



6/6/2021

Final Evaluation

Final Report

*UNDP BES-NET Project “Support to
BES-Net for the Facilitation of
Knowledge Management for the
Effective Management of
Biodiversity and Ecosystems for
Improved Livelihoods and Poverty
Reduction”*

Final Evaluation Report
Evaluation Period: 2016-2020
Date of submitting Final Report: June 2021
Independent Evaluator: Amal Aldababseh
Commissioning Unit: UNDP

Acknowledgements

The Final Evaluation Consultant would like to acknowledge the support of the UNDP, the Project Team, and the Project stakeholders during this evaluation.

The consultant wishes to share the sincerest gratitude to all partners, and the concerned agencies for the efforts made by them to ensure a smooth and successful evaluation. To those who gave of their time to attend virtual meetings and proved to be helpful and informative, and all of whom were supportive of the project. Without their valuable input, work could not have been accomplished.

Special thanks are due to the UNDP team, Ms Yuko Kurauchi and Ms Marlyn Omondi, who have provided great support in providing the needed documentation, setting up virtual meetings, and following up in translating the online questionnaires to French. Their support is very much appreciated.

Disclaimer

This Final Evaluation report was prepared by an international consultant commissioned by UNDP. However, the findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the UNDP.

Project and Evaluation Information Details

Project Information		
Project/outcome title	Support to BES-Net for the Facilitation of Knowledge Management for the Effective Management of Biodiversity and Ecosystems for Improved Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction	
Atlas ID	Award ID: 00097675 Project ID: 00097675	
Corporate outcome and output		
Country	Global	
Region	Global	
Date project document signed	2016	
Project dates (Phases 1 and 2)	Start	Planned end
	June 2016	December 2020
Project budget (SwedBio Component)	292,635.44	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	292,635.44	
Funding source	SwedBio	
Implementing party	UNDP UNDP Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification	

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Project Evaluation- Final	
Final/midterm review/ other	Final Evaluation	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	2016	2020
Evaluators	Amal Aldababseh	
Evaluator email address	adababseh@estidama-jo.com	
Evaluation dates	Start	Completion
	Feb. 2021	June 2021

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	4
1. List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	6
1. Executive Summary	7
1.1 Recommendations	9
1.2 Lessons learned.....	10
2. Introduction.....	11
3. Description of the Intervention	13
4. Evaluation Scope and Objectives.....	17
4.1 Evaluation Scope.....	17
4.2 Evaluation Objectives.....	17
4.3 Evaluation Criteria.....	17
4.4 Evaluation Questions	18
Interview Guide.....	18
5. Evaluation approach and methods	20
6. Data Analysis	22
7. Findings.....	23
7.1 Project Design/Formulation.....	23
7.2 Analysis of Results Framework: project logic, strategy, and indicators	23
7.3 Assumptions and Risks.....	25
7.4 Planned stakeholder participation.....	26
7.5 Project Implementation.....	26
7.5.1 Management Arrangements.....	26
7.5.2 Adaptive management.....	27
7.6 Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements	28
7.7 Project Finance and Co-finance	29
7.8 Monitoring & Evaluation:.....	29
7.9 Project Results	31
7.9.1 Progress towards objective and expected outcomes (*).....	31
7.10 Relevance (*).....	42
7.11 Effectiveness and Efficiency (*).....	43

7.12 Sustainability.....	44
7.13 Financial Risks to Sustainability	44
7.14 Socio-economic Risks to Sustainability	45
7.15 Institutional Framework and Governance Risks to Sustainability	45
7.16 Environmental Risks to Sustainability	45
7.17 Impact	46
8. Recommendations	48
9. Lessons learned	50
10. Annexes.....	51
10.1 Final Evaluation ToR.....	52
10.2 Final Evaluation Work Plan	62
10.3 Example Questionnaire used for Data Collection	63
10.4 Final Evaluation Matrix	65
10.5 List of Documents Reviewed.....	74
10.6 The final list of interviewees.....	76
10.7 Final Evaluation Rating Scales.....	77
10.8 Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form	78
10.9 Signed Final Evaluation Final Report Clearance Form	79

1. List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AC	Advisory Committee
APR	Annual Progress Report
BES	Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
BES-Net	Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network
BMU	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
CDR	Combined Delivery Report
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organization
COVID-19	2019 Novel Coronavirus
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FE	Final Evaluation
GC-RED	Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IKI	International Climate Initiative
ILK	Indigenous and Local Knowledge
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
LDC	Least Developed Country
LF	Logical Framework
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOC	Theory of Change
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre

1. Executive Summary

The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) is a capacity sharing “network of networks”. It aims to promote dialogue among science, policy, and practice communities for more effective management of biodiversity and ecosystem services. It also aims at contributing to long-term human wellbeing and sustainable development.

BES-Net is hosted by the United Nations Development Programme’s Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification (GC-RED). It is implemented in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme’s (UNEP) World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), with the support of SwedBio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre, the German Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Norwegian Environment Agency.

BES-Net contributes to the capacity-building work of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). It facilitates and promotes dialogue on several topics related to the IPBES global thematic assessment, and the UNDP’s work in the BES field.

The Project aimed to further the outreach and operations of BES-Net among developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe to assist in integrating thematic issues of biodiversity and ecosystems management into national poverty alleviation and development programmes, accelerate the policy uptake and use of the thematic assessments produced by IPBES; and support the participation of indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) holders in policy dialogues.

This evaluation exercise was commissioned by UNDP. It was designed to examine the extent of the project’s realistic achievement in comparison to planned activities and value for money. The results framework is essential to understanding whether the project achieved its desired outcome. The evaluator sought to ascertain the extent to which the project has contributed to facilitate and promote dialogue on topics linked to IPBES thematic assessments as well as in key areas of UNDP’s work on biodiversity and ecosystems management. The evaluator also sought to establish the existence of a well-defined results framework that is SMART¹.

According to the Guidelines, the Final Evaluation (FE) should provide evidence-based credible, useful, and reliable information. It will set up a collaborative as well as a participatory approach to ensure close cooperation with the project team, government counterparts in participating countries with a focus on the UNDP Country Offices, UNEP-WCMC, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, UNDP Regional team, the national, regional and global levels including BES-Net donors (i.e. SwedBio and BMU/International Climate Initiative (IKI)) and members of the advisory committee (AC) (i.e. IPBES, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Norwegian Environment Agency, etc.) and other key stakeholders.

The FE followed the UNDP Final Evaluation Guidance. It used the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as defined, and explained in the UNDP Guidance for conducting Final Evaluations of UNDP Projects. It followed UN evaluation norms and policies, including UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluations and UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results and the UNDP Evaluation Guidance document.

¹ Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Relevant and Time-based

This report presents the findings of the FE of the UNDP Project “**Support to BES-Net for the Facilitation of Knowledge Management for the Effective Management of Biodiversity and Ecosystems for Improved Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction**”. This FE was performed by an Independent International Evaluator, Ms Amal Aldababseh.

The FE report documents the achievements of the project, an assessment of management arrangement and adaptive management, and includes an executive summary and eight chapters. and relevant annexes are found at the back end of the report.

Based on project documentation reviews and the feedback gathered from the stakeholders, the project made the expected progress and was perceived as a very important and instrumental initiative. Even though the project faced some delays during its implementation, the project team was able to implement the project’s activities, achieve considerable results by the end of the project implementation, and achieve end-of-the project targets.

The Project is viewed by stakeholders as “best practice” and serves as a model of excellence for other networks to build on; the Project is viewed as successful because findings from the evaluation show that the project met its objectives and that its processes and implementations were valued for money; outcomes are in line with its planned objectives and outputs have achieved the desired results. Gender mainstreaming and women involved in various activities and from participating countries were fully involved, the project experienced gender balance in its implementation. The Project has initiated the process of involving the private sector in biodiversity conservation and ecosystems services, but more chances and stronger involvement should be envisaged to fully benefit from the private sector capacity and resources.

It was confirmed by most of the interviewed stakeholders that the project operated with very strong support from UNDP and other participating agencies. The project team conducted all the project tasks including managerial and support functions with excellent quality and promptly. Stakeholders highlighted that there is a need to build on and encourage the existing network by involving more community-based organizations (CBOs), conduct more dialogues events, and expand the work to other regions and countries.

The project success has been very much dependent on close consultation and coordination, and hard work from the project team, beneficiary communities, executing, and implementing partners and the UNDP team. The project reports and meetings with key stakeholders indicated that the project was able to achieve its objective and outcome with very limited to no delay. Hence, and based on the review and assessment and taking into consideration the difficulties the project team faced during the project launching phase, the overall rating on the achievement of results is **Satisfactory** as shown in Table 1.

The project was very much acknowledged by the participating stakeholders and very relevant to UNDP, the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), IPBES, and the participating Governments’ plans. With the confirmed interest and support provided by the UNDP and the BES-Net risks reduced and prospects for sustainability possible, the overall sustainability is considered **likely**.

■ Table 1: Final Evaluation Ratings and Achievement Summary Table for the Project

Measure	Final Evaluation Rating ²	Achievement Description
---------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------

² Rating Scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), or 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

Progress Towards Results	Objective:	The Project has achieved all of its end-of-project targets.
	Rating: 6 (HS)	
	Output 1/1	End-of-projects targets are achieved.
	Rating: 6 (HS)	
	Output 1/2:	End-of-projects targets are achieved.
	Rating: 6 (HS)	
	Output 1/3:	End-of-projects targets are achieved with some delay.
	Rating: 5 (S)	
	Output 2/1:	End-of-projects targets are achieved
	Rating: 6 (HS)	
	Output 2/2:	End-of-projects targets are achieved
	Rating: 6 (HS)	
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management	Rating: 5 (S)	The Project was able to overcome the challenges and move towards achieving its objectives. Strategic support was provided by AC. The project team was very committed to enhance the project's implementation, perform effective communications, and coordination among all stakeholders at all levels.
Sustainability	Rating: 4 (L)³	Risks factors were assessed and seem no critical risks are envisaged to affect the project sustainably.

1.1 Recommendations

Recommendation 1: To ensure that the knowledge gained through the Regional Dialogues is shared, the Project should ensure that a clear follow-up plan is developed and implemented after attending the regional dialogues. A key lesson learned from the Regional Dialogues is the need to have a follow-up plan after the events. This may include presenting the action plan developed in the dialogue at the national level, encouraging participants to share their knowledge with national stakeholders (**UNDP, BES-Net**).

Recommendation 2: The Project to encourage and attract active participation of the private sector to enhance national and local biodiversity conservation measures; support communities benefiting from ecosystems services and expand project knowledge to national stakeholders. Through private-public-partnership, dedicate a certain percentage of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund to finance better biodiversity conservation measures and tools through effective communication. (**UNDP, BES-Net**).

Recommendation 3: Institutionalize the Regional Dialogues model by developing a clear governance structure that is discussed with all stakeholders and approved by the Project Board. This is essential to make sure that countries are benefiting from the Regional Dialogues. This should include the following elements as a minimum: each country formulate a team of experts with different backgrounds [climate change, ecosystems, land degradation, ecologists, hydrologists, etc.], and appoint one person as a focal point per country (**UNDP, BES-Net**).

Recommendation 4: The Project to build on the success of the first two phases and expand the work to cover other geographical zones and involve more languages to facilitate national participation in regional events. The BES-Net wealth and expanded

³ The 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), and 1=Unlikely (U).

networks support the UN participating agencies in accelerating SDGs implementation and enhancing national work concerning biodiversity conservation (**UNDP, BES-Net**).

Recommendation 5: UNDP to build on the strengths of other UN agencies to act and deliver as one UN. UNDP, UNEP, FAO, and UNESCO complement each other's and can amplify and follow up on the implementation of the action plans developed in the regional dialogues. The existence of four UN agencies can provide great support to the project's implementation [UNDP focuses on financing and capacity building, FAO on food security, UNESCO on education, and UNEP on technical issues related to biodiversity conservation and ecosystems services] (**UNDP**).

Recommendation 6: To ensure the sustainability of the project's impact, BES-Net and UNDP must ensure government participation and enhance national ownership. As it is stand, the project is not government-driven thought everyone is accountable for its action plan developed and agreed to implement. Government representatives must take responsibility for implementation (**BES-Net and UNDP**)

1.2 Lessons learned

- **Lesson Learned 1:** The Project has become and serves as a model of excellence for other knowledge networks to build on. The multidisciplinary and multi-lingual team is useful for supporting the process.
- **Lesson Learned 2:** High-level political will is critical for driving biodiversity conservation at the national level. The need to identify national focal points and/or champions at the national level is important to support the implementation process and enhance coordination.
- **Lesson Learned 3:** Broad stakeholders' engagement with a robust coordination and communication mechanism is important for successful implementation. It was observed and shared by different stakeholders that the project was considered very successful due to the ability to talk in more than one language. Providing facilitation services and translation during different events facilitated the group's interactions and work.
- **Lesson Learned 4:** Need to enlist the involvement and contribution of the private sector and specialized CBOs in biodiversity conservation and ecosystems services for scaling up capacity building and knowledge management.
- **Lesson Learned 5:** Dialogues are useful tools for supporting the attainment of Biodiversity targets and SDG targets at the national and global levels.
- **Lessons Learned 6:** Continuous stakeholders' engagement and communication is essential for knowledge management and sharing project implementation.

Lessons Learned 7: Recruitment of M&E Officer for the new phase is crucial for its success. Also, extending the Project to other countries encouraging and fostering more knowledge sharing and collaboration between stakeholders.

2. Introduction

This evaluation exercise was commissioned by UNDP. It was designed to examine the extent of the project's realistic achievement in comparison to planned activities and value for money. The results framework is essential to understanding whether the project achieved its desired outcome. The evaluator sought to ascertain the extent to which the project has contributed to facilitate and promote dialogue on topics linked to IPBES thematic assessments as well as in key areas of UNDP's work on biodiversity and ecosystems management. The evaluator also seeks to establish the existence of a well-defined results framework that is SMART⁴.

The FE followed the UNDP- Global Environment Facility (GEF) Final Evaluation Guidance. It used the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, etc. as defined, and explained in the UNDP Guidance for conducting Final Evaluations of UNDP-supported Projects.

According to the Guidelines, the FE should provide evidence-based credible, useful, and reliable information. It set up a collaborative as well as a participatory approach to ensure close cooperation with the project team, government counterparts with a focus on the UNDP Country Offices of the participated countries, UNDP Regional team, the national, regional and global levels partners and other key stakeholders.

This final evaluation was conducted following the project proposals and the agreements with the project donors, and in line with UNDP GC-RED Evaluation Plan submitted to the UNDP Evaluation Resource Centre, UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Evaluation Policy (2016) and Evaluation Guidelines (2019), among other resources, which set out several guiding principles, norms and standards for evaluation within UNDP. In compliance with the overall UNDP Evaluation Policy, the evaluation exercise must be independent, impartial, credible, and designed with utility in mind. The evaluation should generate relevant and useful information to support evidence-based decision making.

The main objective of the final evaluation is to assess the achievements of the SwedBio-supported component of the BES-Net project, i.e. the extent of attainment of the expected results, as initially planned and as adjusted upon the extension of the support, and review the SwedBio component's theory of change (TOC) as part of broader BES-Net TOC vis-à-vis the component's accomplishments. The exercise is also expected to highlight key good practices, weaknesses/gaps and other lessons learnt during the implementation of the component within the broader BES-Net project framework to provide forward-looking insights and practical and actionable recommendations to increase the likelihood of success relating to impact and sustainability, taking into account the continuity of the BES-Net initiative through the Phase II (2020-2028) and to inform future programming in the field of BES.

Pertinent issues such as management arrangements, procurement and financial procedures, timeliness of interventions, selection of beneficiaries, incorporation of innovative solutions and prospects for sustainability were also included in the analysis.

The evaluation findings will be utilized, and the recommendations are applied by the BES-Net project team to improve the implementation of Phase II of the project in both technical and operational terms. The results will also be utilized for the consultation with SwedBio and other potential donors on the possible continuous/new collaborations in support of BES-Net Phase II.

