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AGENCE POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT AGRICOLE



Terminal Evaluation of CE-SM PROJECT

"Circular Economy Approach for the Conservation of Agro-biodiversity in the Souss Massa Region of Morocco"

Ref: IC 02-07-2021

TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Deliverable 3

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The evaluation team wishes also to extend its appreciation to the National Coordinator of the project for his availability and his support for the evaluation mission.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Agricultural Development Agency
ANDZOA	National Agency for the development of oasis areas and Argan trees
APATI	Ida Outanane Tourist Host Country Association
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
NPC	National Project Coordinator
CoPiL	Steering Committee
FSR	Framework of Strategic Results
NPD	National Project Director
RDA	Regional Directorate for Agriculture
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
FG	Focus group
RBM	Results-based Management
HCEFLCD	High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification
PGI	Protected Geographical Indication
INDH	National Initiative for Human Development
MAD	Moroccan Dirham
MFAC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of BiologicalDiversity
ONSSA	National Office for Food Safety
CE-SM project	Circular Economy Project for the Conservation of Agro-Biodiversity in the Souss Mass Region
NFP	National Forest Programme
PIR	Project Implementation Report
GMP	Green Morocco Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ProDoc	Project Document
PES	Payment of ecosystem services
AR	Annual internal reviews
ABR	Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve
RDTR	Network for the Development of Rural Tourism
MIR	Mid-year Internal Review
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation

DSOQ	Distinctive sign of origin and quality
SMART	Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound
PMU	Project Management Unit
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteers Programme

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project information table

Project Title	A Circular Economy Approach to Agro-Biodiversity Conservation in the Souss-Massa Region of Morocco				
Project ID	00089921				
Field	Environment and biodiversity				
County	Morocco	Regions	Souss-Massa		
Duration of the project	5 years	Start Date	01/07/2014	End Date	30/06/2019
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAPM) – National Agency for the Development of Oasis Areas and Argan Trees (ANDZOA) 				
Agency in charge of the execution	– Agricultural Development Agency (ADA)				
Development Agency	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)				
Overall Budget	<p>The total budget for the project is of USD 10,147,272 broken down as follows according to the contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – MAF USD 7,300,000 – Global Environmental Facility (GEF) USD 2,647,272 – UNDP USD 200,000 				
Timetable of the Final Evaluation	September – December 2021				
Team members in charge of the Terminal Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ahmed Bencheikh – Rachid Benabbou 				

Brief description of the project

The project "*Circular Economy Approach for the Conservation of Agro-biodiversity in the Souss-Massa-Drâa region*" is a pilot initiative in Morocco designed to position the country on a strategic axis resolutely anchored in the current concerns of sustainable development. In this respect, the integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and programs will (i) preserve the value of biological diversity and the services provided by ecosystems, (ii) optimise the positive effects, and minimise the harmful effects of human activities on biodiversity.

Evaluation Ratings Table

Suivi et Évaluation (S&E)	
M&E design at entry	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
M&E Plan Implementation	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Overall Quality of M&E	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Implementation and Execution	
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	Satisfactory (S)
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	Unsatisfactory (U)
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Assessment of Outcomes	
Relevance	Satisfactory
Effectiveness	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Efficiency	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Overall Project Outcome Rating	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Sustainability	
Financial sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MU)
Socio-political sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MU)
Institutional framework and governance sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MU)
Environmental sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MU)
Probabilité globale de durabilité	Moderately unlikely (MU)

Summary of the main findings, conclusions and lessons learned

Main findings

Validity of the project design

The design of the project is problematic as to achieve its goal and objectives. In fact, the review of the project's ProDoc reveals gaps and inconsistencies which threatens its validity, feasibility and coherence.

Implementation of the project

Delays related to the start up and different stages of the implementation of the project, and the conditions of its supervision (monitoring committee), have hampered its overall implementation. It is perceived by several stakeholders interviewed as unsatisfactory.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation system has been functional since the start of the project and has ensured regular reporting on project activities (quarterly, half-yearly and annually), in accordance with the indicators and targets defined in the strategic results framework of the project.

Despite the efforts made, it was noted that the exploitation of the SES data was not optimal.

Progress towards objectives and expected results

The progress towards the objectives and results of the CE-MS project is as follows: (i) for Component 1, the results of the project are mitigated; (ii) the three capacity building outputs of Component 2 have been achieved, but the achievements of the training workshops are still to be confirmed; (iii) the data available on the four indicators of Component 3 are hypothetical or non-existent; and (iv) the PES model as presented by the ProDoc has been abandoned to pave the way for the option of transforming the existing compensation scheme into PES and the revision of the legal instruments

The relevance of the project is confirmed

Through: (i) The needs of the final beneficiaries (individuals, community groups, organisations) are being taken into account by the project; *Alignment of the project with global and sectorial environmental and sustainable development strategies*; (iii) *Level of adequacy between the project objectives and the strategic priorities of the GEF (including the alignment of relevant focal area indicator*; and (iv) *Level of alignment between the project objectives and design and UNDAF/UNDP and MDGs.*

Effectiveness

The CE-SM project has not achieved all the expected results. The targets of the three components 1, 3 and 4 are partially achieved. The outputs of component 2 (Capacity building to implement and integrate payment for ecosystem services and sustainable use) have been fully achieved.

Efficiency

The project had a disbursement rate of 85% at the time of its closure. On the whole, the financial resources were allocated to the achievement of the outputs. This rate, which can be considered satisfactory, is in contrast with the variable level of achievement of the outputs planned by the project.

Sustainability

Some net benefits of the project are likely to continue. However, the conditions of sustainability (institutional, social, financial, environmental) have not yet been met to ensure the continuity of these net benefits beyond the closure of the project.

Conclusions

Rationale of the CE-SM project strategy

In response to the various pressures on the Argan tree ecosystem in Morocco, the project's strategy is based on the absolute necessity to limit the degradation of the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (ABR) by promoting payment for ecosystem services (PES) and a sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity.

Inappropriate project design

The design of the CE-SM project, consisting of four main components (institutional, regulatory, environmental and economic), is inadequate in a complex context.

The weakness of the project's steering and implementation

The strategic piloting of the CE-SM project has been deficient. On the other hand, the implementation of the project was hampered by the design of a 'turnkey' and over-dimensioned project.

Modest results

The results of the project do not correspond to its initial ambition. On the whole, the results are modest, and some of the project's key outputs have not been achieved or have been delayed, affecting the achievement of the project's immediate and intermediate outcomes.

Sustainability and progress towards impact

The CE-SM project has some net benefits, which are likely to last beyond the closure of the CE-SM project. However, the conditions of sustainability (institutional, social, financial, environmental) have not yet been met to ensure the continuity of these benefits in the long term.

Lessons learned

Good understanding and transparent communication

The design of new PES programmes or projects should be based on a good understanding of local and regional specificities and transparent communication.

PES, a transformative concept

As a transformative concept, PES needs more time for its implementation and territorial anchoring.

Dialogue and consultation

The dialogue and consultation initiated by the PES project with institutional stakeholders and partners in the Sous Massa region are key factors for the sustainability and continuity of results, ownership and replication of the project on a larger scale (scaling up).

Long-term results

Long-term results could be possible if the project had been planned in adequate conditions, with a time-frame of ten years, rather than five years.

Recommendations

#	Recommendation	Entity responsible	Time Frame
A	Category 1: Validity of the project design		
A.1	<i>Considering the validity of project design, it is recommended that special emphasis should be devoted to the design of future PES</i>	Government	Short-term

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	<p>programmes/projects, including: (i) making the intervention logic / theory of change explicit; (ii) formulating indicators in SMART mode; (iii) integrating the analysis of success assumptions and risk factors with appropriate mitigation measures; and (iv) planning the sustainability strategy for each project.</p> <p>In addition, process evaluation of PES programmes/projects should be systematised as it allows: (i) to check the feasibility of their design (strategy, logic model, risk management, etc.); (ii) to determine whether the activities and outputs of the programmes/projects are being implemented as planned or not; and (iii) to focus on the practical problems encountered and how these problems were solved.</p>		
B Category 2: Institutional framework and PES governance			
B.1	<p>In terms of governance and institutional framework, it would be appropriate to: (i) build on the achievements of the project, especially as regards the Commission dedicated to the management of the RBA Ecolabel; (ii) provide a framework for the coherence of the strategies of public institutions around the RBA Ecolabel (SFM, SGG, DARED, etc.); and (iii) maintain the public-private international organisations dialogue during the implementation or revision of the RBA Ecolabel standard.</p>	Government	Mid-term
C Category 3: Sustainability of net benefits over time			
C.1	<p>Considering the sustainability of the net benefits and the progress towards the achievement of the impact, it is strongly recommended that the national counterpart ensures that the continuity of the CE-SM project's opportunity and its net benefits are to be continued. This can be achieved by taking into account the financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities needed to ensure the continuity of the net benefits over time and by integrating the consolidated project results into the Green Generation Strategy (GGS, 2020-2030) and the Forestry Strategy (FGS, 2020-2030).</p>	Government	Mid-term
D Category 4: Exit strategy and sustainability			
D.1	<p>The exit and sustainability strategy of the CE-SM project is envisaged in the project final report (July 2021). The report formulated the first elements of this strategy, which converges with the proposals</p>	UNDP, GEF & Government	Short-term

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<p>of several stakeholders consulted during the evaluation mission. In short, the main axes of the exit and sustainability strategy (2021-2022) concern (i) the creation of an institutional and legal framework for PES at the national level; (ii) support to the implementation of the ASMEL RBA management plan; and (iii) support to the management of the RBA eco-label.</p> <p>In fact, the evaluation mission recommends the organisation of a national sharing workshop dedicated to PES in Morocco. The main objectives of this workshop are: (i) to take stock and capitalise on current PES initiatives; (ii) to discuss opportunities of institutionalising PES; and (iii) to set up the RBA Ecolabel framework agreement.</p>		
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2. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

The first of its kind in Morocco, the CE-SM project aims to introduce PES as a market-based instrument in order to enhance environmental sustainability and strengthen the social well-being of ecosystem service providers in the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve.

The involvement of the various project partners in a participatory approach, as well as the mobilization of the project team, were very favourable for an adaptive management throughout the project's life cycle.

The lack of ownership at the beginning of the project was corrected due to a major awareness-raising and capacity-building programme and also after the reframing mission, which recommended that a new plan be drawn up based on a general PES framework linked to the RBA eco-label.

The designation of an Ecolabel management structure and the establishment of a framework partnership agreement constitute the support for the implementation of the project and its appropriation by the professionals grouped within ASMEL RBA.

Despite the difficulties linked to the Covid-19 pandemic, the results of the project are promising because they allow us to anticipate solutions for the concretisation of PES models in relation to the Green Generation Strategy and the Moroccan Forest Strategy, in line with the proposals of the New Development Model (DNM), which encourages a transition towards the circular economy.

The innovative and ambitious nature of the project has mobilised all stakeholders and partners (donors, implementing agency, MAPMDREF regional structures, FBOs, etc.). Their efforts deserve to be pursued in order to accompany the project's beneficiaries and guarantee the sustainability of the project's achievements

3. INTRODUCTION

1. This report is the terminal evaluation (TE) of the project "Circular Economy Approach for the Conservation of Agro-biodiversity in the Souss Massa Region of Morocco" (CE-SM project).
2. For an initial period of five years (2014-2019)¹, the project was implemented by the Agency for Agricultural Development (ADA) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries (MAPM)².
3. The CE-SM project was implemented according to the UNDP guidelines for national implementation projects (NIM) and in accordance with the UNDP programming, its operational policies, procedures (POPP) and results-based management principles.
4. The project CE-SM was financed by the GEF (US\$ 2,647,272) with respective contributions from the Government of Morocco through MAPM (US\$ 7,300,000) and UNDP (US\$ 200,000), for a total cost of US\$ 10.2 millions, and a national contribution of 72% from the government of Morocco.

A) Purpose, objective and scope of the TE

5. Conducted in accordance with UNDP/GEF guidelines, the purpose of this TE is, as specified in the ToRs, to assess the achievement of project results against what was planned and to draw lessons, which can both improve the sustainability of project benefits and contribute to the overall improvement of UNDP programming³.
6. To this end, the TE examines the extent of the project's achievements. It focuses on the delivery of project results as originally planned, taking into account the recommendations made by the mid-term evaluation (2017), the reframing mission (2018), and its follow-up. The TE provides recommendations for the follow-up of the project's activities and requires a response from the government. The final evaluation and management response will be downloadable from UNDP/GEF systems.

B) Methodology

7. The methodological approach adopted focused on (i) the utility and use of evaluation as a reference frame; (ii) Theory of Change and Progress Towards Impact Analysis as a methodological

¹ The period of the project was extended twice due to difficulties in implementing the innovative approach adopted (twelve-month extension) and due to the COVID-19 pandemic (six-month extension), the CE-SM project Final Report, July 2019, p.3.

² Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, and Water and Forests (MAPMDREF) as of 2016.

³ GEF, UNDP and Agence de Développement Agricole (ADA). Individual consultant procurement notice. Ref: IC 02-07-2021, page 3.

approach; and (iii) partner and stakeholder participation as a learning process. The goal of this approach is to foster the development of valid, credible, and useful findings and recommendations.

8. The evaluation team consolidated the recommendations of the TE ToRs to answer the following two key questions:

A. What has the CE-SM project achieved?

On the one hand, it is a matter of measuring and analysing in a rigorous and precise manner the expected results of the implementation of the CE-SM project (**formative evaluation**).

B. How and why are the expected results of the CE-SM project achieved or not?

On the other hand, on the basis of the previous step, it is necessary to provide a prospective analysis composed of lessons learned and strategic recommendations for decision-making (**summative evaluation**).

9. The following table lists the evaluation questions area with their corresponding evaluation criteria, priority level and evaluation sub-criteria.

Table 1. Evaluation Questions by Area, Priority Level, and Evaluation Sub-criteria

Area	Evaluation Criteria	Priority Level	Evaluation Sub-criteria
Expected results - What has the CE-SM project achieved?	Relevance	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The CE-MS project takes into account the needs of the final beneficiaries (individuals, community groups, organizations) - Alignment of the project CE-SM project with overall and sectorial environment and sustainable development strategies - Level of alignment between the project CE-SM project objectives and GEF strategic priorities (including alignment of relevant focal area indicators) - Level of alignment of CE-SM project objectives and design with UNDAF and CPD
	Intervention Effectiveness	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stage of completion of outputs and immediate outcomes - Effectiveness in achieving intermediate and final outcomes
		High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial and socio-political sustainability of the

	Sustainability of achieved benefits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - institutional framework concerning environment governance - Overall potential for sustainability
	Cross-cutting issues	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consideration of cross-cutting issues (gender equality and women's empowerment, poverty reduction, climate change mitigation and adaptation, capacity building, knowledge management)
The CE-SM project management - How and why the expected results are being achieved or not?	Design and implementation	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rationale of the CE-SM project (validity, feasibility, coherence) - Theory of change - Innovation in relation to the national context and priorities - Lessons learned from other relevant projects (e.g. in the same focal area) integrated into the project design - Expected stakeholder participation - The project's links to other interventions within the sector - Management modalities - Risk management, including environmental and social standards - Results framework analysis: project logic and strategy, indicators - Assumptions and risks - Quality and degree of the implementation of the project strategy - Implementation problems and suggested solutions
	Coherence	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequacy of the resources implemented to the objectives being sought. - Adaptive management (changes in project design and outputs during implementation) - Effective stakeholder participation - Convergence with other similar interventions / Effective partnership arrangements - Implementing partners (UNDP) and executing agency: overall project

			control/implementation and execution
	Efficiency	Low to Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financing and co-financing of the project - Cost-benefit analysis - Cost-effectiveness analysis - GEF additionality - Status of implementation - Timeliness and adherence to deadlines - M&E (design at entry, implementation and overall evaluation)
	Management of development results	Haute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effects and impact that have been achieved or not - Catalytic role / Replication effect - Progress towards impact
	Lessons	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country ownership - Mechanisms to institutionalise the achievements of the PEC-SM project - Adjustments and/or reorientations of activities, funding and working methods

10. The above-mentioned evaluation sub-criteria will be further analysed in order to generate robust evidence-based findings.

C) Data collection and methods of analysis

11. The evaluation team used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection, analysis and triangulation. On the qualitative side, document review, semi-structured interviews and field observation were deployed. On the quantitative side, the analysis focused on the project databases, particularly for the analysis of the project's financial efficiency.
12. The data analysis was conducted through the following analyses: (i) *descriptive analysis* of the context, actors, interests at stake, mechanisms, resources and products deployed by the CE-SM project; (ii) *analysis of the data* collected during the evaluation. This analysis will identify tendencies and recurring themes, as well as contradictory information that emerge during the evaluation questions. At this stage, the team could look for additional data collection; (iii) *quantitative analysis* to further investigate financial, evaluative, management and other data; and (iv) *comparative analysis* of projects within the same sector of activity to identify differences in trends due to geographical, strategic or other factors. This analysis will also identify best practices or lessons learned from different contexts.

D) Deontology

13. The TE Consultant complied with the principles set out in the United Nations Evaluation Group

(UNEG) "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation"⁴, including:

- The protection of the rights and confidentiality of informants, respondents and stakeholders by ensuring compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing data collection and reporting.
- The safety of the data collected before and after the evaluation mission and compliance with protocols to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of information sources.
- Use of information and data being collected as part of the evaluation process only for the evaluation and not for any other purpose without the permission of UNDP and its partners.

E) Limits of the evaluation

14. The present evaluation encountered certain Limits, including: (i) the availability of key informants: the planning of interviews and field visits was reduced to a minimum, due to the busy schedules of key resource persons; (ii) the limited availability and imprecision of information produced by M&E systems; and (iii) the influence of the context of CE-MS implementation concerning the quality and validity of data, and the access to target groups, particularly beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the Consultant endeavoured to create reliable data set on the final evaluation of the CE-SM project.

F) Structure of the TE report

15. The structure of the TE report of the CE-SM project complies with the ToR and the Guidance for *Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financing Projects (GEF&UNDP, 2020)*. In addition to the executive summary, the report outline falls into 5 parts, as follows (i) **Introduction** covering the following points: Purpose and objective of the FE - Scope - Methodology - Data collection and analysis - Ethics - Limits of the evaluation - Structure of the FE report; (ii) **Project description** which covers the following: Project beginning and duration, including milestones - Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional and policy factors relevant to the project's objective and scope - Problems the project seeks to address: threats and barriers - Immediate and developmental objectives of the project - Expected results - Key stakeholders: checklist - Theory of change; (iii) **Evaluation mission** findings covering the following: Project design/development - Project implementation - Project results and impacts; (iv) - **Key findings**, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned; and (v) **Annexes**, including a set of appendices prepared in accordance with GEF requirements.

⁴ GNUE, (2016) *Normes et règles d'évaluation*, Nations Unies, UNEG (sigle anglais de GNUE), New York <http://uneval.org/document/detail/1914>

GNUE, (2020), *Code de conduite éthique révisé*, Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, UNEG, New York <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/2866>

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A) Project development context

16. Morocco has adhered to the global efforts for biodiversity conservation, especially the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992. The country is committed to implementing the revised and updated Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity for the period 2011-2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, whose vision is: "*by 2050, biological diversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, sustaining ecosystem services, maintaining global health and providing essential benefits for all people*"⁵.
17. The Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (ABR), has specific natural wealth, combining valuable traditional local knowledge accumulated over thousands of years, and important opportunities to reconcile biodiversity conservation objectives with those of poverty reduction.
18. The Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve is an agricultural heritage offering many ecosystem services, including food security and livelihoods for local communities. Capitalising on the preservation of ancestral knowledge and practices, it keeps alive a large number of cultural, human and social practices. Nevertheless, the argan forest in Morocco is threatened by a number of human-induced factors, including overgrazing, excessive use of groundwater resources and excessive use of firewood.
19. In this context, the CE-SM project is a pilot initiative designed to position Morocco on a strategic axis that is both promising and firmly anchored in the current concerns of sustainable development. The integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and programmes could preserve the value of biological diversity and the services provided by ecosystems optimising the positive effects and minimising the harmful effects of human activities on biodiversity.

B) Project start-up and duration, including the implementation steps

20. According to the ProDoc of the project, the initial implementation duration of the CE-SM project is five years (2014-2019). It has been extended twice due to difficulties in implementing an innovative but time-consuming approach. Noting the difficulties of the implementation and the various delays, the mid-term evaluation (2017) recommended to extend the duration, in order to achieve the expected results (twelve-month extension). Also, the COVID-19 pandemic requested a six-month extension of the project duration⁶.
21. The principal phases of the project implementation are as follows:
 - **2014, the first phase** of the project cycle through: (i) the mobilisation of the necessary resources for its operation; and (ii) the planning of 54 activities to be implemented.

⁵ Programme des Nations unies pour l'environnement (PNUE) – Convention sur la biodiversité biologique. *Plan stratégique 2011-2020 pour la diversité biologique* : www.cbd.int/sp.

⁶ *Rapport final du projet EC-SM*, juillet 2021, page 3.

- **2015, the second phase** focused on mobilising the necessary expertise for the design and introduction of PES models.
- **2016, The third phase** with two planning workshops for the activities of the year 2017 organised in Ida Outanane and Taroudant.
- **2017, the year of the implementation** of the activities planned in 2016. In the fourth quarter of 2017, the mid-term evaluation was scheduled and carried out.
- **2018, continued implementation** of the project activities. During this year, an expertise to reorient the PES and refocus the objectives of the project was decided by UNDP and the Steering Committee.
- **2019 and 2020, pursuit** of the CE-SM project activities taking into account the recommendations of the project refocusing report (September 2018).
- **2021, year of closure** and final evaluation of the CE-SM project.

C) Problems the project seeks to address: threats and obstacles

22. The project seeks to address the effects of human pressure (overgrazing and transhumance, intensive agriculture and its overexploitation of water resources, excessive harvesting of firewood, uncontrolled exploitation of medicinal and aromatic plants) on the argan ecosystem of the Sous Massa region through the implementation of a payment for ecosystem services (PES) mechanism, linked to the sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (ABR).
23. Threats and obstacles were therefore identified and solutions were recommended in the project strategy.

Table 2. **Obstacles and solutions**

Identified obstacles	Recommended solutions
Obstacle n° 1. Institutional weaknesses and inadequate legal instruments limit the creation, implementation and integration of PES systems.	Component 1. Improved enabling environment for the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SMD region and for the mainstreaming of the approach at the national level.
Obstacle n° 2 Insufficient know-how and technical capacity to develop PES systems and the associated sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity.	Component 2. Capacity building to implement and integrate payment for ecosystem services and sustainable use of associated agro-biodiversity.
Obstacle n° 3. Inadequate promotion and commercialization of agro-biodiversity products from the argan ecosystem.	Component 3. Strengthening biodiversity-friendly organic businesses through improved labelling and marketing of local products from the Argan ecosystem.
Obstacle n° 4. Operational difficulties in implementing PES schemes and limited awareness and commitment of local communities regarding biodiversity conservation.	Component 4. Strengthening agro-biodiversity conservation in the Argan tree ecosystem through PES pilot models.

D) Immediate and development objectives of the project

24. According to the ProDoc, the project CE-SM has the following development goal: «*to contribute to the preservation and sustainable use of globally important biodiversity in the Souss Massa Drâa (SMD) region of Morocco*». To this end, the main objective of the project is «*to conserve the internationally important Argan ecosystem in the Souss Massa Drâa (SMD) region through payment for ecosystem services and the sustainable use of the associated agro-biodiversity*»⁷.

E) Expected results

25. As mentioned above, the CE-SM project main objective is the conservation of the Argan ecosystem through PES and the sustainable use of agro-biodiversity. To this end, the project's Strategic results framework (SRF) contain four components/objectives:
- (i) Enhanced enabling environment for the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SMD region and mainstreaming of the approach at the national level (component/objective 1).
 - (ii) Strengthened capacity to implement and mainstream payment for ecosystem services and the associated sustainable use of agro-biodiversity (Component/Objective 2).
 - (iii) Strengthening biodiversity-friendly organic businesses through improved labeling and marketing of local products from the Argan ecosystem (component/objective 3).
 - (iv) Strengthening the conservation of agro-biodiversity in the Argan tree ecosystem through PES pilot models (component/objective 4).
26. For each of these objectives, main and specific, the ProDoc has set SMART indicators (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound).

F) Key stakeholders

27. As reported in ProDoc, a stakeholder analysis was conducted during the preparation phase of the project to identify key stakeholders, assess their interests in the project, and examine their roles and responsibilities in the project area. Three categories of stakeholders are identified below.

Institutional stakeholders :

- Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fishing (MAPM)
- Agency for the Development of Oasis and Argan Zones (ANDZOA)
- Haut Commissariat for Water and Forests and the Fight against Desertification (HCEFLCD)
- Regional Observatory for the Environment and Sustainable Development (OREDD)
- Ministry of the Environment (MEMEE)
- SMD Basin Agency
- SMD Regional Council
- Social Development Agency (ADS)

Implementing partners:

⁷ ProDoc, page 29.

