the Evaluation Report

Duty station: Home based

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation (PIMS 5413, PID 00102964).

The Terminal evaluation aims to determine the potential impacts and sustainability of the project results, including its contribution to capacity building and achievement of Global and National environmental initiatives. The terminal evaluation will determine and describe lessons learned and will develop recommendations to be used by project partners in order to strengthen their capacity in planning and implementation of similar projects.

The Terminal evaluation will:

- Identify factors, which have had positive or negative impacts on project implementation;
- Assess the correlation of project activities with local and national development priorities and organizational policy, including progressive changes;
- Assess the project efficiency, i.e. level of project goal achievement;
- Assess sustainability and project results;
- Present lessons learned from project implementation and management.

Findings of this evaluation will be considered as lessons learned and will assist in developing recommendations to strengthen institutional sustainability of project outputs (possible implementation of such activities in other countries of the region).

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

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project Title:	"Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation"			
GEF Project ID: UNDP GEF Project ID (PIMS):	#5413		at endorsement (US\$)	at completion (US\$)
Atlas award ID: Atlas project ID:	00099684 00102964	GEF financing:	1,000,000	1,000,000
Country:	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan	IA/EA own:	400,000	400,000
Region:	ECIS	Government:	Kyrgyz Republic 900,000 Republic of Tajikistan 700,000	Kyrgyz Republic 900,000 Republic of Tajikistan 700,000
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other:	SLT 600,000 NABU 616,000 Panthera 300,000 FFI 80,000 WWF-US 600,000	SLT 600,000 NABU 616,000 Panthera 300,000 FFI 80,000 WWF-US 600,000
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):		Total co-financing:	4,196,000	4,196,000
Executing Agency:	UNDP	Total Project Cost:	5,196,000	5,196,000
Implementing Partner (based on	The International			

Project Cooperation Agreement)	Snow Leopard Trust			
Other Partners involved:	Stakeholders listed in the Project Document	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		7 February 2017
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: December 31, 2020	Actual: December 31, 2020

PROJECT OVERVIEW (OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE)

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

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

“Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation” project is fully NGO implemented. In August 2017 following the microassessment, Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed between UNDP in Kyrgyzstan and the International Snow Leopard Trust (SLT)- international NGO.

The project aimed to strengthen transboundary conservation for snow leopards and their high mountain ecosystems to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia. The project will specifically target four Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), with approaches being piloted in one transboundary snow leopard landscape: the Sarychat / Northern Tien Shan landscape (39,500 km²) which is shared between Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan. Direct GEF funding will only go to these four Central Asian countries. It builds upon, and supports, the efforts of the 12 snow leopard range countries who have committed to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP). The project will achieve its objective by gathering, developing and making available best practices to support transboundary actions for snow leopard ecosystem conservation, establishing a common monitoring framework and strengthening global coordination mechanisms. The results will be relevant for four countries of Central Asia but also for all 12 snow leopard range countries.

The snow leopard is classified by IUCN as Endangered, with an estimated global population of 3500-7000. As an apex predator, snow leopards are indicators of healthy high-mountain ecosystems in Central and South Asia that provide essential ecosystem services to millions of people. Ensuring healthy populations of snow leopards will therefore secure both the rich biodiversity of these areas, as well as other multiple benefits. Current threats include illegal wildlife trade, habitat degradation and climate change. A high degree of international cooperation is essential to address such threats, particularly as snow leopards range across many international borders.

The project is designed to produce three main outcomes:

Component 1: Knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes

Component 2: Global and national monitoring framework for snow leopard ecosystems.

Component 3: Ensuring sustainability of snow leopard conservation

The project will thus develop and demonstrate best practice approaches, build capacity and facilitate national implementation for trans-boundary collaboration for snow leopard ecosystem conservation at the global level. It builds upon the already significant baseline of the GSLEP and will be fully integrated with GEF-financed activities relating to snow leopards in the relevant countries

The Project has primary results summarized below:

1. Illegal Wildlife Trade Database, network and processes

2. Ecotourism Principles and Recommendations
3. Climate Smart Management Planning Guidelines along with advice documents
4. PARTNERS Principles training toolkit and manual
5. Training module on species distribution and monitoring
6. Snow leopard population data analysis cheat sheets
7. Snow leopard identification evaluation toolkit
8. Population Assessment of the World's Snow leopards (PAWS): Inception, Action plans, training workshops, periodic meetings, guidelines and manuals
9. Prey population assessment manual
10. Central Tien Shan Management Plan
11. Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Forum 2017
12. Bishkek Declaration 2017
13. Thematic Background Papers For Snow Leopard And Ecosystem Conservation Forum Policy Recommendations
14. Issykkul Statement 2018
15. Shenzhen Consensus for snow leopard conservation 2018
16. New Delhi Statement 2019
17. Economic valuation of ecosystem services from snow leopard landscapes
18. Balanced Acceptance Sampling (using Halton's Iterative Partitioning) and other methodological cheat sheets for designing surveys
19. CITES Training workshops in Bishkek bringing representatives and frontline staff from Central Asian range countries
20. Formation of Kyrgyz NEST
21. SMART adaptation to snow leopard landscapes including possible use of drones for monitoring snow leopard prey and anti-poaching patrolling
22. Design and implementation of surveys in Kyrgyz compliant to PAWS processes through collaboration between prominent snow leopard organizations in the country and SAEPF
23. Green Economy Strategy Document
24. MoUs with entrepreneurs and businesses
25. Celebrity engagement for publicity
26. Trans-boundary MoU for snow leopard and ecosystem conservation between Central Asian countries
27. Engagement with relevant agencies and partner organizations in other snow leopard range countries to develop sustainable conservation plans
28. Development of Snow Leopard Genome
29. Conservation Monitoring Guideline
30. Spatial datasets for management plans
31. Resource and Capacity center within GSLEP website

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The purpose of TE are:

- To assess overall performance against the project objective and outcomes as set out in the Project Document, project's Logical Framework and other related documents;
- To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project;
- To analyze critically the implementation and management arrangements of the project;
- To assess the progress to date towards achievement of the outcomes;
- To review planned strategies and plans for achieving the overall objective of the project within the timeframe;
- To assess the sustainability of the project's interventions;
- To list and document initial lessons concerning project design, implementation and management;
- To assess project relevance to national priorities (including achieving gender equality goals);
- To provide guidance for the future project activities and, if necessary, for the implementation and management arrangements.

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

An overall approach and method¹⁰ for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects have been developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR ([see Annex C](#)). The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal points, UNDP Country Offices, SLT project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum:

Key stakeholders:

- UNDP Kyrgyzstan Senior Management (Principal Office);
- UNDP COs in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan;
- GEF Operational Focal Points in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan;
- UNDP IRH in Istanbul;
- GSLEP Secretariat based in Bishkek;
- Snow Leopard Trust (SLT);
- Global Tiger Initiative (GTI) Council, New Delhi;
- Intergovernmental organizations, conventions and multilateral agencies;
- Academic and research institutions;
- International NGOs working in Central Asia;
- National NGOs engaged in snow leopard conservation in Central Asia;
- Private sector organizations;
- Local level stakeholders in pilot landscape;
- Other stakeholders as requested by the Evaluator.

It is recommended that the evaluation methodology include the following:

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

Evaluator should seek guidance for his/her work in the following materials, which could be found at www.erc.undp.org

- UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results
- UNDP/GEF M&E Resource Guide

EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework ([see Annex A](#)), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The

¹⁰ For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163

evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in [Annex D](#).