This evaluation document is divided into eight Chapters including: -

- **Executive summary:** the first section is a stand-alone section that briefly describes the intervention that was evaluated, explains the purpose and objectives of the evaluation,

⁴ Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Relevant and Time-based

including the audience for the evaluation and the intended uses, describe the key aspect of the evaluation approach and methods, summarize principle findings, conclusions and recommendations and include the evaluators' quality standards and assurance ratings.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction:** it explains evaluation purposes, why the project is being evaluated, the intervention of the evaluation and the structure and contents of the report and how the information contained in the report will meet the purposes of the evaluation and satisfy the information needs of the report's intended users.
- **Chapter 2: Description of the intervention:** it provides the basis for report users to understand the logic and assess the merits of the evaluation methodology and understand the applicability of the evaluation results. It provides sufficient detail on the project, who seeks to benefit, the problem it seeks to address, expected results, implementation strategies and links with national and UN priorities.
- **Chapter 3: Evaluation scope and objectives.** It provides a clear explanation of the evaluation's scope, primary objectives and main questions including the evaluation scope, objectives, criteria, and questions in addition to the evaluation approach and methods.
- **Chapter 4: Data analysis.** The report describes the procedures used to analyze the data collected to answer the evaluation questions. It details the various steps and stages of analysis that were carried out, including the steps to confirm the accuracy of data and the results for different stakeholder groups (men and women, different social groups, etc.)
- **Chapter 5: Findings.** This chapter presents statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
- **Chapter 6: Conclusions.** Provides a comprehensive and balanced and highlight the strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes of the intervention.
- **Chapter 7: Recommendations.** It provides practical, actionable, and feasible recommendations directed to the intended users of the report about what actions to take or decisions to make.
- **Chapter 8: Lessons learned.** This chapter includes a discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation, that is, new knowledge gained from the circumstance (intervention, context outcomes, even about evaluation methods) that apply to a similar context.

In addition to the 8 chapters and the executive summary, the report contains several **annexes**. These annexes provide the report user with supplemental background and methodological details that enhance the credibility of the report.

3. Description of the Intervention

The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) is a capacity sharing “network of networks”. It aims to promote dialogue among science, policy, and practice communities for more effective management of biodiversity and ecosystem services. It also aims at contributing to long-term human wellbeing and sustainable development.

BES-Net is hosted by UNDP GC-RED. It is implemented in partnership with UNEP WCMC, with the support of SwedBio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre, the German Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Norwegian Environment Agency.

BES-Net contributes to the capacity-building work of IPBES. It facilitates and promotes dialogue on several topics related to the IPBES global thematic assessment, and the UNDP’s work in the BES field.

IPBES highlighted in 2015 that developing countries face issues in addressing pressing sustainable development questions due to a weak interface between science/traditional knowledge, policy and practice, and lack of trained national-level experts stakeholders to conduct national-level assessments and to integrate their findings into national policy and decision-making. Further, many countries still need support to contribute to the IPBES assessments and other deliverables and to make the most use of IPBES’s future products. A project was developed to respond to calls from developing countries for UNDP to play a role in capacity building for IPBES. This project responds to strong calls for capacity building in the IPBES context, particularly from developing countries, thereby directly addressing needs identified by its 124 Member States in strengthening the science-policy platform for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The SwedBio-supported component constitutes an important part of the BES-Net Project. The original agreement for this support was signed on 21 June 2016 for three years (2016-2018, Phase 1), and aimed at enhancing collaboration between UNDP and SwedBio to provide further support and strengthening the outreach and operations of BES-Net in developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

In February 2019, the original agreement was amended to extend SwedBio’s support to 2019-2020 with additional financial support (Phase 2). The aim of Phase 2 was to build on the achieved deliverables, lessons learned, and as a response to the emerging needs. The new phase aimed to enhance global knowledge exchange and mutual learning among scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers, and practitioners, and improve the environment for effective science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions towards the achievement of common BES goals.

The Project’s catalytic support through the BES-Net component in the targeted countries was deeply embedded into participating UNDP country offices’ wider BES/environment portfolios and fully integrated into broader United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) to maximize their complementarity with other relevant initiatives, continuity and long-term impacts. The main objective of the component is to assist in integrating thematic issues of BES into national poverty alleviation and development programmes and to support policy uptake and use of the IPBES assessments and the participation of ILK holders in policy dialogues.

The project’s extension put special emphases on developing countries concerning the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of low-income countries and least developed countries; women & gender by implementing the project activities in a gender-sensitive and responsive manner; and indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) with the assurance of the meaningful

participation and representation of IPLCs and, the full understanding their knowledge and rights, throughout the project's online and offline activities.

The Project aimed to further the outreach and operations of BES-Net among developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe to:

1. assist in integrating thematic issues of biodiversity and ecosystems management into national poverty alleviation and development programmes.
2. accelerate the policy uptake and use of the thematic assessments produced by IPBES; and
3. support the participation of ILK holders in policy dialogues.

More specifically, SwedBio contributions were dedicated to achieving the two specific objectives:

1. *Enhancing the BES-Net Web-Portal*: System and content development as well as the operationalization of the BES-Net web-portal as a key tool supporting the global capacity network of scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners with a focus on developing countries and gender balance; and
2. *Networking and Communication*: Networking and communication activities around BES-Net in developing countries. Outreach activities will also be gender-sensitive and target marginal groups.

Due to the progress that has been made towards Phase 1 objectives, several tangible outputs were delivered by end of 2018. BES-Net's works were acknowledged on multiple occasions by the IPBES Secretariat, Bureau/Multidisciplinary Expert Panel members, Technical Support Unit, etc. as the leading contributor to the IPBES Capacity Building Rolling Plan. Building on the positive project's impact, UNDP requested to extend the Third-Party Cost-Sharing Agreement with SwedBio for an additional two years from 2019 to 2020.

Since the project remained relevant to SwedBio's mission and objectives and was in line with the overall strategic framework for the next IPBES work programme, the overall aim of Phase 1 of the collaboration between SwedBio and UNDP remained unchanged during the extended period of 2019-2020. Nevertheless, the Project's objectives were expanded in Phase 2 because of emerging needs as well as to better contribute to SwedBio's Knowledge Interface role.

The BES-Net Project has been relevant to the IPBES strategy and work. It responds to calls for capacity building in the IPBES context, particularly from developing countries, directly addressing needs identified by its 124 Member States in strengthening the science-policy platform for biodiversity and ecosystem services. The project contributed to implementing the biodiversity-related MEAs as well. Especially, the project was designed to contribute to inform National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and resource mobilization strategies, and to meet the following Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

- *Target 19: By 2020*, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared, and transferred, and applied.
- *Target 18: By 2020*, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.
- *Target 2: By 2020*, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.

The Proposal between UNDP and SwedBio identified the main stakeholders to be included in the project implementation.

- i) **Policymakers:** these shape policy and legislation in the public sector and civil society. Policymakers use research to inform decision-making and may need support to demystify the scientific evidence to inform policy. Engaging with a wide range of policymakers across sectors and ministries will help mainstream biodiversity and ecosystems management.
- ii) **Scientists and knowledge holders:** holders and generators of knowledge, these include scientists from academic institutions, NGO researchers or traditional holders and generators of knowledge, as well as technical specialists involved in managing biodiversity and ecosystems services. Their knowledge significantly contributes to the sustainable management of ecosystems; and
- iii) **Practitioners:** these work on the ground, directly or with intermediaries, to define and manage biodiversity and ecosystems challenges. They include members of NGOs, Intergovernmental Organizations, the private sector as well as IPLCs. Their engagement is critical for informing and implementing policy making and in the generation and maintenance of sustainable livelihoods options and opportunities.

Gender mainstreaming within BES-Net activities is another critical issue that the SwedBio-supported component is focusing on including integrating gender-focused perspectives into dialogues and increasing the number of women participating in the network.

Since the start of Phase I of the project, and the development of the gender strategy in 2016, the project's progress in gender mainstreaming and women's participation was reported regularly. The geographical spread and balance of the BES-Net users and visitors were also regularly assessed as part of the BES-Net communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy implementation review. As of 31 December 2018, the composition of the BES-Net registered users is 52% in the scientist/ILK holder, 27% in the practitioner, and 21% in the policymaker categories, respectively. 46.7% of registered users are women. The highest number of web portal visitors are from Europe (30%), followed by Asia (26%), Africa (21%) and North America (14%).

The SwedBio-supported component of the BES-Net project has implemented three outcomes. An analysis of achievements across all three outcomes is expected as follows:

1. Assist in integrating thematic issues of biodiversity and ecosystems management into national poverty alleviation and development programmes.
2. Accelerate the policy uptake and use of the thematic assessments produced by IPBES; and
3. Support the participation of ILK holders in policy dialogues.

In the 2016-2018 period, SwedBio support focused on supporting:

- I. Enhancing the BES-Net web-portal - system and content development as well as the operationalization of the BES-Net web-portal as a key tool supporting the global capacity network of scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners with a focus on developing countries and gender balance; and
- II. Networking and communication activities around BES-Net in developing countries; outreach activities will also be gender-sensitive and target marginal groups.

In the 2018-2020 period (extended period), SwedBio support was dedicated to:

- 1) Enhancing global knowledge exchange and mutual learning among scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers, and practitioners; and
- 2) Improving the environment for effective science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions towards the achievement of common BES goals

The component was implemented by UNDP in partnership with several UN agencies; UNEP, UNESCO, and FAO.

The overall budgets of the BES-Net initiative SwedBio components are as follows:

- For Phase 1 (2016-2018): 173,690.74 (USD).
- For Phase 2 (2019-2020): 127,735.20 (USD)

4. Evaluation Scope and Objectives

4.1 Evaluation Scope

According to the Guidelines, the FE should provide evidence-based credible, useful, and reliable information. It will set up a collaborative as well as a participatory approach to ensure close cooperation with the project team, government counterparts in participating countries with a focus on the UNDP Country Offices, UNEP-WCMC, UNESCO, UNDP Regional team, the national, regional and global levels including BES-Net donors (SwedBio and BMU/IKI) and members of AC (IPBES, UNCCD, FAO, Norwegian Environment Agency, etc.) and other key stakeholders.

The FE followed the UNDP Final Evaluation Guidance. It used the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as defined, and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Final Evaluations of UNDP Projects. It followed UN evaluation norms and policies, including UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluations and UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results and the UNDP Evaluation Guidance document.

4.2 Evaluation Objectives

Following a review of the evaluation terms of reference and project proposals and the agreements with the project donors, the FE assessed the SwedBio-supported components of the BES-Net project performance against expectations set out in the project results framework.

The FE assessed results according to evaluation criteria and in line with the GC-RED Evaluation Plan submitted to the UNDP Evaluation Resource Centre, UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Evaluation Policy (2016) and Evaluation Guidelines (2019), among other resources, which set out several guiding principles, norms and standards for evaluation within UNDP.⁵

The FE seeks to assess project performance against expectations set out in the project results framework. This included interview and consultations with relevant stakeholders, including community beneficiaries in areas of a specific intervention.

The evaluation considered the pertinent outcomes and outputs as stated in the SwedBio-supported component of the BES-Net project document focused on further extending the outreach and operations of BES-Net in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe, particularly the developing countries.

4.3 Evaluation Criteria

The independent evaluator was expected to focus on the key criteria, which included, among others:

- The relevance of the component interventions under the overall BES-Net project to the first and second IPBES work programmes, particularly the Platform's Capacity Building Rolling Plan, and overall policy-science interface enhancement at global, regional, and national levels.
- Effectiveness of the components within the wider BES-Net project.
- The efficiency of the component design and implementation to date (including implementation approaches employed as a basis to guide possible future improvements in delivery).

⁵ UNDP Evaluation Guidelines: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guidance.shtml#handbook>

- Potential sustainability in terms of the contribution of the component towards the BES-Net Phase II (2020-2028) and other BES initiatives.
- Likelihood of achieving the projected impact of the component vis-à-vis the assumptions used in the development of the overall BES-Net project; and
- Fulfilment of gender equality.

4.4 Evaluation Questions

To the extent possible, key informant interviews were used to collect data from project participants. These participants included project partners, project stakeholders and targeted beneficiaries. Sets of questions were used to facilitate data and document collection and knowledge sharing. The questions were arranged around the evaluation criteria. Many of the below questions were used in the virtual interviews. These questions were used to make sure that all aspects were covered, and the needed information was requested to complete the review exercise and guide in preparing the semi-structured interviews.

A list of questions was prepared and was further tailored based on initial interviews and depending on the different categories of participants engaged in the focus groups discussion.

- Why did you take part in this activity?
- What did you get from this activity?
- Did it change something in your way of working, living? If so, what?
- Were there components of this activity useless to your job? Which ones?
- Were there specific difficulties in the implementation of this activity? What could be improved?
- Do you also face difficulties in the implementation of what you have learnt/discussed during this activity? Why? How could this be overcome?
- Do you see other effects of this activity, on your organizations and its performance/results?
- Do you see categories of stakeholders excluded from the potential benefits of the project? Which ones and why?
- Would you have other recommendations to strengthen the work at the county level?

A questionnaire was sent in French to the participating francophone countries and stakeholders. It was translated into English once filled by participants. The project team played a critical role in translating this list from English to French and then translating the feedback from French to English.

Interview Guide	
1.	How was the project formulated? To what extent was it participatory and inclusive?
2.	To what extent have social, economic, and political dynamics been taken into consideration?
3.	Are there gaps to be addressed?
4.	To what extent are the project's monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management
5.	How was the prioritization undertaken, including the selection of countries? To what extent have the most relevant activities and outputs selected to achieve the objectives?
6.	What needs could not be covered? Have some activities been rejected at the inception stage?
7.	How and to what extent was the gender dimension included in the project?

8.	How was gender factored in the component and the results? How have cultural constraints related to gender been addressed? To what extent do the results differ between male and female?
9.	To what extent did the M&E process identify the results and limitations of the process across the various implementing partners and participants? How would you suggest improvements in the M&E to enable documenting results at outcome and impact level in the future?
10.	How have lessons learned been identified and included in the projects?
11.	Which activities could not be implemented as planned and why? What were the difficulties? To what extent can they be anticipated and planned?
12.	To what extent were coordination and the partnership strategy relevant and effective? How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs
13.	To what extent were civil society and the private sector involved? Are there further opportunities in that respect?
14.	What were the potential limitations to put into practice the learnings of the activities
15.	To what extent did you try to overcome potential limitations and difficulties during the projects' implementation?
16.	Which changes can be identified in the beneficiary (partners), organizations and to what extent can they be attributed to the project work?
17.	To what extent did those changes lead to potential impacts?
18.	Can any unexpected positive or negative effects be identified?
19.	What would be your recommendations for the potential future "networks of networks" project operations, particularly at the global -national level?
20.	Has the project-built synergies with other similar projects being implemented at the country level with the United Nations and the Governments?

5. Evaluation approach and methods

This evaluation assessed the achievement of project results by analyzing the progress made towards the achievement of general and specific objectives. The evaluation draws lessons learned and provided recommendations on best practices that focus on key components to facilitate knowledge management for the effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems for improved livelihoods and poverty reduction from this project and guide future programming. The evaluation serves an important accountability function, providing national stakeholders and partners at the global level with an impartial assessment of the results of the SwedBio-supported component's intervention. Documentation of the project's experiences and achievements, as well as challenges, will be excellent tools for the government and development partners, who will be able to draw inspiration for the implementation of other programs and projects related to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management. The evaluation consultant virtually met with key stakeholders for observation, data collection and other forms of project evaluation related discussion meetings. Remote interviews were conducted through skype, zoom etc.

Considering a pre-determined time frame of (30) working days for the consultant, the evaluation was conducted in three (3) Phases as follows:

- The First Phase covered (5) days for the preparation of the Inception report and evaluation matrix. This time devoted to preliminary documentary reviews, inception meeting, and consultations with the UNDP management team as necessary, etc., that culminated into the drafting of the inception report.
- The Second Phase covered 20 days (13 for developing preliminary findings and 7 days to prepare the draft report). It involved engagement of Consultation/Meetings with partners, Data Collection, Analysis, and Preparations for the Preliminary findings/Interim Report. Documents reviewed included but not limited to UNDP Programme Documents, Project proposal to SwedBio for 2016-18 under BES-Net Phase I, Project extension proposal to SwedBio for 2018-2020 under BES-Net Phase I, GC-RED Project Document including BES-Net Component, Project proposal to BMU/IKI for BES-Net Phase I, Project proposal to BMU IKI for BES-Net Phase II, List of key stakeholders and partners, and other relevant project and program documents. One-on-one consultations were carried out with the UNDP team, Partners, Program Heads, UN partners, direct beneficiaries of the project including the regional and global partners leading to the presentation of the draft document. During this period, the consultant anticipated (13) days to develop preliminary findings and present those to stakeholders.
- The Third Phase covered (5) days and was devoted to the preparation, finalization, and submission of the Final Report after the submission of the draft Evaluation Report and obtaining feedback from relevant stakeholders from comments solicited in a consultative process. The comments should be incorporated, and the report refined. The Final Evaluation Report is to be finalized and submitted for approval. An Audit trail report containing all comments on the final evaluation report and if the comments were/were not addressed would be developed and submitted along with the final version of the final evaluation report.