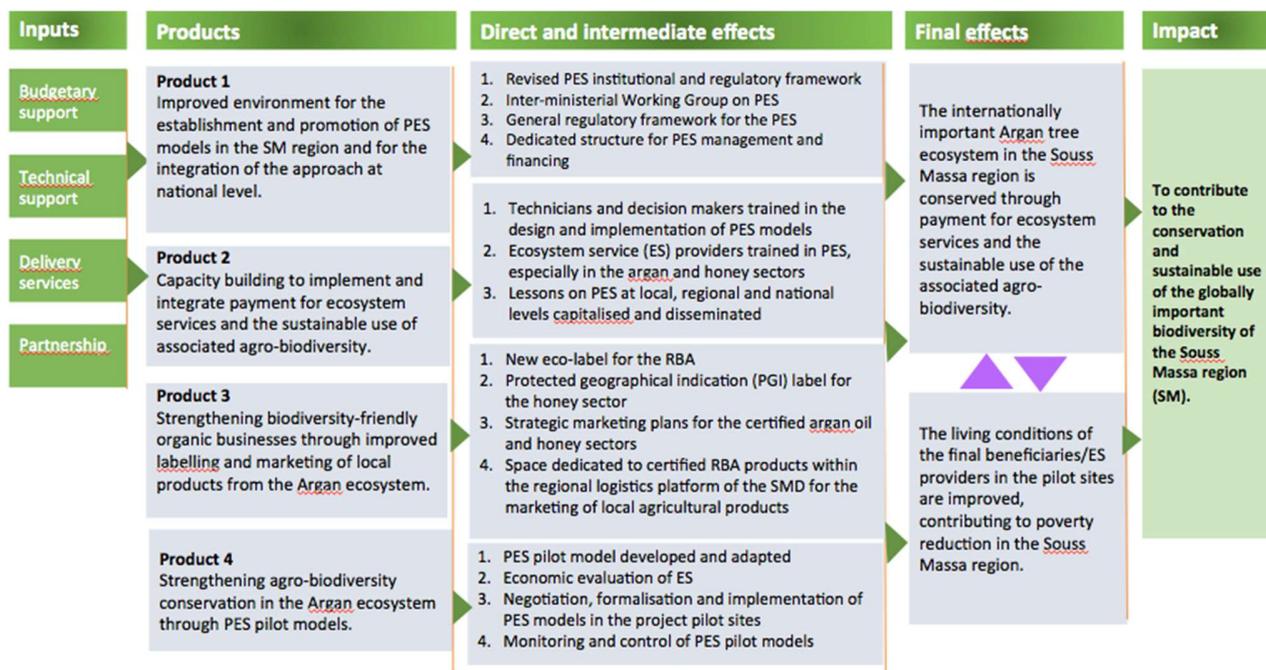
- The Agricultural Development Agency (ADA), the national implementing institution of the project. It hosts the project team, recruits and manages technical assistance and consultancies, selects and signs contracts, purchases and maintains equipment, disseminates results, and is responsible for the overall implementation of the project.
- Network of Associations of the Argan Biosphere Reserve (RARBA)
- Moroccan Federation of Argan Users' Associations
- Moroccan Association for the Geographical Identification of the Oil (AMIGHA)
- National Association of Argan Cooperatives (ANCA)
- Rural Network for Tourism Development (RTDR)
- Local development associations (ADL)
- National institutes in charge of research, development and training
- Moroccan Interprofessional Federation of the Argan Sector FEMAGRANE representing the argan tree's rightholders
- Argan cooperatives
- Beekeepers' associations

Technical and financial partners:

- UNDP-GEF
- Firms: Acteon Environment and Agroconcept

G) The Theory of change of the CE-SM project

28. The TE of the project CE-SM is based on the retrospectively reconstructed theory of change. It describes the sequence of direct, intermediate and final expected results/outcomes of the project. This approach aims to examine the extent to which these effects are achieved or not, the conditions and reasons for achieving or not achieving the effects and their contribution to the development objective of the CE-SM project.



Context, Challenges and Risks: institutional buy-in - validation and adoption of the institutional and regulatory framework (institutionalisation) - sustainability of financial resources - programmatic inefficiency - exit and sustainability strategy - replication of the approach on a larger scale (scaling up) - DLT4EU project - capitalisation of acquired knowledge - coherence / complementarity with other similar initiatives, etc.

Figure 1. Reconstructed theory of change of the CE-SM project

5. FINDINGS

A) PROJECT DESIGN / FORMULATION

29. All stakeholders interviewed recognise the innovative aspect of the CE-SM project. However, the design of the project remains problematic for the achievement of its goal and objectives. In fact, the review of the project's ProDoc reveals gaps and inconsistencies which threatens its validity, feasibility and coherence. These gaps and inconsistencies are mainly related to:
- (i) the absence of a clearly established theory of change,
 - (ii) the lack of output activities formulation,
 - (iii) the vagueness and use of some results based management concepts,
 - (iv) the imprecision of the roles and responsibilities of the project stakeholders,
 - (v) the underestimation of risks, and
 - (vi) the absence of an exit strategy and also the sustainability of net benefits at the closure of the project.

Analysis of results framework (RFS)

Appropriateness of the CE-SM project strategy

30. The strategy of the CE-SM project is highly justified, because it aims to limit the degradation of the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (ABR). The the strategy developed In the ProDoc of the project

is based on the analysis of the context of Souss-Massa (SM) region through environmental, socio-economic, institutional, political and legal dimensions. To this end, the project aims to contribute to the conservation of argan ecosystem in Souss-Massa region by promoting the payment of ecosystem services (PES) and the sustainable use of related agricultural biodiversity.

Obstacles were therefore identified and solutions suggested through the project strategy. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the project's intervention logic has shown limitations when tested for several reasons analysed in this report.

An oversized project design

31. The Outcome Strategic Framework (OSF) of the CE-SM project contains four main components (institutional, regulatory, environmental and economic), and is composed of two parts:
- (i) indicator framework of OSF and the list of outputs by component, and the list of outputs by component. The detailed list of activities, and
 - (ii) the schedule of activities by product were expected to be finalized at the beginning of the project.

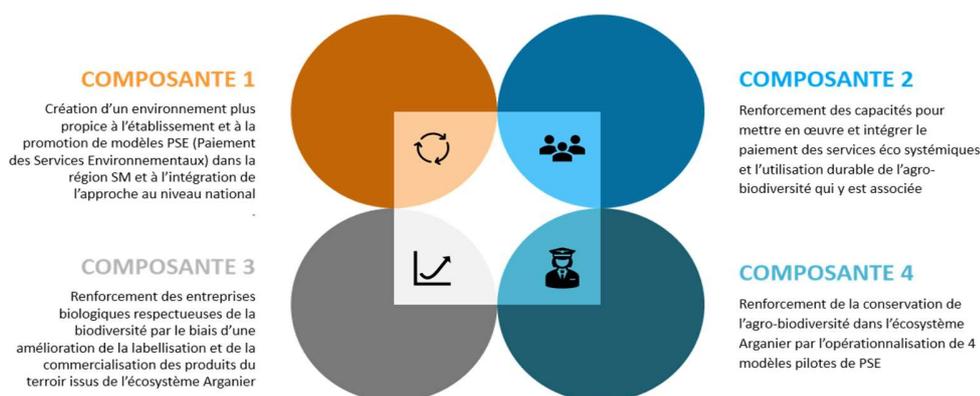


Figure 1. Components of the CE-SM project

Source : *Final Report of the projet*, July 2021.

Several key stakeholders interviewed said that the design is oversized (four components including different products and activities) in respect of 5 years implementation period.

32. *Indicators and targets*

The indicators of the CE-SM project are not systematically SMART (Specific - Measurable - Attainable - Relevant - Timely). Revision and reformulation of some indicators was proposed by the Mid-term evaluation (2017) (see Annex 8 - Analysis of indicators). The indicators related to capacity building are managed (Component 2). Targets are defined by objective/component and indicator. However, the targets are not spread out over time, the fact that does not permit to measure progress towards the project's results.

33. *Assumptions and risks*

The annex IX / The ProDoc Risk Register is dedicated to risk analysis. The register identifies and describes each risk, specifies the typology of risks (organisational, political, operational, environmental, strategic) and assesses its impact on the implementation of the project, and of risk occurring probability.

Systematically, all risks were underestimated because the probability of their occurrence was **low**. In addition, the proposed countermeasures/management response by the ProDoc are inadequate. Consequently, mitigating measures were not established at the beginning of the implementation phase of the CE-SM project.

Links between the project and other projects within the sector

34. The links and complementarities of the CE-SM project are established with respect to the previous process of the project and the implementation of related initiatives.
35. Concerning the previous process, the CE-SM project is in line with two similar initiatives: (i) the MENARID programme of the GEF (Programme for Integrated Natural Resource Management in the Middle East and North Africa) and the UNDP-GEF global project on institutionalising payments for ecosystem services.
36. On the other hand, related initiatives include (i) UNDP-GEF project: Developing a national framework on access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge to share their benefits as a strategy to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Morocco (UNDP ID 4953, GEF ID 5605), (ii) UNDP-GEF project: « Integration of biodiversity in the aromatic and medicinal plant sector » (UNDP ID 4050, GEF ID 3166), (iii) the Moroccan project ASIMA (Agriculture solidaire et intégré au Maroc), (iii) the UNIDO project: Facilitation of Market Access for Agro-Food and Local Products (PAMPAT), (iv) the UNDP-GEF project: « National Biodiversity Planning in Support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 for the Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (UNDP ID 4853, GEF ID 4853), and (v) UNDP's Green Commodities Facility »(GCF).

Innovation related to the national context and priorities

37. Several stakeholders consider the project CE-SM innovative and in line with the promotion of the circular economy on an international scale. For Morocco, it is an initiative "intended to position the country on a strategic axis that is both promising and firmly anchored in the current concerns of sustainable development". The project is perfectly in line with the recommendation of the New Development Model Commission (2021) encouraging: "the adoption of a green economy strategy privileging the LOGIC OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY integrating the specificities and the local potentialities"⁸.
38. Several stakeholders emphasized the innovative aspect of the CE-SM project: "new system of biodiversity conservation", "interesting concept from the point of view of the approach, which combines the preservation of natural resources and the improvement of decent living standards for the population who provides ecosystem services", "the project acts on several areas to have a

⁸ EMP, 2017, page : 38.

widespread effect", "The project plays an important role in raising awareness of actors, institutions and associations", "presenting interest for pilot regions subject to anthropic and climatic degradation", "the project can support the actions of ANDZOA by raising awareness of the population for development projects of the argan tree (to be more cooperative and receptive).

Lessons learned from other relevant projects (e.g. in the same focal area) incorporated into the project design

39. The CE-SM project ProDoc aims to build on the experience and lessons learned from PES projects, particularly the global UNDP-GEF project "Institutionalisation of payments for ecosystem services". In addition to the above mentioned project, the CE-SM project benefited from lessons learned from other international experiences through study visits to Costa Rica and Spain.
40. In the final report of the project (2021), the main lessons learned from these projects show several options to be explored in order to establish the general framework for PES in the RBA. These options concern the direct impact on environmental protection and improvement in Costa Rica and Spain. The following table presents the main lessons learned and possible adaptations to the project CE-SM.

Table 3. Lessons learned and their adaptation to the CE-SM project

Lessons learned	Possible adaptation
Financial compensation provided by the government to forest owners in exchange of forest plantations and environmental services. (Costa Rica)	Similarities with RBA to be adapted and consolidated - Regeneration efforts - Protection and regulation of water for urban and rural use - Development and maintenance of agricultural terraces.
Capping of CO2 exchange , considered as the most extensive mitigation solution in the world, offers the opportunity to develop a biodiversity PES through the introduction of solar systems in households renouncing the removal of wood from the argan forest (Costa Rica)	Involvement of regional council Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) process - Rural Tourism Development Network - Implementation of the carbon neutral strategy using PES tools to promote green tourism.
Management of biosphere reserve labels (Spain)	Modes of governance and involvement of all organizations in charge of environmental management and the establishment and management of the ecolabel. Interest in differentiating the points of sale of RB-labeled products at the level of the referenced shopping centers.

Source: Adapted from CE-SM Final Report, July 2021, page 7

Stakeholder expected participation

41. The ProDoc identified a wide range of stakeholders who are involved in the implementation and management of PES for the RBA. In fact, a preliminary stakeholder analysis was conducted as part

of the preparation of the ProDoc to identify key stakeholders, examine their roles and responsibilities in the project intervention area, and assess their interests in PES implementation in the SM region. However, all stakeholders were not completely involved and efficient for several reasons mentioned below, under the internal consistency evaluation criterion.

Gender mainstreaming in the project design

42. The inclusion of gender in the project design was minimal. In fact, the consultant in charge of the design of the ProDoc did not develop a gender analysis, with the exception of the formulation of indicators on women's participation in certain activities of the project:
- (i) Number of women who benefited from capacity building in M&E and PES design and implementation;
 - (ii) Number of women as producers of ES adhering to the new Protected Geographical Indications label for the honey chain and certified according to the RBA eco-label;
 - (iii) Percentage of stakeholders interested in participating in PES pilot models;
 - (iv) Percentage of PES providers that receive funding and deliver the target ES; and
 - (v) Managed revenues from producers and intermediaries using the RBA/SMD Ecolabel space within the regional logistics hub.

Social and environmental protection

43. The formulation of the ProDoc did not take into account the social and environmental standards of the UNDP when considering the major potential risks related to human rights, gender equality and empowerment, etc. However, the CE-SM project's risk register considered climate change could increase the occurrence of droughts in Morocco which represents a "high risk of rapid desertification that could render large areas of land useless. However, the EC-SM project risk register considered that climate change could increase the occurrence of droughts in Morocco which represents a "high risk of rapid desertification that could render large areas of the SMD incompatible with human habitation and current growth forecasts and development plans for the region".

B) THE CE-SM PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Adaptive Management

44. The table below examines the adaptive management developed by the CE-SM project after the mid-term evaluation (2017), and the reframing mission (2018).

Table 4. Follow-up to the recommendations on adaptive management

Mid-term evaluation (2017)		
Recommendations	Management Response	Terminal evaluation mission comments
<p>Analysis of project stakeholders (roles, actual responsibilities in the ECP-MS, needs and level of influence) and establishing a strategy for their management</p> <p>Set up a CoPiL with a limited number of members and differentiate the steering process from information sharing with project stakeholders.</p> <p>To have a high-level sponsor with real power of influence and legitimacy to mobilise stakeholders to support the vision of the EC-MS</p>		<p>No response was provided for this recommendation.</p> <p>Nevertheless, it should be noted that the preliminary analysis of stakeholders, setting out functions and responsibilities, has been done by the ProDoc (pages: 22 and 23).</p>
	<p>CoPiL membership reduced to 13 members instead of 18 (including ADA, ANDZOA and UNDP), and 5 other stakeholders and 5 beneficiaries involved in PES implementation.</p>	<p>The reduction in CoPiL membership did not make any significant changes in terms of improved achievement of project results.</p>
<p>Set up a CoPiL with a limited number of members and differentiate the steering process from information sharing with project stakeholders.</p>	<p>Identification of potential sponsor and preparation of advocacy materials. The ADA General Directorate has the advantage of legitimacy for institutional mobilisation of stakeholders at central level. The Wali of the region SM has shown his willingness to support the Ecolabel at the regional level.</p>	<p>This change should be important to strengthen institutional coordination at the territorial level and support the implementation of the project without changing the results.</p>

To engage an advocacy strategy by the donors (GEF and UNDP) and the sponsor with key stakeholders to ensure their commitment and support for the project.	Proposal of a national contribution programme based on the Argana PAC and its discussion with the different stakeholders (ADA, DRA, ANDZOA, DREFSO, SMIT, etc.).	No follow-up given regarding this recommendation. The CE-SM project has neither developed the advocacy strategy for donors (GEF and UNDP) nor the national contribution programme (PAC Argana).
To involve the academic community in the studies and activities of the project (formalise a cooperation partnership with universities and other schools of higher education)	Some contacts have been made with resource persons from the Agadir University. The remaining duration of the project will not allow for the implementation of a research protocole on PES. However, a regional conference at the MENA level is planned for 1-3 September 2021 in Agadir in the context of a partnership between ESP/GIZ and the private University Universiapolis. Access to the public procurement portal has been granted through the DRA. But overall, the other management modalities remained restrictive.	No change or modification of the project.
Facilitate administrative procedures for financial management (access to the public procurement portal, transfer of funds between budget lines with justification and traceability) and logistics (permission for the use of vehicles by the PMU)		Access to the public procurement portal did not positively change the the project's expected results.
Collect and document changes in project activities, annual or periodic completion rates of activities, good practices and lessons learnt for their capitalisation and improve the formulation of mitigation measures of identified risks.		No response was provided for this recommendation.
Evaluate the impact of climate change on the sustainability of the FDA terrassette subsidy mechanism.		No response was provided for this recommendation.
Ensure transparency and monitoring of the management of the future RBA eco-label fund.	A legal study was carried out and its results took into account the reference framework developed	This recommendation will be addressed once the Ecolabel is institutionalised.

	for the management of the ecolabel.	
Create synergies with Morocco's climate change resilience programmes in order to identify preventive actions for the effect of drought on beekeeping activities and on the Souss Massa argan forest.	Synergies created with Lab Accelerator and the PMF-GEF.	No response was provided for this recommendation.
Identify measures to mitigate the risk of numerous representatives of the argan and honey sectors and the resulting difficult priority convergence	The PMU is already engaged in the development and implementation of a management plan for the traditional Inzerki apiary, taking into account the preservation of the thyme fields. Similarly, a pollination charter is being validated by the beekeepers' interprofession. In addition, the PGI for Souss honeys is recognised and its attribution is supported by the project (two beekeepers have been awarded the PGI certification) and 20 others are registered for 2021.	This recommendation will be met when the eco-label is institutionalised.
Identify alternative solutions for beneficiaries with low financial capacities in order to have the necessary production and packaging equipment.		
Conceive a long-term strategy for the development, promotion and management of the touristic itinerary by involving regional and national institutional actors.		No response was provided for this recommendation.
To put in place concrete and adapted mechanisms for the mitigation of the strategic risks incurred by the project.		No response was provided for this recommendation.
To look for complementary sources of funding for the project and to extend the duration of the project to achieve its expected results.	Contacts launched with the DLT4EU.	No response was provided for this recommendation.
Reframing mission (2018)		
Recommendations	Management Response	Terminal evaluation mission comment
Replacing or strengthening the Project Management Unit with other members.	The PMU is reinforced by a monitoring committee set up at ADA level.	The terminal report of the CE-MS project does not document the improved effectiveness of the PMU.
Improve the effectiveness of the COPIL: more frequent meetings and more in-depth supervision of technical assistance or separate	Recommendation completed.	The terminal report of the CE-SM project does not report on the improved effectiveness of the CoPil.

strategic steering functions from technical functions.		
Limit the Steering Committee to project implementation partners (max 5-6 members, meeting at least twice a year).	Recommendation completed.	The terminal report of the EC-SM project does not report on the improved effectiveness of the CoPil.
To appoint permanent representatives to the COPIL to ensure continuous monitoring of the project (on the model of the National Biodiversity Committee).		No response was provided for this recommendation.
Establish a Technical Committee, with meetings on request when necessary.	Recommendation completed	The final report of the CE-SM project provides information on the establishment of the Technical Committee and the organisation of meetings.
Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the members of each committee as well as the terms of reference of the project manager and coordinator.		No response was provided for this recommendation.
Abandon the concept of circular economy in the projects (carbon PES, projects related to waste management, climate change adaptation, renewable energies, which are not in the project document).	Recommendation completed	According to the final project report, an adjustment was organised to focus on the argan compensation system and to launch a pilot investment in the local community of Argana covering a 370 ha fenced area and a 5000 ha sustainable development area.
To abandon pilot projects that do not meet the PES principle (renting out the pollination service of bees to intensive agriculture)	Recommendation completed	No data available on the effectiveness of this recommendation in the final project report (July 2021).
To give the argan priority and focus activities on the priorities of the project document: (i) defensing , Agdal, terrassettes (with revision of subsidies and conditionality linked to biodiversity), (ii) legislation (revision of the compensation system for land release based on the model of water contracts, if feasible, and restructuring of the FDA (or FDR) into a PES entity),	Recommendation completed	Recommendation taken into account in the draft fencing text prepared and sent to the administration for review. Significant change to optimise effort and better focus on implementation at one project site without modifying the expected results. The changes were approved by the DNP and reflected in the monitoring reports and project

(iii) proposal of a new law on PES at the RBA level and at the national level, possibly exploring the possibility of linking the protection of the biodiversity of the argan ecosystem to the water issue.		reviews.
Consolidate the axes of intervention into a single PES model that gives priority to the argan and would clearly contribute to the natural regeneration of the argan ecosystem.	Recommendation completed.	According to the terminal report of the project, the intervention axes consolidated into a single PES model in Inzerki, which integrates the RBA label, the setting of defences, the agdal and the terraces for a sustainable argan tree plantation.
In order to achieve this consolidation, reducing the number of branches for the RBA label and focus on the certification of argan oil as a priority	Recommendation completed.	According to the terminal report, the conditions for the establishment of an integrated PES system for a sustainable argan forest (financing, management and monitoring, specifications and good practices, potential beneficiaries) are defined and recorded in the ecolabel management guidelines.
To focus on key sites for the regeneration of the argan ecosystem and reduce the number of pilot sites accordingly. Eliminate pilot sites dominated by almond and ecotourism.	Recommendation completed.	The intervention sites are being reduced and the Inzerki site is being used as a pilot to focus only on activities that have a direct impact on the sustainable management of the territory and the natural regeneration of the argan ecosystem.
To accompany the project with continuous international technical assistance until the end of the project to validate the ToRs of studies and to check the relevance and quality of the products against the objectives of the project and its re-framing. An extension without additional cost can be envisaged only if the project is clearly on progress for achieving a minimal number of results.	International technical assistance contracted and accompanied the project.	Significant changes to improve the implementation of the project without changing the expected results of the project.

Effective stakeholder participation and partnership agreements

45. The table below examines the actual participation of stakeholders and the partnership arrangements developed by the CE-SM project.

Table 5. Status of stakeholder participation

Participation and Partnership	Comments of the Evaluation Mission
<p>Project Management How did the project develop and leverage the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?</p>	<p>The ProDoc identified a wide range of stakeholders involved in PES implementation and management for the PES in RBA, particularly their roles and responsibilities in the project intervention area, and their interest in PES implementation in the SM region.</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders are not sufficiently specified in the ProDoc. The analysis shows that during the implementation phase of the project, there were no agreements between the partners to define the legal framework for their participation and obligations within the framework of the project. Given the absence of this conventional framework, the participation of the stakeholders in the project was very limited and concerned occasional technical cooperation, particularly with ANDZOA and the DRA.</p>
<p>Participation and country-driven processes How did local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? How did they have an active role in project decision-making that supported efficient and effective project implementation?</p>	<p>Ownership by national stakeholders has been minimal, particularly by key institutional partners (ADA, ANDZOA, and HCEFLD).</p> <p>Since the management of the project was delegated to the DRA by ADA, the decision-making process was very slow and impacted the achievement of results within the time frame. However, this situation changed at the close of the CE-SM project due to the ongoing PES development initiatives in Morocco within ADA and ANDZOA, in support of the project objectives. This support is demonstrated, on the one hand, by the institutionalization of the commission responsible for managing the ecolabel, created by decision of the Minister dated June 15, 2021, and on the other hand, by the strengthening of the ecolabel proposed and included in the Generation Green Strategy.</p>
<p>Participation and public awareness: How did stakeholder involvement and public awareness contribute to the progress towards achievement of project objectives? Were there any limitations to stakeholder awareness of project outcomes or to stakeholder participation in project activities? Was there invested interest of stakeholders in the project's long-term success and sustainability?</p>	<p>The contribution of stakeholders to progress toward the CE-SM project objectives is limited.</p>

<p>Extent of stakeholder interaction How did actual stakeholder interaction compared the to what was planned in the project document and Stakeholder Engagement Plan? Include challenges and outcomes on stakeholder engagement, as evolved from the time of the MTR.</p>	<p>The dialogue and consultation initiated by the PES project with institutional stakeholders and partners at the Sous Massa region level are decisive factors for the sustainability and durability of results, ownership and replication of the project on a large scale (scaling up). Indeed, building linkages and strengthening dialogue and consultation relationships to address contextual constraints and challenges can help improve the effectiveness of the CE-SM project.</p>
<p>Gender How appropriate and adaptive was the gender action plan in facilitating gendermainstreaming objectives ? How were women’s groups, NGOs, civil society orgs and women’s ministries adequatelyconsulted and involved in project design? If not, should they have been?</p>	<p>No gender action plan to facilitate mainstreaming objectives has been developed under the CE-SM project.</p>
<p>Stakeholder engagement gender responsive How were stakeholder engagement exercises gender responsive? For any stakeholder workshops, were women-only sessions held, if appropriate, and/orwere other considerations made to ensure women’s meaningful participation? During implementation what systematic and appropriate efforts were made to includediverse groups of stakeholders (e.g. women’s groups)?</p>	<p>As a result of the CE-SM project, according to the 2020 annual review, nearly 85 women are involved in natural resource management through the cooperatives created to manage PES. Also, the project has targeted the middle class and youth to implement the ecolabel/PES. A group of 30 operators are mobilized within ASMEL including 6 women and 20 youth.</p> <p>According to the CNP, efforts have been made to address the gender dimension, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support and accompaniment of six women's cooperatives created and having received financial support from the PEM-GEF to initiate the PES models; • The representativeness of women within ASMEL RBA has been taken into account, 12 women are members out of a total of 33 (1 woman among the 7 members of the executive board, 4 women among the 15 members of the board of directors); • The representation of women was also ensured by the participation of 3/7 women in the PMU team and 6/20 women in the support team in addition to 6 UNDP staff among the 9 regularly ensuring the supervision and administrative management of the project; • 8 women managers of companies were contracted by the project and provided services.

Conclusion

46. On the one hand, the total involvement of stakeholders was lacking and worked against the project's performance. The evaluation mission noted their low participation/ownership in the implementation of the CE-SM project and the development of PES models in the SM region. On the other hand, HCEFLCD, as

a key partner, was not effectively involved in the implementation of the project. Moreover, the project has not developed, in partnership with key partners, a gender action plan to facilitate its mainstreaming objectives.

ADA, the implementation Agency

47. According to the ProDoc, the implementation of the project is to be carried out by ADA, as the Implementing Agency of the project. It is responsible for the disbursement of funds and the achievement of the project's objective and results in accordance with the approved action plan.
48. At the operational level, the ADA has delegated responsibility for the implementation of the CE-MS project to the DRA. The latter has designated DNP from among its senior staff to supervise the implementation of the project.
49. With regard to the Implementing Partner's the following table shows the day-to-day activities of the project under the overall control and supervision of UNDP.

Box 1. Responsibilities of the Implementing Agency
<p>The Implementing Agency is responsible in particular for the following functions: (i) coordinating activities to ensure the achievement of agreed results; (ii) certifying expenditures in accordance with approved budgets and work plans; (iii) facilitating, monitoring and reporting on the procurement of project inputs and the delivery of outputs; (iv) coordinating GEF/UNDP funded interventions with other parallel interventions; (v) approving terms of reference for consultants and tender documents for subcontracted inputs; and (vi) reporting to UNDP on project implementation and impact.</p> <p>Source: ProDoc, page 22.</p>

Table 6. **Implementation status of the CE-SM project by the ADA**

Activities	Comments of TE
Results and timeliness	<p>The process has been initiated for the achievement of the outputs of the CESM project.</p> <p>Overall, the first results are noticeable, especially the two bodies created for the management of the RBA Eco-label (the commission established by decision of the Minister of MAPMDREF and ASMEL).</p> <p>However, the decision-making process is very slow, which has led to significant delays in the implementation of project activities.</p>
Risk management quality	<p>The project was managed according to national procedures based on transparency and competitive bidding for services and purchases in strict compliance with the regulations in place (public procurement decree). Also, the annual reports and reviews report on the progress and constraints encountered in the implementation of the project.</p>
Realistic annual reports	<p>Thus, these risks have not been the object of any extraordinary CoPil meetings or an agenda issue at these annual meetings.</p>

	The lack of appropriate risk management has negatively affected the implementation of the CE-MS Project in general, and the achievement of the results of components 1 and 4 in particular.
Realistic annual reports	Annual reports and review presentations reflect the true picture of progress, constraints and risks.
Adequate management of identified environmental and social risks (assessments, management plans, if appropriate)	The ProDoc formulation did not take into account the social and environmental standards of the UNDP in considering the major potential risks. Thus, the CE-SM project risk register minimized the risks related to the social and environmental dimension and were not properly and proactively managed.