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>rating</i>	2. IA& EA Execution	<i>rating</i>
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	<i>rating</i>	4. Sustainability	<i>rating</i>
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

PROJECT FINANCE / COFINANCE

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

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (M US\$)		Government (M US\$)		Partner Agency (M US\$)		Total (M US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
• In-kind support								
• Other								
Totals								

MAINSTREAMING

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

IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.¹¹

¹¹ A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROtI Handbook 2009](#)

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report ([Annex F](#)) must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions**, **recommendations** and **lessons**. Conclusions should build on findings and be based in evidence. Recommendations should be prioritized, specific, relevant, and targeted, with suggested implementers of the recommendations. Lessons should have wider applicability to other initiatives across the region, the area of intervention, and for the future.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in **Kyrgyzstan (Principal Office)**. The Principal UNDP CO will contract the evaluator and ensure the timely support to the Evaluator. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluator to set up online stakeholder interviews, coordinate with the Government etc.

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be 20 days according to the following indicative plan:

Activity	Timing (indicative)	Completion Date (indicative)
Preparation (desk review)	3 days (May 2020)	7 May 2020
Evaluation (interviews and presentation of preliminary findings)	7 days (May, 2020)	20 May 2020
Draft Evaluation Report	5 days (May, 2020)	29 May 2020
Final Report	5 days (May-June 2020)	10 June 2020

EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	No later than 1 week before the interviews (by 7 May 2020)	Evaluator submits to Principal UNDP CO and SLT
Presentation	Initial Findings	After the interviews completed (by 20 May 2020)	Evaluator makes a presentation for the UNDP COs, SLT, key stakeholders and members of the Project Board
Draft Final Report	Draft evaluation report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within 2 weeks after the interviews completed (by 29 May 2020)	Evaluator submits to Principal UNDP CO and SLT. Reviewed by COs, SLT, IRH RTA, GEF OFPs
Final Report*	Final report addressing and integrating feedback and comments	Within a week time after receiving comments on the draft (by 10 June 2020)	CO uploads to UNDP ERC.

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report. See Annex [Annex G and H](#) for an evaluation clearance form and an audit trail template.

TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation team will be composed of *1 international consultant. The consultant shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects.* The international Consultant has responsibility over submission of a final report. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities. The Project will provide an interpreter for the interviews with the stakeholders (if needed).

The International Consultant will be responsible to deliver the expected output of the assignment. Specifically, he/she will perform the following tasks:

- Manage the evaluation
- Design the detailed evaluation plan
- Conduct desk reviews and interviews in order to obtain objective and verifiable data to substantive evaluation assessment
- Draft the evaluation report and share for comments
- Finalize the evaluation report based on inputs from key stakeholders

The International Consultant must present the following qualifications:

- University degree in natural resource management / environmental management / related areas;
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in the field of environmental management;
- Proven track record of evaluation of projects focusing on conservation of biodiversity and/or land degradation confirmed with at least two project evaluations;
- At least one project evaluation with GEF M&E policies and procedures;
- Familiarity with UNDP Gender Equality Strategy is an asset;
- Experience in working in Central Asian or CIS countries is an asset;
- Fluency in English. Knowledge of Russian is an asset;

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEP 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#)

PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

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

The remuneration of work performed will be conducted as follows: lump sum payable in 1 installment, upon satisfactory completion and approval by Principal UNDP-CO and UNDP-RTA of the Final TE Report.

Consultant's Independence:

The consultant cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

Financial Proposal (home based):

- Financial proposals must be “all inclusive” and expressed in a lump sum for the total duration of the contract. The term “all inclusive” implies all cost (professional fees and etc.);
- The lump sum is fixed regardless of changes in the cost components.

Schedule of Payments:

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

The remuneration of work performed will be conducted as follows: lump sum payable in one installment, upon satisfactory completion and approval by Principal UNDP-CO and UNDP-RTA of the Final TE Report.

Recommended Presentation of Offer

Candidates meeting the minimum ToR requirements will be sourced from the [UNDP IRH vetted roster of experts](#) and will be invited to submit the following documents:

- a) Completed **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#) provided by UNDP;
- b) Personal CV or a **P11 Personal History form**, indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate;
- c) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template provided - “Letter of Confirmation of Interest template for financial proposal template”.

Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

Application documents should be submitted no later than **18:00 (Bishkek time), April 26, 2020** to email: procurement.env.kg@undp.org

K. Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply. The award of the contract will be made to the Individual Consultant who offers the best value for money.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RECOMMENDED CONTRACTOR

Statement of Medical Fitness for Work

Individual Consultants/Contractors whose assignments require travel and who are over 62 years of age are required, at their own costs, to undergo a full medical examination including x-rays and obtaining medical clearance from UN –approved doctor, prior to taking up their assignment.

Where there is no UN office nor a UN Medical Doctor present in the location of the Individual Contractor prior to commencing the travel, either for repatriation or duty travel, the Individual Contractor may choose his/her own preferred physician to obtain the required medical clearance.

Inoculations/Vaccinations

Individual Contractors are required to have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director. The cost of required vaccinations/inoculations, when foreseeable, must be included in the financial proposal. Any unforeseeable vaccination/inoculation cost will be reimbursed by UNDP.

No TRAVELS (home based)

SECURITY CLEARANCE

THE CONSULTANT WILL BE REQUESTED TO UNDERTAKE

The BSAFE, Basic Security in the Field II and Advanced Security in the Field courses must be successfully completed prior to commencement of travel;

UNDP will provide the Consultant with the following:

1. Project documents (see list of documents on Annex B);
2. Contact details of Project partners and stakeholders;
3. Interpreter for online interviews, as necessary.

Annexes to the MTR ToR

Annex A: Project Logical Framework

Annex B: List Of Documents To Be Reviewed By The Evaluators

Annex C: Evaluation Questions

Annex D: Rating Scales

Annex E: Evaluation Consultant Code Of Conduct And Agreement Form

Annex F: Evaluation Report Outline

Annex G: Evaluation Report Clearance Form

Annex H: Te Report Audit Trail

Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation matrix below served as a general guide for the evaluation. It provided directions for the evaluation; particularly for the collection of relevant data. It was used as a basis for interviewing people and reviewing project documents. It also provided a basis for structuring the evaluation report as a whole.

Reviewed Component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
Review criteria: Relevance - How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF, UNDP and to favorably conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems with a special focus on Central Asia?				
<i>How is the Project relevant to GEF objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the Project support the related strategic priorities of the GEF? What regional & international commitments/agreements did the project contribute to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between project objectives and those of the GEF Level of contribution to GEF tracking tools Participation at international meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents GEF policies and strategies GEF web site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents analyses Interviews with government officials and other partners Field visits
<i>How is the Project relevant to UNDP objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the project support the objectives of UNDP in this sector? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of a clear relationship between project objectives and country programme objectives of UNDP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents UNDP strategies and programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents analyses Interviews with government officials and other partners Field visits
<i>How is the Project relevant to the global conservation of snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems with a special focus on Central Asia?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project follow governments' stated priorities? How does the Project support the introduction of a conservation of global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems with a special focus on Central Asia? Does the project address the identified problems? How countries-driven is the Project? Does the Project adequately take into account national realities, both in terms of institutional framework and programming, in its design and its implementation? To what extent were national partners involved in the design of the Project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of community ownership in countries (national and local levels) Degree of coherence between the project and local, regional and national priorities, policies and strategies; particularly related to the conservation of global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities? Level of involvement of Government officials and other partners into the project Coherence between needs expressed by national stakeholders and UNDP criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents National policies, strategies and programmes Key government officials and other partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents analyses Interviews with government officials and other partners
<i>How does the Project address the needs of target beneficiaries?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the project support the needs of target beneficiaries? Is the implementation of the project being inclusive of all relevant Stakeholders? Are local beneficiaries and stakeholders adequately involved in project formulation and implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of the link between project expected results and the needs of target beneficiaries Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of beneficiaries and stakeholders in project design and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiaries and stakeholders Needs assessment studies Project documents Field observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders Field visits
Future directions for similar Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment between the project and the Partners' priorities and areas of focus? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected throughout evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis

