



# Terminal Evaluation of ‘Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into key productive sectors along valley/Red Sea flyway (PIMS1787).

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**Project title:** Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into key productive sectors along valley/Red Sea flyway

**UNDP PIMS ID number:** 1878

**Atlas Project ID/Award ID number:** 00098004

**GEF ID number:** 9491

**Evaluation timeframe:** June-July 2023

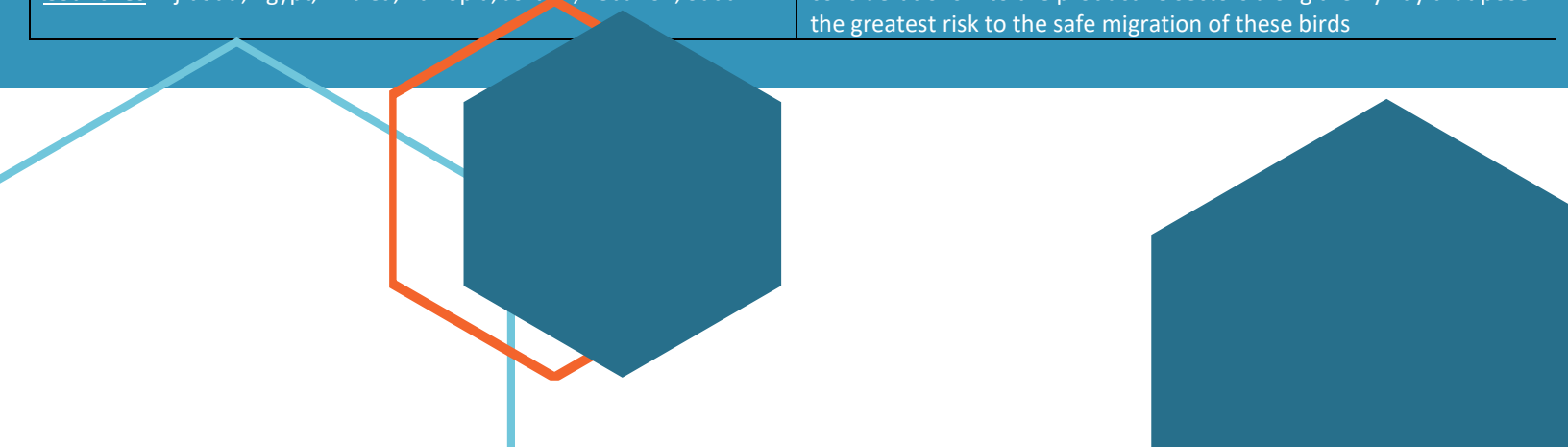
GEF focal area: Biodiversity

**GEF executing agency:** United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). **Implementing partner:** BirdLife International

Project start date: February 2018, End date: Extended to August 2023 (originally Feb 2023)

**GEF funding:** USD 3,500,000– Co-finance target: USD 10,434,885  
**Countries:** Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan

The project aims to to mainstream migratory soaring bird considerations into the productive sectors along the flyway that pose the greatest risk to the safe migration of these birds



## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Disclaimer**

This report is the work of independent consultants, and doesn't necessarily represent the views, policy, or intentions of the GEF agency (i.e UNDP), BirdLife International, Governments and project partners. The opinions and recommendations in the evaluation will be those of the Evaluators and do not necessarily reflect the position of UNDP, or any of the Programme stakeholders.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AWP	Annual Work Plan	MOI&M	Ministry of Interior & Municipalities of Lebanon
BD	Biodiversity	MSB	Migratory Soaring Bird
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	MTR	Mid Term Review
CSO	Civil Society Organization	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency	NCE	Nature Conservation Egypt
EEP	Ethiopian Electric Power	NCS	Nature Conservation Sector
EEU	Ethiopian Electric Utility	NIA	National Implementation Agents
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	NREA	New and Renewable Energy Authority of Egypt
ELEAP	Ethiopian Electrification Program	PB	Project Board
EU	European Union	PDD	Plant Protection Directorate
EWHS	Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society	POPP	Programme & Operations Policies and Procedures
GEF	Global Environment Facility	PIR	Project Implementation Review
HHC	Hunting Higher Council of Lebanon	PMU	Project Management Unit
IFC	International Finance Corporation	RFF	Regional Flyway Facility
IFI	International Finance Institution	RSCN	Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	SPNL	Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon
KfW	KfW German Development Bank	SWS	Sudanese Wildlife Society
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	ToR	Terms of Reference
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	WWWT A	Water & Wastewater Treatment Authority
MOMA	Ministry of Municipal Affairs of Jordan		
MOT	Ministry of Tourism of Lebanon		