Coordination and operational issues

50. *Despite the effort made by the PMU, coordination was limited to the operational level at local and regional level for the implementation of annual work plans. However, the steering of strategic and institutional coordination with decision-makers has been limited. As regards the PMU effort, coordination was limited to the operational level at local and regional level for the implementation of annual work plans. However, the steering of strategic and institutional coordination with decision-makers has been limited.*
51. The analysis of the documents at the disposal of the evaluation team reveals a lack of synergy between the operational aspects and the strategic and political aspects for the implementation of the project, and particularly the results of components 1 and 4. As an example, the case of the revision of the legal text on protection, which was drawn up without coordination (two meetings held with the HCEFLCD in vain in the absence of a formal partnership framework) with the HCEFLCD.
52. Two main operational problems faced are of an administrative character:
- Problems with the PMU's access to the public procurement portal: the launch of the first tenders by the project coincided with the entry into force of the new provisions of the public procurement decree in 2015-2016. The project is domiciled at the DRA and its management has been delegated to its services. It was difficult for the ADA to give access to the local team which reports to the DRA. This problem impacted on the implementation schedule and institutional arrangements.
 - Problems with PMU travel to field sites due to: (i) limited availability of DRA drivers, and (ii) the status of the CNP does not allow the use of project cars.⁸ To solve this problem, for each trip, the CNP uses the company car on a mission order signed by the DNP reporting to the DRA.

UNDP Supervision

53. Day-to-day operational oversight is provided by UNDP through its office in Rabat. Strategic oversight and guidance is provided by the UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor responsible for the project
54. With regard to UNDP supervision, the table below details the activities related to project identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation of the detailed proposal, approval and start up, monitoring, supervision, completion and evaluation.

Table 7. **UNDP supervision activities**

Activities	Comments of TE
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Adequacy, quality and timeliness of UNDP support to the implementing partner and project team	UNDP support was provided in order to strengthen national ownership and accompany it to achieve results. UNDP supported the creation of synergies and complementarities with the PMF-GEF and the Accelerator programme.
Realistic annual reports	The financial reports (CDRs) drawn up are accurate and do not raise any comments in addition to the AAAs submitted, which give details of the financial monitoring on the atlas. The review templates have been much improved in order to guide the PMU in presenting the state of progress in relation to the indicators and targets set out in the ProDoc.
Results and timeliness	UNDP has advocated for proactive management by the national partner in CoPil meetings and reviews.
Risk management quality	Le PNUD a été réactif dans ses interventions pour le traitement des problèmes tout en essayant de renforcer l'appropriation nationale.
Adequate monitoring of environmental and social risk management as identified by the UNDP SESP.	UNDP has been responsive in addressing the issues while trying to build national ownership.

55. In short, UNDP ensured: (i) regular monitoring of the PMU and regular control visits organised in the field to accompany and supervise the project activities and results; (ii) support to the PMU in the pre-examination of the annual work plans and related budgets, quality control by providing and sharing AAAs and CDRs with the national partner and their co-validation; (iii) review of the ToRs elaborated by the PMU and validation of the project's deliverables and products; (iv) monitoring the progress of the project and providing guidance at CoPil meetings, mid-term and annual reviews to address constraints and strengthen national ownership; (v) drafting the PIR each year to assess risks, achievement or non-achievement of target objectives and annual achievements, and providing feedback to the PMU on risk management and implementation of CoPil recommendations, reviews, mid-term evaluation and project reframing.

Quality of UNDP implementation	Rating
Quality of UNDP implementation	Satisfactory (S)
Quality of execution by the implementing partner	Unsatisfactory (U)
Overall quality of implementation	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)

Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), overall evaluation of monitoring and evaluation (*)

Terminal Independent Evaluation of the CE-SM project, December 2021

56. According to the ProDoc, the components of the M&E system are presented as follows.

Table 8. Components of M&E of the CE-SM project

M&E Components	Responsible
Initial workshop and report within two months of the start of the project	CNP, UNDP CO, UNDP/WM RCU
Measurement of the means of verification of project results at the start, middle and end of the project and annually if necessary.	CNP, UNDP/GEF CTR Supervise the commissioning of specific studies and delegate responsibilities to relevant team members
CNP, UNDP/GEF and CTR will supervise the commissioning of specific studies and delegate responsibilities to relevant team members	CNP and the team project supervision
APR/PIR submitted to GEF annually	CNP and the project team, UNDP CO, UNDP/GEF, RCU, UNDP /GEF
Steering Committee annually (1st quarter)	CNP and the project team, Partners, UNDP CO
Quarterly progress reports	CNP and the project team
Mid-year (June) and annual (December) reviews	CNP and the project team, Partenaires, UNDP/CO
Mid-term evaluation at the middle of the implementation period	CNP and the project team, UNDP CO, UNDP/GEF RCU External consultants (evaluation team)
Final evaluation	CNP and the project team, UNDP CO, UNDP/GEF RCU, External consultants (evaluation team)
Rapport Final report of the project du projet	CNP and the project team, UNDP CO,, Consultant local
An annual audit (carried out in 2021)	UNDP CO,, CNP and the project team
Annual site and field visits	UNDP CO, PNUD/FEM RCU, Representatives of the Government

Source : ProDoc, page : 57.

57. The table below examines the design of the CE-SM project's M&E system at entry.

Table 9. Findings and comments of the TE on the M&E of the project

Design of M&E at entry	Findings and comments of the evaluation mission
Was the M&E plan well-conceived, practical and sufficient at the point of CEO Endorsement?	The ProDoc envisages the M&E framework of the CE-SM project for monitoring and reporting on the implementation for mid-term and final evaluations.
Was it articulated sufficiently to monitor results and track progress toward achieving objectives?	As designed, the M&E framework does not permit to track progress towards the achievement of the CE-SM project outcomes (intermediate, final and impact).
Did the M&E plan include a baseline, SMART ³⁴ indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results?	The ProDoc includes an M&E plan defining M&E activities, responsibilities, budget and timeline.

Were baseline conditions, methodology, logistics, time frames, and roles and responsibilities well-articulated ?	As mentioned above, the ProDoc has specified roles and responsibilities, timeframes (timelines). However, it does not specify the M&E methodology to be adopted and, even less, the logistics required for an M&E.
Was the M&E budget in the project document sufficient?	The budget dedicated to M&E represents about 3.7% of the total project cost. This rate is estimated to be sufficient and has been allocated to the evaluations (mid-term and final) and the two audits carried out (2016 and 2021).

Conclusion

58. The analysis of the components of the M&E framework of the project shows that it is comprehensive. But its main limitation is that it does not allow for the monitoring of progress towards the achievement project's outcomes (intermediate, final and impact)

M&E implementation

59. The table below examines the implementation of the M&E system of the CE-SM project.

Table 10. Findings and comments of the TE on the M&E design of the CE-SM

M&E Implementation	Findings and comments of the Evaluation mission
Was the M&E plan sufficiently budgeted and funded during project preparation and implementation?	The budget dedicated to M&E represents nearly 3.7% of the total project cost. This rate is estimated to be sufficient and has been allocated to evaluations (mid-term and final) and the two audits conducted (2016 and 2021).
Was data on specified indicators, relevant GEF/LDCF/SCCF Tracking Tools/Core Indicators gathered in a systematic manner?	Data on the indicators specified in the CRS were collected and used in the annual reports, GEF reports (PIRs), and the mid-year and biannual review documents. However, data for the GEF/LDCF/SCCF monitoring tools/indicators were not collected.
Extent of compliance with progress and financial reporting requirements, including quality and timeliness of reports ;	Monitoring reports (annual reports and IRPs) and annual and mid-year reviews track the status of implementation and are prepared in accordance with periodic deadlines

Value and effectiveness of the monitoring reports and evidence that these were discussed with stakeholders and project staff;	The content of these reports is generally presented and discussed at mid-year and annual review meetings and at CoPil meetings. The information provided by the M&E system were not used to address reported constraints and risks and improve project management.
Extent to which the GEF OFP was kept informed of M&E activities.	The ProDoc did not include a process for informing GEF OFP.
Extent to which the Project Team used inclusive, innovative, and participatory monitoring systems .	The CoPil and PMU have not leveraged the M&E framework to be inclusive, innovative and participatory.
Extent to which information provided by the M&E system was used to improve and adapt project performance.	The information provided by M&E framework was not used to improve and adapt project performance. In fact, this information was not used to address the risks reported and improve project management.
Whether the M&E system included proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure that data will continue to be collected and used after project closure.	The CE-SM project has conducted no training on M&E or Results-Based Management (RBM) for stakeholders responsible for M&E activities to improve the implementation of project activities.
How were perspectives of women and men involved and affected by the project monitored and assessed? How were relevant groups' (including women, indigenous peoples, children, elderly, disabled, and poor) involvement with the project and the impact on them monitored?	Gender sensitive indicators have been completed and their analysis shows that women's participation is still limited for cultural and social reasons.
Was there adequate monitoring of environmental and social risks as identified through the UNDP SESP and in line with any safeguards management plan's M&E section?	The ProDoc did not provide a backup management plan (UNDP SESP).
Whether the projects' Theory of Change was reviewed and refined during implementation ?	ProDoc did not originally design the theory of change for the CE-SM project. Instead, the evaluation mission reconstructed the project's theory of change a posteriori.

Extent of the Project Board's role in M&E activities	Organization of annual CoPil planning, monitoring et evaluation workshops (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020). These workshops provide an update on the status of the project's achievements and the follow-up of the CoPil's recommendations for the previous meeting.
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Conclusion

60. Field monitoring and coordination efforts are carried out by the PMU, but the M&E framework has not been used by the CoPil and the PMU. On the one hand, the design of the M&E framework failed to: (i) put in place a proper M&E system focused on project results, (ii) provide for a dedicated internal M&E structure, and (iii) train resource persons in M&E and managing for development results (RBD). On the other hand, the use of implementation M&E data has not been optimal, particularly as a decision support tool to: (i) improve project management, (ii) ensure timely refocusing, (iii) address constraints, and (iv) find responses to reported risks, especially for components 1 and 4.

Overall assessment of monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation	Rate
M&E Design at Entry	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Implementation of the M&E plan	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Overall quality of M&E	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)

Risk Management

61. The CE-SM project's ProDoc has developed a risk register relating to five levels of analysis, namely: (i) organizational, (ii) policy, (iii) operational, and (iv) environmental. In addition to the identification of risks and their typology, the risk register considers the foreseeable impact of each risk and the likelihood of its occurrence, as well as the anticipated counter measures or responses to mitigate its effects.
62. The table below examines risk management during the implementation of the CE-SM project.

Table 11. Risk management status of the CE-SM project

Risk management componentse	Comments of the Evaluation mission
Was the project's risk register properly maintained during implementation?	The risks identified in the ProDoc register have been minimised. However, the main risks were maintained during implementation, namely (i) lack of inter-ministerial coordination; (ii) revision of the regulatory framework requiring more time than anticipated by the ProDoc; (iii) weak capacity of ADA to implement PES investment requirements; (iv) weak stakeholder mobilisation; (v) difficulty in setting up PES

	mechanisms.
How did those risks affect project implementation?	The lack of management of the identified risks led to delays in the implementation of the project and impacted the achievement of the expected results of components 1, 3 and 4.
What systems and tools were used to identify, prioritize, monitor and manage those risks? Were action plans developed and followed?	The CE-SM project did not develop systems or tools to identify, prioritise, monitor and manage the risks encountered during the implementation of the project.
Did the Project Team keep the Project Board informed of new risks, changes to existing risks and the escalation of risks?	The CoPil was informed, on a regular basis, of new risks to which the EC-SM project was exposed.
Were new risks or changes to existing risks reported on in the annual PIRs and/or MTR (if applicable)?	Recurrent risks were reported in different annual reports but were not managed in an integrated and anticipatory way. The lack of their management has led to delays in the implementation of the project and in the achievement of the results of components 1 and 4. Effective risk management would aim to inform and guide the project with regard to risks, by systematically applying risk management procedures and practices including: (i) specific and factual mitigation measures; and (ii) clear timeframes for implementation of steering (CoPil) or/and management (PMU) responses.
Were action plans developed and followed? Was escalation necessary?	No action plan was developed to address the risks of the implementation of the CE-SM project. This critical situation has not been the subject of extraordinary CoPil meetings or an agenda item at the annual project meetings.
Were any risks overlooked and what were the consequences of that?	Recurrent risks are reported in various CE-SM project documents. This has had the major negative consequence that several project outputs and activities were not realised.

Conclusion

63. First of all, all ProDoc risks were underestimated considering their impact and probability as LOW. Furthermore, the proposed countermeasures were found to be irrelevant for the conduct of the project.
64. Secondly, these risks have not been subject to integrated risk management and updating during the implementation of the EC-SM project. The aim would be to inform and guide the project with regard

to risks, by systematically applying risk management procedures and practices including: (i) specific and factual mitigation measures; and (ii) clear timeframes for implementation of steering (CoPil) or/and management (PMU) responses.

65. Finally, the risk review identifies some recurrent risks, notably those related to (i) stakeholder involvement and contribution; (ii) failure of institutional coordination; (iii) difficulties in adopting the institutional and regulatory framework for the PES; and (iv) delays in the implementation of the Defensification Programme. Each risk is qualified (financial, strategic, political, managerial, institutional and legal, environmental). A responsible person is identified (NPC and NPD) and a timeframe is set to take charge of the risk and resolve it.

6. RESULTS AND IMPACTS OF THE CE-SM PROJECT

A) Progress towards objectives and expected results

66. Progress towards achieving the objectives and results of the CE-SM project has been obstructed by several constraints and difficulties during its implementation. These constraints and challenges led to the extension of the project duration twice after the mid-term evaluation in 2017 and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
67. The following table presents an analysis of the progress towards the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives and expected results of the CE-SM project. Based on the available project documentation, this progress is considered moderately unsatisfactory (MU). **In order to inform progress towards the objectives and expected results of the CE-SM project, the evaluation team triangulated data from three sources, namely: (i) the 2020 Annual Review, (ii) the Court of Auditors' audit report (July 2021) and (iii) the CE-SM project final report (July 2021).**

Progress towards objectives and expected results Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)

Principal Objective	Indicator	Target at the end of the project	Status of the project's completion (July 2021)
Maintaining the globally important Argan ecosystem of the SMD region through the payment of ecosystem services and the sustainable use of the associated agro-biodiversity.	<p>Indicator 1:</p> <p>1a) Net loss of the Argan ecosystem</p> <p>1b) Regeneration of the Argan grove</p> <p>1c) Area of Argan ecosystem under restoration.</p> <p>Indicator 2:</p> <p>% increase in revenues of PES providers participating in PES pilot models.</p> <p>Indicator 3:</p> <p>Number of PES pilot models and hectares covered in each agro-ecological zone.</p> <p>Indicator 4:</p> <p>Number of hectares identified for scaling up of PES models after the end of the project.</p>	<p>Baseline scenario</p> <p>No formal PES model is in place in the project area. However, an approach that converges with PES principles has been implemented by HCEFLCD through its forest protection programme, based on financial compensation for unused grazing units paid to property rights holders who engage in the conservation process.</p> <p>A baseline for deforestation, restoration and regeneration will be quantified for each agro-ecological zone at the start of the project.</p> <p>Targets at the end of the project</p> <p>Baseline and revenue targets for ES providers, number of PES pilot models and their scaling up to be determined at the beginning phase of the project.</p>	The final report of the CE-SM project (July 2021) does not provide evidence to inform the indicators and targets of the main project objective.

68. **Component 1** | More favorable environment for the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SMD region, and for its mainstreaming approach at national level.

Indicator	Baseline	Target at the end of the project	Status of the project's completion (July 2021)
Finalisation and quality of the laws and regulations developed and adopted which are required to establish and implement a national PES model.	A regulatory and institutional framework adapted to PES has not yet been identified and developed at the regional or national level	<p>Three scenarii for the governance of the ecolabel and revision of the standard elaborated / revised legal text under consideration for adoption, the framework agreement for the implementation of the ecolabel elaborated in the process of being signed and the commission of the management body of the ecolabel created on 15 June 2021 by a ministerial decision.</p> <p>Réalisé partiellement, le modèle est mis en place officiellement et sa mise en œuvre initiée.</p>	<p>At the end of the CE-SM project, the setting up of the appropriate regulatory and institutional framework for PES at regional (SM) or national level has not been effectively achieved. (EC-MS project closure report, July 2021).</p> <p>This observation is confirmed by the audit of the Court of Auditors (July 2021) which considered the rate of achievement of component 1 to be: 0%.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the project has completed : (i) the legal study and proposals of three scenarios of governance of the ecolabel and revision of the standard, (ii) the framework agreement for the implementation of the ecolabel, and (iii) the commission of the management entity of the ecolabel.</p>
Numerous and diverse local and regional institutions effectively engaged in and supporting the PES model.		<p>Proposal for a general regulatory framework for PES associated with the Ecolabel in the RBA elaborated and submitted for public consultation including ASMEL RBA statutes, Ecolabel Standard.</p> <p>The Ecolabel management plan and strategic territorial planning applied to the Argana pilot CAMP.</p> <p>The key actors of the project ADA, DRA, ANDZOA; DREFSO and ASMEL were consulted during the legal study.</p> <p>A mixed scenario of "public-private" management chaired by ANDZOA with ADA, DRA DREFSO</p>	<p>The final project report (July 2021) does not provide evidence for this indicator.</p> <p>However, the Court of Auditors' audit (July 2021) confirms the following: (i) the key actors of the project ADA, DRA, ANDZOA; DREFSO and ASMEL were consulted during the legal study; (ii) the mixed scenario of "public-private" management by a commission chaired by ANDZOA with ADA, DRA DREFSO as members and ASMEL as the managing body was adopted; (iii) the identification of the 12 potential ecolabel operators; and (iv) the signing of 9 PES contracts and the elaboration of a marketing plan</p>

		as members, and ASMEL as the managing body, was adopted.	
		12 potential eco-label operators and 9 PES contracts signed (6 for argan oil, 2 for LDCs and 1 for honey) and the marketing plan developed.	
Management structure for the implementation of PES and eco-certification models for agro-biodiversity in the RBA.		Key members of the management entity identified Management structure dedicated to the PES and eco-certification development model established in the RBA from the 2nd year	According to the final report of the CE-SM project, the management structure for the development of PES and eco-certification models of agro-biodiversity in the RBA, (...) a structure (ASMEL RBA) was created in May 2019 for the promotion of the PES-bearing ecolabel linked to the compensation of the Arganeraie fencing and to several other incentive instruments. This structure was then set up as an ecolabel commission by ministerial decision (15 June 2021) to adopt a jurisdictional approach where the role of the State is more solicited.

Conclusion of component 1:

69. The evaluation mission finds that progress towards the objectives and results of Component 1 of the CE-SM project is mitigated.
70. In fact, at the end of the project, neither the enabling environment for the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SM region, nor the mainstreaming of the approach at the national level, is really effective, for the following reasons :
- (I) the validity of the project design and the top-down approach advocated by the ProDoc (top-bottom)
 - (II) the generally long and uncertain time to legislate in Morocco, and particularly on the integration of the PES model
 - (III) the divergence of vision between ADA and HCEFLCD on the revision of the law on land release and the weak involvement of the Department of Water and Forests;
 - (IV) the inter-ministerial working group and the national debate on PES, which were supposed to be set up at the start of the CE-SM project, have not been constituted.
71. **Component 2 |** Capacity building to implement and integrate payment for ecosystem services and the sustainable use of associated agro-biodiversity.

Indicator	Baseline	Target at the end of the project	Status of the project's completion (July 2021)
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<p>Gendered number of producers and other operators involved in the target agro-biodiversity value chains trained as potential suppliers of PES.</p>	<p>There were no producers/operators trained as potential PES providers and no technicians/decision-makers who have experience of SE-related trade-offs and PES design</p>	<p>Target profile 200 producers 20 Associations/NGOs 20 operators/ Intermediaries 50 technicians (at least 18 women) 20 decision-makers (at least 7 women.</p>	<p>According to the annual review of the EC-SM project (December 2020), capacity building on good conservation practices has involved :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 253 ES providers of which 71 were women (29%); ✓ 37 operators; and ✓ 14 NGOS.
<p>Genderised number of technicians and decision-makers with strengthened capacity to assess ES trade-offs, design and implement ES models.</p>		<p>Capacity building of 29 technicians and decision-makers on designing and implementing PES systems through training sessions, study tours and international forums</p> <p>Training of 324 beneficiaries including 103 women among potential ES providers and users</p> <p>Production of various communication tools and their dissemination through the social media network. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7hYB205mcDLH0GnDfh0hSA/videos</p>	<p>According to the above-mentioned document, the capacity building involved :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 69 technicians and decision-makers, including 14 women (20%). <p>On the one hand, five PES models linked to the argan, honey, PAM, kid meat and agri-tourism sectors have been designed and proposed in the communal action plan;</p>
<p>Formal operational guidelines for the implementation and scaling up of the PES approach at regional and national levels.</p>	<p>No established guidelines.</p>	<p>Four established guidelines: agricultural terracing, carbon circuit, RBA eco-labelling and pollination services.</p>	<p>No evidence of operational guidance is available, particularly in the final report of the PEC-SM project (July 2021).</p> <p>However, this report has replaced this third indicator on operational guidelines with an output entitled: "Capitalisation and dissemination of PES lessons". See project completion report, page: 29.</p>

Conclusion for component 2

72. First, the data on the number and profiles of capacity building beneficiaries are not with each other in the main documents of the EC-SM project, particularly: the annual review report (2020), the audit report of the Court of Auditors (July 2021) and the final report of the EC-SM project (July 2021).

73. Secondly, the trainings covered a range of topics related to the ES approach, argan forest restoration and terracing rehabilitation practices, domestication of spontaneous species, pollination services, certification systems, pollination services, climate-related issues as well as participatory financing to cover the initial costs of natural and cultural investments. However, the choice of these courses is not justified in terms of learning objectives by the profiles of the people targeted.
74. Furthermore, the absence of an a priori evaluation (BEFORE THE TRAININGS) of the understanding and control of the knowledge related to PES, does not allow an objective assessment of the real achievements of the participants in the training workshops a posteriori (AFTER THE TRAININGS).
75. **Component 3 |** Strengthening biodiversity-friendly organic businesses through improved labelling and marketing of local products from the Argan ecosystem.

Indicator	Baseline	Target at the end of the project	Status of the project's completion (July 2021) (Juillet 2021)
Genderised number of producers, professional organisations and intermediaries certified in conformity with the RBA eco-label	No RBA eco-label promoter is certified.	The Ecolabel is not yet implemented in terms of regulation: the draft RBA Ecolabel is established, its recognition is being advocated and a draft implementation text is being prepared and submitted for review and approval.	Although the ecolabel has been established at the descriptive level, at the regulatory level it has not yet been implemented (effectiveness).
% Percentage of producers adhering to the new Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) label for the honey sector	0% adhérent au label IGP.	Recognition of the PGI for thyme and Euphorbia-based honeys from Souss in favour of the regional association of beekeepers.	According to the end of project report (July 2021): 5 beekeepers are certified and 12 others are being verified.
Marketing plans for the argan and honey sectors elaborated and adopted by the responsible institutions and the main stakeholders	No marketing plan for the argan and honey sectors.		Implementation of marketing plans was hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic.
Genderised revenues from producers and intermediaries using the RBA/SMD/ ecolabel area	Regional logistics platform envisaged for implementation.	Pilot test of DLT by the Manahil Souss cooperative: electronic commerce with the support of the lab Accelerator/UNDP programme.	The CE-SM final report does not provide data on the revenues of producers and intermediaries.

within the regional logistics platform.			
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Conclusion related to Component 3

76. In practice, the data available on the four indicators of component 3 are hypothetical or non-existent.
77. Hypothetical, as in the case of the ecolabel, whose effectiveness depends on regulation. But also as specified in the final report of the CE-SM project: "the new eco-certification system in the RBA has not aroused the interest of stakeholders due to a lack of vision on the contribution of this tool compared to existing labels". Moreover, the sustainability of this system is conditioned by the framework agreement and specific agreements to be established between ASMEL and public and inter-professional institutions.
78. Also hypothetical, the strategic marketing plans have not been realised as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. Digitalization is a good option for marketing, but the planned activity for marketing certified agrobiological products from the RBA is beyond the scope of the CE-SM project.
79. Finally, the proposed activities and measures for the creation of logistic platforms and the organisational structure of the RBA area are hypothetical and remain out of reach at the time of project closure.
80. **Component 4 |** Strengthening agro-biodiversity conservation in the Argan tree ecosystem through PES pilot models

Indicator	baseline	Target at the end of the project (5th year of the project)	Status of the project's completion (July 2021)
% Genderised percentage of authorised stakeholders interested in participating in PES pilot models.	No formal PES model except for the HCEFLCD forest protection programme and the terraces management programme.	On the one hand, five PES models linked to the argan, honey, PAM, kid meat and agri-tourism sectors have been designed and proposed in the communal action plan; On the other hand, 9 PES contracts established, of which 6 for argan oil, 2 for MAP PAM (coopérative Tazouknit et la société Corsud) and 1 for honey (Manahil Souss).	According to the 2020 Project Annual Review report, only one PES model is established. This PES model has been developed in Inzerki. However, its effective implementation remains dependent on the operationalization of the certification process.
Number of models quantifying ES in different agro-ecological zones, including the economic use of the services provided			This indicator cannot be assessed until the results of the economic evaluation of ES conducted by the CE-SM project have led to the revision of the associated regulatory texts.

and their possible economic return.			
Number of entities requesting ES and their willingness to pay for the services provided.		3 PES systems identified at Inzerki by the Taddert Inzerki association with the CORSUD company for MAP, the Assafoua cooperative for the production and marketing of argan oil and the Manahil Souss cooperative for honey	This indicator cannot be assessed as long as the results of the economic evaluation of ES carried out by the CE-SM project did not lead to the revision of the related regulatory texts.
Genderised percentage of PES providers who participate in the PES pilot models receiving funding and providing the targeted ES.		9 PES contracts established, of which 6 for argan oil, 2 for MAP and 1 for honey.	This indicator cannot be assessed until the results of the economic evaluation of ES conducted by the CE-SM project have led to the revision of the associated regulatory texts.
% PES audits carried out in accordance with established procedures.		9 PES contracts established, of which 6 for argan oil, 2 for MAP and 1 for honey.	At this stage of the EC-SM project, this indicator related to the audits of the implemented PES depends on the management entity of the ecolabel, once operationalized.