Reviewed Component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How could the project better target and address priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries? 			
Review criteria: Coherence – How well does the project fit with interventions to conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems, particularly in Central Asia?				
How is the coherence between the project and other interventions carried out by the same project's Partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there contradictions between the different projects' objectives of Partners? Are there duplications between their activities? Are there any interlinkages and synergies between the project and other projects implemented by the Partners? To what extent is the project coherent with international norms and standards as well as international obligations that Central Asian countries signed up to? Is there convergence between the objective of the project and those of the project's Partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between the project objective and those of the project's Partners Level of coherence between the project and international norms and standards as well as international obligations committed by Central Asian countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Partners policies and strategies Partners' web sites Documents from other projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents analyses Interviews with government officials and other Partners/projects Field visits
Is the Project internally coherent in its design?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were GEF criteria for project identification adequate in view of actual needs? Was the project sourced through a demand-driven approach? Is there a direct and strong link between project expected results (Result and Resources Framework) and the project design (in terms of project components, choice of partners, structure, delivery mechanism, scope, budget, use of resources etc.)? Is the length of the project conducive to achieve project outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between project expected results and internal project design logic Level of coherence between project design and project implementation approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program and project documents Key project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Key Interviews
How is the coherence between the project and other relevant interventions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project coherent in terms of areas of focus and targeting of key activities within the context of other donors' strategies? How does GEF help to fill gaps (or give additional stimulus) that are crucial but are not covered by other donors? To what extent interventions undertaken by different donors support (or undermine) the same objective of the project? Is there any overlap (or not) between the project and other similar interventions in Central Asian countries which are implemented by other donors? If any, to what extent efforts are being made to minimize/eliminate them? Are the design and implementation of similar interventions implemented by other donors harmonized and coordinated to avoid duplication of effort? In what ways? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the project was coherent and complementary to other donor programming List of programs and funds in which future developments, ideas and partnerships of the project are eligible? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Donors' policies and programming documents Other Donor representatives Project documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents analyses Interviews with other Donors
Future directions for similar Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment, its 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected throughout evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis

Reviewed Component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
	coherence and complementarity between the project and other relevant interventions?			
Review criteria: Effectiveness – To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?				
<i>How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the project being effective in achieving its expected outcomes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems What are the factors which contributed to these achievements? Were there any delays? Were there any factors beyond the control of the project and government which affected the implementation of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of execution of outputs under the three outcomes Degree to which the project contributes to favorably conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems New methodologies, skills and knowledge Change in capacity for information management: knowledge acquisition and sharing; effective data gathering, methods and procedures for reporting. Change in capacity for awareness raising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder involvement and government awareness Change in local stakeholder behavior Change in capacity in policy making and planning to improve the conservation of global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy reform Legislation/regulation change Development of national and local strategies and plans Change in capacity in implementation and enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implementation of risk assessments Implementation of national and local strategies and action plans through adequate institutional frameworks and their maintenance Monitoring and evaluation Change in capacity in mobilizing resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage of resources Human resources Appropriate practices Mobilization of advisory services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Key stakeholders including UNDP, Project Team, Representatives of Gov. and other Partners Research findings Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents analysis Meetings with main Project Partners and Project Team Interviews with project beneficiaries Field visits
<i>How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well are risks and assumptions being managed? What is the quality of risk mitigation strategies developed? Are they sufficient? Are there clear strategies for risk mitigation related with long-term sustainability of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning Quality of existing information systems in place to identify emerging risks and other issues? Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atlas risk log Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and Project Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews
Future directions for similar Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What lessons have been learnt for the project to achieve its outcomes? What changes could have been made (if any) to the formulation of the project in order to improve the achievement of project's expected results? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected throughout evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis

Reviewed Component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How could the project be more effective in achieving its results? 			
Review criteria: Efficiency – Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?				
<i>Is Project resources channeled in an efficient way?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use? Does the Project Results Framework and work plans and any changes made to them used as management tools during implementation? Are accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information? How adequate is the M&E framework (indicators & targets)? Are progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes? Is project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual) Is the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happened as planned? Are financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently? How is RBM used during project implementation? Is the project decision-making effective? Does the government provide continuous strategic directions to the project's formulation and implementation? Are there an institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanisms to ensure that findings, lessons learned and recommendations pertaining to project formulation and implementation effectiveness were shared among project stakeholders, UNDP staff and other relevant organizations for ongoing project adjustment and improvement? Does the project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical and financial delivery of annual work plans Availability and quality of financial and progress reports Timeliness and adequacy of reporting provided Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures Planned vs. actual funds leveraged Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations Adequacy of project choices in view of existing context, infrastructure and cost Quality of RBM reporting (progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation) Occurrence of change in project formulation/ implementation approach (i.e. restructuring) when needed to improve project efficiency Existence, quality and use of M&E, feedback and dissemination mechanism to share findings, lessons learned and recommendation on effectiveness of project design. Cost associated with delivery mechanism and management structure compare to alternatives Gender disaggregated data in project documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Representatives of Gov. and Project Team Beneficiaries and Project partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Key Interviews
<i>How efficient are partnership arrangements for the Project?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do governments demonstrate their ownership of the projects? Did governments provide counterparts to the project? To what extent partnerships/linkages between institutions/ organizations are encouraged and supported? Which partnerships/linkages are facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable? What is the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP and relevant government entities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of ownership of project amongst project Partners Level of community ownership and implementation of activities Level of stakeholder collaboration and support for execution of activities Identification and justification for activities beyond control of government Specific activities conducted to support the development of cooperative arrangements between partners, Examples of supported partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations Project Partners UNDP, Representatives of Gov. and Project Team Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews

Reviewed Component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which methods were successful or not and why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized 		
<i>Does the Project efficiently utilize local capacity in implementation?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise and local capacity? Does the project support mutual benefits through sharing of knowledge and experiences, training, technology transfer among developing countries? Did the Project take into account local capacity in formulation and implementation of the project? Was there an effective collaboration with scientific institutions with competence in community resilience to climate change variability and risks? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of total expertise utilized taken from CA countries Number/quality of analyses done to assess local capacity potential and absorptive capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and Project partners Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews
Future directions for similar Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What lessons can be learnt from the project on efficiency? How could the project have more efficiently addressed its key priorities (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements etc....)? What changes could have been made (if any) to the project in order to improve its efficiency? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected throughout evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis
Review criteria: Impacts - Are there indications that the project has contributed to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia?				
<i>How is the Project effective in achieving its objective?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project achieve its objective that is “to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia?” Did the project contribute to the reduction of environmental stress and/or ecological stress? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributions of impacts to environmental stress and/or ecological stress Changes in capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To pool/mobilize resources To provide an enabling environment, For implementation of related strategies and programmes through adequate institutional frameworks and their maintenance, Changes in use and implementation of sustainable alternatives Changes to the quantity and strength of barriers such as change in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of an effective system for knowledge generation and sharing for transboundary landscapes Absence of a common monitoring framework for measuring progress and evaluating success National and Global snow leopard ecosystem protection programs have been drafted but at are not currently funded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Key Stakeholders Research findings Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents analysis Meetings with UNDP, Project Team and project Partners Interviews with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders Field visits