Key documents were provided (annexed to this report) and were used for the evaluation, such as the list of documents reviewed, summaries, a synthesis of the comments of the parties involved in the presentation and reading of the evaluation report, as well as the terms of reference, etc.

The approach for this evaluation included various activities such as project stakeholder consultation meetings, key informant interviews, and data collection was done (including both qualitative and quantitative).

The pre-established action plan, the questionnaire and the methodology prepared during the inception phase were used in the virtual meetings to consult all stakeholders and to integrate the various elements useful to the formulation of recommendations.

The approach for this evaluation included various activities specified below. It entailed project stakeholder consultation meetings, and data collection (both qualitative and quantitative). It enabled the FE consultant to examine the extent of the project's realistic achievement in comparison to the planned activities and value for money.

The evaluator also assessed the results framework that is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound)⁶.

Using the UNDP/GEF Performance criteria table⁷ (provided in the UNDP-GEF Final Evaluation Guidance). The detailed assessment of project performance helped provide a rating of key areas. This was carried out against the pre-identified targets as stated in the Project Logical Framework (LF).

Due to the COVID-19 global outbreak, several limitations were foreseen by the FE consultant that represents major issues to the FE:

- Inaccessibility of data or verification of data sources due to difficulties in interviewing stakeholders (limited internet access, language issue).
- Not all stakeholders might be available/interested to engage virtually.

The FE consultant planned a set of activities to mitigate these limitations, including:

- Introduced questionnaires to ensure that all stakeholders are interviewed and that more extensive and representative qualitative and/or quantitative evaluation data are collected.
- Utilized a range of available tools to ensure stakeholders engagement. When one tool is not possible to be used other tools were used like skype, zoom and MS Teams. If conducting a virtual meeting was not an option for some stakeholders, emails exchange facilitated the process.

Additionally, due to the COVID-19 global outbreak, several limitations were foreseen by the FE consultant that also represents major issues to the FE.

⁶ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/Measuring-and-managing-results.pdf>

⁷ UNDP-GEF Final Evaluation Guidance is used for this TE.

6. Data Analysis

Project-related documents were shared by the project team (Annexed). The methodology consisted of several methods with an analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. It included the following:

- **Data collection:** Project-related documents including progress reports, technical deliverables, annual work plans, combined delivery report, co-financial data, etc. This helped in getting the perspective of both women and men beneficiaries and stakeholders. To the extent possible, data collection and analysis was disaggregated by gender.
- **Desk Review including amongst others:** UNDP Document and proposals, Project Technical Deliverables, Annual Progress Reports (APRs), Final Project Report, combined delivery reports, examples of technical deliverables, Project's agreements, and detailed info on the organized dialogues.
- **Consultations with the project's stakeholders via semi-structured interviews and virtual meetings:** A set of questions was prepared in advance and used to facilitate data collection and knowledge sharing. The questions were arranged around the evaluation criteria. Findings were crosschecked during different interviews and with the available evidence
- **Online questionnaires** (in French) were sent to those who have participated in and benefited from the component activities.
- **Observations** based on the interviews and meetings: The information collected, including documentary evidence, interviews, and observations, were compiled, summarized, and organized according to the questions asked in the evaluation.

The selection of the right analytical approach depends on the list of questions being asked and the evaluation matrix that is developed to support the FE consultant. This process entailed having a clear understanding of the project, its objective, aim, outcomes, outputs, the theory of change, and the resulting impacts and approach for sustainability.

The analytical approaches and methods that were used included:

- **Descriptive:** this approach was used to define the status of the Project implementation, it describes the project's objective, outputs, and impact.
- **Diagnostics:** this approach was used to understand what happened. What did the project achieve? How? Why is this happening? Partnerships developed the use of financial resources, project co-financing, analyses of project risks and issues, and mitigation measures. It was used to define what the project's impact is. Are these sustainable, and what will happen after the closure of the project.
- **Prescriptive:** this approach was used to define the main findings of the evaluation and to define a set of recommendations for the project and future interventions.

7. Findings

This section provides a summary of the main facts based on data collected during the evaluation exercise and mission. The FE paid attention to cross-verification of the evaluative evidence using multiple sources of information and, to the extent possible, avoided over-reliance on opinions obtained during the interviews.

7.1 Project Design/Formulation

The FE analyzed the design of the project as outlined in the UNDP proposals to identify whether the project strategy proved to be effective in reaching the desired results. In doing so, the evaluator assessed the extent to which the project addressed stakeholders' priorities and need. Furthermore, the FE consultant evaluated the extent to which the project objectives were consistent with the priorities and objectives of the UNDP, IPBES, and MEAs.

7.2 Analysis of Results Framework: project logic, strategy, and indicators

An agreement for SwedBio's support of the BES-Net project was signed in June 2016. The component goal was to *"further the outreach and operations of BES-Net in developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe"*.

The extension was supposed to: assist in integrating thematic issues of biodiversity and ecosystems management into national poverty alleviation and development programmes; and to support the policy uptake and use of the IPBES assessments and the participation of ILK holders in policy dialogues.

The activities under these components were supposed to contribute to improving gender mainstreaming within BES-Net activities in both qualitative and quantitative terms – integrating gender-focused perspectives into dialogues and increasing the number of women participating in the network

The BES-Net Project was designed to build on and contribute to the capacity building work of IPBES. It facilitated and promoted dialogue on topics linked to the IPBES global thematic assessments, and in key areas of UNDP's work in the BES field. BES-Net is hosted by UNDP GC-RED. GC-RED also serves as the UNDP focal point to IPBES and strives to strengthen institutional linkages with other UN collaborative partners to the Platform, namely UNEP, UNESCO, and FAO.

The SwedBio's goal is to contribute to meet the growing international concern regarding negative effects on biodiversity and the need for joint policies and strategies to deal with global environmental challenges. The main role is bridging the gap between scientists, practitioners, and policymakers, intending to contribute to improved understanding, knowledge generation, management, and good governance of social-ecological systems. In particular, BES-Net supports the knowledge interface role of SwedBio in its functional Focal Areas of Dialogues and Learning as well as Communication and Training, through bringing together the three BES-Net communities for capacity sharing and both online and face-to-face dialogues. BES-Net also addresses many of SwedBio's thematic areas. BES-Net promotes dialogue in the same areas as the IPBES assessments including on Pollinators, Pollination and Food production or Land Degradation and Restoration, that have a direct impact on livelihoods, food security and health and are essential to resilience building and sustainable development.

The SwedBio-component provided, under the baseline analysis and scenario, means to provide support to three main target groups for BES-Net. These include:

- iv) **Policymakers:** these shape policy and legislation in the public sector and civil society. Engaging with them across different ministries and sectors helps to mainstream biodiversity and enhance ecosystem management.

- v) **Scientists and knowledge holders:** holders and generators of knowledge. Their knowledge significantly contributes to the sustainable management of ecosystems; and
- vi) **Practitioners:** these work on the ground, directly or with intermediaries, to define and manage biodiversity and ecosystems challenges. Their engagement is critical for informing and implementing policy making and in the generation and maintenance of sustainable livelihoods options and opportunities.

Within this context, the project is fully relevant to UNDP's commitment to supporting IPBES as defined in its biodiversity strategy, UNDP's Biodiversity and Ecosystem Global Framework 2012-2020. This strategy sets the stage and the basis of UNDP support for the development of the BES-Net Platform. Ultimately, the Project and the SwedBio-component is contributing to building national and regional capacities in biodiversity conservation and ecosystems management. This will require identifying specific institutional capacity gaps and then developing and applying a targeted approach to improve knowledge and skills where they are needed most. Furthermore, the BES-Net Dialogues, which served as a knowledge and experience-sharing platform, between stakeholders, is supported by face-to-face capacity building activities was widely implemented to enhance knowledge sharing and capacity development. The BES-Net web portal, as an online sharing and networking and collaboration tool as well as a global means of communication, provided critical support to the capacity building matchmaking and face-to-face capacity-building efforts undertaken under the BES-Net umbrella.

The SwedBio component was also linked with SwedBio's strategy. The component was aligned with SwedBio's goal to *"contribute to meet the growing international concern regarding negative effects on biodiversity and the need for joint policies and strategies to deal with global environmental challenges"*⁸.

The SwedBio component was considered an integral part of the BES-Net. BES-Net also supported the knowledge interface role of SwedBio in its functional Focal Areas of Dialogues and Learning as well as Communication and Training, through bringing together the three BES-Net communities for capacity sharing and both online and face-to-face dialogues.

To ensure sustainability and effectiveness, the design of SwedBio's thematic area ensured that they are in line with BES-Net thematic areas. One of the main areas most stakeholders highlighted during the interviews is that BES-Net promotes dialogue in the same areas as the IPBES assessments including on *Pollinators, Pollination and Food production or Land Degradation and Restoration*. These thematic areas are crucial and essential to build resilience and sustainably develop by having direct impacts on livelihoods, food security and health.

Results Framework formulated during the design phase of this project presents a coherent set of expected results but also complement the work of BES-Net.

The project strategy was not confirmed during the inception phase of the project as the SwedBio supported component was part of the overall BES-Net project. So, no changes were made to the 2 LFs (2016-2018 and 2019-2020) which indicates logical presentations of the chains of results. The review of the Project LFs confirms that this project is well aligned with national, regional, and global priorities and their logic is appropriate to address clear national, regional, and global needs/priorities. The Project strategy includes two objectives per phase, five outcomes during Phase 1 and 2 outcomes during Phase 2, and 15 outputs during Phase 1 and 4 outputs under Phase 2 as presented in the project LFs. However, both components' LFs did not highlight the project contribution to SDGs. Nevertheless, gender aspects were incorporated

⁸ Support to the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-NET) for the facilitation of knowledge management for the effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems for improved livelihoods and poverty reduction. A Proposal for Partnership between UNDP and SwedBio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre 14 June 2016.

as outputs, targets, and key results in the LF for both phases, however, the focus on gender aspects was very high in Phase 1.

Fundamentally, the LF followed the UNDP format. However, the following observations were made:

- No baseline data were provided per output.
- Indicators and Targets were not SMART in general. The review of the Phase 1 LF indicated that targets and indicators together provide the needed information concerning the target to be achieved and the indicator used to measure progress. However, targets were used as the deadlines to achieve the indicators! This makes it difficult and does not allow for proper adaptive management and monitoring of progress.

In conclusion, the review of the component strategy indicates that the strategy is a direct response to national, regional and global needs and priorities to advance many of the developing countries and least developed countries processes and efforts in biodiversity conservation and ecosystems services management.

7.3 Assumptions and Risks

The SwedBio-component proposal document did not discuss assumptions and risks during Phase 1. For Phase 2, Table 5 of the Project Proposal identified **4 risks** during the formulation stage⁹ and included risks description, risk level, type of risk, and the countermeasure /mitigation measures. The risks types included political (1 risk), strategic (1 risk), financial (1 risk), and Financial/operational (1). No discussions took place for assumptions at all.

However, it is worth mentioning that the 2015 Project Proposal included a detailed analysis of the project's risks including the level of risk, association with the project's outcomes, outputs, and activities and the mitigation measures. Yet, no links were made in the SwedBio's components concepts.

Risks were slightly examined and analyzed mainly during Phase 2 of the project implementation. The project's APRs listed the identified risks during the project implementation and provided a detailed analysis. It was noticed that no project risks and issues logs were included in the Project's final report.

According to the Project's team, the SwedBio risks and issues logs had been maintained largely off-line. This is given the fact that the BES-Net project set as an output of the broader GC-RED project within UNDP Atlas, which is divided into the Centre component and the BES-Net component. The Project' team decided to avoid crowding the Atlas with the component and sub-component specific risk logs, so only those risks which are generally applicable for the overall project were listed on Atlas including the risk logs on COVID-19 and insufficient resources/resource mobilization¹⁰. The FE consultant believes that the management of the project's risks is **moderately satisfactory** as risks were initially identified but were not regularly and carefully analyzed and monitored with concrete mitigation measures and were not updated on project reports with a follow-up plan on mitigation measures.

⁹ UNDP Project Document, Table 5: Project Risks and Risk Mitigation Measures (2019-2020). Page 13.

¹⁰ Screenshots were provided by the project team.

7.4 Planned stakeholder participation

The Proposal highlighted¹¹ the importance of the involvement of multiple stakeholders during the project development phase. It also highlighted that the project idea was developed through a consultative process and in response to a request from IPBES member states, developing countries.

With the support and partnerships with BMU/IKI and SwedBio, UNDP developed and has been implementing the BES-Net to extend its support to countries tackling science-policy questions critical to the effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems worldwide, thereby contributing to long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

The ProDoc listed three main target groups for BES-Net and identified the importance of their engagement: 1) for policymakers: *"engaging with a wide range of policymakers across sectors and ministries will help to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystems management"*; 2) for scientists and knowledge holders *"their knowledge significantly contributes to the sustainable management of ecosystems"*; and 3) for practitioners *"their engagement is critical for informing and implementing policy making and in the generation and maintenance of sustainable livelihoods options and opportunities"*.

7.5 Project Implementation.

The TE discusses in this section the assessment of how the project has been implemented. It assessed how efficient the management of the project has been and how conducive it is to contribute to successful project implementation.

7.5.1 Management Arrangements

The Project was implemented by UNDP GC-RED following UNDP standard operational and financial rules and regulations.

The Project Management Unit carries out day-to-day project implementation, under the supervision of the GC-RED Director and the BES-Net Project Manager. A project team was assigned to implement the project activities in close coordination and collaboration with UNDP's global BES-Net team, relevant national and regional centres and the BES-Net partners.

The management arrangements for this project are as follows:

- The project is guided by a BES-Net AC as the executive decision-making body of the project. It is comprised of the following organizations: BES-Net donors, BES-Net Implementing Partners (i.e. UNEP WCMC), IPBES Secretariat, UN Collaboration Partners to IPBES, and MEAs relevant to IPBES, mainly CBD and UNCCD.
- Accordingly, Project AC was expected to meet twice a year to review progress in the project implementation (the BES-Net project including the SwedBio funded component), in addition to assessing the critical emerging issues and make the needed strategic orientation of BES-Net activities.
- The FE consultant observed that nine meetings were held for the BES-Net AC (February 2016, March 2017, September 2017, March 2018, October 2018, May 2019, December 2019, June 2020, and December 2020). Around 2 meetings per year. It was noticed that the focus of the AC meetings was the discussion on technical issues rather than on discussing the work planning, budgeting, and providing strategic decisions on programmatic issues.

¹¹ UNDP GEF project document, section IV. Results and Partnerships. Subsection iii. Stakeholder Engagement. Page 9.

- UNDP as the Senior Supplier provides quality assurance for the project and ensures compliance with UNDP policies and procedures.

Below is the Project management structure as proposed in the Project proposal. No changes took place during the implementation.

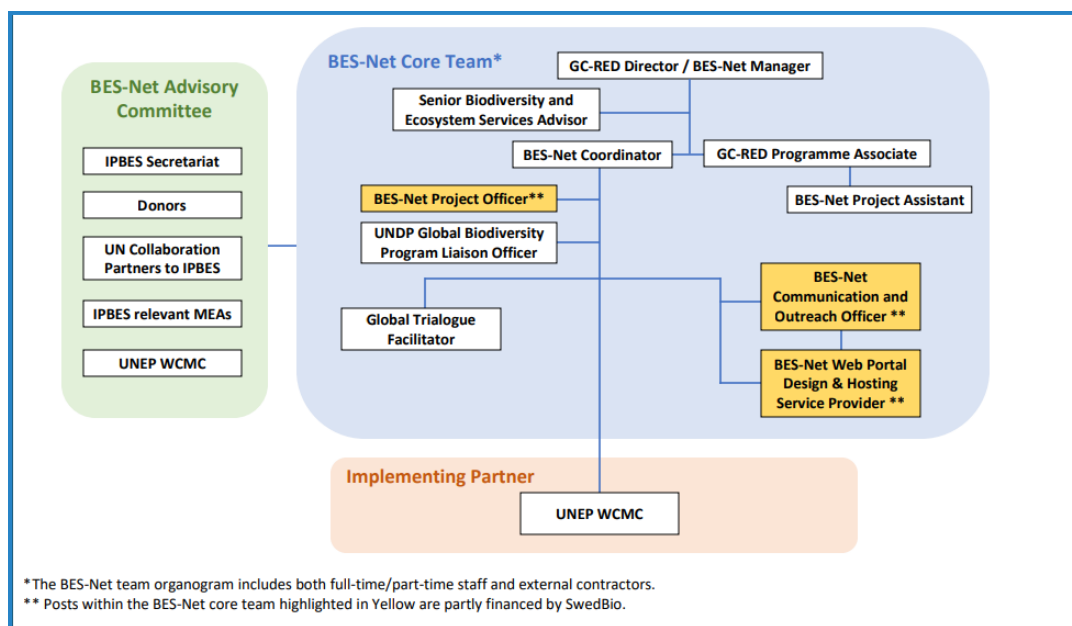


Figure 1: BES-NET Project Management Structure Overview (Project Proposal, Page 14).