Conclusion relating to Component 4

81. For this component of the CE-SM project, the final project report acknowledges that the adoption of the PES model proposed by ProDoc was not accepted by stakeholders. This led the project to choose the option of transforming the existing compensation scheme into a more effective PES and to revise the relevant legal instruments accordingly. On the other hand, the reframing mission recommended to focus on the argan offset system and to launch a pilot investment in the local commune of Argana covering an area of 6000 ha. To this end, a PES start-up was designed on the basis of the main obstacles to the regeneration of the argan tree and identified good practices on the Inzerki site.
82. On the other hand, the indicators of this component do not reflect the progress made by the CE-SM project because they are conditioned by other devices, measures or mechanisms: (i) the PES model depends on the operationalisation of the certification process; (ii) the PES audits carried out are linked to the management body of the ecolabel once operationalised; (iii) the models quantifying ES, the entities requesting ES and the providers of ES result from the revision of the associated regulatory texts.

B) Relevance

The CE-SM project consideration of the needs of the final beneficiaries (individuals, community groups, organisations)

83. The CE-SM project has taken into account the needs of the final beneficiaries through the involvement of the rights-holders of the public forests in a consultative process. This process is well appreciated by the different stakeholders of the project. The dialogue and consultation of the local population were, in particular, underlined by several interlocutors as a good initiative, even if the expected results appear to be difficult to reach.

84. According to the ProDoc, the final beneficiaries of the CE-SM project are the legitimate right holders. They were grouped into associations or cooperatives. But the confusion between SE providers and PES users/beneficiaries is entertained

by the ProDoc concerning the real final beneficiaries. This confusion is aggravated by the lack of adequate registers to identify rights holders, particularly the new families who have settled in the region over the last 50 years and claim the right to use resources from the Argan forests.

85. The consultation is organized by ProDoc through local project committees. It was well appreciated by the direct beneficiaries (associations, cooperatives, etc.), as some association representatives said during the evaluation mission.

86. However, the lack of evidence about the functioning of the local committees, the regularity of meetings and their minutes do not permit to conclude that the final beneficiaries were truly involved. In other words, the CE-SM project has not adopted a broader approach that integrates the priorities and comments of the final beneficiaries in the decision-making process, which affects the rehabilitation of the argan ecosystem.

87. On the other hand, the mid-term evaluation (2017) notes that stakeholder involvement was neither sufficient nor regular: *"A comprehensive stakeholder involvement plan was to be developed at the start of the project. This commitment is not reflected in the project documentation provided by the PMU. As a result, the formal involvement of stakeholders, except from approving possible co-financing of the project or announcing their support for the process (ProDoc), has not been clarified and formalised. This situation means that the effective mobilisation of key stakeholders and their appropriate involvement could be compromised outside a formal and institutionalised framework. Without the necessary elements of stakeholder analysis (needs, interests and potential impact on the success of the project), a strategy for stakeholder management cannot be envisaged at this stage of the project. It is therefore essential to develop and adopt strategies and plans for stakeholder involvement to monitor their overall relationship with the CE-SM project. Moreover, on the ground, some actors show a modest mobilisation and an insufficient accompaniment of the project". Based on this observation of the mid-term evaluation, the final report of the project proposes to "strengthen the co-management of the forest protection programme by*

Box 3

Stakeholder interest in the CE-SM project

The CE-SM project is a pilot initiative in Morocco intended to combine current concerns of sustainable development through the creation of innovative payment of ecosystem services (PES) models. This requires time, which exceeds that of the project for the understanding and the adhesion of the actors, the management of the process as well as the cost to be mobilized to operationalize these PES.

It's the first kind of project to be implemented by ADA and is an innovative and pilot project in Morocco. The activities carried out by ANDZOA in the project area have led, indirectly, to the demonstration of PES models and to the support of the argan tree sector.

Source : Stakeholders interviews, september – october 2021

introducing PES inspired by a circular economy approach and a new ecological label for RBA»⁹.

Alignment of the CE-SM project with global and sectoral environmental and sustainable development strategies

88. The project CE-SM is in line with the national priorities for the environment and sustainable development in Morocco. On the other hand, the project is aligned with other sectoral strategies and public policies (human development, agriculture, etc.). The relevance of the project is also confirmed by the manifest interest of the New Development Model (NDM) in promoting the circular economy in Morocco.
89. The project CE-SM is in conformity with Morocco's international commitments and national priorities.
90. At the international level, and as specified in the ProDoc, the project CE-SM is in line with Morocco's commitments as follows :
 - (i) The conservation of biodiversity and the fair sharing of the benefits resulting from the use of genetic resources of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
 - (ii) The contribution to the objectives and requirements of the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
91. At the national level, the development objectives and immediate, intermediate and final effects of the project CE-SM are in line with the National Charter on Environment and Sustainable Development and the following national strategies:
 - (i) Firstly, the project CE-SM is in line with the principles of the National Charter on Environment and Sustainable Development, namely: (a) its implementation in a way that ensures conformity between strategies and sectoral priorities in the fields of environment, climate change adaptation and risk management, (b) territorial convergence in the most vulnerable areas and for the most vulnerable populations, and (c) the gender dimension.
 - (ii) Secondly, the project is in accordance with the strategy of Morocco Green Plan (MGP) aiming at the development of local products. It reinforces biodiversity conservation and sustainable ecosystem services related to Pillar II for supporting small farmers projects.
 - (iii) Finally, the project is in line with Morocco's strategies and programmes to strengthen sustainable development, poverty alleviation and environmental degradation: (a) the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (NBSAP) which recognises the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as a national priority objective, (b) the National Strategy for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development and its National Action Plan, which aims to integrate environmental protection considerations into the various socio-economic sectors, (c) National Forest programme (NFP) by advancing the sustainable management of forest resources through a decentralisation policy, (d) the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH).
92. These strategies aim to improve the effectiveness of strategic biodiversity management to establish good governance, and to create the basis for human, inclusive and sustainable development in Morocco.

⁹ Rapport final du projet EC-SM, page : 2.

Level of adequacy between the project objectives and the strategic priorities of the GEF (including the alignment of relevant focal area indicator)

93. The CE-SM project is part of the GEF4 Biodiversity Component, whose main objective is to preserve/ restore strategic forest areas through three expected outcomes: (i) conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity embedded in ecologically productive seascapes and landscapes (SO-2), (i) strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for biodiversity mainstreaming (SP-4), and (iii) fostering markets for biodiversity goods and services (SP-5).
94. The CE-SM project is in line with a series of GEF projects in Morocco related to the preservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. Indeed, this project is part of the GEF4 Biodiversity component, whose central objective is to conserve and restore strategic forest areas. More specifically, The CE-SM project fits into the GEF strategic objective BD-SO-2: "Integrating biodiversity conservation in landscapes and production sectors on land and at sea". To this end, the project converges with the specific objectives of the GEF strategy: (i) fostering markets for biodiversity-related goods and services (SP-5), and (ii) putting in place the necessary policies to take biodiversity into account in production systems (SP-4).

Level of alignment between the project objectives and design and UNDAF/UNDP and MDGs

95. *The objectives of the project are in accordance with the development outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) of 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 and several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*
96. On the one hand, the relevance of the project CE-SM objectives is confirmed by the UNDAF (2012-2016) through the 5th cooperation area, "Environmental protection, disaster prevention and management of natural risks and climate change". So that, the project would contribute to UNDAF outcomes 3 and 5, namely: (i) reduction of inequalities through the support of socio-economic development policies, strategies and programmes as well as the implementation of the principles of the National Charter on Environment and Sustainable Development. The Project is also in line with the UNDAF (2017-2021) in terms of the expected results related to "Sustainable inclusive development", "Economic inequalities, reduction of inequalities" and "Inclusive, integrated and sustainable rural development and vulnerabilities". The project is also in line with the UNDP-Morocco programme document 2012-2016: UNDP through support, development/coordination and implementation of national and territorial strategies, with special focus on low-carbon climate change resilience and gender equality, focusing on the most vulnerable populations and areas.
97. On the other hand, the project development objectives are consistent with several SDGs, particularly: SDG12/Responsible Consumption and Production, SDG13/Climate Change and SDG15/Life on Earth. The project would also contribute to SDG10/Reduction of inequality, SDG/Gender equality and SDG3/Good health and well-being.

Sub-criteria	Rating
The project CE-SM takes into account the needs of the final beneficiaries (individuals, community groups, organisations)	Moderately satisfactory (MS)
Alignment of the project with global and sectoral environmental and sustainable development strategies	Satisfactory (S)
Level of alignment of the project objectives with GEF strategic priorities (including alignment of relevant focal area indicators)	Satisfactory (S)
Level of alignment between the objectives and design of the EC-SM project with the UNDAF and the CPD	Satisfactory (S)
Relevance	Satisfactory (S)

C) Coherence (internal and external)¹⁰

Internal coherence

98. *Although the CP-SM project was reasonably well resourced, strategic governance and internal management did not function effectively. The 2017 mid-term evaluation identified a number of risks related to the implementation of the project. Following the mid-term evaluation (2017) and UNDP CTR field mission in 2018, a refocusing mission was initiated by the COPIL in order to carry out a technical and conceptual reorientation of the PES. Still, The evaluation mission notes that the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation and the refocusing mission have not been systematically carried out.*

Adequacy of the implementation to the project objectives

99. As a matter of fact, the resources (financial, human, etc.) provided for the implementation of the project are sufficient to achieve the planned objectives and outputs. In this respect, an analysis of the financial efficiency of the project is as follows.

Governance, management and support arrangements of the project¹¹

100. The relationship between the governance, management and support bodies of the project is not effective. In fact, the supervision modalities (National Directorate), steering (CoPil and Interministerial Committee), project management (National Directorate and PMU) and support (local committees and Interministerial Working Group) of the project have not fully functioned. In sum, the internal coherence of the project has not been established, even after the refocusing mission.

101. The main inconsistencies noted or confirmed by the evaluation mission are as follows:

102. Lack of shared vision

First, the absence of shared vision among the key institutions (ADA, HCEFELD and ANDZOA) associated has

¹⁰ The coherence criterion is used as defined by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC). December 2019. Evaluation criteria: adapted definition and principles of utilization.

¹¹ See ProDoc - PART III: *Management Modalities*, pages: 51-53.

reduced opportunities for complementarity, harmonization and coordination. The lack of synergies between ADA, HCEFELD and ANDZOA has really hampered the implementation of PES systems in the SM region, and more generally, in Morocco. The refocusing mission emphasized both "institutions lack of a shared vision and the insufficient institutional coordination, as well as the limited effectiveness of the CoPil (too numerous, infrequent meetings, etc.)»¹².

103. The CoPil steers at a minimum

Second, the Project Steering Committee (CoPil) is responsible for: (i) ensuring coordination among the various government agencies; (ii) guiding the program implementation process, synchronizing national and local planning processus, plans and strategies of sustainable resource use and conservation policies; (iii) ensuring that activities are fully integrated with other development initiatives in the SMD region; (iv) supervising the work of the implementing units, monitoring progress, and approving reports; (v) supervising financial management and reporting; and (vi) monitoring the effectiveness of project implementation¹³.

104. The configuration of prerogatives, as defined by the ProDoc, is too large, and less adapted to the steering functions, which are of a strategic nature. In other words, the steering of the project has functioned at a minimum. It consists in organizing annual meetings, in order to: (i) validate the achievements (2015, 2016, 2019, 2020) and approve the annual work plans (2015, 2016, 2017), or semester plans for the year 2021; (ii) share information on the progress of the project with the different stakeholders; and (iii) propose recommendations on different technical issues of the project.

105. The main limitations of the CoPil are: (i) the annual frequency of meetings being considered insufficient by several stakeholders consulted; (ii) a large number of participants are invited to meetings, 30 in (2014-2015), 32 in (2016), 24 in (2017), 29 in (2020), 24 in (2021); (iii) CoPil members without real decision-making power.

106. As noted in the minutes of the annual CoPil meetings, several relevant recommendations were not implemented, for example: (i) involvement of the professional and inter-ministerial working group in all the stages of the planning and implementation of the project (2014); (ii) establishment of Knowledge Management and Communication System, dedicated to the project; (iii) strengthening the ownership of the principles of the project by the Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries (2017); (iv) strengthening national ownership mechanisms to align with Morocco's new development model (2021); (v) focusing, during the remaining three months of the project, on operationalizing the overall PES framework and sustainability aspects (2021).

107. Project Management Unit (PMU) facing implementation challenges

Under the joint responsibility of the National Project Director and the National Project Coordinator, the PMU is responsible for the implementation of the project over a vast territory with multiple stakeholders at local and regional levels. The project CE-SM is oversized, requiring continuous efforts in contacts, negotiations, and support in favor of final beneficiaries.

¹² Reframing report, page: 5.

¹³ ProDoc, page: 52.

108. Supporting entities: interministerial working group and local committees

Finally, with reference to the project's support entities and missions, it should be noted that the inter-ministerial working group, which was to coordinate efforts and harmonize approaches to PES integration, was not established during the project's time frame. In fact, the project's final report (2021) confirms that «*an inter-ministerial working group should be formally established and should function to make the necessary institutional, policy and legal changes in consultation with the RBA Eco-label Commission*»¹⁴.

109. On the other hand, the ProDoc envisages the creation of local committees composed of the main stakeholders involved in the PES model. Established for each project intervention site, the local committee has extensive prerogatives: (i) *link the project's objective to local plans, as well as to ongoing or planned interventions and investments by local partners and/or beneficiaries, (ii) identify support for the project's requirements as well as opportunities to expand its scope, (iii) coordinate institutional participation in the implementation of project activities for each pilot site, and (iv) convene experts from the public and private sectors and civil society organizations to discuss important issues associated with the project's implementation.*
110. Several local committees have been established, but there is no evidence of meetings and decisions made by these committees. According to the final report (July 2021), these committees discussed: (i) specific policies and initiatives, (ii) capacity building gaps and networking of the RBA eco-label, and international feedback on PES experiences.

External coherence

111. *The ProDoc identified several programs and projects that are complementary to the CE-SM project. However, the project did not benefit from any other interventions on the issue of biodiversity in Morocco.*

Convergence with other interventions / actual partnership arrangements

112. The external coherence criterion refers to the complementarity of the project with other PES interventions and actors in Morocco. It includes complementarity, harmonization and coordination with these interventions. The ProDoc has established an inventory of possible collaborations and coordination of the project with other similar or related initiatives. However, the lack of data on these programs and projects does not permit to assess their added value to the EC-SM project.
113. The global UNDP-GEF project on the Institutionalization of Payments for Ecosystem Services had been completed in 2012, two years before the launching of the CE-SM project. According to the ProDoc, the project would build on the experience and lessons learned and the PES tools developed by this project. The project team would focus on the following: (i) to involve relevant international professional networks, such as the Katoomba Group, whose objective is to mobilize specialists to assist the working groups in technical issues and (ii) to incorporate in the design of new policies, the impact on biodiversity, low transaction costs and ES principles in favour of the poor¹⁵.

¹⁴ Final report of CE-SM project (july 2021), page: 26.

¹⁵ ProDoc, page : 87.

114. The ProDoc has established an inventory of possible collaborations and coordination of the CE-SM project with other similar or related initiatives. However, the absence of data on these programs and projects does not permit to assess their added value to the project.

D) Effectiveness

115. This section examines the extent to which the objectives of the CE-SM project have been or are expected to be achieved.

Contribution of the CE-SM project to SDGs, UNDAF/CPD and GEF strategic priorities

Table 12. Review of the different contributions of the CE-SM project

Indicator	Expected Target	Target achieved at the closure of the project
UNDAF/CPD outcome: Outcome 2: Sustainable and inclusive development - CPD output / Output 2.6: Equitable access to natural resources and ecosystem services for sustainable management is increased.		
2.6.1 Number of legislative, policy and institutional frameworks developed/implemented/ revised to ensure conservation, sustainable use and management of natural resources, access to these resources, biological diversity and ecosystems, and equitable sharing of the benefits they provide.	At least one framework reviewed and one framework developed (PES/RBA Label)	Project to revise the text of the fencing developed and currently under study by the administration. Partnership framework being signed (ADA, DRA, HCEFLDC) for the implementation of the RBA Ecolabel.
2.6.2 Number of people benefiting from increased and sustainable opportunities through the adoption of sustainable natural resource management solutions	At least 300 people are involved.	PES contracts developed 45 people from Inzerki (PES PAM) targeted
2.6.3 Number of new jobs created as a result of the adoption of solutions for Natural Resources, Ecosystem Services, Chemicals and Waste Management.	At least 2 more jobs created.	150 working days (source: Inzerki Association's moral report)
SP outcome: Accelerated structural transformation towards sustainable development/SP output: Gender sensitive legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions are strengthened and solutions adopted to address conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits of natural resources in line with international conventions and national legislation.		
The country has put in place gender specific measures for the conservation, sustainable use and equitable access to natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as the sharing of their benefits.	Elaboration of a general framework for PES in the RBA, based on the rehabilitation of the argan forest and an RBA label	A standard developed and registered (PES Pilot Scheme - Legal Study 2020) 3 governance scenarii developed and submitted for review
SDG: 12 (Sustainable consumption and production)		

Sustainable management of natural resources.	RBA Certification.	RBA Standard label
SDG: 15 (Life on Earth)		
Exploitation of terrestrial ecosystems according to AME.	1 AME project	Opportunity to integrate the PES model in the framework of the Green Generation Strategy (GGS, 2020-2030). To this respect, the CE-SM project has submitted a note to the ADA.

Review of the actual outputs/results of the CE-SM project

116. In the light of the delays in the implementation and operationalisation of the Ecolabel management entities, the results achieved are not commensurate with those initially planned. They have an impact on the achievements of the outputs of components 1, 3 and 4. Nevertheless, the achievements related to capacity building and communication (C2) show significant rates.
117. The CE-SM project did not achieve all the expected results. The targets of the three components 1, 3 and 4 are partially achieved. Only the outputs of component 3 (Capacity building to implement and integrate payment for ecosystem services and sustainable use) have been fully achieved.

Component 1: Improved enabling environment for the establishment and promotion of PES models in the SMD region and the mainstreaming of the approach at national level.

Output 1.3: General regulatory framework for PES in the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (ABR) developed and submitted by key stakeholders for adoption;

Output 1.4: Structure dedicated to the management and financing of PES in the Argan Biosphere Reserve (RBA).

Output 1.3 has been partially achieved.

118. The results of this output are in line with the planned targets and constitute a first step in the process of regulation and institutionalisation of PES in Morocco towards their operationalisation. The results achieved are as follows:
- The project of a general regulatory framework for PES associated with the ecolabel in the RBA elaborated and submitted for public consultation including the statutes of the ASMEL RBA, the Standard of the ecolabel;
 - The ecolabel management plan and the territorial strategic planning applied to the pilot Argana Municipal Action Plan developed but not yet implemented;
 - The key actors of the project ADA, DRA, ANDZOA, DREFSO and ASMEL were consulted during the legal study;
 - The mixed scenario of "public-private" management by a commission chaired by ANDZOA with ADA, DRA, DREFSO as members and ASMEL as the managing body is adopted;
 - 12 potential ecolabel operators and 9 PES contracts signed (6 for argan oil, 2 for PMA and 1 for honey), and the marketing plan developed.

Output 1.4: Following a long process, the two structures dedicated to the management of the ecolabel are created but are not yet operational.

119. Outputs 1.3 and 1.4 contribute, in part, to the achievement of the immediate objective of component 1. These results should feed into the process of finalising PES strategy documents in Morocco by the institutional partners concerned (ADA, HCEFLCD). It should also be noted that the operationalisation of the certification process will allow the implementation of the PES pilot models developed in the Commune of Argana to be initiated and the certification to be launched.

Component 2 : Strengthening capacity to implement and integrate payment for ecosystem services and the sustainable use of associated agro-biodiversity.

Output 2.1 : *Technicians and decision makers trained in the design and implementation of PES models;*

Output 2.2 : *Ecosystem service (ES) providers trained in PES, especially in the argan and honey sectors;*

Output 2.3 : *Capitalisation et diffusion des enseignements sur les PSE aux niveaux local, régional et national.*

120. **The three outputs have been implemented and their effects contribute to the achievement of the immediate objective of component 2.** Interviews with stakeholders confirm their interest in the design of PES models, the targeting of institutional stakeholders and final beneficiaries (providers and buyers of ES).

121. The tools produced have contributed to the dissemination of the PES concept. Four international events organised in Agadir have brought together experts and scientists of PES systems in the RBA. Different topics were discussed on good practices for the regeneration of the argan tree ecosystem and other associated practices (terracing, bee pollination, harvesting of aromatic plants, and agrotourism).

Component 3 : Strengthening biodiversity-friendly organic businesses through improved labelling and marketing of local products from the Argan ecosystem.

Output 3.1 : *New eco-label for RBA certifying that local product chains are biodiversity-friendly and sustainable in terms of ecosystem services ;*

Output 3.2 : *Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) label for the honey sector and professional association organised to manage the label;*

Output 3.3 : *Strategic marketing plans developed for the certified argan oil and honey sectors and their implementation is being supported;*

Output 3.4 : *Dedicated space for RBA certified products within the SMD regional logistics platform for the marketing of local agricultural products.*

Output 3.1 partially achieved.

122. Les activités réalisées concernent la mise en place du système d'éco-certification dans la RBA ciblant les chaînes de valeur ayant un impact considérable sur l'environnement (huile d'argan, miel, espèces spontanées, viande de chevreux et tourisme rural. D'autre part, la commission de gestion de l'écolabel est institutionnalisée et le projet de texte de mise en application élaboré et soumis aux administrations concernées pour approbation et adoption. Les effets de ce produit devraient être atteints qu'une fois la commission soit opérationnelle pour lancer la certification.

Output 3.2 completely achieved

123. The introduction of the PGI label for thyme and euphorbia honey, in favour of the regional association of beekeepers, is recognised in 2017. Certification has been initiated and awarded to 5 beekeepers and another 12 operators are being verified with the support of the DRA. The label should guarantee the quality and traceability of the product locally.

Output 3.3 partially achieved

124. The marketing strategy for certified agro-biological products originating from the RBA should be effective as soon as it is implemented. The tests for its implementation, planned from 2020, have not been carried out due to the COVID-19 pandemic (restriction of movement and air traffic). A promotional campaign is being prepared to promote the RBA Eco-label. In this context, a digital platform has been designed with the support of the UNDP Lab Accelerator programme.
125. The main activity planned for 2021, "Design, development and implementation of a digital marketing platform for RBA eco-label products", was not carried out. It should be used by operators in the argan, honey and aromatic and medicinal plant sectors, including support for operators and payment of the necessary certification fees.

Output 3.4 not completed.

126. Considering the health context, the space within the regional logistics platform of the SM planned to be reserved for RBA-certified products has not been implemented. According to the CNP, a pilot test for the introduction of Block Chain technology in the value chain of the Manahil Souss cooperative (UNDP DLT4EU project) was initiated by the CE-SM project, in order to ensure traceability of the PES aimed at the rehabilitation of the Inzerki perimeter (370 ha). Its independent verification will be ensured by the certification body VERRA in the framework of its LANDSCALE programme.

Component 4 : Strengthening PES pilot models for the preservation of the agro-biodiversity of the Argan tree ecosystem.

Output 4.1 : Pilot PES model developed and adapted to different practices and techniques of EM providers in the RBA;

Output 4.2 : Economic evaluation of the SE associated with the preservation of the Argan ecosystem in the different agro-ecological zones of the RBA;

Output 4.3 : Negotiation, formalisation and implementation of PES models in the project sites ;

Output 4.4 : Monitoring and control of PES pilot models by an intermediate structure.

Output 4.1 : Completed.

127. Preparatory work has been initiated by the PMU to produce a conceptual and technical document prior to the operationalisation of PES. Participatory diagnostics on ES flows within the RBA were conducted to identify eight local start-up associations. These start-ups, accompanied by the project, were supported by the SGP/GEF to serve as platforms for the introduction of PES on the ground. Also, a pilot PES investment in the local community of Argana was launched, covering a 370 ha set-aside area and a 5000 ha sustainable development area.
128. On an experimental basis, an APAC (Area and Territory of Conserved Indigenous Heritage) has been created in Inzerki. To this end, an Argana communal action plan was developed with the integration of PES and the RBA eco-label to ensure the broad and sustainable participation of the local community.

129. In terms of results, 14 operators are involved in the implementation of PES schemes, distributed as follows (i) 5 PES models linked to the Argan, honey, PAM, goat meat and agro-tourism sectors were designed and proposed in the Argana communal action plan; (ii) 5 PES models related to the argan, honey, PAM, kid meat and agro-tourism sectors were designed and proposed in the Argana communal action plan (iii) 9 PES contracts were established, 6 cover the argan sector (Nissaa Inzerki, Tagmat aziar, Ajdig ntirganine, Tamaynoute, Dar assafaoua, Taymatine cooperatives), 2 cover PAM (Tazouknit cooperative and the Corsud company) and 1 cover honey (Manahil Souss)

Output 4.2 Completed.

130. The activities of this output concern the implementation of two studies: (i) the first concerns the economic analysis for the evaluation of the value of the ES, which can be generated by an investment in nature with a specific case study on the terraces, and (ii) the second one relates to the updating of the opportunity costs associated with the setting of defenses having proposed an upward revision of the compensation to 570 Dh/ha/year.
131. The results of these two studies have been communicated to the central administrations to be taken into account in the revisions of the regulatory texts which are currently underway. Their adoption should accelerate the implementation of PES.

Output 4.3 Completed.

132. The activities carried out under this output supported three PES systems identified in Inzerki by the Taddert Inzerki association with the CORSUD company for the production of PAM, the Assafoua cooperative for the production and marketing of argan oil and the Manahil Souss cooperative for honey.
133. In support of these activities and in anticipation of the operationalisation of the entities created for the management of the ecolabel, the implementation of the pilot models of PES and the RBA certification system concerned 7 pilot sites (Inzerki, Tidnas, Sidi Bouzekri, Ighefri, Idaougnidif, Tiskeji, RDTR) with financial support from the PMF /GEF up to 385 0000 USD, paid directly to the beneficiaries

Output 4.4 Not completed.

134. The activity carried out under this product was limited to the elaboration of 9 PES contracts, of which 6 for argan oil, 2 for MAP and honey. The other activities related to monitoring and control have not been carried out, as they can only take place after the operationalisation of the eco-label management body. Nevertheless, the monitoring mechanisms and audit protocols for the PES pilot schemes are already defined in the developed ecolabel standard and will be developed with the approved certification entities.
135. To summarise, the objective of operationalising the RBA Ecolabel as a PES is not yet effective. The contribution to the immediate objective of Component 4 is conditioned by the establishment of the ecolabel management entities and the launch of certification.
136. As the table below shows the number of argan ecosystems under restoration and the number of operational PES models is relatively modest.