Reviewed Component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
<i>How is the Project impacting the local environment?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the impacts or likely impacts of the project on? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local environment; Poverty; and, Other socio-economic issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide specific examples of impacts at those three levels, as relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Key Stakeholders Research findings Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis Interviews with key stakeholders Field visits
Future directions for the Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How could the project build on its successes and learn from its weaknesses in order to enhance the potential for impact of ongoing and future initiatives? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected throughout evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis
Review criteria: Sustainability - To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?				
<i>Are sustainability issues adequately integrated in Project design?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were sustainability issues integrated into the formulation and implementation of the project? Does the project employ government implementing and/or monitoring systems? Is the government involved in the sustainability strategy for project outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence/Quality of sustainability strategy Evidence/Quality of steps taken to address sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and project Partners Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews
<i>Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues? Are the recurrent costs after project completion sustainable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level and source of future financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities after project end? Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs Level of financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities by in-country actors after project end Evidence of commitments from international partners, governments or other stakeholders to financially support relevant sectors of activities after project end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and project Partners Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews
<i>Are there organizational arrangements and continuation of activities issues?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are project results well assimilated by organizations and their internal systems and procedures? Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support? Has there been a buy-in process, or was there no need to sell the project and buy support? What degree is there of local ownership of initiatives and results? Were appropriate 'champions' being identified and/or supported? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts or institutions/organizations Number/quality of champions identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and project Partners Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews
<i>Is there an adequate enabling environment to</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are laws, policies and frameworks addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms? Are the necessary related capacities for lawmaking and enforcement built? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efforts to support the development of relevant laws and policies State of enforcement and law-making capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and project Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews

Reviewed Component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
<i>sustain project achievements?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the level of political commitment to build on the results of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of commitment by the political class through speeches, enactment of laws and resource allocation to priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiaries 	
<i>Will institutional and individual capacities adequate at the end of the project</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the capacity in place at the national, and local level adequate to ensure sustainability of results achieved to date? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements in place in those different management functions, at appropriate levels (national and local) in terms of adequate structures, strategies, systems, skills, incentives and interrelationships with other key actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and project Partners Beneficiaries Capacity assessments available, if any 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Documentation review
<i>Are there any social and/or political sustainability issues?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the project contribute to key building blocks for social and political sustainability? Did the project contribute to local Stakeholders' acceptance of the new practices? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example of contributions to sustainable political and social change with regard to the management and monitoring of the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations UNDP, Project Team and project Partners Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Documentation review
<i>Will achievements be replicable?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were project activities and results replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up? What was the project contribution to replication or scaling up of innovative practices or mechanisms? Does the project have a catalytic role? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number/quality of replicated initiatives Number/quality of replicated innovative initiatives Volume of additional investment leveraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other donor programming documents Beneficiaries UNDP, Project Team and project Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews
<i>Are there any challenges to sustainability of the Project</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts? Have any of these been addressed through project management? What could be possible measures to further contribute to the sustainability of efforts achieved with the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges in view of building blocks of sustainability as presented above Recent changes which may present new challenges to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and evaluations Beneficiaries UNDP, Project Team and project Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews
Future directions for the Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results? What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed? How can the experience and good project practices influence the strategies to favorably conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems? Are national decision-making institutions (Parliaments, Governments, etc.) ready to improve their measures to favorably conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected throughout evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis

Annex 4: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation Consultants

Evaluators / Consultants:

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

Evaluation 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:
Jean-Joseph Bellamy

Signed in: Ottawa on May 15, 2020

Signature:  _____

Annex 5: List of Documents Reviewed

BDO, April 9, 2019, UNDP – Audit Report – Audit of the Implementing Partner: International Snow Leopard Trust

European Commission, 2017, Larger than Tigers: Inputs for a Strategic Approach to Biodiversity Conservation in Asia – Central Asia Report

European Commission, 2017, Larger than Tigers: Inputs for a Strategic Approach to Biodiversity Conservation in Asia – Regional Reports

European Commission, 2017, Larger than Tigers: Inputs for a Strategic Approach to Biodiversity Conservation in Asia – Synthesis Report

European Commission, Background Note on “Larger than Tigers” in Central Asia

European Commission, Larger than Tigers: Biodiversity Conservation Strategic Approach for Asia

GEF, April 26, 2011, Proposal for Enhancing the Visibility of the GEF (GEF/C.40/08)

GEF, Brand Guidelines & Graphic Standards

GEF, GEF Secretariat Review for Full/Medium Sized Projects

GEF, GEF-6 Programming Directions (Extract from GEF Assembly Document GEF/A.5/07/Rev.01, May 22, 2014)

GEF, GEF-7 Child Project Concept: Integrated Community-based Management for Abatement of Human-Wildlife Conflict and Wildlife Crime in Southern Kyrgyzstan

GEF, June 1, 2018, GEF Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF-7 (GEF/C.54/05)

GEF, Project Identification Form (PIF)

GEF, Request for CEO Endorsement

GEF, UNDP, 2018 Project Implementation Review (PIR)

GEF, UNDP, 2020 (DRAFT) Project Implementation Review (PIR)

Moore Stephens, July 25, 2017, UNDP Micro Assessment – International Snow Leopard Trust

SLT, GEF, UNDP, March 2018, SLT-RSL Project Inception Report

SLT, GEF, UNDP, Project Presentation

SLT, GEF, UNDP, Quarterly Narrative Reports from Q3 2017 to Q2 2020.

SLT-RSL Project, AWP 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Stanford University, Program for Conservation Genomics – Presentation

UNDP, April 2016, Capacity Assessment Report for the Snow Leopard Trust

UNDP, CDRs 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

UNDP, GEF, SLT, Government of Kyrgyzstan, PPG Mission 3-9 May 2015 - Notes for File

UNDP, GEF, SLT, Government of Kyrgyzstan, Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation - Project Document

UNDP, Joint Work Plan of UNDP Programmes on Gender Mainstreaming – 2018, 2019

UNDP, July 1, 2011, National Implementation by the Government of UNDP Supported Projects: Guidelines and Procedures

UNDP, Letter to Delegate Authority for the project to UNDP Kyrgyzstan

UNDP, Non-Governmental Organizations Implementation

UNDP, Project-Level Evaluation – Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects

UNDP, Risk Log in Atlas

UNDP, UNDP Guidelines for Engagement with NGOs under Country Based Pooled Funds – Guidance Notes for Country Offices

World Bank Group, GEF, The Global Wildlife Program – Knowledge Platform 2019

_____, Concept Note for Kyrgyzstan’s GEF-7 STAR Allocation

_____, Global Wildlife Program – Reducing Poaching, Reducing Trafficking, Reducing Demand

_____, Minutes of the Meeting of the GSLEP Program and the PB Meeting of the GEF-UNDP-SLT Project, New Delhi, October 24, 2019