- The Project's team produced APRs. These reports summarized the progress made by the project versus the expected results, explained any significant variances, detailed the necessary adjustments, budget planning, annual work plans, risks update, and served as the main reporting mechanism for monitoring project activities. Five APRs were reviewed by the TE.
- In terms of project assurance, UNDP monitored the project's implementation and achievement of the project outcomes and outputs and ensured the proper use of funds.

7.5.2 Adaptive management

The project utilized the BES-Net's existing arrangement to expedite implementation and enhance the project delivery of the SwedBio components. This includes:

- the project management arrangement, project team, and AC serviced as the project board.
- Modifying the project activities to suit the constructions posed by the COVID-19 outbreak. The project was able to post a series of eight op-ed articles to analyze the nexus between biodiversity and COVID-19 in conjunction with various thematic topics such as land, climate change, gender, etc. to contribute to the growing interest in the linkages between biodiversity loss and the rise of infectious zoonotic diseases.
- There was a need to revisit some of the results framework components due to the changing circumstances (example: the work on the IPBES Stakeholder Engagement Pages). Thus, the affected outputs and their targets were adjusted promptly in consultation with the SwedBio, and line with the higher outcomes and the main objectives of BES-Net. The TE would like to highlight that the project has made the needed changes quickly, yet, it was observed that the documentation of the changing process was not clear and did not provide the full picture about the changes at the outputs level. For the UNDP project, the Project Board should discuss the proposed

changes and approve them. It was noticed that none of the AC meetings included this discussion and thus the approval process was not very clear.

Against this analysis, and based on collected information and evidence, the rating for the management arrangement and adaptive management component is **Satisfactory (S)**.

7.6 Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements

The UNDP Proposal included a list of key stakeholders to be involved in the implementation of the project which also articulated their respective expected roles and responsibilities.

The project was successful in engaging key stakeholders by involving them in the Project activities. The stakeholders not only provided strategic guidance to the Project but also participated in the actual implementation of the project. Different partnerships were established like with the gender-focused organizations¹². In some countries, the project was able to build specific partnerships to enhance the implementation of the proposed activities. For example, in Kazakhstan, and as a result of the Central Asia Regional Trialogue, public-private partnerships were strengthened as the trialogue was considered as one of the key catalysts in tackling the declining population of bees and planting more bee-friendly plant species¹³.

Following the project's communication and stakeholder engagement strategy, BES-Net has built a partnership with over 110 organizations/initiatives (80 by Dec 2016, 91 by Dec 2017, 104 by Dec 2018, 111 by Dec 2019 and 113 by Dec 2020). As a "network" initiative, the BES-Net team regularly communicates with the respective partners' focal persons to obtain the latest updates of their works and feature them on the project's web portal, e-newsletters and social media channels. The project also coordinated with many partners in organizing the events. Some examples include:

- BES-Net collaborated with the Institute for Biodiversity - Network (ibn) and organized its Regional Trialogues for Eastern Europe (2017) and Central Asia (2020) back-to-back with the ibn's IPBES capacity-building workshops.
- The BES-Net team attended the Regional round table organized by the Bio-Bridge at the margin of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation workshop in 2018 and made a presentation on the Trialogue experiences and their outcomes.
- BES-Net is recognized as a member of the Coalition of the Willing on Pollinators (aka. Promote Pollinators) and convened a joint webinar in the 2020-2021 period.
- Several BES-Net partners were represented at the past BES-Net Regional Trialogues.

As a result of improved design and contents, the web portal attracted 470 new users to formally register in 2019 (58% increase from 2018), encompassing all three target communities of policymakers (31%), scientists (45%) and practitioners//ILK holders (24%). In 2020, the web portal attracted 165 new users to formally register (14% increase from 2019), encompassing all three target communities of policymakers (35%), scientists (44%) and practitioners//ILK holders (21%).¹⁴

The Project managed to include a wide range of stakeholders. As stated in the Project's final report, in 2019, 15 out of 41 participants of Anglophone Africa Regional Trialogue from the target countries were from the practice sector representing national/local NGOs, CSOs, farmers groups, indigenous community organizations, beekeepers' associations, women's associations, etc. Among them (60%) are from Least Developed Countries (LDCs), i.e. Ethiopia, Malawi, and Zambia. In 2020, all the participants in the WhatsApp group dialogue

¹² Project Progress Report- Annual Report 2019.

¹³ Project Progress Report- Annual Report 2020.

¹⁴ Source: Project Final Report.

session (62 people) and 85% of the Zoom dialogue session were from the practice sector. Among them, 50 participants (80%) were from LDCs, i.e. Benin, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, and Togo.

In conclusion, the project was successful in involving many stakeholders, scientist, practitioners and policymakers in different countries and region, in project implementation and hence the stakeholders' participation has been planned sufficiently. However, it was noticed that the involvement of the private sector, as well as CBOs, are limited. This was also confirmed by the interviewed participants, who recommended to further engage with the private sectors and CBOs to benefit from their knowledge, resources, and capacity.

Thus, the partnerships developed with the private sector and CBOs should have been strengthened.

7.7 Project Finance and Co-finance

At the time of the TE, the review of financial records as recorded in the Project's financial reports and UNDP Atlas system indicates that the actual expenditures including allocated against the SwedBio-component's grant since the start of the Project represent about **100% (US\$ 292,635.44)** of the approved budget of US\$ **292,635.44**. The breakdown of project expenditures by year is presented in [Table 2](#).

Finally, the project was not subject to any financial audit during the last 5 years.

Co-financing

The SwedBio-funded component was a small part (around 4%) of the total value of the large BES-NET Project with a total value of **6,002,099.95 USD**. The main project co-financing contributions were pledged by BMU with a total grant of **4,950,113.00 USD**, and **800,000 USD** as in-kind contributions from UNDP.

Table 2. SwedBio Components Funds Disbursement Status (FE 2021 in USD) ¹⁵

Year	Total Approved Grant Amount	Total Expenditures	Fund Balance	Utilization %
2016	66,985.09	66,985.09	0	100%
2017	55,323.33	53,179.34	0	100%
2018	51,381.59	47,398.83	0	100%
2019	61,668.81	61,204.58	0	100%
2020	57,276.62	63,867.60	0	100%
	292,635.44	292,635.44	0	100%

7.8 Monitoring & Evaluation:

The standard UNDP M&E procedures were presented in a very summarized M&E plan in the UNDP Proposal¹⁶. No specific budget was allocated for monitoring activities for the SwedBio component except one budget line for the project's evaluation.

Below is a summary of the M&E plan operating modalities (as presented in the two proposals):

¹⁵ Source: Project Final report, UNDP Atlas CDRs, and Information Provided by the Project team.

¹⁶ UNDP ProDoc. Section Reporting and Evaluation. Page 7.

- **Annual Narrative and Financial Reports:** These annual reporting requirements are prepared by the Project Manager with inputs from the UNDP and the project team. According to the project proposal, these are short summaries of main achievements and lessons learned during the year to be submitted annually and no later than the 5th of February each year. These summaries were included in the BES-Net APRs and included reporting of risks and related management plans, gender, co-financing, and financial commitments, among other issues. The Project has submitted 5 APRs: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. Also, the reports included annual work plans and budgets.
- **Annual certified financial statement** as of 31 December every year. These statements to be submitted no later than 30 June of the following year.
- **Annual Review Meeting:** According to the agreement, UNDP and SwedBio need to meet at least once a year to follow up on the progress of the project. The purpose is to share the project status and progress in detail taking advantage of various IPBES related event occasions such as an annual IPBES Plenary.
- **Final Evaluation:** The FE evaluation is underway (this report) and follows UNDP evaluation guidelines. The FE is conducted by an independent external consultant to assess and analyze the achievements of the projects both qualitatively and quantitatively with a special focus on the developing countries, gender and IPLCs-related parameters.
- **Final report:** Final report along with the FE report will serve as the final project report package. These should be submitted to the AC during the project final review meeting, which is planned to take place during the second half of 2021, to discuss the lesson learned, opportunities for scaling up, and the recommendations made in the FE and associated management response.
- **Project AC Meetings:** The BES-Net AC served as the Project Board and provided clear guidance to the project team. As discussed earlier, membership of the committee comprises representatives of BES-Net donors, BES-Net Implementing Partners (i.e. UNEP-WCMC), IPBES Secretariat, UN Collaboration Partners to IPBES, and MEAs relevant to IPBES (such as CBD and UNCCD).

The AC planned to meet twice a year to:

- review progress in the implementation of the BES-Net project, including the SwedBio-funded components,
- assess the critical emerging issues to be addressed, if any, and
- recommend the future orientation of BES-Net activities.

Based on the above, the evaluator adjudges that the project level monitoring was in line with UNDP monitoring and evaluation guidelines. The quality of APRs was exceptional and provided the AC and relevant stakeholders with the needed details to make any decisions needed.

Based on the above, the FE consultant believes that the project level monitoring component rating is **Satisfactory (S)**.

Based on the above, the M&E at design and implementation is rated as:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
	S				

7.9 Project Results

7.9.1 Progress towards objective and expected outcomes (*)

According to the UNDP FE guidelines, the achievements of expected results were evaluated in terms of attainment of the overall objective as well as identified outcomes and outputs. For this the performance by components is analyzed by looking at:

- general progress towards the established,
- actual values of indicators by the end of the Project vs. designed ones, and
- evidence of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the results as well as how this evidence was documented.

The information presented in this section has been sourced from APRs, a review of the Project's technical reports supplemented with information collected during the TE, virtual interviews with stakeholders and the project team.

A detailed assessment at the output level is presented below in **Table 3**.

Overall results of the Project are rated as

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
	S				

The key used for indicator assessment (Color Coding):

Green = completed, the indicator shows achievement
Yellow = On target to be achieved by the end of the project
Red = Not on target to be achieved by project closure

Table 3. Matrix for Rating the Achievement of Outputs¹⁷

Logical Framework for the SwedBio Funded Component of BES-Net Project (2016-2018) and Results

Objective 1: System and content development as well as the operationalization of the BES-Net web-portal as a key tool supporting the global capacity network of scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners with a focus on developing countries and gender balance					
Outcome 1.1: BES-Net web portal is fully operational, accessible and interactive for users in developing countries with registered users from the communities of science, policy and practice.		Results: BES-Net web portal fully operational in both English and French with an average of over 1,200 visitors per month since the launch with a steadily growing number of the registered users across the policy, science, and practice sector			
Outputs	Output Indicators	Targets	End of Project Assessment	Rating	Justification for Rating
1.1.1. Soft launch of the BES-Net web portal	Launch event	By December 2016	The web portal was launched in December 2016. The French version of the portal was launched in 2018.	HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement
1.1.2. Training of the BES-Net and IPBES administrators and moderators	All administrators and moderators continuously trained as per the relevant timelines	July 2016-December 2018	The management structure of BES-Net has fully been put in place and the BES-Net Web Portal Management team is fully trained on the portal operation.	HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement
1.1.3. Continued administration, moderation, content and user management of the web portal by the BES-Net team and supported by a web development	Management protocols in place and followed by the team	July 2016-December 2018	Web portal management protocols are in place; Portal is fully supported by the qualified hosting company and the technical officer.	HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement

¹⁷ Texts in this table were mainly provided by the Project team, APR 2020.

and design company					
1.1.4. Further improvements are made on the BES-Net web portal to ensure access in low connectivity areas, on mobile phones and in different languages, as per the first phase of use of the portal and user's feedback	No. of BES-Net Twitter followers	By December 2016: enhancements of the web portal-first round, to support the launch; By December 2017: enhancements of the web portal for connectivity, and development in French; December 2018: third round of enhancement of the web portal, based on experience and user's feedback	The portal was launched in French in 2018 and the web pages/ contents regularly updated and expanded; An online user survey was conducted in the 4 th quarter of 2018 and, a work plan for major updating of the web design and layout developed.	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
Outcome 1.2: The interactions of specific networks that serve the IPBES agenda, particularly those that focus on or operate in developing countries, such as the IPBES Stakeholder Network, are hosted and supported by the BES-Net web portal.		Results: While the original plan to host the IPBES Stakeholder Engagement pages was cancelled, BES-Net partners and users' arrangement was created and a number of dedicated discussion groups were established and facilitated with close technical backstopping support.			
Outputs	Output Indicators	Targets	End of Project Assessment	Rating	Justification for Rating
1.2.1. The IPBES Stakeholder Engagement Pages are developed on the BES-Net web portal following the joint request from IPBES and the IPBES Stakeholders	2 web pages are produced	By September 2016	Based on the discussions in 2016/2017, output was amended to create a stakeholder engagement function within the BES-Net web portal; IPBES stakeholders are registering as BES-Net web portal users and experts individually and various online tools to engage them were created such as "Find and Connect", "Ask Experts" and online discussion forum services.	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
1.2.2. One other group of stakeholders are created each year on the BES-Net web portal, at the user's	2 users' groups are created by users between June 2016 and December 2018 on the BES-	In 2017 and 2018	Three dedicated discussion groups created on the portal: 1) participants of the first regional Dialogue promoting the implementation of IPBES	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement

request	Net web portal		Pollination/Pollinator Thematic Report in 5 countries in Eastern Europe; 2) stakeholders facilitating the national ecosystem assessment process in 4 countries; and 3) participants of the second regional Trialogue, promoting the implementation of IPBES Pollination/Pollinator Thematic Report in 7 countries in the Caribbean.		
1.2.3. Training and technical support provided to the managers of these groups	Number of training undertaken, feedback received	July 2016-December 2018	Dedicated discussion groups are administered and fully technically supported by the BES-Net team.	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
1.2.4. Further improvements made on the web portal to support the specific needs of groups, as required	The list of users' requests for groups is continuously updated, prioritized and implemented.	July 2016-December 2018	All the contents rated beneficial by users are continuously expanded; The number of registered users is growing steadily to 808 combining all three target sectors of policy, science and practice as of 31 December 2018 (28% increase from the same period in 2017). Besides the periodic individual user feedback through email, a holistic online user survey was conducted in the 4 th quarter of 2018 to seek collective inputs on the areas of improvement for the web portal and the social media channels.	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
Objective 2: To improve the environment for effective science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions towards the achievement of common BES goals					
Outcome 2.1: Support the implementation of the overall BES-Net communication and outreach strategy.		Results: Once the BES-Net-Net Communication and Stakeholder engagement strategy was rolled out, the implementation results were regularly reported, demonstrating steady positive progress.			