Table 13. Number of argan ecosystems under restoration & number of PES models

Indicators	Expected Targets	Target achieved at the closure of the project	Achievement rate
Surface area of argan ecosystems under restoration	9715 ha	5000 ha	51%
Number of operational PES pilot models	4	1	25%

Constraining factors and risk management

137. At the end of the CE-SM project, important constraining factors, identified by different annual reviews, related to institutional aspects, have not been resolved, such as institutional coordination, adoption of the institutional and regulatory framework, insufficient commitment of stakeholders to fulfil their commitments, etc.
138. On the other hand, risks have not been subject to integrated management for their updating during the implementation of the CE-SM project. The purpose would be to inform and guide the project with regard to risks, by systematically applying risk management procedures and practices including: (i) specific and factual mitigation measures; and (ii) specific timeframes for implementation of steering (CoPil) or/and management (PMU) responses.

Alternative strategy to achieve the project objectives

139. Leverage strategies initiatives that would amplify the experience of the HCEFLD. To this end, the CE-SM project should have been co-managed by the ADA and the HCEFLCD, whose missions and attributions are complementary to achieve the project's objectives.

Gender

140. A gender sensitive and human rights based approach was not integrated into the project design with the exception of the formulation of indicators on women's participation in some activities. Nevertheless, a significant part was reserved for women as final beneficiaries of the project during the implementation of the project. About 32% of the women potential PES users participated in capacity building sessions on PES design and development.

Sub-criteria	Rating
Efficiency in the realization of products and immediate effects	Moderately unsatisfactory (MI)
Efficiency	Moderately unsatisfactory (MI)

141. **Overall, the effectiveness of the CE-SM project is moderately unsatisfactory (MI).**

E) Efficiency

142. *The CE-SM project had a disbursement rate of 85% at the time of its closure. On the whole, the financial resources were allocated to the achievement of the outputs. This rate, which can be considered satisfactory, is in contrast to the variable level of achievement of the outputs planned by the project.*

Financing and co-financing

143. According to the ProDoc, the total budget of the project amounts to USD 10,147,272, with GEF funding of USD 2,647,272 and UNDP funding of USD 200,000 as a grant, and co-financing from the Government of Morocco, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries (MAPM), of USD 7,300,000, distributed as follows: ADA USD 1,618,944, ANDZOA USD 5,681,056. The various contributions were mobilised from the start of the implementation of project.

144. The planned and actual co-financing commitments, type and source of co-financing contributions are presented in the following tables:

Table 14. Co-financing of the project

Type and source of co-financing	UNDP Financing(US\$)		Government (US\$)		Total	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants	200,000	200,000	-	-	200,000	200,000
Grants	-	-	7,300,000	7,300,000	7,300,000	7,300,000
Total	200,000	200,000	7,300,000	7,300,000	7,500,000	7,500,000

Table 15. Sources of co-financing confirmed at the final evaluation phase

Source of co-financing recurring expenses	Name of co-financer	Type of financing	Investment mobilised	Montant en US\$
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	Investment mobilised	200,000
Recipient Country Government	ADA	Grants	Investment mobilised	1,618,944
Recipient Country Government	ANDZOA	Grants	Investment Mobilised	5,681,056
Total cofinancing				7,500,000

145. The co-financing used has made it possible to put in place the prerequisites necessary for the implementation of the PES and whose effects are conditioned by the operationalization of the entities created for the management of the ecolabel and the launch of the certification.

146. The gaps between planned and actual expenditures are noted in the years 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021 with disbursement rates below 70%. The lowest disbursement capacity (27%) is noted in the consumption of the budget of the year 2021 and it is justified by the delay in the establishment and operation of the entities created for the management of the ecolabel. The remaining period (6 months, January-June) was deemed insufficient to incur expenses and carry out the remaining activities in components C3 and C4.

Table 16: Comparison of Budget Planned and Budget Spent

Years	work plan budget (\$)	Budget spent CDR (\$)	disbursement %
2014	51 800,00	50 644,23	98%
2015	486 260,00	355 178,06	73%
2016	579 291,00	517 713,18	89%
2017	587 450,00	314 092,79	53%
2018	645 336,00	461 226,26	71%
2019	977 296,55	566 792,87	58%
2020	404 046,29	162 976,30	40%
2021	166 854,05	41 965,21*	27%
Total		2 428 361,00**	85%

* As of the provisional status as of June 30, 2021.

** cumulative disbursement as of June 30, 2021 is \$2, 428,361 (source: draft 2021 PIR).

Resource Allocation and Cost Effectiveness

147. The financial resources have been allocated to carry out the activities programmed in the approved annual work plans. Evidence for cost-effectiveness analysis is not available, due to the strategic scope of the project, which requires a long period of time after PES implementation to make a judgement, and because the PES models are not yet operational to have figures to review.

Strategic use and allocation of resources to achieve results

148. The analysis of the use of the project's financial resources was based on the consolidated figures provided by the PMU (Annual Work Plans, CDR). The funds dedicated by the GEF and UNDP to the CE-SM project were managed in a unified manner by UNDP as GEF Implementing Agency. The distinction between the charges for these two funds is shown in the FACE and the CDR.

149. The varying rates of annual disbursements and the pace of project implementation suggest that the use of resources was not efficient and economical. The pace of project implementation was in four phases:

- 77% of the total budget consumed during the 2015-2016 and 2018-2019 periods, marked by an accelerated pace of expenditure;
- 8% of the total budget consumed over the entire project period in 2020-2021, marked by a decline in the pace of spending, due in particular to the pandemic;
- 13% of the total budget consumed in 2017, marked by a slowdown in the rate of execution;
- 2% of the total budget consumed during the project launch period in July 2014.

150. The achievement of results (C3 and C4) can only be possible during the post-project period and is conditioned by the effective operationalization of the authorities created for the management of the ecolabel. Shortcomings have been noted and concern: (i) the financial planning was not result-oriented and (ii) The use of human resources made available to the project, dedicated to strengthen the PMU, was not efficient and shows shortcomings in their accountability and deployment in the absence of definition of roles and distribution of tasks.

151. The strategic allocation of resources was carried out globally in a reasoned manner, taking into account the needs and the factual data for the achievement of the project's objective. It is noted that almost 60% of the resources were dedicated to the components (C3 and C4) considered operational and decisive to have effects, followed by 13% for component 2 and 10% for the strategic component (C1). On the other hand, the costs dedicated to management are rational (15%) and no overruns have been recorded despite the extension of the project.
152. Financial controls of expenditures were carried out at two levels, first by the DNP as authorizing officer and in application of national procedures (public procurement decree for purchases and services) and then by UNDP during the validation of payments based on the verification of the various supporting documents attached to the Face. The audit report for the 2020 fiscal year, which was made available to us, does not raise any comments on these aspects, but it does make recommendations for improving management.
153. The project has not completed some important activities in components 3 and 4. This is due to the constraints encountered and the delay in the establishment and operationalization of the two ecolabel management structures, which has impacted the implementation schedule. The analysis shows that the expected results can only be achieved during the post-project period. In this sense, the contribution of the project to the achievement of global environmental and development objectives is earlier for the medium and long term and is conditioned by the commitment of the national partner for the operationalization of the two management structures of the ecolabel.
154. The Green Generation Strategy 2020-2030 launched by the Department of Agriculture offers a potential to finance the operationalization of the identified PES, during the post-project period, and promote their generalization. According to the CNP, a budget of 40 million dirhams has been set aside for this purpose within the framework of this strategy by the ADA on the basis of the concept note developed by the CE-SM project.

Comparison of project cost and time versus output/outcome equation to similar projects

155. The CE-SM project is innovative in the Moroccan context and in the absence of similar projects, it is difficult to make comparisons of cost and time regarding the output/outcome equation.

Costs related to the lack of resources for gender and human rights mainstreaming

156. The recovery of the value chain, as part of the effective operationalization of PES models, benefits women and ecosystem guardians and should promote human rights and socio-economic integration at the local level.

Disbursement

157. The disbursement of GEF-UNDP funding and national co-financing are 85% and 82% respectively. Reconciliations between the budgets planned in the ProDoc and those spent (GEF-UNDP financing) reveal slight overruns in components 1 and 2.

Table 17. **Disbursement of GEF-UNDP funding**

Components	Budget planned in ProDoc (\$)	Amount spent (\$)	Percentage of disbursement
C 1	217 942,00	242 954,30	111%
C2	290 814,00	310 524,33	107%
C3	807 301,00	717 340,51	89%
C4	1 090 554,00	781 884,26	72%
Gestion de projet	440 661,00	375 657,60	85%
Total	2 847 272,00	2 428 361,00	85%

Table 18. Disbursement of total project funding

Financial resources	Budget planned (USD)	Budget spent (USD)	Disbursement
Financing GEF –UNPD	2 847 272	2 428 361,00	85%
National Co-financing ADA	1 618 944	1 618 944	100 %
National Co-financing National ANDZOA	5 681 056	3 579 065	63%
Total	10 147 272	7 626 370	75%

Compliance with the time schedule and deadlines

158. An extension requested by the national partner has been granted by the donor for the completion of the CE-SM project activities, that is 16 months delay, compared to the initially planned duration (5 years). This delay is mainly due to the following factors: (i) numerous constraints and difficulties related to the implementation of the project mentioned in this report; and (ii) the COVID-19 pandemic hampered the timetable for the implementation of the project activities, and delayed the completion of several planned actions.
159. In conclusion, financial efficiency could have been improved if the management of financial resources were based on results-based budgeting and not only on activities and outputs.

Sub-criteria	Rating
Financing and co-financing	Satisfactory (S)
Use of available financial resources	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Flow of budget implementation	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Disbursement	Satisfactory (S)
Cost-benefit analysis analyse	N/A
Cost effectiveness analysis	N/A
Respect du calendrier et des délais	Unsatisfactory (U)
Efficiency	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)

160. On the whole, financial efficiency is moderately unsatisfactory (MU).

Overall achievement

161. The overall implementation of the CE-SM project is as follows:

Evaluation Results	Rating
Relevance	Satisfactory (S)
Effectiveness	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Efficiency	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
Rating of the overall implementation of the project	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)

F) Sustainability

162. *Some net benefits of the CE-SM project are likely to continue. Several initiatives are proposed in the final report (July 2021) that are likely to maintain the benefits identified by the team of evaluation. However, it should be noted that the conditions of sustainability (institutional, social, financial, environmental) are not yet met to ensure the continuity of these net benefits beyond the closure of the CE-MS project.*
163. The table below sets out the net sustainability benefits of the EC-SM project. The term "net benefits" emphasises the value of each benefit over time, taking into account the sustainability conditions associated with continuing the intervention. *For this purpose, the evaluation team applied the sustainability questions from the Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financing Projects (GEF&UNDP, 2020).*

Table 19. **Likelihood continuation of the net benefits of the CE-SM project in the long term**

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	
Sustainability Questions	Net benefits or not identified by the evaluation mission
Are there environmental factors that could undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits?	Drought is the main factor that can reduce the environmental benefits of the CE-SM project. Indeed, the MS region has been in severe drought for years, and the surface water deficit is 94% according to SMD Watershed Agency (l'Agence des bassins hydrographiques) .
Will certain activities in the project area pose a threat to the sustainability of project outcomes?	The intense agricultural activity in the SM region consumes 90% of water for exported fruit and vegetable, particularly to European countries. In the long term, climate change presents a real threat to the sustainability of the future flow of environmental benefits of the project.
SOCIO-POLITICAL SUSTAINABILITY	
Sustainability Questions	Net benefits or not identified by the evaluation mission
What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow?	Ownership by national stakeholders has been minimal, particularly by key institutional partners (ADA, ANDZOA, and HCEFLD), which may compromise the sustainability of project results/benefits.

<p>Are the project's successful aspects being transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?</p>	<p>The concern of key stakeholders (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD) for the benefits of the project and their continuation. To this end, initiatives have been taken through (i) the DARED project implemented by ANDZOA for the domestication of the argan tree; (ii) the support of the DRA for the upgrading of agricultural cooperatives benefiting from the project; (iii) the support of the DRA for the certification of the PGI of honey; and (iv) the establishment at the regional level by the ADA of a marketing platform for local products</p> <p>In addition, a pilot project to support the implementation of the RBA eco-label has been established and included in the new Green Generation strategy for a total amount of 42 million dirhams over the period 2020-30.</p>
<p>Is there sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?</p>	<p>The CE-SM project has deployed numerous awareness-raising activities for the benefit of stakeholders (technicians, decision-makers, buyers and sellers of SE) through: (i) sensitization of local communities for the implementation of argan development projects; (ii) strengthening knowledge and awareness of the objectives and long-term benefits of the project; and (iii) accompaniment of professionals in the argan sector.</p>
<p>Has the project achieved stakeholders' (including government stakeholders') consensus concerning courses of action on project activities after the project's closure date?</p>	<p>The consensus of the key stakeholders (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD), for the ownership of the project activities after its closure, has not been achieved. The inter-ministerial working group and the national debate on the PES, which were supposed to be set up at the start of the project, were not constituted. At the end of the project, this same group is still not in place.</p>
<p>How has the project identified and involved champions (i.e. individuals in government and civil society) who can promote sustainability of project outcomes?</p>	<p>The project did not identify leaders/champions (i.e., individuals in government and civil society) to promote the sustainability of project results.</p>
<p>Are there any social or political risks that can undermine the longevity of project outcomes?</p>	<p>Morocco is a politically stable country.</p> <p>Socially, the main risk that could compromise the longevity of the project's results is the shortage of water due to the endemic drought.</p>
<p>Indicate whether the gender results achieved are short-term or long term.</p>	<p>The gender outcomes of the CE-SM project are undermined by local traditional consideration and cultural practices of the participating populations throughout the design and implementation phases of the project.</p>

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND GOVERNANCE SUSTAINABILITY	
Sustainability Questions	Net benefits or not identified by the evaluation mission
Has the project put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure?	<p>First, the inter-ministerial working group that should have been established to develop jointly the legal and regulatory frameworks was not created. Secondly, the revision of the institutional and regulatory framework to implement PES was hampered by the lack of mutualisation of efforts and poor coordination between the agricultural and forestry sectors.</p> <p>Finally, the CE-SM project succeeded, in extremis, in July 2021, in the official creation of a structure dedicated to the implementation and monitoring of the PES model and the RBA ecological certification programmes.</p>
Are the project's successful aspects being transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?	The lack of legal, policy, structural, and governance frameworks for PES has, on the other hand, been a hindrance to PES development in Morocco.
How has the project developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?	The CE-SM project has permitted the emergence of national, regional and local capacity in terms of PES experience and expertise through capacity building, training, study tours, etc.
Does the project leadership have the ability to respond to future institutional and governance changes (i.e. foreseeable changes to local or national political leadership)? Can the project strategies effectively be incorporated/mainstreamed into future planning?	The project was not well managed and was not able to respond to the opportunity and challenges of setting up the conditions for PES development in Morocco.
Can the project strategies effectively be incorporated/mainstreamed into future planning?	The Green Generation Strategy (GGS) could be the appropriate framework for the development of PES in Morocco.
Is the institutional change conducive to systematically addressing gender equality and human rights concerns?	The mainstreaming of gender equality and human rights in Morocco has been constitutionally established since 2011.
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	
Sustainability Questions	Net benefits or not identified by the evaluation mission

<p>What is the likelihood that financial resources will be available once the GEF assistance ends to support the continuation of benefits (income generating activities, and trends that may indicate that it is likely that there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project outcomes)?</p> <p>What opportunities for financial sustainability exist?</p>	<p>The CE-SM project foresees as part of its components the promotion of organic production of argan oil and honey as well as their certification and marketing in order to generate higher incomes for local beneficiaries while ensuring the sustainability of associated production systems.</p>
<p>What additional factors are needed to create an enabling environment for continued financing?</p> <p>Has there been the establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the GEF assistance ends (i.e. from the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and market transformations to promote the project's objectives)?</p>	<p>In addition to GEF funding, other sources can contribute to the sustainability of the EC-SM project's achievements, including Morocco's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) against the causes of climate change.</p> <p>Capacity building of operators to obtain the Ecolabel and integrate PES, including covering certification fees as well as GEN membership fees and sustainability impact assessment fees for the first three years, upgrading of recovery units and participation in trade promotion missions.</p> <p>The integration of the sustainability dimension of the argan tree's ecosystem services into ANDZOA's programmes and projects.</p>
<p>SUSTAINABILITY OF LESSONS LEARNED AND TRANSFER OF PROJECT SUCCESSES</p>	
<p>Sustainability Questions</p>	<p>Net benefits or not identified by the evaluation mission</p>
<p>Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis?</p>	<p>Positive or negative lessons learned from the EC-SM project are substantially documented to be shared with other projects or stakeholders.</p>
<p>Are the project's successful aspects being transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?</p>	<p>It is too early to talk about transferring the successes of the CE-SM project.</p>

Sustainability sub-criteria	Probability of sustainability
Environmental sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MI)
Socio-political sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MI)
Sustainability of the institutional framework and governance	Moderately unlikely (MI)
Financial sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MI)
Overall probability of sustainability	Moderately unlikely (MI)

G) Country Ownership

164. National stakeholders ownership, especially key institutional partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD) has been very limited. The evaluation mission noted their low participation/ownership in the implementation of the CE-SM project and the development of PES models in the SM region. However, by the closure of the project, the situation has changed, and the PES development initiatives appear to be in progress within the ADA and ANDZOA.
165. The ProDoc has adequately identified all the requirements needed for the ownership of the CE-SM project, and its expected net benefits, particularly for key stakeholders (ADA, HCEFLD, ANDZOA). The initial workshop, scheduled two months after the signing of the ProDoc, was considered a priority for the ownership of the project results. In fact, the workshop aimed to address a number of important issues, including "helping all partners to fully understand and take ownership of the project". The workshop report was to serve as a reference for all stakeholders in the implementation of PES models. But this initial workshop did not take place.
166. Several stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation mission said that they are convinced that the benefits of the project can still be used by the Regional Council of the Souss Massa region.

H) Gender equality and women's empowerment

167. *The CE-SM project aimed to help advance gender equality issues by integrating them into the design, the negotiation and implementation of pilot PES models, the development of local agro-biodiversity value chains and the business sector. Still, the only activities of the project in which women have participated are training sessions on a variety of topics related to the PES approach.*
168. Under Output 2.1: the project contributed to the training of 18 women/69 beneficiaries, i.e. 19% of women benefited from the training. These trainings covered a range of topics related to the PES approach: (i) argan forest restoration and terracing practices, (ii) domestication of volunteer species, (iii) pollination services, (iv) certification systems, (iv) climate-related issues, and (v) participatory financing to cover the initial costs of natural and cultural investments.
169. Ecosystem Service Providers (ESP) benefited from the training, particularly with regard to the argan and honey value chains ; the training sessions benefited to 75 women/257 beneficiaries (29%). These training sessions focused on the same trainings of the product 2.1. in addition to the Ecobranding¹⁶.

I) Cross-cutting

Poverty reduction

170. The unavailability of evidence does not permit to assess the contribution of the CE-SM project to poverty reduction

¹⁶ Final report of the projet CE-SM (juillet 2021), pages : 10 et 11.

Climate change mitigation

171. The lack of available evidence makes it impossible to assess the contribution of the project to climate change mitigation.

Knowledge management

172. To some extent, the Project has contributed to knowledge management related to the circular economy and the benefits of payments for ecosystem services (PES). However, knowledge management requires not only the sharing of knowledge beyond the individuals considered to be aware of and/or trained in PES, but also its consideration in the development of new policies or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Morocco.

173. In terms of knowledge management, the CE-SM project ProDoc was very ambitious, but less realistic. It was ambitious, because it provided for both knowledge production, sharing and dissemination, and testing of ecosystem service solutions in the pilot sites. The ProDoc was less realistic, claiming to initiate:

- «good management promoting the recovery and sustained provision of ecosystem services; which consequently will bring benefits at national and international levels and contribute to poverty reduction. The project will also contribute to increasing the sustainability of the agricultural sector in Morocco. Through capacity building and awareness raising campaigns, small-scale farmers as well as public officials at local, provincial, regional and national levels will be more aware of conservation measures that ensure sustainable agricultural practices.

By promoting the integration of land and biodiversity conservation measures in the RBA region, the project will facilitate the future integration of these measures into Pillar II projects of the Morocco Green Plan across the SMD region»¹⁷.

174. Output 2.3. "Capitalisation and Dissemination of PES Lessons at Local, Regional and National Levels" provides for the establishment of an RBA Label Management Structure. It is proposed to manage PES and maintain a clearinghouse for information and lessons learned in the design and implementation of PES pilot programmes in the project area. This valuable initiative was not implemented within the timeframe

Box. 3

Successes of the project CE-SM according to stakeholders

The creation of ASMEL and capacity empowerment of its members is considered as a first step in the process of the development and operationalisation of PES.

ANDZOA has integrated in its programmes and projects the dimension of the reinforcement and sustainability of the ecosystem services of the argan tree.

«In order to honour its commitments in terms of planned co-financing, ANDZOA mobilised \$50 million for the implementation of the "Development of Argan Farming in Vulnerable Areas" DARED, co-financed by the Green Climate Fund. One of the three components of this fund was the planting of argan trees and the construction of rainwater harvesting facilities.»

Source : Stakeholder interviews, September - October 2021

¹⁷ ProDoc, page : 49.

of the project. The creation of the clearinghouse on communication tools and lessons learned should be updated on the RBA Ecolabel website.

Catalyst effect/replication

175. The CE-SM project has paved the way for a new and innovative PES experience in Morocco. At this stage, it is early to consider its catalytic effect and the possibility of replicating the experience on a larger scale in the SM region and Morocco.
176. The project's extension process cannot be achieved for the time being without a strategy for the sustainability of the CE-SM project's net benefits, which includes: (i) integrating the project's uncompleted key actions and proposing appropriate solutions for their completion, as is the case of the PES institutional and regulatory framework; (ii) enhancing the project's good practices that could be replicated and extended targeting other regions in Morocco, and (iii) consolidating the project's knowledge management component to replicate effectively the PES experience in the SM region and Morocco.

J) Progress towards impact¹⁸

177. *The CE-SM project focuses on the regeneration of the argan ecosystem and the improvement of the living conditions of the final beneficiaries/ecosystem service providers of PES in the project's pilot areas. The progress towards achieving the impact has been hampered by several factors related mainly to its design and implementation. However, the project can be credited with a few factors favourable to progress towards impact.*

Factors related to the project

178. On the one hand, factors (Drivers) of the project facilitating progress towards impact:
- Confirmed relevance of the CE-SM project for (i) final beneficiaries (PES buyers and suppliers), and (ii) key institutional partners (ADA, ANDZOA, HCEFLCD);
 - The project is considered as innovative by institutional partners;
 - Significant funding-co-financing mobilised;
 - Dialogue and consultation initiated by the CE-SM project.

Table 20. Overview of the driving factors of the CE-SM project

Driving factors (project)	
Positive change	The rationale of the evaluation mission
Confirmed relevance of the project	The CE-SM project's consideration of the needs of final beneficiaries (individuals, community groups, organisations). The EC-SM project has taken into account the needs of the right holders use of state forests through a process of consultations.

¹⁸ This section is based on the analysis of progress as presented in the "GEF Fifth Overall Performance Study, OPS5, Final Report: At the Crossroads to Achieving More Impact. Independent Evaluation Office, Global Environment Facility, 2014).

	<p>Alignment of the CE-SM project with global and sectorial strategies for the environment and sustainable development. The CE-SM project fits well with the national priorities for environment and sustainable development in Morocco.</p> <p>Level of alignment between the objectives of the CE-SM project and the GEF strategic priorities (including alignment of relevant focal area indicators). The CE-SM project is in line with the framework of the GEF4 Biodiversity component, whose main objective is to conserve/restore strategic forest areas (SO-2, SP-4 and SP-5).</p> <p>Level of alignment between the objectives and design of the CE-MS project with the UNDAF/UNDP and the SDGs. The objectives of the CE-SM project are in line with the development outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) of 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 and several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).</p>
The project considered as innovative and pilot by the institutional partners	Stakeholders recognize the innovative aspect of the project. Several stakeholders emphasized the innovative nature of the concept in terms of its approach of combining the preservation of natural resources with the improvement of decent living standards for the providers of ecosystem services.
Dialogue and consultation initiated by the project	The importance of dialogue and consultation with institutional stakeholders and partners at the scale of the Sous Massa region is a driving factor of the project to ensure the sustainability of results, ownership and replication of the project on a large scale (scaling up).
Significant financing-co-financing mobilized	The total budget for the project is US\$10,147,272 , with GEF funding of US\$2,647,272 and UNDP funding of US\$200,000 in the form of a grant, and co-financing by the Government of Morocco, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries (MAPM), of US\$7,300,000, broken down as follows: ADA of US\$1,618,944,000, ANDZOA of US\$5,681,056

179. On the other hand, **factors (Internal risks) impeding progress towards impact. These internal risks are as follows:**

- Inadequate design of the ProDoc for a complex context;
- Modest implementation and achievements (key outputs of the CE-SM project delivered or delayed affecting the achievement of immediate and intermediate outcomes);
- Limited effectiveness of the CoPil (project piloting and supervision at a minimum);
- Lack of shared vision by key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD);
- Insufficient institutional coordination;
- Inadequate technical support (studies).

Table 21. **Overview of the internal risks of the CE-SM project**

Internal risks	
Identified risks	The rationale of the evaluation mission
ProDoc design not adapted to a complex context	<p>The design of the CE-SM project proved to be inappropriate in a complex context.</p> <p>In fact, the review of the project's ProDoc reveals gaps and inconsistencies that do not allow to conclude on its validity, feasibility and coherence. These gaps and inconsistencies concern, mainly (i) the absence of a clearly established theory of change, (ii) the lack of formulation of output activities, (iii) the vagueness and use of some results-based management (RBM) concepts, (iv) the vagueness of the roles and responsibilities of project stakeholders, (v) the under-appreciation of risks, and (v) the absence of an exit strategy and sustainability of net benefits at project closure.</p>
Modest implementation and results achieved	<p>The results of the CE-SM project have not been up to the initial ambition.</p> <p>Overall, the performance is modest; with some key project outputs not delivered or delayed affecting the achievement of the project's immediate and intermediate outcomes. In other words, the effectiveness of the project has been limited to the achievement of outputs (training sessions, study tours, exchange workshops, conferences, institutional films, the project webpage, model building and PES contracting etc.).</p>
Limited effectiveness of the CoPil (minimal project steering and supervision)	<p>The strategic steering of the EC-SM project was lacking.</p> <p>Few strategic decisions were taken by the CoPil before the refocusing mission (2018) to address the problems and constraints to which the project was repeatedly confronted.</p>
Lack of shared vision by key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFELD)	<p>The lack of a shared vision has reduced the opportunities for complementarity and harmonisation among all three institutions.</p> <p>The lack of synergies between ADA, HCEFELD and ANDZOA has really hampered the implementation of PES systems in the SM region, and more generally in Morocco.</p>
Insufficient institutional coordination	<p>Coordination and operational issues.</p> <p>Despite the effort made by the PMU, the coordination was limited to the operational level at local and regional level for implementing the annual work plans. However, the steering of the strategic and institutional coordination of the project is considered to be ineffective.</p>
Technical support sometimes inappropriate (some studies)	<p>Technical assistance not always relevant or addressing issues superficially issues, while other fundamental studies are still missing.</p>

Contextual factors

180. On the one hand, the contextual factors of the project (Assumptions) favouring progress towards impact. These factors are as follows:
- Convergence of the project with several national and international biodiversity protection strategies;
 - Involvement of several institutional (ADA, ANDZOA, DRA, etc.) or social (associations, cooperatives, etc.) actors;
 - Previous associated initiatives, specifically from the HCEFLD.
181. On the other hand, **contextual factors impeding progress towards impact (external risks):**
- Unfavourable institutional constraints (lack of convergence and complementarities between the three key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD));
 - Complex local and regional context (tensions over natural resources).