_____, Minutes of the PB Meeting of the UNDP-GEF-SLT Project, December 27, 2019

_____, Quarterly FACE Reports from Q3 2017 to Q1 2020

_____, Snow Leopard Trust Report for the Snow Leopard Genome Project 2019

_____, Standard Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) Between UNDP and a Non-Governmental Organization (SLT)

_____, Standard Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) Between UNDP and a Non-Governmental Organization (SLT) – Amendment to August 6, 2020

_____, Standard Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) Between UNDP and a Non-Governmental Organization (SLT) – Amendment to February 6, 2020

List of Documents Received from SLT:

Attachment 1.1 IWT Database web links for reference

Attachment 1.2 Snow Leopard IWT Database Protocol for reference

Attachment 1.3 GSLEP IWT Partners Report 2020

Attachment 2.1 Principles and Recommendations for Tourism in Snow Leopard Habitat

Attachment 2.2 Photo-Nepal Minister Releasing Principles and Recommendations for Tourism

Attachment 3.1 Management-Planning-Guidelines-_revised

Attachment 4.1 PARTNERS Principles Guide for Trainers

Attachment 4.2 Community engagement workshop Introduction

Attachment 4.3 Partners training workshop brief report

Attachment 5.1 Proteus Training Presentations (zipped file)

Attachment 5.2 Proteus program code RFiles data files for modeling distribution (zipped file)

Attachment 5.3 Proteus Modeling Software (zipped file)

Attachment 5.4 Proteus Sample Exercises for Training in Species Distribution Modeling (zipped file)

Attachment 6.1 St Andrews Snow Leopard Population-Data Setup Cheatsheet

Attachment 6.2 St. Andrews Snow Leopard Population-Data Analysis Cheatsheet

Attachment 7.1: Snow Leopard Identification Training Website Tool

<https://camtraining.globalsnowleopard.org/leppe/login/>

Attachment 7.2 Snow Leopard Training and Evaluation Toolkit for identifying snow leopards

Attachment 8.1 PAWS Guidelines Final Draft

Attachment 8.2 GSLEP Article-Learning How to Count Cats

Attachment 8.3 Meeting notes-Snow-Leopard-Population-Assessment-August-24-2017

Attachment 8.4 PAWS Minutes of meetings and Action plans

Attachment 8.5 List of PAWS-related press for reference

Attachment 9.1 Double Observer Survey Manual for Surveying Wild Prey

Attachment 10.1 Landscape_MP_2019_12_11 short

Attachment 10.2 Management Plan for Central Tien Shan Russian_short

Attachment 10.3 Draft work plan for implementation of the Central Tien Shan MP

Attachment 10.4 Central Tien Shan Management Plan_published

Attachment 10.5 SAEPF Decree of approval for Central Tien Shan Landscape MP

Attachment 11.1 GSLEP International Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Forum (Summit 2017)

Attachment 11.2 GSLEP Symposium on Conservation, Science, Climate Change Global Forum 2017

Attachment 11.3 GSLEP Snow Leopard Science Symposium_ Presentations Global Forum 2017

Attachment 11.4 List of Press Coverage with links, for reference

Attachment 12.1 Bishkek Declaration 2017_EN

Attachment 13.1 GSLEP Thematic Recommendations

Attachment 14.1. Issykkul-Statement-2018

Attachment 14.2 Third Steering Committee Meeting Report-Issyk Kul 2018

Attachment 15.1 Shenzhen-Consensus-2018

Attachment 16.1 New-Delhi-Statement-2019

Attachment 17.1 Valuation of Ecosystem Services in Snow Leopard Landscapes of Asia

Supplement 18.1 Report on Green Economy and Environment Protection round-table

Supplement 18.2 Conservation Led Development Strategy

Supplement 18.3 Report Conservation Finance

Supplement 1.1 Survey Design Cheatsheet-Marco Level for SECR

Supplement 2.1 CITES WORKSHOP for CENTRAL ASIAN_Agenda May 2018

Supplement 2.2. CITES Workshop Logistical note May2018

Supplement 2.3. CITES Workshop List of Participants May2018

Supplement 2.4 CITES Workshop for Central Asia Final Report

Supplement 2.5 CITES-Article re CITES-led training workshop May2018

Supplement 3.1 NEST_ Strategy

Supplement 3.2 Agenda NESS Kyrgyzstan

Supplement 3.3 NESS meeting List of Participants

Supplement 3.4 NESS meeting notes

Supplement 3.5 NEST_Report_2017_RUS

Supplement 4.1 UAVs for Enhanced Monitoring of Snow Leopard

Supplement 5.1 PASK report approved by PAWS FINAL_RUS_Kyrgyzstan

Supplement 5.2 Photo-India Minister Releasing India Assessment supported by Proteus-St Andrews

Supplement 6.1 Agenda of Green Economy Week

Supplement 6.2 Agenda of Event-Green economy in the private sector

Supplement 6.3 Concept of Green Economy Week

Supplement 6.4 Recommendations for the resolution of green economy week – 2019

Supplement 6.5 Proposals for supporting Green Economic Development
Supplement 6.6 Report on Green Environment Week
Supplement 7.1 GSLEP Communications Strategy
Supplement 7.2 List of Articles Related to MSP Project
Supplement 7.3 Celebrity Network
Supplement 7.4 Celebrity Dia Mirza Big Cats Team Challenge
Supplement 7.5 Asia World Film Festival 2019 Poster
Supplement 7.6 Asia World Film Festival 2019 Program
Supplement 7.7 Article-Bishkek to host international race to preserve snow leopard

Website Consulted

www.thegef.org

<https://www.snowleopard.org>

<https://www.kg.undp.org/>

<https://globalsnowleopard.org>

<http://www.biodiversityfinance.org/index.php/kyrgyzstan>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDNkNaWzRTU>

<https://camtraining.globalsnowleopard.org/leppe/login/>

<https://gslep-iwt.netlify.app>

<https://vanishingtreasures.org>

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/environment/brief/the-global-tiger-initiative>

<http://gticouncil.org>

https://postconflict.unep.ch/LargerThanTigers/LTT-Tajikistan-Background_Note.pdf

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8ed5fdcb-b187-11e8-99ee-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/global-wildlife-program>

<https://en.nabu.de/modules/suche/htdig.php?words=snow+leopard>

Annex 6: Interview Protocol

Note: This interview protocol is a guide for the interviewer (a simplified version of the evaluation matrix). Not all questions were asked to each interviewee; it was a reminder for the interviewer about the type of information required to complete the evaluation exercise and a guide to prepare the semi-structured interviews. Confidentiality was guaranteed to the interviewees and findings were “triangulated” before being incorporated in the evaluation report.

I. RELEVANCE - *How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF, UNDP and to favorably conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems with a special focus on Central Asia?*

- I.1. How is the Project relevant to GEF objectives?
- I.2. How is the Project relevant to UNDP objectives?
- I.3. How is the Project relevant to the global conservation of snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems with a special focus on Central Asia?
- I.4. How does the Project address the needs of target beneficiaries?

Future directions for similar projects

- I.5. What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment between the project and the Partners’ priorities and areas of focus?
- I.6. How could the project better target and address priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries?

II. COHERENCE - *How well does the project fit with interventions to conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems, particularly in Central Asia?*

- II.1. How is the coherence between the project and other interventions carried out by the same Partners?
- II.2. Is the Project internally coherent in its design?
- II.3. How is the coherence between the project and other relevant interventions?

Future directions for similar projects

- II.4. What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment, its coherence and complementarity between the project and other relevant interventions?