Outputs	Output Indicators	Target	End of Project Assessment	Rating	Justification for Rating
2.1.1. Development of a BES-Net communication and stakeholder engagement strategy and associated implementation plan	Strategy document and implementation plans available implemented and monitored	By September 2016	The communication and stakeholder engagement strategy was established in July 2016 and was fully operationalized with annual status and progress monitoring. Minor adjustments were also made to the different sections of the strategy periodically in response to emerging needs and circumstances.	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
2.1.2. Implementation of the communication strategy through: sending regular BES-Net newsletters to all web portal users; uploading new content regularly on the BES-Net web portal to maintain the relevance, newsworthiness and interest of users (new content for the thematic libraries, new forum discussions, new jobs and internship entries, new events, etc.); maintaining and managing the BES-Net social media in a timely and lively manner, and in a fashion that is integrated with the website content and activity; continuous technical support and training provided to the	<p>Newsletter sent out quarterly</p> <p>Google Analytics statistics and analysis of activity on the BES-Net web portal</p> <p>Quantitative analysis of the feedback received using the interactive features of the BES-Net web portal</p> <p>Number of followers on social media channels</p> <p>Number of social media posts viewed/shared/ liked</p> <p>BES-Net press coverage and mentions in our Partner's communication activities</p> <p>BES-Net participation in events</p>	September 2016-December 2018	<p>Since the inauguration in October 2016, BES-Net newsletters were distributed on a bi-monthly basis, each to over 4,000 people.</p> <p>Web portal contents were updated regularly, and the numbers of web portal users/experts are steadily growing (808 registered users and 124 experts as of 31 December 2018);</p> <p>Monthly Google Analytics reports have been produced in support of the deliberation on further improvement of the web portal and the social media channels.</p> <p>Followers/visitors of BES-Net's social media channels are steadily increasing with positive feedback (4,632 Facebook followers, 618 Twitter followers and 160 LinkedIn members as of 31 December 2018).</p> <p>A total of 852 Facebook posts were published in 2018, receiving 4,632 total</p>	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement

<p>BES-Net and IPBES team of moderators; continuous monitoring of the technical performance of the website and of their feedback and needs to cater for their needs through further web-development and design; development of dissemination and communication material; and PR activities including a launch event of the BES-Net web portal and participation to key international events to promote BES-Net and BES-Net in support of IPBES.</p>			<p>page likes, 36,246 total page reach and the engagement of 1,222 people.</p> <p>A total of 739 tweets and 1,089 retweets were posted on Twitter in 2018, engaging 6,359 people and earning 1,800 likes and 408,721 impressions.</p> <p>Several publicity/PR resources, such as the project posters, briefs and interview videos, were published both in soft and hard formats and distributed widely, including at the IPBES plenaries and other global/regional events (for further details, please refer to APRs);</p> <p>BES-Net's Trialogue activities are featured by various partners and national/local media (e.g. TV, radio, newspapers) and reflected in their communication activities.</p>		
<p>2.1.3. Development and dissemination/ implementation of BES-Net methodological, knowledge and policy products, including the BES-Net Trialogue methodology, and the BES-Net gender analysis</p>	<p>The BES-Net facilitation toolkit is produced by March 2017; The BES-Net gender analysis is produced by March 2017; The BES-Net Gender Strategy is developed by June 2017 and implemented until the end of the project in December 2018</p> <p>BES-Net knowledge products are developed as per the request from website users (asking for policy briefs and identifying knowledge gaps)-</p>	<p>July 2016-December 2018</p>	<p>Based on the BES-Net Trialogue Methodological framework developed in 2017 and the region experiences to date, the Regional Trialogue info note was developed as a reference document for the interested stakeholders. The methodological framework has further been customized and tailored to each Trialogue event to better fit different regional and national contexts; BES-Net Gender Strategy was established in November 2016 and the status in the implementation was closely monitored as part of the annual progress reporting; BES-Net online</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>completed, the indicator shows achievement</p>

	January 2017-December 2018		resource library was created and equipped with 1,707 resource links by 31 December 2018, including the policy briefs, scientific publications and good practice/success story documents, etc. produced by IPBES, BES-Net partners and other BES stakeholder in various IPBES thematic fields.		
Outcome 2.2: Further identify, enlist and engage local and regional research/think-tanks and other relevant institutions, as well as Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on different thematic areas.		Results: Registered BES-Net users increased throughout the project period consistently and have reached 808 by Dec 2018 and 1,310 by Dec 2020, from policy, science and practice sectors and benefited from a wide range of the BES-Net tools and services.			
Outputs	Output Indicators	Target	End of Project Assessment	Rating	Justification for Rating
2.2.1. Development of the BES-Net contacts, web-users, Partners and Experts database, which includes a focus on an increased number of users and experts from developing countries and the community involved in ILK	Number of BES-Net contacts, web-users, Partners and Experts reported on in September 2016, December 2016, December 2017 and December 2018	BES-Net contact, web-users, Partners and Expert databases developed by September 2016	BES-Net stakeholders' database was created and regularly updated as part of the annual review of the BES-Net communication and stakeholder engagement strategy. The number of BES-Net users, partners and experts all grew steadily throughout the project lifespan in both the original and the extended periods. As of 31 December 2018, BES-Net was supported by 808 registered users, 104 partner organizations/ initiatives and 124 experts and the BES-Net database contained 1,901 contacts.	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
2.2.2. An analysis of the Network for gender, geographical spread and balance among the three communities of users with	Gender analysis following the SwedBio requirements performed by June 2017 and recommendations available for the next steps of the BES-Net	November 2016, then continue with annual reports	Since the development of the gender strategy in 2016, the project's progress in gender mainstreaming and women's participation was reported regularly. The geographical spread and balance	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement

a focus on ILK holders is undertaken	implementation Number of contacts in the database, number of ILK contacts, gender ratios in September 2016, December 2016, December 2017 & December 2018 reported on		of the BES-Net users and visitors were regularly assessed as part of the BES-Net communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy implementation review. As of 31 December 2018, the composition of the BES-Net registered users is 52% in the scientist/ILK holder, 27% in the practitioner, and 21% in the policymaker categories, respectively. 46.7% of registered users are women. The highest number of web portal visitors are from Europe (30%), followed by Asia (26%), Africa (21%) and North America (14%).		
2.2.3. Relevant studies which focus on gender and poverty in the context of biodiversity and ecosystems management and information networks are identified and relayed on the BES-Net web portal	Number of studies found used by the BES-Net team to develop its gender methodology and relayed on the BES-Net web-portal, as appropriate	July 2016-December 2018	By 31 December 2018, a total of 62 gender-focused resources were uploaded to the library.	S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
Outcome 2.3: Support the participation of ILK representatives in the BES-Net Trialogues in developing countries.		Results: BES-Net Trialogue Methodology for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities was developed and implemented throughout the original and extended SwedBio funding period with predominantly positive feedback from the participants on several dedicated tools and approaches adopted to ensure the proactive engagement of the practice sector attendees.			
Outputs	Output Indicators	Target	End of Project Assessment	Rating	Justification for Rating
2.3.1. ILK representatives are identified and supported to join the BES-	The list of participants to each Trialogue includes at least three	January 2017-December 2018	In 2017, 11 ILK representatives were sponsored to participate in the first Trialogue for Eastern Europe from four	MS	Partly achieved and carried over to 2019

Net Trialogue	ILK representatives		countries (4 from Albania, 2 from Georgia, 2 from Montenegro and 3 from Moldova). In 2018, Since the target countries for the Caribbean Regional Trialogue were not in the LDC category, it was agreed not to charge the participation cost of ILK holder representatives to SwedBio. The budget was carried over to 2019 and allocated to sponsor the participation of ILK holders from LDCs in the Anglophone Africa Regional Trialogue.		
---------------	---------------------	--	--	--	--

Table 3: Logical Framework for the SwedBio Funded Component of BES-Net Project (2019-2020) and Results

Objective 1: To enhance global knowledge exchange and mutual learning among scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners						
Outcome: Knowledge of scientists/ knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners expanded on BES-related topics.						
Outcome Indicators: Proportion of BES-Net online service users providing positive feedback on the enhancement of their BES knowledge		Target: 70% (2020)	Results: 76%	Comments: According to the 2 nd BES-Net online platform users survey in 2020, 76% of respondents scored above 7 out of 10 on the use of the BES-Net web portal; and 99% of respondents recommended the BES-Net newsletter		
Outputs	Output Indicators	Targets	End of Project Assessment		Rating	Justification for Rating
1.1. Accessibility of BES-related knowledge resources improved	No. of BES knowledge library resources available in the BES-net web portal	2,000 (2019) 2,500 (2020)	Results: 2,138 (2019) and 3,375 (2020); Final achievement – 3,375.		HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement
	No. of BES-focused e-newsletters disseminated	6 (2019) 6 (2020)	Results: 6 (2019) and 6 (2020); Final achievement – 12		S	completed, the indicator shows achievement
	No. of BES-Net web	850 (2019)	1,145 of which 475 are women (2019) and 1,310 of which 524 are women (2020); Final achievement – 1,310 (of which 524 are		HS	completed, the indicator shows

	portal users	950 (2020)	women).		achievement
	No. of BES-Net Twitter followers	750 (2019) 850 (2020)	In 2019, the number of followers increased by 78% from December 2018, based on the new strategic social media practices applied on types/timing of posts, packaging/visualization of messages, etc. to attract more stakeholders and respond to their needs and interests; (2020) The number of followers increased by 42% from December 2019). The account engaged over 5,300 people and collected 673,000 impressions throughout the year. 1,101 (2019) and 1,561 (2020); Final achievement – 1,561	HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement
1.2. Interactions among scientists/ knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners increased beyond geographic and sectoral boundaries	No. of dedicated discussion forums created	1 (2019) 1 (2020)	In 2019, two closed discussion forums were created for the participants of Anglophone Africa and Central Asia Regional Trialogues for data and info sharing across national/regional borders; (2020) Seven parallel WhatsApp discussion groups were created for the participants of the Francophone Africa Regional Trialogue's pre-Trialogue virtual sessions (62 people in total). 2 (2019) and 7 (2020); Final achievement - 9	HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement
	No. of new BES-Net experts in various thematic areas	20 (2019) 20 (2020)	(2019) a Limited number of BES-Net users offered to be part of the BES expert roster in 2019. Since the participation in the roster is voluntary, the BES-Net team will explore and pilot various strategic approaches to better encourage and engage users; (2020) As a result of the proactive invitation campaign, 13 BES-Net users with various thematic knowledge and expertise agreed to join the expert pool over the year.	MS	Partly achieved.
	No. of information sharing/ learning events organized	1 (2019) 1 (2020)	2 (2019) and 1 (2020); Final achievement – 3. (2019) 1) Presented experiences/lessons on the National Ecosystem Assessments (NEAs) and National BES platforms at IPBES-7 Stakeholder Day, and 2) Organized a side event on the Anglophone Africa Regional Trialogue during the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) COP14; (2020) Success stories on the policy-science-practice networks at national and regional levels based on BES-Net's Regional Trialogue and national ecosystem assessment (NEA) experiences were presented at the fourth meeting of IPBES	HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement

			capacity-building forum held virtually on 7-8 December 2020.				
Objective 2: To improve the environment for effective science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions towards the achievement of common BES goals							
Outcome: Capacity of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) enhanced to apply the messages and recommendations of IPBES thematic assessments to their practices							
Outcome Indicators: No. of IPLC participants in the Regional Trialogues providing practical stories of implementing the agreed follow-up actions as the evidence of IPBES assessment applications		Target: 5 (2020)	Results: 5	Comments: Representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Nigeria and Kazakhstan participated in the BES-Net webinar and shared post-Regional Dialogue effort on the uptake of the IPBES thematic assessments including the proven stories by the practice sector. More stories from the practice and other sectors of the Regional Trialogues are posted on the web portal and circulated through various BES-Net online channels.			
Outputs	Output Indicators	Targets	End of Project Assessment		Rating	Justification for Rating	
2.1. Guiding frameworks for science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions developed/ refined and experiences shared	No. of guiding framework documents developed/ refined	2 (2019) 2 (2020)	The project developed and regularly reviewed/updated the 1) BES-Net Communication Stakeholder Engagement Strategy; 2) BES-Net Gender Strategy, and 3) Trialogue methodological framework. A guiding framework document for IPLC engagement into Regional Dialogue was drafted. In 2020, the project developed and has regularly reviewed/updated the 1) BES-Net Communication Stakeholder Engagement Strategy; 2) BES-Net Gender Strategy; 3) Trialogue methodological framework, and 4) guiding framework document for IPLC engagement into Regional Dialogue. A guidance note was also created on IPLC engagement in the virtual dialogue sessions.		HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement	
	No. of lessons learnt documents developed	1 (2020)	Results: N/A (2019) and 1 (2020); Final achievement - 1		S	completed, the indicator shows achievement	
2.2. Representation of IPLCs in policy dialogues improved	% IPLC representation among the BES-Net Regional Trialogues participants	25 (2019) 25 (2020)	Results: 36.6% of which 53% are women (2019) and 100% of which 35% are women (2020)		HS	completed, the indicator shows achievement	

7.10 Relevance (*)

Reviewed evidence and stakeholders interviewed confirmed that the project is highly relevant and addressed a highly important topic to UNDP, IPBES, MEAs and the governments of the participating countries. The stakeholders interviewed during the TE expressed the added value of the project and emphasized that it is crucial to have a new phase to follow up and implement the countries’ plans. The elements of strategic relevance are:

The Project has been highly relevant to the IPBES strategy and work. The BES-Net Project responds to calls for capacity building in the IPBES context, particularly from developing countries, thereby directly addressing needs identified by its 124 Member States in strengthening the science-policy platform for biodiversity and ecosystem services. This project contributes to implementing biodiversity related MEAs. Especially, the project was designed to contribute to inform National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and resource mobilization strategies, and to meet the following Aichi Targets of CBD:

- *Target 19:* By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared, and transferred, and applied.
- *Target 18:* By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.
- *Target 2:* By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.

The Project’s catalytic support through the BES-Net component in the targeted countries was deeply embedded into participating UNDP country offices’ wider BES/environment portfolios and fully integrated into broader United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) to maximize their complementarity with other relevant initiatives, continuity and long-term impacts

At the national level, UNDP Country Office focal points and their political partners in the target countries took the leading roles to monitor the BES-Net II activities be carried out in close synergy with related ongoing and forthcoming UNDP projects and other relevant initiatives, which are mutually reinforcing, such as GEF/ Small Grants Programme (SGP). Also, UNDP COs maintained close coordination, and regularly explore the areas of collaboration with other IKI-funded programme partners in respective target countries by making use of the national alliance networks.

The Project is highly relevant to several ongoing initiatives at the national levels that were linked to the BES-Net and the SwedBio components solutions delivering beneficial outcomes for multiple sustainable development objectives. During the project design, it was envisaged that the Project will aim to monitor and showcase how its support to mainstream the concept of nature-based solutions across sectors and strengthening of ecosystem health/resilience will contribute directly or indirectly to the achievement of sustainable development agendas in the target countries such as poverty alleviation (SDG1), food security (2), water and sanitation (6), energy (7), job creation (8), business/industries (9), peace (16), among others.

Based on the above, project relevance is rated as Relevant:

Relevant (R)	Irrelevant (IR)
R	

7.11 Effectiveness and Efficiency (*)

Effectiveness

The Project has been very effective in achieving its specific objectives. The effectiveness of the project strategy is evidenced by:

- The level of satisfaction with the Project progress expressed by all stakeholders during the TE is very high. Stakeholders reported that the level of effectiveness of this Project is very high in comparison to other projects they been involved with.
- No delays encountered during the project implementation due to the active involvement of the different stakeholders, the professional and highly dedicated project team, and governments interest. The project team with the support of the Government and UNDP and other UN agencies were able to advance the work and provided the needed technical support.

The Project was impacted by COVID19 during 2020. This issue affected the speed of implementation and the ability to convene the needed face-to-face dialogue. Thus far, the Project was able to design and effectively utilize several adaptive management measures to continue the work under the COVID19 conditions to achieve its main goal. As a result, the Project objective and main outputs have been achieved; most of the established targets have been met.

Considering the above-mentioned facts, Effectiveness was rated as **Highly Satisfactory**:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
HS					

Efficiency

The rating for project efficiency is **Satisfactory (S)**. The Project has been able to implement planned activities within the planned duration using the allocated resources. Overall, it appears the project has been efficient for the following reasons:

- Involvement of relevant stakeholders through the utilization of the pre-existed coordination mechanisms (Committees) as the Project AC (BES-Net Committee) which served as the project board.
- The cost-effectiveness of the project is considered **Satisfactory (S)**. The inclusion of long-term staff who were involved in the BES-NET Project in project implementation helped the Project in achieving all results with no delays.
- The M&E of the project was undertaking according to UNDP procedures and it is rated as **Satisfactory (S)**, yet some aspects could have been enhanced like reporting. It was noticed that the APRs, mainly during Phase 1, did not include sufficient information about the project M&E components, no update on the project's issues and risks, and no focus on adaptive management.
- Risks and issues identification and management is rated as **Satisfactory (S)**. The Project was affected by some risks and issues more than one time during its implementation those were registered using the UNDP ATLAS system and reported in the APRs.
- Project capacity to build needed partnerships during the project's implementation phase is rated as **Satisfactory (S)**. More effort should be put towards enhancing the private sector and specialized CBOs participation.
- The Project ensured the representation and participation of women in all the project's activities. The SwedBio support has also contributed to improving gender mainstreaming within the BES-Net activities in both qualitative and quantitative terms – integrating gender-focused perspectives into dialogues and increasing the number

of women participating in the network. The involvement of men and women equally into project activities as well as mainstreaming gender in the project's activities are rated as **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**.

- The quick shift from the agreed-upon activities into a new set of activities due to COVID-19 facilitated the implementation of the remaining activities and ensured that the fund was utilized as per the need of the stakeholders and in line with the overall project's goal.

Overall, it emerges that the Project has been **Satisfactory** when it comes to efficiency.