Table 22. **Overview of the contextual factors of the CE-SM project**

Contextual factors	
Contextual factors identified	The rationale of the evaluation mission
Convergence of the project with several national and international biodiversity protection strategies	The CE-SM project is in line with the national and international priorities for the environment and sustainable development in Morocco. This convergence concerns: (i) sectoral strategies and public policies (human development, agriculture, etc.); (ii) the protection of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
Previous related initiatives, specifically the initiative of the HCEFLD	The forest protection system of the High Commission for Water, Forests and the Fight against Desertification (HCEFLCD) is an important factor in building on what already exists.

182. On the other hand, the contextual factors of the project (external risks) obstructing progress towards impact, namely:
- Unfavourable institutional constraints (lack of convergence and complementarity among the three key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD));
 - Local context of pressures over natural resource.

Table 23. **Overview of the contextual factors of the CE-SM project**

External Risks	
Risks identified	The rationale of the evaluation mission
Institutional constraints unfavourable to the CE-SM project	Lack of convergence and complementarity among the three key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD)
Local context of pressures over natural resources	Excessive use and tensions around natural resources from the Argan forests

Table 24. **Factors contributing or hindering progress towards the impact of the CE-SM project**

	Factors contributing to progress towards impact (drivers)	Factors impeding progress towards impact (internal risks)
Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirmed relevance of the CE-SM project for (i) final beneficiaries (PES buyers and suppliers), (ii) key institutional partners (ADA, ANDZOA, HCEFLCD); ▪ The project is considered as innovative and pilot by institutional partners; ▪ Significant funding-co-financing mobilised; ▪ Dialogue and consultation initiated by the CE-SM project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inadequate design of the ProDoc for a complex context; ▪ Modest implementation and achievements (key outputs of the project not completed or delayed affecting the achievement of immediate and intermediate outcomes); ▪ Unfavourable institutional constraints (lack of convergence and complementarities between the three key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD); ▪ Limited effectiveness of the CoPil (project piloting and supervision at a minimum); ▪ Insufficient institutional coordination; ▪ Inadequate technical support (studies); ▪ Lack of shared vision by key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD).
	Factors contributing to progress towards impact (assumptions)	Factors impeding progress towards impact (External Risks)
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convergence of the project with several national and international biodiversity protection strategies; ▪ Previous associated initiatives (HCEFLD). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unfavourable institutional constraints (lack of convergence and complementarities between the three key partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD); ▪ Complex local and regional context (pressures over natural resources).

Conclusion

183. The contribution of PES towards impact goes far beyond the present CE-SM project cycle. Nevertheless, the approach and tools developed by the project should be continued and consolidated in order to generate sustainable changes in the field of PES in the MS region and in Morocco. The project has achieved significant results in capacity building, training and awareness raising of final beneficiaries and institutional stakeholders. However, the project was confronted with many fundamental challenges, particularly the poor anticipation of the conditions and capacities to ensure ownership and continuity of the net benefits of the project after its closure.

7. MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A) Main findings

184. The main findings of the final evaluation of the CE-SM project are as follows:

#	Topic	Finding
1	Project Design/Formulation	<p>Stakeholders recognise the project's innovative aspect. However, the design of the project is problematic as to achieve its goal and objectives.</p> <p>In fact, the review of the project's ProDoc reveals gaps and inconsistencies which threatens its validity, feasibility and coherence. These gaps and inconsistencies are in particular: (i) the absence of a clearly established theory of change, (ii) the lack of outputs activities formulation, (iii) the vagueness and use of some results based management concepts, (iv) the imprecision of the roles and responsibilities of the project stakeholders, (v) the underestimation of risks, and (v) absence of an exit strategy and sustainability of net benefits at the closure of the projet.</p>
2	Implementation of the project	<p>Delays related to the start up and different stages of the implementation of the project, and the conditions of its supervision (monitoring committee), have hampered its overall implementation. It is perceived by several stakeholders interviewed as unsatisfactory.</p>
3	M&E	<p>The Monitoring and Evaluation system has been functional since the start of the project and has ensured regular reporting on project activities (quarterly, half-yearly and annually), in accordance with the indicators and targets defined in the strategic results framework of the project.</p> <p>Despite the efforts made, it was noted that the exploitation of the SES data was not optimal. As confirmed by the minutes of the CoPil meetings, the SES data was not used as a decision support tool: (i) to improve project management, (ii) to ensure timely refocusing, (iii) to remove constraints, and (iv) to find answers to reported risks, especially for components 1 and 4.</p>
4	Progress towards objectives and expected results	<p>Progress towards achieving the objectives and results of the CE-SM project has been hindered by several constraints and difficulties during its implementation as noted in different sections of this report. These constraints and challenges led to the extension of the project duration (two times), after the mid-term evaluation in 2017 and after the COVI-19 pandemic.</p>
5	Relevance	<p>The needs of the final beneficiaries (individuals, community groups, organisations) are being taken into account by the project.</p> <p>The CE-SM project has taken into account the needs of the final beneficiaries through the involvement of the rights-holders of the public forests in a consultative process. This process is well appreciated by the different stakeholders of the project. The dialogue and consultation of the local population were, in particular, underlined by several interlocutors as a good initiative, even if it is considered, as they said, not always obvious.</p>

		<p>Alignment of the project with global and sectoral environmental and sustainable development strategies. The CE-SM project is in line with the national priorities for the environment and sustainable development in Morocco. It's also aligned with other sectoral strategies and public policies (human development, agriculture, etc.). Besides, the relevance of the project is confirmed by the manifest interest of the New Development Model (NDM) in promoting the circular economy in Morocco.</p> <p>Level of adequacy between the project objectives and the strategic priorities of the GEF (including the alignment of relevant focal area indicator). The project CE-SM is part of the GEF4 Biodiversity Component, whose main objective is to preserve/ restore strategic forest areas through three expected outcomes: (i) conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity embedded in ecologically productive seascapes and landscapes (SO-2), (i) strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for biodiversity mainstreaming (SP-4), and (iii) fostering markets for biodiversity goods and services (SP-5).</p> <p>Level of alignment between the project objectives and design and UNDAF/UNDP and MDGs. The objectives of the project are in accordance with the development outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) of 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 and several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).</p>
6	Coherence	<p>Internal coherence Even if the project was reasonably well resourced, strategic governance and internal management did not function effectively. The 2017 mid-term evaluation identified a number of risks related to its implementation. Following the mid-term evaluation (2017) and UNDP CTR field mission in 2018, a refocusing mission was initiated by the COPIL in order to carry out a technical and conceptual reorientation of the PES. The evaluation mission reported that the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation and the refocusing mission have not been systematically carried out.</p> <p>External coherence The ProDoc identified several programs and projects which are complementary to the CE-SM project. However, the project did not benefit from other interventions on the issue of biodiversity in Morocco.</p>
7	Effectiveness	<p>On the whole, the rate of implementation varies from one product to another. In addition to the seven planned activities, the project carried out a total of twenty-seven activities as follows: (i) 19 communication, promotion and advocacy activities; (ii) 9 activities related to studies and technical assistance; and (iii) 6 capacity capacity building activities. The capacity building activities meet the expectations of the stakeholders who participated in these activities (training sessions, study tours, exchange workshops, conferences, institutional films, the project webpage). However, the intermediate and final effects are be confirmed, possibly through an ex-ante and/or impact evaluation.</p>
8	Efficiency	<p>The project had a disbursement rate of 85% at the time of its closure. On the whole, the financial resources were allocated to the achievement of the outputs. This rate, which can be considered satisfactory, is in contrast with the variable level of</p>

		achievement of the outputs planned by the project.
9	Sustainability	Some net benefits of the project are likely to continue. However, the conditions of sustainability (institutional, social, financial, environmental) have not yet been met to ensure the continuity of these net benefits beyond the closure of the project.
10	Country ownership	National stakeholders ownership, especially key institutional partners (ADA, ANDZOA and HCEFLD) has been very limited. The evaluation mission noted their low participation/ownership in the implementation of the project and the development of PES models in the SM region. By the closure of the project, the situation is changing. In fact, PES development initiatives in Morocco are now underway by ADA and ANDZOA.
11	Gender equality and women's empowerment	The CE-SM project aimed to help advance gender equality issues by integrating them into the design, the negotiation and implementation of pilot PES models, the development of local agro-biodiversity value chains and the business sector. Still, the only activities of the project in which women have participated are training sessions on a variety of topics related to the PES approach.
12	Cross-cutting issues	<p>Poverty reduction The unavailability of evidence does not permit to assess the contribution of the project to poverty reduction.</p> <p>Climate change mitigation The lack of available evidence makes it impossible to assess the contribution of the project to climate change mitigation.</p>
13	Knowledge management	To some extent, the project has contributed to knowledge management related to the circular economy and the benefits of payments for ecosystem services (PES). However, knowledge management requires not only the sharing of knowledge beyond the individuals considered to be aware of and/or trained in PES, but also its consideration in the development of new policies or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Morocco.
14	Catalysing effect/Replication	The CE-SM project has paved the way for a new and innovative PES experience in Morocco. At this stage, it is early to consider its catalytic effect and the possibility of replicating the experience on a larger scale in the SM region and in Morocco.
15	Progress towards impact	The CE-SM project focuses on the regeneration of the argan ecosystem and the improvement of the living conditions of the final beneficiaries/ecosystem service providers of PES in the project's pilot areas. But the progress towards achieving the impact has been hampered by several factors related mainly to its design and implementation. The project can be credited with a few factors favourable to progress towards impact.

B) Conclusions

Rationale of the CE-SM project strategy

185. In response to the various pressures on the Argan tree ecosystem in Morocco, the project's strategy is based on the absolute necessity to limit the degradation of the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve (ABR). To this end, the intervention strategy consists of contributing to the conservation of the argan ecosystem in the SM region by promoting payment for ecosystem services (PES) and a sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity.

Inappropriate project design

186. The design of the CE-SM project, consisting of four main components (institutional, regulatory, environmental and economic), is inadequate in a complex context. In fact, the review of the project's ProDoc reveals gaps and inconsistencies that make it impossible to conclude on its validity, feasibility and consistency. These gaps and inconsistencies concern, mainly (i) the absence of a clearly established theory of change, (ii) the lack of formulation of output activities, (iii) the vagueness and use of some results-based management (RBM) concepts, (iv) the vagueness of the roles and responsibilities of the project stakeholders, (v) the under-appreciation of risks, and (v) the absence of an exit strategy and sustainability of net benefits at the project closure.

The weakness of the project's steering and implementation

187. On the one hand, the strategic piloting of the CE-SM project has been deficient. Few strategic decisions were taken by the CoPil before the refocusing mission (2018) to address the problems and constraints to which the project was repeatedly exposed. On the other hand, the implementation of the project was hampered by the design of a 'turnkey' and over-dimensioned project. Despite the PMU's monitoring and coordination efforts on the ground, the operating method was constraining, which leads to an unsatisfactory implementation of the project.

Modest results

188. The results of the project do not correspond to its initial ambition. On the whole, the results are modest, and some of the project's key outputs have not been achieved or have been delayed, affecting the achievement of the project's immediate and intermediate outcomes. The effectiveness of the project has been limited to the achievement of the following outputs: training sessions, study tours, exchange workshops, conferences, institutional films, the project web page, etc.

Sustainability and progress towards impact

189. The CE-SM project has some net benefits which are likely to last beyond the closure of the CE-SM project. However, the conditions of sustainability (institutional, social, financial, environmental) have not yet been met to ensure the continuity of these benefits in the long term. On the other hand, progress towards impact of the project depends on several factors related to the project or its context. On the one hand, the factors hindering progress towards impact are varied and require appropriate responses, such as the case for the validity of the project design, the effectiveness of the piloting (CoPil) or implementation structures (PMU and various committees), insufficient institutional coordination, etc.

C) Lessons learned

190. The lessons learned from the project could be applied to other programmes or projects on the same PES issue. They are as follows:

Good understanding and transparent communication

191. The design of new PES programmes or projects should be based on a good understanding of local and regional specificities and a transparent communication: (i) identifying and securing potential beneficiaries (providers and buyers of ES), (ii) informing about the existence of the PES scheme and its adoption, and (iii) building trust in the organisation which manages the eco-systemic payments.

PES, a transformative concept

192. As a transformative concept, PES needs more time in order to clarify: (i) the regulatory issues of PES, (ii) the governance of the management of the mechanism between buyers and producers/suppliers of ES to successfully carry out the work on the argan biosphere, (iii) the support to the ecolabel commission, (iv) the operationalisation of the pilot model designed for Argana in order to develop other representative pilots of RBA, and (v) the control of the additional costs dedicated to ecosystem services which concern the agricultural and forestry professionals.

Dialogue and consultation

193. The dialogue and concertation initiated by the PES project with institutional stakeholders and partners in the Sous Massa region are key factors for the sustainability and continuity of results, ownership and replication of the project on a larger scale (scaling up). In fact, the establishment of links and the strengthening of dialogue and concertation relations to address contextual constraints and difficulties can contribute to improve effectiveness.

Long-term results

194. Long-term results could be possible if the project had been planned in adequate conditions, with a time-frame of ten years, rather than five years. Indeed, the implementation of PES requires more time, as it involves major transformations in the long term. On the other hand, future programmes or projects related to PES implementation should include realistic and result-oriented objectives.

D) Recommendations

195. At the end of the final evaluation of the CE-SM project, it is mainly recommended to:

Recommendation n° 1		
Category 1: Validity of the project design		
<p>Considering the validity of project design, it is recommended that special emphasis should be devoted to the design of future PES programmes/projects, including: (i) making the intervention logic / theory of change explicit; (ii) formulating indicators in SMART mode; (iii) integrating the analysis of success assumptions and risk factors with appropriate mitigation measures; and (iv) planning the sustainability strategy for each project.</p> <p><i>In addition, process evaluation of PES programmes/projects should be systematised as it allows: (i) to check the feasibility of their design (strategy, logic model, risk management, etc.); (ii) to determine whether the activities and outputs of the programmes/projects are being implemented as planned or not; and (iii) to focus on the practical problems encountered and how these problems were solved.</i></p>		
Entity responsible	Priority level	Time Frime
Government	High	Short-term
Recommendation n° 2		
Category 2: Institutional framework and PES governance		
<p>In terms of governance and institutional framework, it would be appropriate to: (i) build on the achievements of the project, especially as regards the Commission dedicated to the management of the RBA Ecolabel; (ii) provide a framework for the coherence of the strategies of public institutions around the RBA Ecolabel (SFM, SGG, DARED, etc.); and (iii) maintain the public-private international organisations dialogue during the implementation or revision of the RBA Ecolabel standard.</p>		
Entity responsible	Priority level	Time Frime
Government	High	Short-term
Recommendation n° 3		
Category 3: Sustainability of net benefits over time		
<p>Considering the sustainability of the net benefits and the progress towards the achievement of the impact, it is strongly recommended that the national counterpart ensures that the continuity of the CE-SM project's opportunity and its net benefits are to be continued. This can be achieved by taking into account the financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities needed to ensure the continuity of the net benefits over time and by integrating the consolidated project results into the Green Generation Strategy (GGs, 2020-2030) and the Forestry Strategy (FGS, 2020-2030).</p>		
Entity responsible	Priority level	Time Frime
Government	High	Short-term
Recommendation n° 4		
Category 4: Exit strategy and sustainability		
<p>The exit and sustainability strategy of the CE-SM project is envisaged in the project final report (July 2021). The report formulated the first elements of this strategy, which converges with the proposals of several stakeholders consulted during the evaluation mission. In short, the main axes of the exit and sustainability strategy (2021-2022) concern (i) the creation of an institutional and legal framework for PES at the national level; (ii) support to the implementation of the ASMEL RBA management plan; and (iii) support to the management of the RBA eco-label.</p> <p>In fact, the evaluation mission recommends the organisation of a national sharing workshop dedicated to PES in</p>		

Morocco. *The main objectives of this workshop are: (i) to take stock and capitalise on current PES initiatives; (ii) to discuss opportunities of institutionalising PES; and (iii) to set up the RBA Ecolabel framework agreement.*

Entity responsible	Priority level	Time Frime
UNDP, GEF & Government	High	Short-term

8. ANNEXES

Annex I: ToRs of the TE (French)

1. INTRODUCTION

Conformément aux politiques et procédures de suivi et d'évaluation du PNUD et du FEM, tous les projets de moyenne ou grande envergure appuyés par le PNUD et financés par le FEM doivent faire l'objet d'une évaluation finale (EF) à la fin du projet. Les présents termes de référence (TdR) énoncent les attentes associées à l'EF du projet de grande envergure intitulé « Une approche d'Economie Circulaire pour la Conservation de l'Agro-biodiversité dans la région du Souss Massa au Maroc » (PIMS 5079) et mis en œuvre par l'agence pour le développement agricole. Le projet a démarré le 17 juin 2014 et se trouve actuellement dans sa 7ème année de mise en œuvre. Le processus d'EF doit suivre les directives décrites dans le document « [Directives pour réaliser les évaluations finales des projets appuyés par le PNUD et financés par le FEM](#) ».

2. CONTEXTE ET SITUATION DU PROJET

Le but du projet est de contribuer à la préservation et à l'utilisation durable de la biodiversité d'importance mondiale dans la région du Souss Massa (SM) au Maroc en agissant aux travers de 4 composantes interconnectées. La composante une, concernera la création d'un environnement habilitant pour l'introduction des PSE au Maroc en adressant les changements institutionnels, politiques et légaux nécessaires à la mise en place et le pilotage d'un tel mécanisme dans le SMD. A travers la composante 2, le projet renforcera les capacités techniques pour la mise en œuvre de modèles PSE dans le SMD et préparera ainsi le terrain pour une réplique nationale des concepts et des outils PSE via la dissémination des leçons apprises et l'échange d'expériences avec d'autres projets et programmes. Les activités de la composante 3 permettront de promouvoir une production organique, durable et respectueuse de la biodiversité via un schéma de labellisation et de commercialisation adaptées aux produits de l'écosystème Arganier. En capitalisant sur les 3 premières composantes, le projet entamera un investissement pilote de type PSE à travers la Composante 4 en tant que moyen de promotion, de conservation et d'exploitation durable de la biodiversité et les services écosystémiques qui y sont associés dans l'écosystème Arganier.

Le budget total du projet est de 10, 147,272 USD financés par le FEM, le PNUD et le gouvernement (contribution en espèce et en nature de 7 300 000 USD). L'agence d'exécution du projet est l'ADA. Ce projet ayant une durée de 5 ans a été lancé au mois de juillet 2014.

Le contrôle des activités du projet incombe au Comité de pilotage du projet (CPP). La surveillance opérationnelle quotidienne sera assurée par le PNUD par le biais de son bureau de Rabat, et le contrôle et les orientations stratégiques par le Conseiller technique régional du PNUD/FEM responsable du projet.

Le Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche Maritime a nommé un haut fonctionnaire qui assure la fonction de Directeur national de projet (DNP) pour la mise en œuvre du projet. Il est chargé d'assurer la supervision de l'Etat et de fournir les orientations de la mise en œuvre du projet.

Au niveau régional, la gestion quotidienne du projet est effectuée par une Unité de gestion du projet (UGP) établie à Agadir sous l'autorité générale du DNP.

Un Comité local (CL) sera établi pour chacun des sites d'intervention du projet. La fonction des CL est de relier l'objectif

du projet aux plans locaux, ainsi qu'aux interventions et investissements en cours ou prévus par les partenaires locaux et/ou bénéficiaires.

Les parties prenantes sont représentées par l'Agence pour le développement Agricole (ADA), le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD), l'Agence nationale pour le développement des zones oasiennes et de l'arganier (ANDZOA) et le Fonds pour l'Environnement Mondial (FEM).

Les partenaires clés du projet au niveau local et national regroupent les ONG locales et professionnels (RARBA, FIFARGANE, RDTR, l'association régionale des apiculteurs SM), les experts nationaux ou internationaux recrutés pour apporter d'assistance au projet et l'ASMRL RBA, une association créée pour gérer l'écolabel RBA.

Le projet EC-SM a connu au départ, un certain nombre de difficultés qui ont entraîné des retards la mise en œuvre des activités sur le terrain, en particulier le manque de véhicules et de moyens de transport pour assurer les missions et activités du terrain de l'équipe du projet, le retard dans la mise en place de la structure opérationnelle du projet, et surtout la réticence manifestée au départ par les populations locales au regard de la thématique de paiement de services éco systémiques (PSE) jugée très sensible et du caractère institutionnel et soft du projet ainsi que du faible niveau d'appropriation de la démarche du projet par les différents groupes cibles et acteurs concernés.

L'évaluation mi annuelle de recadrage du projet a été conduite en plusieurs missions pour recentrer les activités du projet sur les résultats attendus. Le caractère novateur du projet et la nécessité d'une large sensibilisation sur les PSE, l'écolabel RBA et la recherche de solutions pratiques pour impacter positivement la biodiversité a pris plus de temps que prévu.

Les aspects transversaux du projet relatifs aux groupes vulnérables, égalité des sexes, et droits fondamentaux ont été pris en considération lors de l'élaboration du standard de l'écolabel RBA.

Quant à la pertinence du projet par rapport aux stratégies et priorités du gouvernement, le projet offre la possibilité d'introduire le volet environnement et développement durable au sein des chaînes de valeurs et vient en renforcement de la Stratégie Green Génération.

Le projet contribue à la réalisation des ODD 12 et 15 de façon directe et initie une possibilité d'intégrer les aspects relatifs au changement climatique (objectif 13) vu son potentiel de séquestration du carbone associée aux bonnes pratiques du système de PSE.

Les facteurs sociaux, économiques, politiques, géographiques et démographiques critiques ont été analysés au et pris en compte fur et à mesure de l'avancement du projet pour créer un environnement favorable à sa mise en œuvre.

Par ailleurs et au vu du contexte de la pandémie COVID-19, et malgré les mesures de confinement, le projet a poursuivi ses activités à distance moyennant des canaux de communication digitale vu que la majorité des activités se rapporte à la finalisation du standard de l'écolabel RBA.

3. OBJECTIF DE L'EF

Le rapport d'EF doit évaluer la réalisation des résultats du projet par rapport à ce qui était prévu et tirer des leçons qui peuvent à la fois améliorer la durabilité des bénéfices de ce projet et contribuer à l'amélioration générale de la programmation du PNUD. Le rapport d'EF encourage la responsabilité et la transparence, et évalue l'étendue des réalisations du projet.

Cette évaluation devra permettre de :

- (i) apprécier l'état de réalisation des activités,
- (ii) estimer dans quelles mesures le projet a atteint ses objectifs en termes d'effets et d'impact,
- (iii) juger de l'adéquation des moyens mis en œuvre aux objectifs poursuivis,
- (iv) identifier les problèmes de mise en œuvre et apprécier les solutions proposées,
- (v) capitaliser sur les aménagements et/ou réorientations des activités, de financement et des méthodes de travail,
- (vi) proposer des mécanismes visant l'institutionnalisation des acquis du projet, dont notamment les mécanismes de paiements pour les services écosystémiques, le dispositif de réhabilitation écologique, le plan de renforcement des capacités, les résultats des expertises thématiques ainsi que les plans de développement durable participatifs et inclusifs élaborés par le projet en vue de leur intégration dans le cadre des plans et contrats programmes de l'ADA.

Elle a pour mandat :

1. L'examen des documents de base du projet, notamment le « document du projet » et son cadre logique ainsi que les rapports annuels du projet ;
2. L'analyse de l'organisation du projet et de son montage institutionnel, afin de juger de son efficacité et de son degré d'adaptation aux spécificités du projet et à son environnement naturel et institutionnel ;
3. L'appréciation du rôle et succès du projet dans la mobilisation des partenaires et des acteurs ciblés ainsi que le degré de leur implication respective dans la réalisation des activités du projet ;
4. L'examen des pratiques de gestion durable et de restauration des écosystèmes réalisés dans les sites ciblés par le projet ;
5. L'évaluation du progrès enregistré à la fin du projet envers la réalisation des objectifs prévus, et l'analyse des défis ;
6. L'examen du budget et de la gestion financière ;
7. L'élaboration de propositions et recommandations pertinentes pour une stratégie de sortie du projet, portant sur tous les enjeux identifiés. Par ailleurs, la mission esquissera et analysera l'intérêt et l'opportunité, le cas échéant, d'une éventuelle seconde phase du projet (deuxième tranche de financement).

En particulier, dans le cas du projet EC-SM, les aspects suivants seront examinés :

- Evaluer le degré d'appropriation du projet et ses objectifs par les différentes catégories cibles (populations locales, gestionnaires de l'arganeraie aussi bien au niveau Central que local et tous les autres acteurs concernés à savoir (l'ADA, l'ANDZOA, DREFSO ? Communes Rurales, DRA, ASMEL RBA...etc.),
- Dégager et approcher les changements induits par le projet en termes de comportements des populations usagères, gestionnaires de l'arganeraie et Communes allant dans le sens favorable à la mise en place d'une cogestion des ressources naturelles ;
- Faire ressortir l'impact du projet sur l'adoption de nouvelles pratiques et modes de conduite et de gestion des écosystèmes arganiers ;
- Evaluer l'impact du projet sur l'évolution de la prise de conscience et le regain d'intérêt suscité par l'approche du projet auprès des populations locales, gestionnaires de l'arganeraie autres acteurs en matière de gestion participative des écosystèmes arganiers ;
- Evaluer le degré d'intégration du projet dans les programmes et projets sectoriels des partenaires institutionnels au niveau local (DREFLCD, DRA, DREFSO et Communes...);
- Analyser et évaluer la performance de la démarche et interventions du projet qui est à caractère institutionnel et innovateur dans ses chantiers en termes d'intégration dans la stratégie de l'ADA et

d'atteinte résultats escomptés.