III. EFFECTIVENESS – *To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?*

- II.1. How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?
 - Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems
 - Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range countries
 - Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems
- II.2. What are the factors which contributed to these achievements?
- II.3. Were there any delays?
- II.4. Were there any factors beyond the control of the project and government which affected the implementation of the project?
- II.5. How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?

Future directions for similar projects

- II.6. What lessons have been learnt for the project to achieve its outcomes?
- II.7. What changes could have been made (if any) to the formulation of the project in order to improve the achievement of project’s expected results?
- II.8. How could the project be more effective in achieving its results?

IV. EFFICIENCY - *Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?*

- III.1. Is adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?
- III.2. Do the *Project Results Framework* and work plans and any changes made to them used as management

tools during implementation?

- III.3. Are accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?
- III.4. How adequate is the M&E framework (indicators & targets)?
- III.5. Are progress reports produced accurately, timely and respond to reporting requirements?
- III.6. Are financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently?
- III.7. Is the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happening as planned?
- III.8. Is project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)?
- III.9. How is RBM used during project implementation?
- III.10. Are there an institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanism for lessons learned for ongoing project adjustment and improvement?
- III.11. Does the project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation?
- III.12. How does the government demonstrate its ownership of the projects?
- III.13. To what extent are partnerships/ linkages between institutions/ organizations encouraged and supported?
- III.14. Which partnerships/linkages are facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable?
- III.15. What is the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP, and relevant government entities)
- III.16. Is an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise and local capacity?
- III.17. Did the project take into account local capacity in design and implementation of the project?

Future directions for the project

- III.18. What lessons can be learnt from the project on efficiency?
- III.19. How could the project have more efficiently addressed its key priorities (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements, etc.)?

V. IMPACTS - *Are there indications that the project has contributed to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia?*

- IV.1. Will the project achieve its objective that is "to strengthen transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems and landscapes to ensure stability of global snow leopard population by addressing drivers of existing and emerging threats with special focus on Central Asia?"
- IV.2. Did the project contribute to the reduction of environmental stress and/or ecological stress?
- IV.3. How is the Project impacting local environment and socio-economic issues?

Future directions for the project

- IV.4. How could the project build on its successes and learn from its weaknesses in order to enhance the potential for impact of ongoing and future initiatives?

VI. SUSTAINABILITY - *To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?*

- V.1. Were sustainability issues adequately integrated in project formulation?
- V.2. Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?
- V.3. Are laws, policies and frameworks being addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms?
- V.4. Is the capacity in place at the national and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of results achieved to date?
- V.5. Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support?
- V.6. Does the project contribute to key building blocks for social and political sustainability?
- V.7. Are project activities and results being replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up?
- V.8. What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts?

Future directions for the project

- V.9. Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results?
- V.10. What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed?
- V.11. Are national decision-making institutions (Parliament, Government etc.) ready to improve their measures to favorably conserve global snow leopard population and their critical mountain ecosystems?

Annex 7: List of People Interviewed

TERMINAL EVALUATION

UNDP-GEF project “Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation”

Responsible from The International Snow Leopard Trust:

Dr. Koustubh Sharma, International Coordinator, SLT/GSLEP, E-mail: koustubh@snowleopard.org

Dr. Charudutt Mishra, Executive Director, Snow Leopard Trust, E-mail: Charu@snowleopard.org

Translator: Zarilbek Nyshan uulu, E-mail: zarilbek@gmail.com

Stakeholders	Interview date/time
“National” Stakeholders actively engaged with the project:	
• Mr. Musaev Almaz, Director of Department of the Biodiversity conservation and Pas, State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry (KY - No EN)	• Interview conducted on June 11 th 22:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Kumar Mambetaliev, Deputy Director of Department of the Biodiversity conservation and Pas, State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry (KY - No EN)	• Interview conducted on June 18 th 22:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Kuvanysh Jumabai uulu, Director, Snow Leopard Foundation in Kyrgyzstan (KY)	• Interview conducted on June 9 th 9:30 Ottawa time
• Mr. Chyngyz Kochorov, GSLEP Secretariat (KY)	• Interview conducted on June 8 th 12:00 Ottawa time
Other “National” Stakeholders mostly engaged through GSLEP Steering Committee:	
• Ms. Salykmambetova Baglan Nurstamovna, Head, International Cooperation Department, State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry (KY - No EN)	• Interview conducted on June 8 th 23:00 Ottawa time
• Ms. Barieva Aizada Jantaevna, State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry	
• Mr. Talgat Kerteshev, PM of Conservation and Sustainable Management project in KZ	• Interview conducted on June 11 th 8:00 Ottawa time
• Ms. Aiman Omarbekova, Team Leader of Conservation and Sustainable Management project in KZ	
• Mr. Neimutallo Safarov (GEF OFP Tajikistan) (TK - No EN)	• Interview conducted on June 10 th 8:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Dilovarsho Dustov, CEP	
• Ms. Tatiana Tatiana Novikova, CEP	
• Mr. Vladimir Lekarkin, CEP	
• Mr. Abbas Akhadov, PM of Snow Leopard Project in UZ	• Interview conducted on June 9 th 8:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Zairbek Kubanychbekov, Director, Irbis Foundation (KY - No EN)	• Interview conducted on June 6 th 9:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Tolkunbek Asykulov NABU (KY - No EN)	• Interview conducted on June 22 nd 22:00 Ottawa time
“International” Stakeholders actively engaged with the project:	
• Dr. Charudutt Mishra, Executive Director, Snow Leopard Trust (Seattle)	• Interview conducted on June 1 st 20:00 Ottawa time
• Ms. Siri Okamoto, Development Officer, Snow Leopard Trust (Seattle)	• Interview conducted on June 10 th 13:00 Ottawa time
• Ms. Laura Farnitano, SLT (Seattle)	
• Dr. Koustubh Sharma, International Coordinator, Global Snow Leopard &	• Presentation done on May 26 th and

Stakeholders	Interview date/time
Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) and Senior Regional Ecologist, Snow Leopard Trust (KY)	May 27 th Ottawa time
• Dr. Simon Morgan, Special Projects Coordinator, Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Associate Director of Conservation, Program for Conservation Genomics, Stanford University (USA California)	• Interview conducted on June 11 th 10:30 Ottawa time
• Dr. David Borchers, Center for Research in Ecological and Environmental Modelling, University of St. Andrews (UK)	• Interview conducted on June 8 th 10:00 Ottawa time
• Dr. Darryl Mackenzie, PROTEUS (New Zealand)	• Interview conducted on June 8 th 17:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Keshev Varma, GTI Council (India)	• Interview conducted on June 5 th 9:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Mike Moser (Consultant who drafted the project document)	• Interview conducted on June 12 th 10:00 Ottawa time
UNDP:	
• Ms. Jenty Kirsch-Wood, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative (KY) • Ms. Aidai Arstanbekova, UNDP Team Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (KY)	• Debriefing conducted on June 24 th 22:30 Ottawa time
• Mr. Daniyar Ibragimov, UNDP Team Leader/ Biodiversity Portfolio (KY)	• Interview conducted on June 1 st Ottawa time
• Ms. Mirgul Amanalieva, UNDP WTS Project Coordinator (KY)	• Interview conducted on June 4 th 22:00 Ottawa time
• Ms. Sherbet Nurzhanova, UNDP Programme Associate (KY) • Ms. Aidai Arstanbekova, UNDP Team Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (KY)	• Interview conducted on June 8 th 08:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Doley Tshering, UNDP-SGP (New York)	• Interview conducted on June 4 th Ottawa time
• Ms. Yoko Watanabe, UNDP-SGP (New York)	• Interview conducted on June 5 th Ottawa time
• Mr. Maxim Vergeichik, UNDP RTA-IRH	• Interview conducted on July 23 rd Ottawa time
GEF:	
• Mr. Ulrich Apel, GEF Secretariat	• Interview conducted on June 15 th 14:00 Ottawa time
• Mr. Jaime Cavalier, GEF Secretariat	• Sent email on June 18 th for an online meeting (no response)