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Unsatisfactory (U)	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)
	S				

7.12 Sustainability

This section discusses how sustainable project achievements should be over the long term. It includes a review of the management of specific risks such as financial risk, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks. The Project team confirmed that currently no exit strategy and/or sustainability plan are being developed however there is a proposal for SwedBio support to BES-Net Phase II.¹⁸

The objective of the new support is to “*build science-policy-practice capacity to co-generate knowledge on BES and jointly design evidence-informed, strategic and transformative solutions for the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable management and use of essential ecosystem services.*”. To this end, the new project is to make use of the existing governance structure and make full use of the different stakeholders involved in the project (UNDP, UNEP-WCMC, and UNESCO)

7.13 Financial Risks to Sustainability

For such a technical project when reviewing the sustainability of project achievements, financial risk is an area where some questions related to the long-term sustainability of project achievements need some attention.

For financial sustainability and to ensure and further enhancement of the outreach and operations of BES-Net in developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe are achieved the project should be financially sustained post-project, a financial sustainability strategy is proposed to be prepared along with an exit strategy and sustainability plan. However, an advance action has happened. UNDP and the SwedBio are currently at the advanced stage of discussion to explore the new partnership to support the BES-Net Phase II from 2021 to 2024. For the TE, this commitment from SwedBio and UNDP ensures that there are no financial risks to sustain the project's impacts. The first phase of the project ensured that the needed financial support is mobilized before the project's closure.

Based on the above discussion, the financial risks are negligible, and sustainability is rated as:

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MUL)	Unlikely (U)
L			

¹⁸ Concept Note was shared with the evaluation consultant “*CONCEPT NOTE FOR SWEDBIO SUPPORT TO BES-NET PHASE II*”.

7.14 Socio-economic Risks to Sustainability

The project is highly relevant to the needs of the three main beneficiaries: scientists, practitioners, and policymakers. Thus, there are no envisaged socio-economic risks that might affect the sustainability of the project's outcomes. The TE does not see any socio-economic risk to sustainability.

Based on the above-mentioned Socio-economic Risk, risks are negligible and thus the sustainability is rated as:

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MUL)	Unlikely (U)
L			

7.15 Institutional Framework and Governance Risks to Sustainability

The project has implemented a comprehensive capacity development programme and produced the necessary knowledge products to ensure awareness and knowledge are enhanced and distributed at the national, regional, and global levels. Due to the nature of the Project's governance structure and management, the Project managed to institutionalize its major deliverables. Knowledge management established to provide useful information and it is expected to help a great deal at different stage and locations and will be useful for ecosystem professionals, researchers/academic, and decision-makers.

The issues of institutional sustainability were considered as likely as the risks are lowered.

The Institutional framework and governance risks are medium, and sustainability is:

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Unlikely (U)
L			

7.16 Environmental Risks to Sustainability

All the project interventions indicated that the activities enhanced the environment and conserve ecosystems. No activities implemented by the Project posed any environmental threats to the sustainability of the Project's outcomes. The TE sees no environmental risk to sustainability.

The Environmental risks are negligible, and the sustainability is:

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MS)	Unlikely (U)
L			

Based on the assessment of the categories above, and the presence of low risks, the overall sustainability rating is:

Likely (L)	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderately Unlikely (MS)	Unlikely (U)
L			

7.17 Impact

The Project has achieved major milestones and key outputs concerning managing biodiversity and ecosystem services. Below is a summary of key deliverables, that would have a long-term impact on the Project:

SwedBio Support to BES-Net during the Original Agreement Period (June 2016- December 2018)

- Established BES-Net's overall online networking framework and the roll-out of various tools and approaches to facilitate the dialogues and interactions among policymakers, scientists, and practitioners.
- Established the project's strategies for communication, stakeholder engagement and gender mainstreaming
- Launched the BES-Net web portal with a few different functions and services as a basis for enhancing policy-science-practice interfaces over BES and related themes.
- Made the BES-Net web portal highly visible and actively utilized, receiving over 19,000 visitors annually, including some 5,700 from Europe, 4,800 people from Asia and 4,000 people from Africa, in 2018.
- Reached over 800 people registered to BES-Net as the visitors and the regular users of the BES-Net online tools, of which approximately 47% were women.
- Established a partnership with a total of 104 organizations/initiatives to enhance the thematic collaboration, promote regular information exchange and expand the collective outreach to the target audiences. About 62% of the BES-Net partners (i.e. 64 organizations) have been integrating a gender perspective into their operations to different extents.

SwedBio Support to BES-Net during the Amended Period January 2019 to December 2020

- Strengthened the online policy-science-practice network around various BES themes. The BES-Net team provided the partner institutions, individual registered users, and other visitors with dedicated online support to help them continuously interact on various BES-related topics of common interest.
- Broadening and strengthening of the BES network worldwide. All in all, the web portal obtained the highest rate of traffic since the launch, with more than 70,000 page-views in total and nearly 2,000 visitors utilizing a wide range of services offered every month. In terms of the regional distribution of the web portal visitors, the highest overall rate of access was recorded in 2020 in all the regions, except for North America and other category regions since the launch of the web portal. The portal received the largest number of visitors from Europe, which accounted for 32% of the total visitors in the year, followed by Asia (23%) and Africa (20%).
- Expanded BES-Net's partnership to 113 organizations/initiatives and 67% of the partners, or 76 organizations/initiatives, are committed to integrating the gender perspective into their operations to different extents.
- Strengthening partners' capacities in mainstreaming gender equality. Some organizations are committed to mainstreaming gender equality as part of their missions/visions, while others strive to ensure women's representation in their governance system. Many partners are also contributing to gender mainstreaming efforts by publishing and disseminating resources concerning gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Enhanced the engagement of IPLCs in the BES-Net activities and built their capacity to apply the IPBES assessment messages to their on the ground practices. The project team regularly reviewed and updated the existing strategies pertinent to IPLCs. It also developed a set of methodological frameworks to guide the active participation of IPLCs in the policy-science-practice dialogue and networking process, including a guidance note on the IPLCs engagement in the virtual dialogue settings under the COVID-19 situation.

- Engaged a wide range of practice sector participants in the Anglophone Africa Regional Trialogue, which was held in May 2019. They represented the national/local non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, farmers groups, indigenous community organizations, beekeepers' associations, women's associations, etc. from six countries, including three least developed countries.
- In the third and fourth quarters of 2020, the project also organized online dialogue sessions, particularly targeting the IPLCs stakeholders in the Francophone Africa region. Using various communication support tools, the pilot virtual Trialogue sessions allowed more than 60 participants to actively exchange knowledge and experiences on the protection and sustainable use of pollinators for local food security and ecosystem management.

8. Recommendations

The Project is considered successful. It managed to deliver most of its planned results within an acceptable timeframe and use of resources. Based on the review and assessment of the project context, the technical nature of the project, and taking into consideration the operational issues faced by the project during implementation like COVID-19 breakout, the project overall rating is **Highly Satisfactory**.

The Project is very much acknowledged by the participating governments and stakeholders, and very relevant to UNDP, and the Governments' plans. The confirmed interest and support provided by the UNDP, SwedBio and BES-Net prospects for sustainability are certain, and overall sustainability is considered **likely**.

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

For the Design

Corrective Action 1: Discuss the LF systematically with stakeholders mainly the proposed targets and indicators and ensure that targets and indicators are SMART.

Corrective Action 2: Adaptive management measures need to constitute part of the Project implementation review. This is crucial to effectively avoid any risks during the implementation.

For the Monitoring and Evaluation

Correction Action 3: Ensure that the Project's Reports include qualitative and quantitative analysis and provide essential information. An exit strategy needs to be discussed during the last six months of the Project.

TE would like to make the following recommendations to ensure there is a clear set of actions to follow up or reinforce the initial benefits of the project:

Recommendation 1: To ensure that the knowledge gained through the Regional Trialogues is shared, the Project should ensure that a clear follow-up plan is developed and implemented after attending the regional trialogues. A key lesson learned from the Regional Trialogues is the need to have a follow-up plan after the events. This may include presenting the action plan developed in the dialogue at the national level, encouraging participants to share their knowledge with national stakeholders.

Recommendation 2: The Project should encourage and attract active participation of the private sector to enhance national and local biodiversity conservation measures; support communities benefiting from ecosystems services and expand project knowledge to national stakeholders. Through private-public-partnership, dedicate a certain percentage of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund to finance better biodiversity conservation measures and tools through effective communication.

Recommendation 3: Institutionalize the Regional Trialogues model by developing a clear governance structure that is discussed with all stakeholders and approved by the Project Board. This is essential to make sure that countries are benefiting from the Regional Trialogues. This should include the following elements as a minimum: each country formulates a team of experts with different backgrounds [climate change, ecosystems, land degradation, ecologists, hydrologists, etc.], and appoint one person as a focal point per country.

Recommendation 4: The Project to build on the success of the first two phases and expand the work to cover other geographical zones and involve more languages to facilitate national participation in regional events. The BES-Net wealth and expanded

networks support the UN participating agencies in accelerating SDGs implementation and enhancing national work concerning biodiversity conservation.

Recommendation 5: UNDP to build on the strengths of other UN agencies to act and deliver as one UN. UNDP, UNEP, FAO, and UNESCO complement each other's and can amplify and follow up on the implementation of the action plans developed in the regional dialogues. The existence of four UN agencies can provide great support to the project's implementation [UNDP focuses on financing and capacity building, FAO on food security, UNESCO on education, and UNEP on technical issues related to biodiversity conservation and ecosystems services.

Recommendation 6: To ensure the sustainability of the project's impact, BES-Net and UNDP must ensure government participation and enhance national ownership. As it stands, the project is not government-driven though everyone is accountable for its action plan developed and agreed to implement. Government representatives must take responsibility for implementation.

9. Lessons learned

- **Lesson Learned 1:** The Project has become and serves as a model of excellence for other knowledge networks to build on. The multidisciplinary and multi-lingual team is useful for supporting the process.
- **Lesson Learned 2:** High-level political will is critical for driving biodiversity conservation at the national level. The need to identify national focal points and/or champions at the national level is important to support the implementation process and enhance coordination.
- **Lesson Learned 3:** Broad stakeholders' engagement with a robust coordination and communication mechanism is important for successful implementation. It was observed and shared by different stakeholders that the project was considered very successful due to the ability to talk in more than one language. Providing facilitation services and translation during different events facilitated the groups' interactions and work.
- **Lesson Learned 4:** Need to enlist the involvement and contribution of the private sector and specialized CBOs in biodiversity conservation and ecosystems services for scaling up capacity building and knowledge management.
- **Lesson Learned 5:** Trialogues are useful tools for supporting the attainment of Biodiversity targets and SDG targets at the national and global levels.
- **Lessons Learned 6:** Continuous stakeholders' engagement and communication is essential for knowledge management and sharing project implementation.
- **Lessons Learned 7:** Recruitment of M&E Officer for the new phase is crucial for its success. Also, extending the Project to other countries encouraging and fostering more knowledge sharing and collaboration between stakeholders.

10. Annexes

10.1 Final Evaluation ToR



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Terms of Reference

Final Evaluation of the SwedBio-funded Component of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) Project

Location:	Home-based
Type of Contract:	Individual Contract
Languages Required:	English (Knowledge of one or more additional UN official languages is an advantage)
Starting Date:	1 December 2020
Duration of Assignment:	30 days spread between December 2020 and February 2021

I. Background and Context

The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) is a capacity sharing “network of networks” that promotes dialogue among science, policy and practice for more effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems services, contributing to long-term human well-being and sustainable development. BES-Net aims at contributing to the capacity building work of the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). In particular, the first phase of the BES-Net initiative (2016-2021) has been committed to facilitate and promote dialogue on topics linked to IPBES thematic assessments as well as in key areas of UNDP’s work on biodiversity and ecosystems management through three interlinked areas of work:

- Face-to-face capacity-building support through Regional Trialogues: Trialogues bring together BES-Net’s three target communities of science, policy and practice for face-to-face dialogues around the themes of the completed IPBES Thematic Assessments, particularly on pollinators/pollination and land degradation/restoration. Fostering mutual learning, inter-cultural understanding and interinstitutional coordination on specific policy-relevant questions at the national and regional levels, Trialogues strengthen the interface between these communities and enhance national capacity to integrate scientific findings of the IPBES assessments into policy, decision-making and on-the-ground practices. The special geographic focus is placed on Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Anglophone/Francophone Africa and Central Asia;
- National Ecosystem Assessments (NEA): BES-Net supports the development of the national capacity to conduct NEAs in pilot countries, namely Cameroon,

Colombia, Ethiopia and Vietnam, complementing the global assessment being undertaken by IPBES. Leveraging the expertise of the Sub-Global Assessment Network (SGAN), the NEA process encompasses not only the production of national assessment reports but also the development of a set of policy support tools to integrate assessment findings into decision-making; and

- Online platform for global networking: The BES-Net web portal provides a comprehensive knowledge resource library on biodiversity and ecosystems services, and a rich database of organizations and experts working on the IPBES thematic assessment areas. The latest news and updates from BES-Net and its 100+ network partners are circulated via social media channels and disseminated through bi-monthly e-newsletters.

The BES-Net Phase I is managed by the Nairobi-based Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification (GC-RED), which is one of UNDP's Global Policy Centers, in partnership with the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). The total budget of the BES-Net Phase I is about US\$ 4.95 million, which is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) with the contribution of approximately US\$ 4.65 million, and SwedBio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre with the contribution of approximately US\$ 300,000. The SwedBio-supported component of BES-Net will expire on 31 December 2020, while the BMU-supported component will end on 31 June 2021.

The overall aim of the SwedBio-supported component of BES-Net is to further the outreach and operations of BES-Net in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe, particularly the developing countries to:

- 1) Assist in integrating thematic issues of biodiversity and ecosystems management into national poverty alleviation and development programmes;
- 2) Accelerate the policy uptake and use of the thematic assessments produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; and
- 3) Support the participation of indigenous and local knowledge holders in policy dialogues.

In the 2016-2018 period, SwedBio support focused on supporting:

- *Enhancing the BES-Net web-portal* - system and content development as well as the operationalization of the BES-Net web-portal as a key tool supporting the global capacity network of scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners with a focus on developing countries and gender balance
 - Output 1.1. BES-Net web portal is fully operational, accessible and interactive for users in developing countries with registered users from the communities of science, policy and practice
 - Output 1.2. Specific networks are supported by the BES-Net web portal
 - Output 1.3. There is increased visibility of BES-Net
- *Networking and communication* activities around BES-Net in developing countries; outreach activities will also be gender-sensitive and target marginal groups.
 - Output 2.1. An increased number of user and expert (institutions) from developing countries and the community involved in ILK are registered on BES-Net
 - Output 2.2. Gender is taken into account in the BES-Net Dialogues

In the 2018-2020 period (extended period), SwedBio support has been dedicated:

- To enhance global knowledge exchange and mutual learning among scientists/knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners

- Output 1.1. Accessibility to and utilization of BES-related knowledge resources improved
- Output 1.2. Interactions among scientists/ knowledge holders, policymakers and practitioners increased beyond geographic and sectoral boundaries
- To improve the environment for effective science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions towards the achievement of common BES goals
 - Output 2.1. Guiding frameworks for science-policy-practice dialogue and collaborative actions developed/refined and experiences shared
 - Output 2.2. Representation of IPLCs in policy dialogues improved

II. Evaluation Purpose, Scope and Objectives

This final evaluation is being conducted following the project proposals and the agreements with the project donors, and in line with the GC-RED Evaluation Plan submitted to the UNDP Evaluation Resource Centre, UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Evaluation Policy (2016) and Evaluation Guidelines (2019), among other resources, which set out several guiding principles, norms and standards for evaluation within UNDP. In compliance with the overall UNDP Evaluation Policy, the evaluation exercise must be independent, impartial, credible and designed with utility in mind. The evaluation should generate relevant and useful information to support evidence-based decision making.

The main objective of the final evaluation is to assess the achievements of the SwedBio-supported component of the BES-Net project, i.e. the extent of attainments of the expected results, as initially planned and as adjusted upon the extension of the support, and review the SwedBio component's theory of change (TOC) as part of broader BES-Net TOC vis-à-vis the component's accomplishments. The exercise is also expected to highlight key good practices, weaknesses/gaps and other lessons learnt during the implementation of the component within the broader BES-Net project framework to provide forward-looking insights and practical and actionable recommendations to increase the likelihood of success relating to impact and sustainability, taking into account the continuity of the BES-Net initiative through the Phase II (2020-2028) and to inform future programming in the field of BES.