- Pertinence et l'adaptation ou non des indicateurs du suivi et de l'évaluation choisis aussi bien au contexte de mise en œuvre qu'aux exigences du document du projet ? Dans quelle mesure la batterie de critères retenus répondent et expriment les effets et les impacts aussi bien spécifiques que globaux du projet ?
- Statuer sur le système de S&E que le projet a mis en place durant sa durée, ainsi que les enseignements à tirer pour les autres projets.
- L'évaluation de l'impact induit par le projet dans la zone du projet et des différents chantiers ouverts et engagés par le projet avec les différents bureaux d'assistance technique en vue de mesurer l'évolution du projet et d'approcher le degré d'atteinte des objectifs prévus et de l'impact et effets éventuels sur les changements et modes opérés chez les populations usagères et les partenaires institutionnels impliqués dans la problématique de préservation et gestion durables des écosystèmes arganiers.
- Evaluer l'impact de la pandémie du COVID-19 en termes de calendrier d'exécution, d'interventions sur le terrain, de mobilisation des parties prenantes et des conditions économiques et sociales des bénéficiaires.

4. APPROCHE ET MÉTHODOLOGIE DE L'EF

Les approches/méthodologies à adopter doivent permettre une mise en œuvre efficace de l'évaluation, y compris les directives de sécurité, des revues documentaires approfondies, l'utilisation prioritaire des consultants nationaux et le recours par les évaluateurs à des réunions et des entretiens virtuels avec les parties prenantes. Ces méthodologies et approches, ainsi que toutes les limitations rencontrées pendant le processus d'EF, doivent être détaillées dans le rapport initial d'EF et le rapport final d'EF.

Le rapport d'EF doit ainsi fournir des informations fondées sur des données factuelles crédibles, fiables et utiles.

L'équipe de l'EF doit examiner toutes les sources d'information pertinentes, y compris les documents élaborés pendant la phase de préparation (tels que le FIP, le plan de lancement du PNUD, la Procédure de détection des risques environnementaux et sociaux du PNUD/PDRES), le document de projet, les rapports de projet, dont les RMP annuels, les révisions du budget du projet, les rapports sur les enseignements tirés, les documents stratégiques et juridiques nationaux et tout autre matériel que l'équipe juge utile pour étayer cette évaluation. L'équipe de l'EF doit examiner les indicateurs de base/outils de suivi de référence et à mi-parcours du domaine focal du FEM, soumis au FEM au moment de l'approbation du directeur et aux étapes de mi-parcours, ainsi que les indicateurs de base/outils de suivi qui doivent être complétés avant le début de la mission d'EF sur le terrain.

L'équipe de l'EF doit suivre une approche participative et consultative garantissant une implication active de l'équipe projet, des homologues gouvernementaux (le point focal opérationnel du FEM), des partenaires de mise en œuvre, du bureau de pays du PNUD, du conseiller technique régional, des bénéficiaires directs et d'autres parties prenantes.

La participation des parties prenantes est indispensable à la réussite de l'EF. Cette mobilisation doit consister en des entretiens avec les parties prenantes qui assument des responsabilités liées au projet, à savoir entre autres (PNUD, GEF, ANDZOA et DREFSO; les agences d'exécution (ADA), les hauts fonctionnaires et les chefs d'équipes/de composantes, les experts et les consultants clés dans le domaine concerné, le comité directeur du projet, les bénéficiaires du projet, le monde universitaire, les autorités locales et les OSC, etc. En outre, l'équipe de l'EF est censée effectuer des missions sur le terrain à la commune d'Argana où les PSE pilotes ont été initiés.

La conception et la méthodologie spécifiques de l'EF devraient ressortir des consultations entre l'équipe de l'EF et les parties susmentionnées quant à ce qui est approprié et réalisable pour atteindre le but et les objectifs de l'EF et répondre aux questions d'évaluation, compte tenu des contraintes de budget, de temps et de données. L'équipe de l'EF doit utiliser des méthodologies et outils tenant compte du genre et veiller à ce que l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes, ainsi que d'autres questions transversales et les ODD, soient intégrées dans le rapport d'EF.

L'approche méthodologique finale, y compris le calendrier des entretiens, les visites sur le terrain et les données à utiliser dans l'évaluation, doit être clairement exposée dans le rapport initial d'EF et faire l'objet d'une discussion approfondie et d'un accord entre le PNUD, les parties prenantes et l'équipe de l'EF.

Toutefois, une certaine souplesse sera permise pour permettre à l'équipe d'évaluation de déterminer les meilleurs outils et méthodes de collecte et d'analyse des données. Par exemple, les TdR peuvent suggérer d'avoir recours à des questionnaires, des visites sur le terrain et des entretiens, mais l'équipe d'évaluation doit pouvoir revoir cette approche en concertation avec le responsable de l'évaluation et les principales parties prenantes. Ces modifications de l'approche doivent être convenues au préalable et reprises clairement dans le rapport initial d'EF).

Le rapport final doit décrire l'ensemble de l'approche adoptée pour l'EF et la justification de cette approche en rendant explicites les hypothèses sous-jacentes, les défis, les forces et les faiblesses concernant les méthodes et l'approche de l'évaluation.

S'il n'est pas possible de se rendre dans le pays ou de se déplacer à l'intérieur du pays pour la mission d'EF, l'équipe de l'EF doit élaborer une méthodologie tenant compte de cette situation et prévoir de procéder à l'évaluation à distance et de façon virtuelle, en ayant notamment recours à des méthodes d'entretien à distance et à des revues documentaires approfondies, à l'analyse de données, à des enquêtes et à des questionnaires d'évaluation. Ce point doit être détaillé dans le rapport initial d'EF et convenu avec l'unité mandatrice.

Si tout ou partie de l'EF doit s'effectuer de manière virtuelle, il convient de tenir compte de la disponibilité, de la capacité ou de la volonté des parties prenantes d'être interrogées à distance. En outre, leur accès à Internet ou à un ordinateur peut poser problème, car de nombreux interlocuteurs gouvernementaux et nationaux peuvent travailler depuis chez eux. Ces limitations doivent être reflétées dans le rapport final d'EF.

Si la collecte de données/mission sur le terrain n'est pas possible, alors les entretiens pourraient s'effectuer à distance par téléphone ou en ligne (Skype, Zoom, etc.). Les consultants internationaux peuvent travailler à distance avec le soutien sur place des évaluateurs dans la mesure où ces derniers sont en mesure d'intervenir et de se déplacer en toute sécurité. Aucune partie prenante, aucun consultant ou membre du personnel du PNUD ne saurait être mis en danger et la sécurité est la priorité absolue.

Une courte mission de validation peut être envisagée si elle est jugée sans risque pour le personnel, les consultants et les parties prenantes, et si le calendrier de l'EF le permet. De même, des consultants nationaux qualifiés et indépendants peuvent être recrutés pour conduire l'EF et les entretiens dans le pays, si leur sécurité est garantie.

5. PORTÉE DÉTAILLÉE DE L'EF

L'EF doit évaluer la performance du projet par rapport aux attentes énoncées dans le cadre logique/de résultats du projet (voir l'Annexe A des TdR). Elle doit évaluer les résultats par rapport aux critères décrits dans les [Directives pour la réalisation des évaluations finales des projets appuyés par le PNUD et financés par le FEM](#)

La portée de l'EF doit détailler et inclure les aspects du projet qui seront couverts par l'EF, comme le calendrier, ainsi que les principales questions d'intérêt pour les utilisateurs que l'équipe d'EF doit aborder.

La section du rapport d'EF sur les constatations doit couvrir les sujets énumérés ci-dessous. Une présentation complète du contenu du rapport d'EF est fournie en Annexe C des TdR.

Les critères nécessitant une notation sont marqués d'un astérisque (*).

Constatations

i. Conception/élaboration du projet

- Priorités nationales et appropriation par le pays
- Théorie du changement
- Égalité des sexes et autonomisation des femmes
- Mesures de protection sociale et environnementale
- Analyse du cadre de résultats : logique et stratégie du projet, indicateurs
- Hypothèses et risques
- Enseignements tirés des autres projets pertinents (par exemple, dans le même domaine focal) incorporés dans la conception du projet
- Participation prévue des parties prenantes
- Les liens entre le projet et d'autres interventions au sein du secteur
- Modalités de gestion

ii. Mise en œuvre du projet

- Gestion adaptative (modification de la conception du projet et des produits du projet au cours de la mise en œuvre)
- Participation réelle des parties prenantes et accords réels de partenariat
- Financement et cofinancement du projet
- Suivi et évaluation : conception à l'entrée (*), mise en œuvre (*) et évaluation globale du S&E (*)
- Partenaire de mise en œuvre (PNUD) (*) et agence d'exécution (*), contrôle/mise en œuvre globale du projet et exécution (*)
- Gestion des risques, y compris les Normes environnementales et sociales

iii. Résultats du projet

- Évaluer la réalisation des résultats par rapport aux indicateurs en rendant compte du niveau de progrès pour chaque objectif et indicateur de résultat au moment de l'EF et en notant les réalisations finales
- Pertinence (*), Efficacité (*), Efficience (*) et réalisation globale du projet (*)
- Durabilité : financière (*), sociopolitique (*), du cadre institutionnel et de la gouvernance (*), environnementale (*) et probabilité globale de durabilité (*)
- Appropriation par les pays
- Égalité des sexes et autonomisation des femmes
- Questions transversales (réduction de la pauvreté, amélioration de la gouvernance, atténuation des changements climatiques et adaptation à ceux-ci, prévention des catastrophes et relèvement, droits

fondamentaux, renforcement des capacités, coopération Sud-Sud, gestion des connaissances, volontariat, etc., selon les cas)

- Additionnalité du FEM
- Rôle de catalyseur / Effet de répliation
- Progrès vers l'impact

Principales constatations, conclusions, recommandations et enseignements tirés

- L'équipe de l'EF doit inclure un résumé des principales constatations dans le rapport d'EF. Les constatations doivent être présentées sous forme d'énoncés de faits fondés sur l'analyse des données.
- La section sur les conclusions est rédigée à la lumière des constatations. Les conclusions doivent être exhaustives et équilibrées, largement étayées par les preuves et s'inscrire dans la logique des constatations de l'EF. Elles doivent mettre en avant les forces, les faiblesses et les résultats du projet, répondre aux principales questions de l'évaluation et donner des pistes de réflexion pour l'identification et/ou la résolution des problèmes importants ou des questions pertinentes pour les bénéficiaires du projet, le PNUD et le FEM, y compris les questions relatives à l'égalité des sexes et à l'autonomisation des femmes.
- Le rapport doit présenter des recommandations concrètes, pratiques, réalisables et à l'attention des utilisateurs cibles de l'évaluation concernant les mesures à adopter ou les décisions à prendre. Les recommandations doivent être spécifiquement étayées par des preuves et liées aux constatations et aux conclusions relatives aux questions clés traitées par l'évaluation.
- Le rapport d'EF doit également comprendre les enseignements qui peuvent être tirés de l'évaluation, y compris les meilleures pratiques concernant la pertinence, la performance et le succès, qui peuvent fournir des connaissances acquises à partir de circonstances particulières (les méthodes de programmation et d'évaluation utilisées, les partenariats, les leviers financiers, etc.) applicables à d'autres interventions du FEM et du PNUD. Lorsque c'est possible, l'équipe de l'EF doit inclure des exemples de bonnes pratiques concernant la conception et la mise en œuvre du projet.
- Il est important que les conclusions, les recommandations et les enseignements tirés du rapport d'EF intègrent l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes.
- Le rapport d'EF comprendra un tableau de notations d'évaluation, comme présenté ci-dessous :

Tableau 2 des TdR : Tableau de notations d'évaluation pour le projet « Approche d'Economie Circulaire pour la Conservation de l'Agro-biodiversité dans la région du Souss Massa au Maroc »

Suivi et évaluation (S&E)	Note ¹
Conception du S&E à l'entrée	
Mise en œuvre du plan de S&E	
Qualité globale du S&E	
Mise en œuvre et exécution	Note
Qualité de la mise en œuvre/du contrôle du PNUD	
Qualité de l'exécution par le partenaire de mise en œuvre	
Qualité globale de la mise en œuvre/exécution	

Les réalisations, l'efficacité, l'efficience, le S&E, la mise en œuvre/le contrôle et l'exécution, la pertinence sont notés sur une échelle de six points : 6=Très satisfaisant (TS), 5=Satisfaisant (S), 4=Moyennement satisfaisant (MS), 3=Moyennement insatisfaisant (MI), 2=Insatisfaisant (I), 1=Très insatisfaisant (TI).

La durabilité est notée sur une échelle de quatre points : 4=Probable (P), 3=Moyennement probable (MP), 2=Moyennement improbable (MI), 1=Improbable (I)

Évaluation des résultats	Note
Pertinence	
Efficacité	
Efficiences	
Note de la réalisation globale du projet	
Durabilité	Note
Ressources financières	
Socioéconomique	
Cadre institutionnel et de gouvernance	
Environnementale	
Probabilité globale de durabilité	

6. CALENDRIER

La durée totale de l'EF sera d'environ (25-30) jours ouvrables en moyenne) sur une période de six semaines à compter du (01 avril 2021). Le calendrier provisoire de l'EF est le suivant :

Calendrier	Activité
(18/03/2021)	Clôture des candidatures
(22/03/2021)	Sélection de l'équipe de l'EF
(24 et 25/03/2021)	Période de préparation de l'équipe de l'EF (communication des documents de projet)
(01-02/04/2021)	Examen des documents et préparation du rapport initial d'EF
(05/04 et 06/04/2021) 02 Jour	Finalisation et validation du rapport initial d'EF – au plus tard au début de la mission d'EF
(12-23/04/2021 (10 jours)	Mission d'EF : réunions avec les parties prenantes, entretiens, visites sur le terrain, etc.
(26/04/2021)	Réunion de clôture de la mission et présentation des premières constatations – au plus tôt à la fin de la mission d'EF
(27/04-07/05/2021)	Préparation du projet de rapport d'EF
(07/05/2021)	Diffusion du projet de rapport d'EF pour commentaires
(17/05/2021)	Intégration des commentaires sur le projet de rapport d'EF dans la piste d'audit et finalisation du rapport d'EF
(19/05/2021)	Préparation et publication de la réponse de la direction
(22/05/2021)	Atelier de clôture avec les parties prenantes (facultatif)
(24/05/2021)	Date prévue de l'achèvement de l'ensemble du processus d'EF

Il peut être envisagé une extension de délai si l'évaluation est retardée d'une manière ou d'une autre en raison de la COVID-19.

Les options pour les visites de sites doivent figurer dans le rapport initial d'EF.

7. ÉLÉMENTS LIVRABLES DANS LE CADRE DE L'EF

#	Élément livrable	Description	Calendrier	Responsabilités
1	Rapport initial d'EF	L'équipe de l'EF précise les objectifs, la méthodologie et le calendrier de l'EF	Au plus avant la mission d'EF : (24/04/2021)	L'équipe de l'EF soumet le rapport initial à l'unité mandatrice et à la direction du projet
2	Présentation	Premières constatations	Fin de la mission d'EF : (23/04/2021)	L'équipe de l'EF présente ses constatations à l'unité mandatrice et à la direction du projet
3	Projet de rapport d'EF	Projet de rapport complet conformément aux directives de l'Annexe C des TdR) avec les annexes	Dans la semaine suivant la fin de la mission d'EF : (07/05/2021)	L'équipe de l'EF soumet le projet de rapport à l'unité mandatrice ; il est ensuite révisé par le CTR, l'unité coordinatrice du projet et le PFO FEM
4	Rapport final d'EF* dans les deux versions Française et Anglaise + piste d'audit	Rapport final révisé et piste d'audit de l'EF dans laquelle l'EF détaille comment il a été donné suite (ou non) aux commentaires reçus dans le rapport final d'EF (voir le modèle en Annexe H des TdR)	Dans la semaine suivant la réception des commentaires sur le projet de rapport : (24/05/2021)	L'équipe de l'EF soumet les deux documents à l'unité mandatrice

*Tous les rapports finaux d'EF seront soumis à une analyse de la qualité effectuée par le Bureau indépendant d'évaluation (BIE) du PNUD. Pour plus de détails sur l'analyse qualité des évaluations décentralisées réalisée par le BIE, veuillez consulter la section 6 du Guide d'évaluation du PNUD².

8. DISPOSITIONS RELATIVES À L'EF

La responsabilité principale de gérer l'EF incombe à l'unité mandatrice. L'unité mandatrice de ce projet d'EF est le bureau de pays du PNUD.

L'unité mandatrice passera un contrat avec les évaluateurs et s'assurera que l'équipe de l'EF disposera en temps utile des indemnités journalières et des facilités de voyage dans le pays. L'équipe projet sera chargée de prendre contact avec l'équipe de l'EF afin de lui fournir tous les documents nécessaires, préparer les entretiens avec les parties prenantes et organiser les visites sur le terrain.

L'unité mandatrice et l'équipe du projet apporte le soutien pour l'organisation de réunions virtuelles/à distance en cas de besoin. L'unité mandatrice devra fournir une liste mise à jour des parties prenantes et de leurs coordonnées (téléphone et courriel) à l'équipe du projet.

9. Profil de L'évaluateur

2 Disponible sur : <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/French/section-6.shtml>

Un évaluateur indépendant conduira l'EF – ayant l'expérience des projets et des évaluations dans d'autres régions. L'évaluateur sera responsable de la conception générale et de la rédaction du rapport d'EF et de la coordination de la mission. L'expert(e) sera chargé(e) d'évaluer les tendances naissantes concernant les cadres réglementaires, les allocations budgétaires, le renforcement des capacités, de travailler avec l'équipe projet pour définir l'itinéraire de la mission d'EF, etc.).

L'évaluateur ne peut pas avoir participé à la préparation, la formulation, et/ou la mise en œuvre du projet (y compris la rédaction du Document de projet), ne doit pas avoir effectué l'évaluation de ce projet et ne doit pas avoir de conflit d'intérêts en relation avec les activités liées au projet.

L'évaluateur sera sélectionné sur la base des compétences suivantes :

1/ Expert (e) International (e)

Éducation

- Diplôme master en techniques d'évaluation/Environnement/Développement Durable ou tout autre domaine étroitement lié ;

Expérience

- Expérience récente dans les méthodologies d'évaluation de la gestion axée sur les résultats ;
- Expérience dans l'application d'indicateurs SMART et dans le remaniement ou la validation des scénarios de départ ;
- Compétences dans le domaine de la biodiversité, la conservation et utilisation durable de la biodiversité, les paiements pour les services écosystémiques ;
- Expérience professionnelle dans l'évaluation des projets ;
- Expérience professionnelle d'au moins 10 ans dans l'évaluation des projets de développement ;
- Compréhension avérée des questions liées au genre dans le domaine de conservation et utilisation durable de la biodiversité ;
- Excellente aptitude à la communication ;
- Compétences avérées en matière d'analyse ;
- Une expérience dans l'évaluation/la révision de projet dans le système des Nations Unies sera considérée comme un atout.
- Une expérience dans la mise en œuvre d'évaluations à distance sera considérée comme un atout.
- Langue : Maîtrise de l'anglais et le français à l'écrit et à l'oral

10. CODE DE DÉONTOLOGIE DE L'ÉVALUATEUR

L'équipe de l'EF est tenue de respecter les normes éthiques les plus élevées et de signer un code de conduite à l'acceptation de la mission. Cette évaluation sera menée conformément aux principes énoncés dans les « Directives éthiques pour l'évaluation » du GNUE. L'évaluateur doit protéger les droits et la confidentialité des informateurs, des personnes interrogées et des parties prenantes en prenant des mesures pour assurer le respect des codes juridiques et autres codes pertinents régissant la collecte et la communication des données. L'évaluateur doit également assurer la sécurité des informations collectées avant et après l'évaluation et respecter des protocoles visant à garantir l'anonymat et la confidentialité des sources

d'information lorsque cela est prévu. Par ailleurs, les informations et les données recueillies dans le cadre du processus d'évaluation doivent être utilisées uniquement pour l'évaluation et non à d'autres fins sans l'autorisation expresse du PNUD et de ses partenaires.

11. MODALITÉS DE PAIEMENT

- Versement de 20 % du paiement après la présentation satisfaisante de la version finale du rapport initial d'EF et après approbation de l'unité mandatrice
- Versement de 40 % du paiement après la présentation satisfaisante du projet de rapport d'EF à l'unité mandatrice
- Versement de 40 % du paiement après la présentation satisfaisante du rapport final d'EF et après approbation de l'unité mandatrice et du CTR (via les signatures sur le formulaire d'approbation du rapport d'EF), et une fois soumise la piste d'audit de l'EF

Critères à remplir pour émettre le paiement final de 40 %³

- Le rapport final d'EF comprend toutes les exigences énoncées dans les TdR de l'EF et suit les directives relatives à l'EF.
- Le rapport final d'EF est rédigé clairement, organisé de façon logique et il est spécifique au projet concerné (le texte n'a pas été copié et collé à partir d'autres rapports d'évaluation à mi-parcours).
- La piste d'audit inclut les réponses et les justifications de tous les commentaires recensés.

En raison de la situation actuelle et des implications de la COVID-19, un paiement partiel peut être envisagé à hauteur du temps investi dans la production du livrable dont il n'a pu assurer la fourniture complète en raison de circonstances échappant à son contrôle.

12. ANNEXES DES TDR

Liste des annexes

- Annexe A des TdR : Cadre logique du projet/de résultats
- Annexe B des TdR : Dossier d'informations sur le projet, soumis à l'examen de l'équipe de l'EF
- Annexe C des TdR : Contenu du rapport d'EF
- Annexe D des TdR : Modèle de matrice de critères d'évaluation
- Annexe E des TdR : Code de conduite du GNUE applicable aux évaluateurs
- Annexe F des TdR : Échelles de notation de l'EF
- Annexe G des TdR : Formulaire d'approbation du rapport d'EF
- Annexe H des TdR : Piste d'audit de l'EF

Annex II: Itinéraire de la mission d'EF, y compris le résumé des visites sur le terrain

Dans le cadre de la mission d'évaluation du projet EC-SM, une visite de terrain a été organisée par l'équipe d'évaluateurs, accompagnée du Coordonnateur national du projet, au site d'intervention pilote dudit projet à la Commune d'Argana.

- Date de la visite : lundi 27 septembre 2021
- Lieu de la visite : Inzerki
- Objectif de la visite :
 - (i) Échanger avec les bénéficiaires locaux du projet et recueillir leur témoignage et perception sur les activités réalisées ;
 - (ii) Visiter les lieux d'introduction des PSE.
- Déroulement de la visite :

12:00 – 13:00	- Échange avec le Président de l'Association de Taddert Inzerki sur le projet EC-SM
13:00 – 14:00	- Visite de reconnaissance de la zone pilote d'intervention du projet - Visite du rucher d'Inzekri - Visite des terrassettes réalisées par les populations à Inzerki; - Visite des équipements hydrauliques construits avec l'appui du PMF-FEM pour appuyer la mise en œuvre du modèle de PSE des PAM à Inzerki (un puits, un bassin de stockage d'eau, une motopompe et des panneaux solaires) dédiés à l'irrigation du modèle PSE des PAM
14:30 – 15:30	- Réunion d'échange avec les membres de l'Association Taddart Inzekri
15:30 – 16:00	- Visite du modèle de PSE de domestication des Plantes Aromatiques et Médicinales (PAM) réalisé par l'Association Taddart Inzekri, dans le cadre d'un contrat signé avec la société Corchid à Agadir (société spécialisée dans l'export des PAM), avec l'appui technique du projet EC-SM (accompagnement dans le montage du PSE) et le soutien financier du PMF-FEM pour la mise en œuvre.