Interviewed 33 people (12 women and 21 men)

Annex 8: Stakeholders Implementation Plan

Outcome/ Output	Stakeholder	Role in Project
Outcome 1: Key stakeholders have sufficient knowledge, capacity and tools for effective transboundary conservation of snow leopard ecosystems		
Output 1.1: Tools, methods and guidelines for effective transboundary cooperation developed, tested and made available to stakeholders	CITES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of training materials for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors in Central Asia
	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination of development of international agreements and programs for conservation of transboundary populations of snow leopard and its prey species
	GIZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of international agreements and programs for conservation of transboundary populations of snow leopard and its prey species
	Inter-Governmental Commission for Sustainable Development in Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration and approval of international agreements and programs for conservation snow leopard and its prey species, wildlife migration corridors, control of wildlife trade and transboundary nature reserves
	Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of the Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of development of international agreements and programs for snow leopard conservation
	Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of development of international agreements and programs for snow leopard conservation
	State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of development of international agreements and programs for snow leopard conservation
	National Biodiversity and Biosafety Center of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of international agreements and programs for snow leopard conservation
	State Committee for Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of development of international agreements and programs for snow leopard conservation
	Institute of Zoology of the National Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development training materials for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia
	Biological Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Kyrgyzstan	
	Institute of Zoology and Parasitology of Tajik Academy of Sciences, Tajikistan	
	Institute of Genetic Diversity of Plant and Animals of Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan	

Outcome/ Output	Stakeholder	Role in Project
	WWF (Central Asia Office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the analysis of poaching and wildlife trade levels in Central Asia • Participation in the development of training materials and trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia • Organization of international collaboration of customs department in the Central Asia • Participation in the development of international agreements and programs for conservation of transboundary snow leopard populations
	Snow Leopard Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the analysis of poaching and wildlife trade levels in Central Asia • Participation in the development of training materials and trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia
	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the analysis of poaching and wildlife trade levels in Central Asia • Participation in the development of training materials and trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia
	Panthera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the analysis of poaching and wildlife trade levels in Central Asia • Participation in the development of training materials and trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia • Organization of international collaboration of customs department in the Central Asia • Participation in the development of programs for conservation of transboundary snow leopard populations in Central Asia
	Snow Leopard Conservancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of conservation transboundary cooperation experience in Eurasia
	INTERPOL Environmental Crime Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the analysis of poaching and wildlife trade levels in Central Asia • Analysis of legislation of Central Asia's countries for control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade
	TRAFFIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the development of training materials and trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia • Organization of international collaboration of customs department in the Central Asia
	Association for Biodiversity Conservation of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the analysis of poaching and wildlife trade levels in Central Asia • Participation in the development of training materials and trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia • Organization of international collaboration of customs department in the Central Asia
	Snow Leopard Fund – Kyrgyzstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the analysis of poaching and wildlife trade levels in Central Asia

Outcome/ Output	Stakeholder	Role in Project
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of training materials and trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia
Output 1.2: Training materials and methods developed and disseminated, including through an on-line platform	GSLEP Secretariat	Dissemination of materials prepared in the framework of Output 1.1. among relevant agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders via project Web-site and other on-line resources such as NBSAP Forum and BES-Net.
Output 1.3: Effective enforcement mechanisms developed and introduced to enforcement agencies	CITES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors in Central Asia
	Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of the Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in capacity building and development of inter-agency collaboration of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff
	Republican State Institution "Okhotzooptom", Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of inter-agency and international collaboration to control poaching and illegal wildlife trade in the snow leopard habitat Participation in capacity building of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff Leading anti-poaching inter-agency collaboration in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape
	State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in capacity building and development of inter-agency collaboration of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff
	State Agency for Environmental and Technical Safety of the Government of Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of inter-agency and international collaboration to control poaching and illegal wildlife trade in the snow leopard habitat Participation in capacity building of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff Leading anti-poaching inter-agency collaboration in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan Transboundary Landscape
	Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in capacity building and development of inter-agency collaboration of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff
	National Biodiversity and Biosafety Center of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in capacity building of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff
	State Committee for Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in capacity building and development of inter-agency collaboration of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff
	State Inspection for Protection of Wildlife and Plants (Gosbiokontrol), Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of inter-agency and international collaboration to control poaching and illegal wildlife trade in the snow leopard habitat Participation in capacity building of customs officers, border guards, wildlife agencies and PA staff

Outcome/ Output	Stakeholder	Role in Project
	Customs Agencies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of international and inter-agency collaboration to control illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia
	Border Guard Services of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of international and inter-agency collaboration to control poaching and illegal wildlife trade in border zones of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
	Association for Biodiversity Conservation of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of international and inter-agency cooperation for protection of snow leopard populations in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan Transboundary landscape
	Association of hunters of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the trainings for customs officers, border guards and wildlife inspectors on control of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia
Outcome 2: Global monitoring framework developed for snow leopard ecosystems, demonstrated and adopted by range states		
Output 2.1: Common monitoring indicators and methods for snow leopard landscapes and populations developed, tested and disseminated	GSLEP Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation of discussion, approval and implementation of standard monitoring system for snow leopard, its prey species, and ecosystems among range countries
	Governments of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Kingdom of Bhutan, People's Republic of China, Republic of India, Mongolia, Nepal, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Russian Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion, approval and implementation of standard monitoring system for snow leopard, its prey species, and ecosystems
	Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of the Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring integration of standard monitoring system for snow leopard, its prey species, and ecosystems into national biodiversity monitoring system of Kazakhstan
	State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring integration of standard monitoring system for snow leopard, its prey species, and ecosystems into national biodiversity monitoring system of Kyrgyzstan
	Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring integration of standard monitoring system for snow leopard, its prey species, and ecosystems into national biodiversity monitoring system of Tajikistan
	National Biodiversity and Biosafety Center of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in integration of standard monitoring system for snow leopard, its prey species, and ecosystems into national biodiversity monitoring system of Tajikistan
	State Committee for Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring integration of standard monitoring system for snow leopard, its prey species, and ecosystems into national biodiversity monitoring system of Uzbekistan
	Institute of Zoology of the National Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in discussion and adoption of the global snow leopard monitoring system at national level in Central Asia