Under the direction of the BES-Net Project Manager and working closely with the Monitoring and Evaluation focal points, the independent evaluator is expected to focus on the key criteria, which include, among others:

- The relevance of the component interventions under the overall BES-Net project to the first and second IPBES work programmes, particularly the Platform's Capacity Building Rolling Plan, and overall policy-science interface enhancement at global, regional and national levels;
- Effectiveness of the components within the wider BES-Net project;
- The efficiency of the component design and implementation to date (including implementation approaches employed as a basis to guide possible future improvements in delivery);
- Potential sustainability in terms of the contribution of the component towards the BES-Net Phase II (2020-2028) and other BES initiatives;
- Likelihood of achieving the projected impact of the component vis-à-vis the assumptions used in the development of the overall BES-Net project; and
- Fulfilment to gender equality.

Pertinent issues such as management arrangements, procurement and financial procedures, timeliness of interventions, selection of beneficiaries, incorporation of

innovative solutions and prospects for sustainability should also be included in the analysis.

The evaluation findings will be utilized and the recommendations are applied by the BES-Net project team to improve the implementation of the rest of Phase I up to 2021, and Phase II of the project in both technical and operational terms. The results will also be utilized for the consultation with SwedBio and other potential donors on the possible continuous/new collaborations in support of BES-Net Phase II.

III. Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions

The following are guiding questions within the framework of the evaluation criteria, which are to be reviewed by the evaluator and elaborated/targeted/specified further in the evaluation inception report in line with the above evaluation purpose, scope and objectives:

Relevance

- Was there a clear and logical consistency between, inputs, activities, outputs and progress towards achievement of objectives (quality, quantity and time-frame)?
- How has the component contributed to the priorities of the overall BES-Net project and those of the first and second IPBES work programmes?
- Were the component's objectives, including specification of targets and identification of beneficiaries, clear and realistic?
- Was the component relevant to the needs of target beneficiaries?
- How well did the component react to changing work environment and how well has the design able to adjust to emerging circumstances?

Effectiveness

- To what extent is the component successful in achieving the expected results?
- In which areas does the component have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the component build on or expand these achievements?
- In which areas does the component have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?
- What has been the contribution of partners and other organizations to the results, and how effective have BES-Net partnerships been in contributing to achieving the planned results?
- To what extent have the targeted stakeholders and beneficiaries benefitted from the component? Are there any other beneficiaries, besides the targeted, who have benefitted from the component?
- To what extent are the current results benefitting women and men equally?
- To what extent are the component management and implementation participatory and is this participation contributing to the achievement of the component and broader BES-Net objectives?

Efficiency

- To what extent are funding, staff, and other resources used to achieve the expected results of the component and the overall BES-Net project? Was there economic use of resources?
- Were the strategies utilized adequately? How have they contributed to the maximum intervention efficiency?

- To what extent was component implementation (e.g. procurement, recruitment) guided by effectiveness principles such as accountability, fairness and value for money?
- To what extent were quality outputs delivered on time?
- Were there any unanticipated events (e.g. COVID 19), opportunities or constraints that contributed to or hindered the delivery of the interventions promptly?

Sustainability

- What strategies and mechanisms have been incorporated into the implementation of the component to guarantee the sustainability of expected outputs in the broader BES-Net project framework?
- To what extent did the capacity building activities under the component produce lasting results?
- To what extent have partners and other stakeholders committed to providing continuing support?
- To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the BES-Net project team continually and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the BES-Net project/SwedBio-supported component?
- To what extent can the results of the component be replicated/ upscaled in other areas?

Potential Impact

- Did the component have the intended impact and/or is the component likely to on the overall BES-Net project and beyond?
- What specific contribution did the component make within the broader BES-Net project framework? What specific part of this difference can be attributed to the component?

Gender equality

- To what extent has gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender?

IV. Methodology

The final project evaluation is to be undertaken following UN evaluation norms and policies, including UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluations and UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results and the UNDP Evaluation Guidance document.

Given the nature of the BES-Net project including the SwedBio-supported component, with the combination of global, regional and national focus, and because of the current COVID-19 situation, the collection of data will be undertaken on a home basis. The assignment is envisaged to cover at least the following areas:

- Desk study review of all the project related documents, such as the project proposals, annual work plans, annual progress reports, minutes of the biannual Advisory Committee meetings and other evidence-based sources of information (e.g. periodic online user survey reports Regional Trialogue outcome monitoring reports), etc.
- Virtual meetings/email-based consultations with the BES-Net project team (i.e. UNDP, UNEP-WCMC and sub-contracted organizations), the Project Advisory Committee members, donors and other key partners; and

- Online questionnaires and/or interviews with those who have participated in and benefited from the component activities.

The UNDP GPC-Nairobi, in support of the final project evaluation, will:

- Provide all relevant background documents to the Consultant;
- Provide an overall briefing on the BES-Net project and the SwedBio-supported component;
- Avail any necessary follow-up support for online/email-based consultations and interviews; and
- Provide any additional information and support, as required.

The type of information and methods selected must produce evidence, and they should combine both qualitative and quantitative aspects. The evaluation findings should not rely only on perceptions, but the evidence should be validated by the triangulation of different data sources /or methods.

V. Evaluation Products (Key Deliverables)

The main product of the final project evaluation will be a final project evaluation report. The language of the report is English. The report should articulate the project results and findings for the BMU funded and SwedBio-supported components respectively, and comply with other UNDP requirements. The detailed outline of the report shall be agreed upon the commencement of the assignment. The expected deliverables will include:

Inception report: An inception report shall be submitted within 5 days of commencing the consultancy, based on a desk review and preliminary analysis of the available information supplied and the initial meetings with the UNDP GC-RED/BES-Net project team. The report should contain an evaluation matrix (See Annex) that displays for each of the evaluation criteria, the questions and sub-questions that the evaluation will answer, and for each question, the data that will be collected to inform that question and the methods that will be used to collect that data (all based on the evaluation criteria outlined). It should also include a proposed schedule of tasks/activities and deliverables and a table of contents for the final evaluation report (See Annex). The methodology should be robust enough to ensure high quality, triangulation of data sources, and verifiability of information.

Presentation of the preliminary findings: The evaluator should present the preliminary findings of the evaluation and tentative conclusions of the evaluation to the UNDP GC-RED/BES-Net project team as well as the relevant partners/stakeholders.

Draft consolidated evaluation report: The draft evaluation report, containing the initial findings including key observations and recommendations based on verifiable facts and figures, shall be circulated to all with any responsibility in oversight regarding the BES-Net project, including the SwedBio-supported component, as well as the organizations/individuals participating in the evaluation process to ensure that the evaluation needs are met based on the quality criteria, as well as validate the finding, recommendations identified in the report. This should also be accompanied by an audit trail detailing how comments, questions and clarifications have been addressed.

Final report: The draft report will be amended further by the Consultant taking into account all the comments and inputs from the stakeholders. The final report shall be submitted to GC-RED in digital form using the latest MS Office programs. GPC-Nairobi will share copies of the report with the donor and any other relevant stakeholders.

VI. Evaluation Ethics

This evaluation will be conducted following the principles outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (2020) available at <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/2866>. The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing the collection of data and reporting on it. The evaluator must also ensure the security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

VII. Management and Implementation Arrangement

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with UNDP GC-RED and will contract the evaluators.

While the evaluation will remain fully independent GC-RED's BES-Net Project Manager and the M&E focal points will serve as the focal point for providing both substantive and logistical support to the contractor. In close cooperation and consultation with UNDP GC-RED/BES-Net team, the contractor will develop the plan, identify key interview partners and organize virtual meetings.

This TOR shall be the basis upon which compliance with assignment requirements and the overall quality of services provided by the consultants will be assessed by UNDP.

During the evaluation, the Consultant is entitled and expected to discuss with all the persons and organizations relevant to the assignment. The Consultant has no authorization to make any commitments on behalf of UNDP, its implementing partners or donors.

VIII. Evaluation Timeframe and Payment Schedule

This consultancy is envisioned to be completed in 30 (thirty) working days spread over two (2) months between December 2020 and January 2021.

Payment will be made based on satisfactory submission of the deliverables:

Deliverables/Outputs	Number of working days	Payment (Target Due Date)
Satisfactory submission of the inception report	5	15% (By 15 December 2020)
Presentation of the Preliminary Findings	13	39% (By 22 January 2020)
Satisfactory submission of the draft consolidated evaluation report	7	21% (By 5 February 2021)
Satisfactory submission of the final consolidated evaluation report	5	15% (By 28 February 2021)
Total	30	100%

IX. Evaluation Team Composition and Required Skills and Experience

The lead evaluator will be responsible for collating all information collected and finalizing the reports and deliverables. The evaluator selected must be independent of any organization that was involved in the project and must not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and must not have a conflict of interest with project-related activities. The Lead evaluator is expected to take primary responsibility for:

Planning, conducting and reporting on the evaluation including guiding the other evaluator(s), if any

- Documentation review
- Organizing the collection of the relevant data and inputs to the reports/deliverables
- Supervision of the evaluation and ensuring timelines are met
- Use of best practice evaluation methodologies in conducting the evaluation
- Drafting and finalizing of the Inception Report for the Final Evaluation
- Leading presentation of the draft evaluation findings and recommendations in-country
- Conducting the de-briefing for the UNDP GC-RED/BES-Net project team and other stakeholders
- Drafting and finalization of the Final Evaluation Report

The evaluator should have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with UNDP projects is an advantage. The evaluator must also present the following qualifications:

Competency:

Corporate Competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards:
 - Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
 - Treats all people fairly without favouritism.

Functional Competencies:

- Extensive knowledge of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods
- Good analytical and strategic thinking skills

Development and Operational Effectiveness:

- Ability to lead strategic planning, change processes, results-based management and reporting;
- Ability to conduct evaluation considering the specific country context and to identify creative, practical approaches to overcome challenging situations.
- Ability to meet tight deadlines

Management and Leadership:

- Excellent interpersonal, communication, and teamwork skills
- Builds strong relationships with clients, focuses on impact and result for the client and responds positively to feedback;
- Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude;
- Demonstrates openness to change and ability to manage complexities;
- Ability to lead effectively, mentoring as well as conflict resolution skills;
- Remains calm, in control and good-humoured even under pressure;

- Proven networking, team-building, organizational and communication skills.

Education:

- Advanced university degree in natural resources management/environment or related disciplines;

Experience:

- At least 8 years of professional experience in results-based management and participatory monitoring and evaluation.
- At least 3 years of relevant experiences in the area of biodiversity and various BES-Net thematic fields;
- Solid understanding of UNDP's results-based evaluation policies and procedures and past project M&E experiences within the United Nations system; and
- Good communication and analytical, and visualization skills including gender-sensitive analysis.

Language:

- Fluency in written and spoken English (Prerequisite)
- Knowledge of one or more additional UN official languages is an advantage

X. Application Submission Process

Applicants must submit a duly completed and signed application form in English, which include the below components:

- **P11 form**, indicating all relevant past experiences and the contact details of at least three (3) professional referees;
- **CV** in alignment with the required qualification and relevant experience;
- **Proposed Methodology** on how the applicant will approach and complete the assignment; and
- **Financial Proposal** that indicates the daily rate/fee of the candidate in US dollars, using the **Offeror's letter to UNDP confirming interest and availability**

XI. Criteria for Selection

Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the technical criteria will be weighted at 70% and the financial offer will be weighted at 30%. Only candidates scoring 49 points or higher from the review of education, experience, language and methodology (i.e. technical criteria) will be considered for the financial evaluation. Those applications not meeting the prerequisite language requirement (i.e. fluency in English) will not be considered Applicant receiving the highest combined score and has accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

Technical Criteria (70% of total evaluation; maximum 70 points):

- Demonstrated academic qualification (Max. 5);
- Demonstrated professional experience in results-based management and participatory monitoring and evaluation (Max. 15);
- Demonstrated relevant experiences in the area of biodiversity and various BES-Net thematic fields (Max 10)
- Solid understanding of UNDP's results-based evaluation policies and procedures and past project M&E experiences within the United Nations system (Max. 10)

- Communication and analytical, and visualization skills including gender-sensitive analysis (Max. 5)
- Knowledge of one or more additional UN official languages (Max. 5)
- Quality of methodology based on the level of understanding of the task, the extent of addressing the important aspects of the task and the degree of aligning the scope of the task to the TOR (Max. 20)

Financial Criteria (30% of total evaluation; maximum 30 points) – to be computed as a ratio of the proposal being evaluated and the lowest priced proposal of those technically qualified;

XII. Annexes

All the below documents are available at

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3k75p1xcvaxr7ct/AADqoyz2PI3TBh-2_sOe8Wfga?dl=0

- Project proposal to SwedBio for 2016-18 under BES-Net Phase I
- Project extension proposal to SwedBio for 2018-2020 under BES-Net Phase I
- GC-RED Project Document including BES-Net Component
- Project proposal to BMU International Climate Initiative (IKI) for BES-Net Phase I
- Project proposal to BMU IKI for BES-Net Phase II
- List of key stakeholders and partners
- Preliminary documents to be consulted
- Evaluation matrix template
- Outline of the evaluation report format
- Code of conduct forms

10.2 Final Evaluation Work Plan

Schedule & Calendar of Work		
Activity (s)	Description	Deadline
Phase (1)		2 March 2021
Inception Inception report and evaluation matrix (5) Days	Initial document review, development of methodology and develop a work plan. Participate in an Inception Meeting with UNDP lead unit, inception report.	
Presentation, data collection	Desk review, surveys, interviews, the presentation including briefing & debriefing. Draft inception report.	
Phase (2)		1 April 2021
Draft evaluation report Stakeholder workshop presentation (20 Days)	Interview stakeholders Data collection, meetings and other forms of evaluation information gathering within communities.	
Synthesis	Data entry, analysis, interpretation leads to the development of the provisional report. Present draft Evaluation Report and lessons.	
Phase 3		30 May 2021
Final Evaluation Report (12) Days	Draft/provisional report is validated with project stakeholders commenting. Finalize and submit evaluation and lessons learned report incorporating additions and comments provided by stakeholders. Final reporting & dissemination.	
Total (30) Days		

10.3 Example Questionnaire used for Data Collection

Many of the below questions were used in the virtual interviews. These questions were used to make sure that all aspects are covered, and the needed information is requested to complete the review exercise and a guide to preparing the semi-structured interviews.

I. Relevance - How does the Project relate to the main objectives of the UNDP SwedBio and the environment and development priorities?

1. Is the Project relevant to the SwedBio objectives?
2. Is the Project relevant to UNDP objectives?
3. Is the Project relevant to the country's development objectives?
4. Does the Project address the needs of target beneficiaries?
5. Is the Project internally coherent in its design?
6. How is the Project relevant considering other donors?
7. What lessons have been learned and what changes could have been made to the Project to strengthen the alignment between the Project and the Partners' priorities and areas of focus?
8. How could the Project better target and address the priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries?

II. Effectiveness – To what extent are the expected outcomes of the Project being achieved?

1. How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?
2. How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?

III. Efficiency - How efficiently is the Project implemented?

1. Was the adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?
2. Did the Project logical framework and work plan and any changes made to them use as management tools during implementation?
3. Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for Project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?
4. Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and respond to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?
5. Was Project implementation as cost-effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)? Was the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happening as planned? Were financial resources utilized efficiently?
6. Could financial resources have been used more efficiently?
7. Were there institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanism to ensure that findings, lessons learned and recommendations about Project design and implementation effectiveness were shared among Project stakeholders, UNDP CO and UNDP Regional and Global staff and other relevant organizations for ongoing Project adjustment and improvement? Did the Project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation?
8. To what extent were partnerships/ linkages between institutions/ organizations encouraged and supported?
9. Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable?
10. What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP and relevant government entities).
11. Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise as well as local capacity?
12. Did the Project consider local capacity in the design and implementation of the Project?

IV. IMPACTS - What are the potential and realized impacts of activities carried out in the context of the Project?

1. Will the project achieve its objective that is to improve fiscal measures for collecting, managing, and allocating revenues for global environmental management?
2. How is the Project impacting the local environment such as impacts or likely impacts on the local environment; on poverty; and, on other socio-economic issues?