Annex III: List of interviewed persons

Name	Organisation / Title	Mode of consultation	Date
HADDOUCH, Moha	Coordonnateur national Projet EC-S-M, Agadir, Maroc	Entretien en présentiel	13.09.2021
SABRI, Abdelhakim	Président Réseau du Développement du Tourisme Rural (RDTR), Agadir, Maroc	Visioconférence	13.09.2021
ABOUTAYAB, Hassan	Président-Délégué ASMEL RBA Ecolabel, Agadir, Maroc		13.09.2021
MEZGAR, Mohamed	Directeur National du Projet EC-SM, Agadir, Maroc	Réunion téléphonique	14.09.2021
AFKER, Abdelaziz	Direction régionale des eaux et forêts du Sud-Ouest (DREFSO), Agadir, Maroc	Visioconférence	14.09.2021
BENHJIB, Rahal ELGHAZI, Ouïam	Agence de développement agricole (ADA), Rabat, Maroc	Visioconférence	15.09.2021
BAROUD, Abdellah BRIM, Brahim	Direction régionale de l'agriculture de Souss-Massa, Agadir, Maroc	Visioconférence	21.09.2021
DANOUEANE, Mustapha	Trésorier ASMEL / Professionnel PAM, Agadir, Maroc	Visioconférence	17.09.2021
AITLHAJ, Abderrahman IBNZYN, Nourredine	Agence nationale pour le développement des zones oasiennes et de l'arganier (ADZOA), Agadir, Maroc	Visioconférence	20.09.2021
NADIM, Amal	Cheffe de l'Unité Environnement et Changement climatique Programme des Nations unies pour le développement (PNUD), Rabat, Maroc	Visioconférence	29.09.2021 15.10.2021
AGNAO, Abdellah	ARAPIS, Aït Melloul, Maroc	Réunion en présentiel au site de l'association à Ait Melloul	29.09.2021
CHATOUI, Brahim	Association Taddert Inzerki, Inzerki, Maroc	Visite de terrain à Argana (rucher d'Argana) et réunion en présentiel	27.09.2021
MESSENA, GHM	Consultant, Italie	Visioconférence	3.10.2021
DE SOYE, Yves	Conseiller Technique Régional (CTR) Programme des Nations unies pour le Développement (PNUD), Bruxelles, Belgique	Visioconférence	13.10.2021

Annex IV: List of documents reviewed

1	Formulaire d'identification de projet (FIP)
2	Plan de lancement du PNUD
3	Document de projet final PNUD-FEM, avec toutes les annexes
4	Demande d'approbation du directeur
5	Procédure de détection des risques environnementaux et sociaux du PNUD (PDRES) et plans de gestion connexes (le cas échéant)
6	Rapport de l'atelier initial/ (PV du CoPil)
7	Rapport d'évaluation à mi-parcours et réponse de la direction aux recommandations
8	Tous les rapports sur la mise en œuvre des projets (RMP)
9	Rapports d'avancement (trimestriels, semestriels ou annuels, avec les plans de travail et les rapports financiers associés)
10	Rapports de mission de contrôle
11	Procès-verbaux des réunions du comité directeur du projet et d'autres réunions (par ex. réunions du Comité d'examen des projets)
12	Outils de suivi du FEM (de l'approbation du directeur, à mi-parcours et durant la phase finale du projet)
13	Indicateurs de base FEM/FPMA/FSCC (à partir du FIP, de l'approbation du directeur, à mi-parcours et durant la phase finale du projet) ; seulement pour les projets FEM-6 et FEM-7
14	Données financières, y compris les dépenses réelles par résultat et les coûts de gestion, y compris la documentation de toute révision budgétaire majeure
15	Données sur le cofinancement avec les contributions prévues et réelles, ventilées par type de cofinancement, par source et selon que la contribution est considérée comme un investissement mobilisé ou des dépenses de fonctionnement
16	Rapports d'audit
17	Versions électroniques des produits du projet (brochures, manuels, rapports techniques, articles, etc.)
18	Exemples de supports de communication relatifs au projet
19	Liste récapitulative des réunions formelles, ateliers, etc. organisés, avec la date, le lieu, le sujet et le nombre de participants
20	Toute donnée de suivi socioéconomique pertinente, comme les revenus / les niveaux d'emploi moyens des parties prenantes dans la zone cible, l'évolution des revenus liés aux activités du projet
21	Liste de contrats et d'achats d'articles de plus de 5 000 dollars (organisations ou entreprises ayant conclu un contrat pour les produits du projet, sauf en cas d'information confidentielle)
22	Liste de projets/initiatives contribuant aux objectifs du projet approuvés/lancés après l'approbation du projet par le FEM (c'est-à-dire tout résultat à effet de levier ou de catalyseur)
23	Données sur l'activité pertinente du site Internet du projet – par exemple, le nombre de visiteurs uniques par mois, le nombre de pages consultées, etc. sur la période concernée (si elles sont disponibles)
24	Document de programme pays du PNUD (DPP)
25	Liste/carte des sites du projet, en précisant ceux pour lesquels des visites sont proposées
26	Liste et coordonnées du personnel du projet, des principales parties prenantes, notamment des membres du conseil du projet, le CTR, les membres de l'équipe projet et les autres partenaires à consulter
27	Éléments livrables du projet qui fournissent des preuves documentaires de la progression vers la réalisation du projet

Annex V: Matrix of evaluation questions

Questions d'évaluation	Indicateurs	Sources	Méthodologie
PERTINENCE			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM est-il adapté aux besoins des bénéficiaires finaux des produits et activités du projet (individus, groupes, organisations) ?</i>	Prise en compte par le projet EC-SM des besoins des bénéficiaires finaux / les ayants droits (individus, groupes communautaires, organisations)	Consultation des principales parties prenantes clés (groupes de discussion et entretiens individuels)	Revue documentaire Consultations avec les bénéficiaires finaux / les ayants droits des produits et activités du projet EC-SM Visites sur le terrain
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM est-il pertinent au regard des défis et priorités en matière d'environnement développement au Maroc ?</i>	Alignement du projet EC-SM sur les stratégies globales et sectorielles en matière d'environnement et de développement durable	Stratégies et politiques publiques du Maroc en matière d'environnement et de développement durable (agriculture, tourisme, etc.)	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec des personnes ressources qualifiées
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM s'accorde-t-il aux principaux objectifs du domaine focal du FEM ?</i>	Niveau d'adéquation entre les objectifs du projet EC-SM et les priorités stratégiques du FEM (y compris l'alignement des indicateurs pertinents du domaine focal)	Documents stratégiques prioritaires du FEM pour la période d'approbation du projet EC-SM Documents stratégiques prioritaires actuels du FEM	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec des personnes ressources qualifiées
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM était-il lié et conforme aux priorités et stratégies du PNUD pour le Maroc ?</i>	Niveau d'adéquation entre les objectifs et la conception du projet EC-SM avec l'UNDAF et le CPD	Documents du programme-cadre pays du PNUD pour le Maroc (UNDAF et Plan stratégique)	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec des personnes ressources qualifiées
CONCEPTION ET EXECUTION			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM est-il conçu de manière à répondre aux priorités/besoins correspondants (bénéficiaires/région SM/pays) ?</i>	Validité de la conception du projet pour l'atteinte de ses objectifs	ProDoc et autres documents pertinents du projet Entretiens avec des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec l'équipe du projet Analyse descriptive de la validité de la conception du projet
<i>Dans quelle mesure l'appui technique du PNUD à la mise en œuvre a-t-il été régulier, fonctionnel et efficace ?</i>	Qualité de l'exécution de l'appui du PNUD au projet EC-SM	Idem	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec l'équipe du projet Analyse descriptive de la qualité de l'appui du PNUD à la mise en œuvre du projet EC-SM

<i>Dans quelle mesure les différentes fonctions de l'Agence de la mise en œuvre (ADA) ont-elles été assurées régulièrement et efficacement ?</i>	Degré d'appropriation du projet par l'ADA et sa bonne exécution par la DRA	Idem	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec l'équipe du projet Analyse descriptive du contexte de la mise en œuvre du projet EC-SM
COHERENCE			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le dispositif interne de gouvernance et les objectifs du projet EC-SM ont-ils été adéquats ?</i>	Correspondance entre les différents objectifs et la coordination institutionnelle du projet EC-SM	ProDoc et autres documents pertinents Entretiens avec des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec l'équipe du projet Analyse descriptive de la cohérence interne du projet EC-SM
<i>Le projet EC-SM s'accorde-t-il avec d'autres projets et programmes dans le domaine de l'utilisation durable de l'agro-biodiversité au Maroc ?</i>	Complémentarité avec d'autres interventions connexes au Maroc	Idem En plus, des documents des interventions connexes	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec l'équipe du projet Analyse comparative de la complémentarité des interventions avec le projet EC-SM
EFFICACITE			
<i>Dans quelle mesure les objectifs et les résultats escomptés du projet EC-SM ont été atteints, ou sont en train de l'être ?</i>	État de réalisation des activités et des résultats (directs, organisationnels et institutionnels) par rapport aux indicateurs du projet EC-SM	ProDoc et autres documents pertinents du projet Parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec l'équipe du projet Analyse des réalisations du projet EC-SM (directs, organisationnels et institutionnels)
<i>Y-a-t-il des résultats inattendus du projet EC-SM ?</i>	Importance et pertinence des résultats inattendus	Idem	Revue documentaire Entretiens avec l'équipe du projet Analyse descriptive des résultats du projet EC-SM
<i>Quel est le degré de réalisation globale du projet EC-SM ?</i>	Efficacité globale des réalisations	Idem	Analyse approfondie qualitative et quantitative des résultats basée sur les indicateurs du projet EC-SM
EFFICIENCE			

<i>Dans quelle mesure les ressources (financières, humaines, temporelles, techniques, matérielles, etc.) ont-elles été allouées de façon optimale afin d'aboutir aux résultats escomptés ?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financement et cofinancement du projet - Taux d'exécution - Conformité de l'utilisation des ressources financières avec les normes et standards nationaux et internationaux - Additionnalité du FEM 	ProDoc (budget), rapports financiers/révisions du budget du projet rapports combinés de dépenses	<p>Analyse du budget</p> <p>Analyse d'allocation des ressources</p> <p>Analyse coût-bénéfices</p> <p>Analyse Coût-efficacité</p>
<i>Dans quelle mesure le pilotage, la coordination interne et externe, le suivi-évaluation de la performance et la communication du projet EC-SM ont-ils été assurés de façon efficace ?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - État d'avancement de l'exécution - Respect du calendrier et des délais 	ProDoc, plans de travail annuels, rapports périodiques d'activités	Analyse descriptive de l'exécution du cycle du projet
<i>Dans quelle mesure le système de S&E a-t-il été bien conçu, fonctionnel et efficace ?</i>	S&E (conception à l'entrée, mise en œuvre et évaluation globale)	ProDoc, CRS, revues internes, rapports annuels, RMA, PIR, évaluation à mi-parcours (2017)	Analyse descriptive du système de S&E du projet
DURABILITE			
<i>Dans quelle mesure les bénéfices nets du projet EC-SM seront durables ou sont susceptibles de perdurer ?</i>	Identification des capacités requises pour assurer les bénéfices nets du projet EC-SM	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Analyse descriptive des capacités nécessaires à la continuité des bénéfices nets du projet
<i>Dans quelle mesure existe-t-il des risques financiers, institutionnels, sociopolitiques et / ou environnementaux au maintien des bénéfices nets du projet EC-SM à long terme ?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Durabilité financière, sociopolitique, du cadre institutionnel et de la gouvernance, environnementale - Probabilité globale de durabilité 	Idem	Analyse descriptive des capacités nécessaires à la continuité des bénéfices nets du projet EC-SM
IMPACT			
<i>Existe-t-il des indications que le projet EC-SM a contribué à (ou permis de) progresser vers une réduction des pressions exercées sur l'environnement et/ou une amélioration de l'état écologique dans la région SM ?</i>	Facteurs contribuant ou entravant le progrès vers l'impact	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	<p>Revue documentaire</p> <p>Analyse contributive au progrès vers l'impact</p>
<i>Comment le projet EC-SM a-t-il été impacté par le COVID-19 et</i>	Mesures du confinement prises	Information pertinente du projet EC-SM disponible	Analyse contextuelle

<i>quelles mesures ont été prises pour en atténuer ses effets ?</i>			
QUESTIONS TRANSVERSALES			
EGALITE DES SEXES ET AUTONOMISATION DES FEMMES			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM a-t-il intégré dans ses actions la question de l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes ?</i>	Degré et modalités pratiques de l'intégration de l'égalité des sexes et de l'autonomisation des femmes	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Analyse contributive
OBJECTIFS DE DEVELOPPEMENT DURABLE			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM a-t-il contribué à la réalisation des objectifs de développement durables, particulièrement les ODD 12 et 15 ?</i>	Adéquation des objectifs du projet EC-SM et les ODD 12 et 15	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Analyse contributive
REDUCTION DE LA PAUVRETE			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM a-t-il contribué (ou devrait) à réduire la pauvreté des bénéficiaires finaux des activités du projet ?</i>	Importance des ressources financières générées	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Analyse contributive
ATTENUATIONS DES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM a-t-il contribué à l'atténuation des changements climatiques dans la région SM ?</i>	Mesures d'atténuation envisagées	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Analyse contributive
GESTION POUR LES RESULTATS DE DEVELOPPEMENT			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM a appuyé le renforcement des capacités en gestion axée sur les résultats de développement ?</i>	Capacités techniques à développer des systèmes de PSE et l'utilisation durable de la biodiversité agricole	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Analyse descriptive

GESTION DES CONNAISSANCES			
<i>Dans quelle mesure le projet EC-SM a-t-il mis en place un processus de gestion des connaissances dans le domaine de l'économie circulaire au Maroc ?</i>	Effectivité et qualité du processus de gestion des connaissances dans le domaine de l'économie circulaire	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Revue documentaire Analyse descriptive
LEÇONS APPRISES			
<i>Quels sont les facteurs qui ont influencé positivement ou négativement l'atteinte des résultats attendus du projet EC-SM ?</i>	Identification des facteurs contribuant ou entravant le progrès vers l'impact et les bénéfices durables du projet EC-SM	ProDoc, rapport de l'évaluation à mi-parcours (2017), rapport de recadrage (2018), revues internes, autres documents pertinents et consultations des parties prenantes clés	Analyse descriptive et contributive

Annex VI: Questionnaire used and summaries of responses

Questionnaire et résumés des réponses	
Date de l'entretien	
Consentement – Confidentialité	
<p>Présentation de la mission Je m'appelle Ahmed Bencheikh, et je travaille avec mon collègue M. Rachid Benabbou pour le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD, Maroc) sur l'évaluation finale projet Economie circulaire dans la région Souss Massa (EC-SM).</p> <p>Prière de noter que l'objectif d'une évaluation finale est d'aider le PNUD, le FEM et leurs partenaires d'exécution et institutionnels d'apprendre sur les succès ainsi que sur les défis qui pourraient nécessiter une révision ou une réflexion plus approfondie sur les interventions en matière de développement durable au Maroc et dans le monde.</p> <p>Si vous êtes d'accord, j'aimerais m'entretenir avec vous pendant environ 40 à 50 minutes au sujet de votre participation aux activités du projet EC-SM.</p> <p>Consentement Votre participation dans cette mission d'évaluation est volontaire.</p> <p>Vous avez le droit DE NE PAS participer.</p> <p>Vous pouvez choisir de ne pas répondre à n'importe quelle question, et vous pouvez arrêter de participer à tout moment.</p> <p>Il n'y a pas de risque ni d'avantage pour vous si vous décidez de participer, mais votre participation est très importante pour cette étude. C'est une partie d'un grand effort par le MCC et l'équipe de cette étude pour fournir les informations pertinentes qui peuvent améliorer l'enseignement secondaire au Maroc.</p> <p>Anonymat et confidentialité Vos réponses seront strictement anonymes. Votre nom n'apparaîtra nulle part et il ne sera aucunement possible de savoir de quelle manière vous avez répondu.</p> <p>A Prière de s'assurer que toutes les informations recueillies au cours de cet entrevue seront codifiées confidentiellement.</p> <p>Questions Avez-vous des questions avant de commencer ?</p> <p>Acceptez-vous de participer à cette étude d'évaluation ?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Oui</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Non</p>	
Durée de l'entretien	40 – 50 mn
QUESTIONS / RESUMES DES REPONSES	
<p>Question 1. Comment avez-vous connu le projet EC-SM ?</p>	
<p>Question 2. Quelle l'importance du projet EC-SM pour la région SM et pour le Maroc ?</p>	

Réponses

Code 1

Le projet EC-PSE a apporté un concept novateur et se réjouit de ses réalisations particulièrement le renforcement des capacités auquel ont bénéficié ses membres.

Code 2

Le concept apporté par le projet est novateur et a permis de sensibiliser les PP que les efforts de conservation de l'écosystème ont une valeur/coût.

Le projet est pertinent et vise l'impact des PSE par le jumelage de la conservation et le développement, ce qui permettra un changement de position par la population. Ceci demande le temps qui dépasse celui du projet pour la compréhension, l'adhésion des acteurs et la gestion du processus ainsi que le coût à mobiliser pour opérationnaliser ces PSE.

Code 3

Il s'agit d'un premier projet du genre sur le PSE mis en œuvre par l'ADA et revêt un caractère novateur et pilote au Maroc. En tenant compte du caractère novateur dudit projet et du contexte de mise en œuvre, les réalisations sont appréciées et particulièrement celles liées au renforcement des capacités des parties prenantes et considérées des acquis et la création de la commission de la gestion la gestion de l'écolabel de la RBA.

Pour le co-financement, tel que prévu dans le pro doc, un portefeuille de projets a été réalisé et financés par l'ADA dans le cadre du PMV (pilier 2) en appui au projet EC-PSE durant la période allant de 2014 à 2019. Le montant de ce financement dépasse celui prévu initialement.

Code 4

L'objectif du projet cadre avec celui stratégique de l'ANDZOA. Dans ce cadre, les activités réalisées par l'ANDZOA dont la zone du projet et qu'elle considéré comme outils économiques et ont abouti de manière indirecte à la démonstration des modèles de PSE et à l'appui de la filière de l'arganier.

Pour le co-financement, tel que prévu dans le pro doc, un programme développé et mis en œuvre a par l'ANDZOA au niveau de la RBA en appui au projet EC-PSE durant la période allant de 2014 à 2019. Le montant de ce financement dépasse celui prévu initialement.

(Code 5

Le projet EC-SM constitue un appui important pour le tourisme rural / de montagne dans la région.

Notre implication a bénéficié d'un appui spécifique (PNUD) : circuit / voyage carbone.

Programme de travail : (i) traçage du circuit, (ii) habillage du circuit , actions respect de la nature, (iii) promotion commerciale.

Code 6

Participation large et variété des parties prenantes associées au projet EC-SM.

Question 3.

Quel est votre avis sur l'approche et outils du projet EC-SM ?

Réponses

Code 3

Anticipation par le projet par rapport à ce qu'est prévue par la nouvelle stratégie forestière : un plan de gestion de la forêt comme composante dans le Plan d'action communal d'Argana conçu.

Travail est pilote à l'échelle de la commune d'Argana et très utile pour la période post projet et permettra d'outiller le comité communal des Forêts qui devrait être mis en place à Argana.

Chaque commune mettra en place, dans le cadre de cette nouvelle stratégie forestière, un comité communal des Forêts constitué de la Commune, des Organisations de Développement Forestier (associations des ayants droits, coopératives, association des chasseurs, de pêche, de mise en défens, des parcours et d'argan) et les Eaux et Forêts. Ce comité discute la planification *avec la commune et négocie un plan de gestion concertée territorial*.

Code 3

Le PSE est un mécanisme incitatif qui se réfère à diverses modalités selon lesquelles les bénéficiaires des services écosystémiques doivent rembourser les prestataires de ces services pour assurer leur pérennité. Elle estime que ce mécanisme couplé à des pratiques et des méthodes d'aménagement et de gestion des ressources naturelles peuvent constituer les prérequis indispensables pour la reconstitution et la conservation de la forêt d'arganier.

Code 5

Concept nouveau qui a demandé beaucoup de temps pour sa compréhension et assimilation de l'approche du PSE.

Code 6

Concept nouveau.

Question 4.

Selon vous, quelles sont les principales réussites du projet EC-SM ? Et quelle leur portée ?

Réponses

Code 1

Le renforcement des capacités a permis aux opérateurs d'avoir une compréhension du concept des PSE;

La création de l'ASMEL et le renforcement des capacités de ses membres considéré comme un premier dans le processus de développement et l'opérationnalisation des PSE;

Le cahier des charges qui constitue le référentiel pour gérer la certification par l'ASMEL est élaboré;

Plaidoyer pour l'écolabel en tant que levier pour préserver la biosphère avec l'ambition d'élargir le nombre de produits à labéliser;

Le potentiel offert par le commerce digital écologique pour la commercialisation des produits issus des PSE a été identifié comme alternatif durant pendant la période de confinement et restriction du déplacement pour faire face au COVID 19.

Code 3

A l'issue de la création de la commission de l'éco labélisation en mi-juin 2021, sur décision de M. le Ministre en mi-juin 2021, la Direction produits du terroir au niveau de l'ADA est responsable de la labélisation (standards RBA) assure le suivi de cette composante du projet selon les trois prochaines étapes suivantes : (i) l'enregistrement de l'éco-label auprès de l'OMPIC, (ii) a réception et le traitement des demandes de certification des opérateurs identifiés, et (iii) le lancement de la certification.

Code 4

L'ANDZOA a intégré dans ses programmes et projets la dimension renforcement et durabilité des services écosystémiques de l'arganeraie. A ce titre et pour honorer ses engagements vis-à-vis du PEC- SM en matière de cofinancement prévu, l'ANDZOA a mobilisé un financement de 50 M \$ pour la mise en œuvre du projet « Développement de l'agriculture en Zones Vulnérables » DARED cofinancé par le Fonds Vert pour le Climat et dont une de ses trois composantes consistait en la plantation de l'agriculture et la construction des ouvrages de collecte des eaux pluviales. Le taux de déboursement réalisé, durant la période allant de 2014-2021, s'élève à 63%.

Code 5

Partenariat avec les associations / coopératives locales.

Réflexion sur la réduction du carbone.

Question 5.

Quels ont été les défis que le projet EC-SM a rencontré au cours de sa mise en œuvre ?

Réponses

Code 1

La commission de l'écolabel est créée mais n'est pas encore opérationnelle pour entamer les étapes prévues au titre de l'écolabel;

Retard dans l'enregistrement et la reconnaissance du label;

La promotion de l'écolabel n'a pas été entamée;

Malgré l'effort déployé et la dynamique créée, le projet est arrivé à sa fin sans que les vingtaines d'opérateurs identifiés soient labélisés.

Code 3

La durabilité des actions lancées par le projet et leur la répliation constituent un défis pour l'ADA et l'ensemble des partenaires concernés. A ce titre et à l'issue des résultats de l'évaluation à mi-parcours et du recadrage du projet, une commission a été instaurée au niveau de l'ADA pour renforcer le suivi dudit projet et la coordination institutionnelle a été renforcée.

Code 6

Trop ambitieux avec de de nombreuses exigences qui ont rendu sa mise en œuvre difficile

Recadrage de 2018: changement de schéma et un nouveau départ.

Question 6.

Selon vous, quelles sont les principales leçons à tirer de l'expérience du projet EC-SM ?

Réponses

Code 1

La compréhension du concept par les parties prenantes et leur adhésion a demandé du temps et dépasse la période du projet qui aurait dû être programmée sur une durée au moins de 10 ans.

Code 3

La compréhension et l'adhésion des parties prenantes au concept du PSE ont demandé un temps ayant impacté l'agenda d'exécution du projet. Ce temps dédié à ce processus n'a pas été prévu lors de la planification du projet mais il était nécessaire pour la mise en synergie et l'appropriation par les partenaires concernés.

Code 4

Le PSE est un concept transformateur dans le milieu économique au profit des bénéficiaires et nécessite plus de temps pour convaincre les décideurs sur les questions de réglementation des PSE pour la durabilité de leur opérationnalisation.

Code 5

Fin du projet, le début d'un nouveau programme de consolidation/capitaliser sur l'existant (voir comment continuer)

Question 7.

Au terme de cet entretien, quelle recommandation faite vous à l'équipe d'évaluation ?

Réponses

Code 1

Accompagnement post-projet

Opérationnaliser la commission de l'écolabel;

Développer le marketing digital et les expositions avec l'appui des sociétés spécialisées;

Accélérer la concrétisation de la labélisation et doter l'ASMEL d'un budget pour accompagner les opérateurs dans la certification des produits des PSE et lancer leur commercialisation.

Code 2

Mettre en valeur le PSE conçu à Argana et le lier au marché pour son opérationnalisation;

Engager la mise en œuvre du plan de gestion de la forêt au niveau d'Argana par la commune et dans le cadre d'un partenariat multi acteurs;

Répliquer le modèle pilote du PSE conçu à dans d'autres contextes au niveau de la RBA ayant leurs propres caractéristiques et particularités différentes de celles d'Argana;

Impliquer le Conseil régional de Sous Massa en tant qu'organe fédérateur des communes et des autres acteurs pour la phase post projet;

Capitaliser les acquis du projet et promouvoir son extension à d'autres zones au niveau de la RBA dans le cadre de développement rural en ciblant celles touchées par l'exode rural

Code 4

- Continuer et poursuivre le plaidoyer initié par le projet avec l'ensemble des parties prenantes (acteurs institutionnels, fournisseurs et acheteurs des SE) et vulgariser davantage le concept de ce nouveau marché pour percevoir les intérêts économique et écologique de son opérationnalisation;
- Assurer la gouvernance de la gestion du mécanisme entre acheteurs et producteurs/fournisseurs des SE pour mener à bien le travail sur la biosphère de l'arganier ;
- Apporter un appui à la commission de l'écolabel, créée sur décision de M. le Ministre, pour qu'elle puisse accomplir sa mission durant la phase post projet ;
- Réussir l'opérationnalisation du modèle pilote conçu pour Argana et développer d'autres pilote représentatif de la RBA ;
- Appréhender les coûts supplémentaires dédiés aux services écosystémiques qui peuvent cerner les professionnels agricoles et forestiers.

Code 5

Une feuille de route avec une prise en charge niveau régional (Conseil régional)

Annex VII: TE rating scales

Annex VIII: Signed acceptance form of the evaluation consultant's code of conduct

Les évaluateurs/consultants :

1. Doivent présenter des informations complètes et équitables dans leur évaluation des forces et des faiblesses afin que les décisions ou les mesures prises soient bien fondées.
2. Doivent divulguer l'ensemble des conclusions d'évaluation, ainsi que les informations sur leurs limites et les mettre à disposition de tous ceux concernés par l'évaluation et qui sont légalement habilités à recevoir les résultats.
3. Doivent protéger l'anonymat et la confidentialité à laquelle ont droit les personnes qui leur communiquent des informations. Les évaluateurs doivent accorder un délai suffisant, réduire au maximum les pertes de temps et respecter le droit des personnes à ne pas s'engager. Les évaluateurs doivent respecter le droit des personnes à fournir des renseignements en toute confidentialité et s'assurer que les informations dites sensibles ne permettent pas de remonter jusqu'à leur source. Les évaluateurs n'ont pas à évaluer les individus et doivent maintenir un équilibre entre l'évaluation des fonctions de gestion et ce principe général.
4. Découvrent parfois des éléments de preuve faisant état d'actes répréhensibles pendant qu'ils mènent des évaluations. Ces cas doivent être signalés de manière confidentielle aux autorités compétentes chargées d'enquêter sur la question. Ils doivent consulter d'autres entités compétentes en matière de supervision lorsqu'il y a le moindre doute à savoir s'il y a lieu de signaler des questions, et comment le faire.
5. Doivent être attentifs aux croyances, aux us et coutumes et faire preuve d'intégrité et d'honnêteté dans leurs relations avec toutes les parties prenantes. Conformément à la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme, les évaluateurs doivent être attentifs aux problèmes de discrimination ainsi que de disparité entre les sexes, et s'en préoccuper. Les évaluateurs doivent éviter tout ce qui pourrait offenser la dignité ou le respect de soi-même des personnes avec lesquelles ils entrent en contact durant une évaluation. Sachant qu'une évaluation peut avoir des répercussions négatives sur les intérêts de certaines parties prenantes, les évaluateurs doivent réaliser l'évaluation et en faire connaître l'objet et les résultats d'une façon qui respecte absolument la dignité et le sentiment de respect de soi-même des parties prenantes.
6. Sont responsables de leur performance et de ce qui en découle. Les évaluateurs doivent savoir présenter par écrit oralement, de manière claire, précise et honnête, l'évaluation, les limites de celle-ci, les constatations et les recommandations.
7. Doivent respecter des procédures comptables reconnues et faire preuve de prudence dans l'utilisation des ressources de l'évaluation.
8. Doivent veiller à ce que l'indépendance de jugement soit maintenue et que les conclusions et recommandations de l'évaluation soient présentées de manière indépendante.
9. Doivent confirmer qu'ils n'ont pas participé à la conception et à l'exécution du projet évalué, ni à aucune activité de conseil concernant, et qu'ils n'ont pas effectué l'évaluation à mi-parcours du projet.

Formulaire d'accord avec le Consultant chargé de l'évaluation

Accord pour le respect du Code de conduite du système des Nations Unies en matière d'évaluation :

Nom de l'évaluateur : BENCHEIKH Ahmed, chef d'équipe

Nom de l'Organisation de conseils (le cas échéant) : Evolva Development, Rabat, Maroc

Je confirme avoir reçu et compris le Code de conduite des Nations Unies en matière d'évaluation et je m'engage à le

respecter. Signé à Raba (Maroc), le 29 novembre 2021 (Date)



Signature :

Annex IX: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Annex X: Signed TE report approval form