Outcome/ Output	Stakeholder	Role in Project
	Biological Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Kyrgyzstan	
	Institute of Zoology and Parasitology of Tajik Academy of Sciences, Tajikistan	
	Institute of Genetic Diversity of Plant and Animals of Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan	
	Snow Leopard Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of global snow leopard monitoring system at national level in Central Asia
	Snow Leopard Conservancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of global snow leopard monitoring system Providing trainings for PA staff and wildlife agencies on snow leopard monitoring
	Snow Leopard Fund – Kyrgyzstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in integration of global snow leopard monitoring system in the biodiversity monitoring system of Kyrgyzstan
	Association of hunters of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing basic data for national snow leopard monitoring system of Tajikistan
Output 2.2: Spatial database for monitoring and management of one transboundary landscape is developed	GSLEP Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of global monitoring center for snow leopard populations and ecosystems Approval of snow leopard monitoring GIS database structure among range countries via GSLEP mechanisms Dissemination of GIS database to stakeholders and public via powerful online servers (e.g. ESRI)
	GSLEP Secretariat, Snow Leopard Trust, Snow Leopard Conservancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of GIS database structure for common monitoring systems for Snow Leopard landscapes
	WWF Central Asia Program, Snow Leopard Trust, Snow Leopard Conservancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing GIS training on building and using the GIS database to organizations involved in monitoring and conservation of snow leopard
	GIS Terra Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GIS database for monitoring of snow leopard populations and ecosystems for Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan Transboundary Landscape Incorporation of the database into institutional frameworks
Output 2.3: Sustainable landscape management measures are identified and presented to stakeholders for implementation	Association for Biodiversity Conservation of Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of data on snow leopard key population and habitat in the system of regional socio-economic planning in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan Transboundary landscape
	Snow Leopard Fund – Kyrgyzstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of data on snow leopard key population and habitat in the system of regional socio-economic planning in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan Transboundary landscape
	Business companies (mining, development, tourism, others) in Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of sustainable land management measures and integration of them into local and regional development planning in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape
	Hunting concessions in Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of sustainable land management measures and integration of them into local and regional

Outcome/ Output	Stakeholder	Role in Project
		development planning in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape
	Local communities in the Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of sustainable land management measures and integration of them into local and regional development planning in Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape
Outcome 3: Effective and sustainable transboundary conservation mechanism for snow leopard ecosystems		
Output 3.1: Global coordination mechanism for technical support, resource development and knowledge-sharing is strengthened	GSLEP Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of the Snow Leopard Forum in 2017 Initiation of collaboration with private sector to provide sufficient funding for GSLEP Establishment of global monitoring center for snow leopard populations and ecosystems
	Governments of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Kingdom of Bhutan, People's Republic of China, Republic of India, Mongolia, Nepal, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Russian Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the Snow Leopard Forum in 2017
Output 3.2: Global and national tools for financing snow leopard ecosystem conservation developed, piloted, and shared	GSLEP Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation of discussion, approval and implementation of GSLEP financial strategy
	Governments of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Kingdom of Bhutan, People's Republic of China, Republic of India, Mongolia, Nepal, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Russian Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control of GSLEP implementation at the national level Discussion, approval and implementation of GSLEP financial strategy
	WWF (Central Asia Office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of GSLEP financial strategy and negotiations with donors, including private sector
	Snow Leopard Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of GSLEP financial strategy and negotiations with donors, including private sector
	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the development of GSLEP financial strategy and negotiations with donors, including private sector
Output 3.3: Private sector dialogue platforms established	GSLEP Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation of collaboration with private sector to provide sufficient funding for GSLEP
	Global Tiger Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of collaboration with donors, including private sector, to provide sufficient funding for GSLEP implementation
	National Biodiversity and Biosafety Center of Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the negotiations with private sector in Central Asia to provide funding for snow leopard conservation
	Business companies (mining, development, tourism, others) in Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the Consortium of partners to establish a sustainable funding mechanism for Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape Participation in the development, approval and funding of targeted national portfolios of projects for snow leopard conservation in Central Asia

Outcome/ Output	Stakeholder	Role in Project
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support of GSLEP implementation Participation in the Confederation of Industries for snow leopard conservation in Central Asia's countries
	Hunting concessions in Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the Consortium of partners to establish a sustainable funding mechanism for Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape Participation in the development, approval and funding of targeted national portfolios of projects for snow leopard conservation in Central Asia
	Local communities in the Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the Consortium of partners to establish a sustainable funding mechanism for Sarychat/Northern Tien Shan transboundary landscape
Project Management and Co-financing		
SLT-PMU and GSLEP Secretariat		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project coordination and management Control of GSLEP implementation at the global level Initiation of collaboration with private sector to provide sufficient funding for GSLEP
UNDP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall project supervision, monitoring and evaluation Project funding from GEF resources Negotiation with other donors on the project co-financing in Central Asian countries Reporting to GEF on the project progress Implementation of complimentary GEF projects in Central Asia
Global Tiger Initiative Council and Forum		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of collaboration with donors, including private sector, to provide sufficient funding for GSLEP implementation
Committee for Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of the Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Supervision of the project implementation in Kazakhstan Project co-financing
State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of Kyrgyz Republic		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to GSLEP Secretariat Overall Supervision of the project implementation in Kyrgyzstan Project co-financing
Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Supervision of the project implementation in Tajikistan Project co-financing
State Committee for Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Supervision of the project implementation in Uzbekistan Project co-financing
WWF (Central Asia Office)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project co-financing
Snow Leopard Trust		
Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU)		
Panthera		

Annex 9: Remarks about conducting evaluations online under COVID-19

Data Collection Process

- Need to pair the international Evaluator with a national Evaluator, both with a good command of English to be able to provide online translation of interviews.
- Spent more time in preparing the data collection phase (interviews and documents gathering), particularly the key questions to use for interviews, which, as much as possible, should overlay the outline of the report. The better the clarity of questions, the better collected data is resulting in a better evaluation report.
- Plan the interviews ahead as if it was a mission agenda, taking into account time differences and allowing a good hour for each interview plus possibly travel time between interviews.
- In addition to the International Evaluator taking notes during online interviews, the National Evaluator should summarize in point-form his/her notes from conducting these evaluations. It provides additional evaluative evidence (including comments on observations and discussion points) collected during the interviews but also possibly before and after interviews and during field visits.

Technologies

- Use video link as much as possible to conduct interviews. Content of these interviews through video link is richer, allowing the Evaluators to better deepen the understanding of particular areas.
- Use WIFI instead of phone network (generally faster bandwidth).
- Try to set up a 2-point web connection (instead of 3 or more) if travel is authorized in-country; i.e. the National Consultant to go and meet the Interviewees on site. It maximizes the quality of bandwidth.
- Chose a video platform that is used comfortably by all such as Skype, Zoom or others. Note that WhatsApp video is only working on smartphones; not the best set up for interviews.
- Use smartphones to record short videos with comments to provide visuals on the project such as surrounding areas of a project area, activities implemented with the support of the project, and "close up" of goods and services procured by the project.
- If possible, record videos/pictures of field activities from drone if available.
- Set up a dropbox folder (or any other cloud-based system) to upload data.

Annex 10: Rating Scales

As per UNDP-GEF guidance, the TE Evaluation Team used the following scales to rate the project:

- A 6-point scale to rate the project effectiveness, efficiency, overall project outcome Rating, M&E, IA & EA Execution
- A 4-point scale to rate the sustainability of project achievements;
- A 2-point scale to rate the relevance of the project; and
- A 3-point scale to rate the impact of the project.

Ratings for Project effectiveness, efficiency, overall project outcome Rating, M&E, IA & EA Execution		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

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

Ratings for Progress Relevance		
2	Relevant (R)	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”.
1	Not Relevant (NR)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.

Ratings for Impact		
3	Significant (S)	Significant impact
2	Minimal (M)	Minimal impact
1	Negligible (N)	Negligible impact

Additional ratings where relevant		
	Not Applicable (N/A)	
	Unable to Assess (U/A)	

Annex 11: Audit Trail

The audit trail is presented in a separate file.

Annex 12: Evaluation Report Clearance Form

EVALUATION REPORT CLEARANCE FORM

Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared by

UNDP Country Office

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

UNDP RTA

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____