V. Sustainability - Are the initiatives and results of the Project allowing for continued benefits?

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

10.4 Final Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Overall Project assessment, lessons learned and recommendations			
What do you perceive as the project's most significant achievements thus far?	Project achievements	Interviews Project documentation	Interviews Review of project documentation
Please comment on any lessons learned thus far through this project	Lessons learned	Project reports Interviews	Review of project documentation Interviews
What issues, if any, are impeding project progress and how might these be addressed?	Obstacles to progress	Interviews Project reports	Interviews Review of project documentation
Do you have any recommendations to strengthen project execution and delivery?	Recommendations	Interviews Project reports	Interviews Review of project documentation
Do you have any recommendations to maximize project impact and sustainability?	Recommendations	Interviews Project reports	Interviews Review of project documentation
Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?			
The project log frame and theory of change still relevant and appropriately designed given the project experience to date?	Technical design studies confirm the feasibility	project documents, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews,
Are the project assumptions still valid and have any been missed?	Changes occurred in underlying conditions that affect design assumptions	project documents, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews,
Were risks well-identified and mitigation measures well designed to adequately address the risks?	Verification relevance of risks and effectiveness of mitigation measures indicated in the PRODOC, through later Project reporting	Project documentation; interviews with Project team and relevant stakeholders	Documents review; consultation with Project team and relevant stakeholders

Are the project indicators and targets realistic?	Stakeholder views of the project design	project documents, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews,
Is the project promoting stakeholder engagement?	Stakeholder response to expected community voluntary contributions	project documents, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews,
Is the project in line with national development priorities (SDGs, National Biodiversity Policy, Biodiversity laws, plans and strategies, etc.)?	measures are proven in protecting biodiversity	project documents, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews,
Are broader development and gender/social inclusion aspects addressed in the project design?	The extent of targeting of vulnerable beneficiaries	project documents, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews,
Are the Project outputs and activities relevant and feasible for achieving the Project objective and outcomes?	Project outputs and activities logically lead to achieving Project objective and outcomes	Project documentation; interviews with local stakeholders	Documents review; consultation with relevant stakeholders
Project Design			
Are there any aspects of the project design that should be modified at this point to maximize project impact or to better reflect the project reality?	Design changes required	Interviews Project documentation	Interviews Review of project documentation
Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its time frame?	Content of logframe	Logframe Interviews	Review of logframe interviews
Were the capacities and resources of the executing institution and counterparts properly considered when the project was designed?	Capacity and resources of EA and counterparts at project entry	Interviews ProDoc	Interviews Review of ProDoc
Were the management arrangements and roles and responsibilities properly identified before project approval?	Detail and clarity of management arrangements	ProDoc	Review of ProDoc
Were partnership arrangements negotiated before project approval?	Agreements with partners on project implementation at project entry	Interviews ProDoc	Interviews Review of ProDoc
To what extent did stakeholders participate in the project formulation process?	Level of stakeholder participation in project design	Interviews ProDoc	Interviews Review of ProDoc
Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design?	Project design reflecting previous lessons learned	Interviews	Interviews

Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?			
To what extent have the results been delivered with the least costly resources possible?	Total amount spent compared to budget Amount spent per output and outcome compared to budget The total amount of co-financing secured	Project's report (particularly summaries of project expenses) Interviews	Review of project documentation Interviews
How efficient are partnership arrangements for the project?	The number of partnerships established.	Progress reports.	Review of project documentation Interviews
What lessons can be drawn regarding efficiency for other similar projects in the future?		Project financial reports and progress reports	Review of project documentation Interviews
Effectiveness: to what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved			
To what extent were each of the project outcomes and project objectives achieved thus far?	Each of the project outcomes and project objective achieved thus far? Logframe indicators at the objective and outcome levels	APRs, progress reports, consultancy reports Interviews	Interviews Review of project documentation
How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?	Risks are identified and a clear set of mitigation measures were identified and taken	Risks log	Review of project documentation
What lessons can be drawn regarding effectiveness for other similar projects in the future?	Lessons learned generated and shared	Lessons learned from the report. Progress Reports	Review of project documentation Interviews
Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?			
What quantitative and qualitative achievements have occurred in terms of output/outcome targets?	Changes from baseline conditions; water depth/ sediment monitoring data	project documents, monitoring reports, training reports, meeting minutes, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews

How is progress rated relative to baseline status?	Lake lowering design and construction progress	project documents, monitoring reports, training reports, meeting minutes, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews
What are the circumstances and issues affecting project achievements and components not on target?	Training participants and assessment data	project documents, monitoring reports, training reports, meeting minutes, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews
Is there an enabling environment for project implementation at national and local levels?	Participant satisfaction with quantity and quality of outputs to date	project documents, monitoring reports, training reports, meeting minutes, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews
What actions are needed, if any, to ensure, accelerate or expand project achievements?	Responses to delays in the project schedule	project documents, monitoring reports, training reports, meeting minutes, project staff, project partners, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews
How well is the project contributing to national policy and practice on biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management (?)	Evidence of policy uptake of project methods and results	National policies, data collected, project staff, project partners	document analysis, data analysis, interviews
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?			
Are the management structure, the distribution of responsibilities, and the coordination mechanisms operating effectively?	Perceived clarity of roles and responsibilities in project implementation	Project staff, project partners, monitoring reports, training reports, data collected	document analysis, data analysis, interviews,

How effective are the working relationships and communications between the implementing partners?	Status of MoUs between implementing partners	Project staff, project partners, monitoring reports,	document analysis, interviews
Are follow-up actions, and/or adaptive management, taken in response to M&E activities (e.g., in response to APRs, and steering committee meetings)?	Responses to M&E activities	Project reports Interviews	Interviews Review of project documentation
Is the Implementing Partner providing sufficient management direction and how could it be improved?	Pro-active actions of management bodies (adaptive management)	Project staff, project partners, monitoring reports,	document analysis, interviews
Is UNDP providing effective support and quality assurance and how could it be improved?	Pro-active actions of management bodies (adaptive management)	Project staff, project partners, monitoring reports,	document analysis, interviews
Were any needs for adaptive management changes identified and implemented?	Adaptive management changes made and positively impacted project implementation	Project documentation; Project team, UNDP and key national, regional, and global partners	Documents review; consultation with relevant stakeholders
Is the Project Board/Project Steering Committee providing effective oversight and guidance and how could it be improved?	Number of meetings and decisions taken by project committees	Project staff, project partners, monitoring reports,	document analysis, interviews
If changes in planned project outputs, activities or implementation methodology were made, were these adequately justified and approved by the project steering committee?	Explanations provided for changes during project implementation	Steering committee minutes Project reports	Review of steering committee minutes and project documentation
Are the project stakeholders and beneficiaries substantially engaged in implementation?	Participant satisfaction with decision making and communication processes	Project staff, project partners, monitoring reports, training reports	document analysis, interviews
Have the project and individual activities been implemented in line with the defined timeframe and budget, and accordance with the Annual Work Plans and Budgets?	Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWBs) are based on the results framework and total budget and work plan; Activities are implemented within the timeframe and budgets indicated in the AWP	Project documentation; Project team, UNDP CO and key national partners, regional and global teams.	Documents review; consultation with relevant stakeholders

Were the project monitoring and evaluation and reporting plans implemented satisfactorily and did they support the project's implementation?	Quarterly and Annual Reports submitted timely and provide adequate information on progress, bottlenecks, and proposed mitigation measures; M&E Plan implemented and used to improve the project's implementation	Project documentation; Project team, UNDP CO and key national partners, regional and global teams	Documents review; consultation with relevant stakeholders
What constraints have been encountered and how have they been addressed? If not, what needs to be put in place to address them?	Self-assessment by implementing partners	Project documents, project staff, project partners, monitoring reports	document analysis, interviews
Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, for budgeting and for the timely flow of funds?	The efficiency of disbursements and financial management Annual expenditures about annual budgets	Project staff, project partners, financial reports	document analysis, interviews
What is the status of expected and actual co-financing?	Tracking of co-financing contributions (table)	Financial reports	Document analysis
How effective are the monitoring and oversight functions and usefulness of the monitoring data?	Use of project indicators in progress reports	Project documents, monitoring reports, project staff, project partners, data collected	Document analysis, interviews, data collected
Are the monitoring and reporting based on the project's indicators?	Perceptions of effectiveness of the M&E systems	Project documents, monitoring reports, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews
Were monitoring reports submitted promptly?	Reporting quality and completeness	Project documents, monitoring reports, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews
Are sufficient resources being allocated to M&E and are they used effectively and efficiently?	Resources committed to M&E and data availability	Project documents, monitoring reports, project staff, project	Document analysis, data analysis, interviews

		partners, data collected	
Have implementation issues been fully reported and discussed with the Board?		Project documents, monitoring reports, project staff, project partners, Project Board meeting minutes	Document analysis, interviews
Does the project have a communication strategy and adequate public outreach	Communication strategy documented Outreach activities completed and media products disseminated	Communication and KM products, media products, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews
Have the critical risks affecting achievements and potential sustainability been sufficiently addressed?	Risks identified in the Pro Doc/ ATLAS Risk Management Module Risks noted in technical reports and Audit	Project documents, ATLAS risk assessment, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews
Have the critical risks affecting achievements and potential sustainability been sufficiently addressed?	Risks identified in the Pro Doc/ ATLAS Risk Management Module Risks noted in technical reports and Audit	Project documents, monitoring reports, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
To what extent is the project contributing to capacity development to sustain results?	Sustainability strategies in the project design	Project documents, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews; training and capacity development reports
What policy or institutional measures are required to sustain the outputs of the project?	Changes in policy or regulation to sustain project results	Project documents, national strategies/policies, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews; training and capacity development reports
Are there adverse social, environmental, or other effects that need consideration?	Socio-economic or political factors observed	Project documents, national strategies/policies, project staff, project partners	Document analysis, interviews; training and capacity development reports
Mainstreaming			

Is it possible to identify and define the positive or negative effects of the project on local populations?	Employment generated because of the project Impact of the project on income levels, food security, etc.	Project's reports, Interviews	Review of Project's reports Interviews
Do the project objectives conform to agreed priorities in the UNDP country programme documents, UNDAF/UNSDG, etc?	The consistency of the Project with CPD, CPAP, and UNDAF	Pro.Doc., CPD, CPAP	Review of Pro.Doc., and UNDAF.
Have gender issues been considered in project implementation? If so, how and to what extent?	Level and nature of participation of women in project implementation	Project's reports, interviews	Review of Project's reports, interviews
Project Finance			
Is there enough clarity in the reported co-financing and leveraged resources to substantiate in-kind and cash co-financing from all listed sources?	Table specifying co-financing and leveraged resources secured and sources thereof	Project reports Interviews	Review of project documentation Interviews
Have the reasons for differences in the level of expected and actual co-financing been made clear and are the reasons compelling?	Explanation of the difference between expected and actual co-financing	Project reports with co-financing figures	Review of project documentation Interviews
Are externally funded project components well integrated into the SwedBio supported components?	Components funded by co-financing	Project reports Interviews	Review of project documentation Interviews
Is the extent of materialization of co-financing influencing project outcomes and/or sustainability?	Total co-financing secured. Level of achievement of project outcomes Perceived project sustainability.	Project reports Interviews	Review of project documentation Interviews
Stakeholders			
Is the project involving the relevant stakeholders through information sharing and consultation and by seeking their active participation in project implementation, and M&E?	Level of participation of stakeholders in project implementation	Project reports Interviews	Review of project documentation Interviews
Gender equality and women's empowerment			
How is the project contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment?	Level of the progress of gender action plan and gender indicators in the results framework	Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders	Desk review, interviews, virtual meetings
In what ways is the project's gender results advancing or contributing to the project's biodiversity outcomes?	Existence of logical linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts	Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders	Desk review, interviews, virtual meetings
Replication and Scalability			

What are project lessons learned, failures/lost opportunities to date? What might have been done better or differently?	Lessons learned	Project reports Interviews	Review of project documentation Interviews
How effective were the exit strategies and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project including contributing factors and constraints	Lessons learned generated and shared	Report. Progress Reports	Review of project documentation Interviews
What factors of the project achievements are contingent on specific local context or enabling environment factors?	Project document. Funding proposal	Report. Progress Reports	Review of project documentation Interviews
Are the actions and results from project interventions likely to be sustained, ideally through ownership by the local partners and stakeholders?	Level of ownership	Project reports Project technical deliverables	Review of project documentation Interviews
What are the key factors that will require attention to improve prospects of sustainability, scalability, or replication of project outcomes/ outputs/results?	Sustainability strategy. Government investments. Ongoing efforts to build on the project to ensure scalability and/or replicability.	Project reports Project technical deliverables	Review of project documentation Interviews

10.5 List of Documents Reviewed

No.	Document Title
1.	AC Minutes (9 MoMs)
2.	Third-Party Agreement – UNDP SwedBio
3.	Amended Cost Sharing Agreement UNDP and SwedBio
4.	Annual Progress Report, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020
5.	BES-NET Survey 2018
6.	BES-NET Survey 2020
7.	BTORs (8)
8.	Anglophone Africa Regional Trialogue Survey
9.	Caribbean Regional Trialogue Survey
10.	Eastern Europe Trialogue Survey
11.	Regional Trialogues Participants Interview Results
12.	Annex I. IPBES 5 INF DCO BES NET
13.	Annex II. BES-NET Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
14.	Annex III. Communication Strategy
15.	Annexe IV – BES-NET Gender Analysis and Strategy
16.	Annex V- Evaluation Report - Final Report
17.	Annex VI- BES NET Full Proposal to SwedBio 2016.
18.	Annex VIII 0 Work plan
19.	Annex I. Implementation Status of BES-NET
20.	Annex II. ES- NET Communication-Gender Strategy
21.	Annex III. BES-NET Partners – level of Gender Mainstreaming
22.	Annex IV. Methodology for BES-NET Trialogues
23.	Annex 1. MTR of GC-RED Programme
24.	Annex II. Implementation Status of BES NET
25.	Annex III. BES-NET Online and Gender Indicators
26.	Annex IV. BEST NET partners -
27.	Annex V. Trialogue info note.
28.	Annual Progress Report and its 10 annexes.
29.	SwedBio Budget Allocation Plan
30.	SwedBio Annual Minute of Meeting 2020
31.	2020 SwedBio Workplan revised
32.	2020 CDR
33.	Annex 1- Interviews
34.	Annexe 2 – Summary of Trialogues results from interviews
35.	BES-NET Beneficiaries for SwedBio supported component

36.	BES-NET Risk and Issue logs
37.	Code of Conduct
38.	Evaluation Matrix template
39.	GC-RED Organigram 2021
40.	GC-RED ProDoc 2015
41.	Online of the evaluation report format
42.	Project extension proposal to SwedBio for 2018-2020
43.	Project proposal to BMU IKI for BES-NET Phase I
44.	Project proposal to BMU IKI for BES-NET Phase II
45.	Project extension proposal to SwedBio for 2018-2020 unde BES-NET phase I
46.	SwedBlo- Concept Note 2021
47.	Triialogue lessons_ synthesis report
48.	UNDP Evaluation Guidelines

10.6 The final list of interviewees

Name	Title/Organization
Anne Juepner	Director, Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification (GC-RED), UNDP
Diem Hong Thi Tran	IPBES technical support unit on capacity building
Edoardo Zandri	Chief, Scientific Assessments Branch - Science Division. UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme
Ellika Torok	Senior Adviser at SwedBio – a programme on resilience & development funded by Sida
Nina Vik	Senior Advisor IPBES NFP, Threatened Biodiversity Section, Norwegian Environment Agency
Peter Bates	IPBES technical support unit on indigenous and local knowledge. UNESCO, Paris, France
Shena Garcia Rangel Claire Brown	UNEP - WCMC
Martijn Thijssen	Project Leader / Coalition of the Willing on Pollinators
Abram Bicksler	Agricultural Officer - Agroecology and Ecosystem Services Team (NSPED). Plant Production and Protection Division (NSP) Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Lilian Chimphepo	Principal Environmental Officer / Environmental Affairs Department, Malawi
Meriem Bouamrane	UNESCO
Benneth Obitte	Small Mammal Conservation Organization, Nigeria
Hien Ngo	Biodiversity and Pollination Expert, FAO
Sikeade Egbuwalo	Senior Forest Officer / Federal Ministry of Environment, Nigeria
Maglo Komi	Executive Director / Organisation pour la Promotion de l'Agroécologie et Solidaire, Togo
Yuko Kurauchi	Policy Specialist. Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification (GC-RED), UNDP

10.7 Final Evaluation Rating Scales

Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and the objective)

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

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)

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

Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)

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

10.8 Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Evaluator/Consultants

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

Final Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant:

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT

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

Signed at (Jordan)

Signature:

Amal Dabulseh

10.9 Signed Final Evaluation Final Report Clearance Form

(to be completed by CO and UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and included in the final document)

Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared by

UNDP Country Office

Name: Anne Juepner, Director, GC-RED

Signature: Anne Juepner Date: 28-Jun-2021