## Executive summary

### Project information table

Project Title:	Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into key productive sectors along valley/Red Sea flyway (PIMS1787)			
GEF Project ID:	9491		<u>at endorsement (US\$)</u>	<u>at completion (US\$)</u>
UNDP Project ID:	00098004	GEF financing:	US\$ 3,500,000	US\$ 3,144,008
Countries:	Regional: Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan	IA/EA own:	USD \$ 100,000	60,444
Region:	Middle East & Eastern Africa	Co-financing:	US\$ 10,434,885	US\$ 16,603,005
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other:	US\$ 00	US\$ 00
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	Reduce Threats to Globally significant biodiversity / Preventing the Extinction of known threatened species.	Total co-financing:	US\$ 10,434,885	US\$ 16,603,005
GEF implementing Agency:	UNDP	Total Project Cost:	US\$ 14,034,885	US\$ 19,807,457
Executing partner	BirdLife International	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		February 13 & 18, 2018 respectively
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: February, 2023	Actual: August, 2023

### Project Description

The project's overall goal as originally designed in 2007, "to ensure that globally threatened and significant populations of soaring birds that migrate along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway are effectively maintained. The immediate objective is that conservation Management objectives and actions for MSB are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors along the flyway, making this a safer route for soaring birds. To achieve the goal, the project has three components/outcomes:

1. Component 1. Raised awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours among target groups that threaten MSBs in the key sectors, decision-making, and the general public.
2. Component 2. Content, tools, and capacity developed and delivered to mainstream MSBs/Flyway concept into sector processes, practices, and programmes.
3. Component 3. Learning, evaluation, adaptive management, and upscaling.

The project mainstreams MSB into the five key production sectors largely using sector “vehicles” identified by the targeted flyway countries. A “vehicle” is defined as a planned or existing reform process or project in a targeted sector.

The Project is being executed by BirdLife International and its national partners following the NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International in all countries (except Egypt where NIM modality has been applied) and implemented by UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency. The Project is being supervised by a Project Board responsible for making management decisions comprised of UNDP Jordan, BirdLife International and main beneficiaries.

## Evaluation Ratings Table

Table 1: Evaluation rating table

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating <sup>1</sup>
M&E design at entry	Satisfactory (S)
M&E Plan Implementation	Satisfactory (S)
Overall Quality of M&E	Satisfactory (S)
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	Satisfactory (S)
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	Satisfactory (S)
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	Satisfactory (S)
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	Satisfactory (S)
Effectiveness	Satisfactory (S)
Efficiency	Satisfactory (S)
Overall Project Outcome Rating	Satisfactory (S)
Sustainability	Rating
Institutional Framework and governance	Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.
Financial	Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Likely (ML) in Egypt. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.
Socio-economic	Likely (L), except in Sudan and Ethiopia it is Moderately Unlikely (MU)

<sup>1</sup> Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point rating scale: 6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5 = Satisfactory (S), 4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2 = Unsatisfactory (U), 1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4 = Likely (L), 3 = Moderately Likely (ML), 2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1 = Unlikely (U)



Environmental	Likely (L)
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon, Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

## Summary of the findings & rating justification

**Project results:** Overall, the MSB project has lived up to expectations, achieving most of its targets with some targets surpassing expectations, and only a few partially achieved. Its primary focus was to mainstream MSB considerations into the productive sectors posing the highest risks to the MSBs during migration: hunting, energy, tourism development, agriculture, and waste management. The project's collaborative approach effectively engaged stakeholders, forming coherent partnerships across a broad spectrum to successfully integrate MSB considerations into sectoral policies and strategic processes.

The project has successfully accomplished transformative outcomes by mainstreaming migratory soaring birds into five key sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway. These sectors include hunting, energy, tourism, agriculture, and waste management. Through the collaboration of BirdLife International and its partners, the initiative has led to global environmental benefits by influencing governmental and private sector policies in these areas. The project also provided sector-specific guidance to raise MSB conservation awareness and strengthen the capabilities of local partner organizations in flyway countries.

The project strategically formed partnerships with the private sector and international financial institutions, while working closely with local authorities in all five sectors. By involving international and local NGOs as executing partners, the project successfully engaged various stakeholders in a complex region. Additionally, regional cooperation and exchange on MSB conservation, facilitated by the RFF and local CSOs initiatives, have built trust, encouraged dialogue, and fostered strong relationships among the flyway countries. A critical factor in the project's success is its ability to build upon the lessons learned from Tranche I and maintain long-term commitment through GEF engagement.

The project achieved significant results including:

- 21 Submitted policies and 17 approved new and revised country sector policies developed and approved
- 99 projects and schemes are now incorporating the MSB concerns of which 88 projects during Tranche II
- 35 sites covering 5,709,771 ha in of land managed for hunting, energy, agriculture and waste management under 'flyway sensitive' practices at selected sites along flyway
- 1923 articles or other media releases highlighting MSBs, and flyway importance have been produced
- Sensitivity mapping developed by the project has attracted several international financial institutions and the Asian Development Bank is working on sensitivity mapping with BirdLife in India, Thailand, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.
- Improved awareness of national and local governments, local communities near sites, private sector, CSOs on MSB considerations. 70% of key stakeholders surveyed have a positive attitude towards MSB safe practices, and that 50% have positive behavior change.
- The project responded to 96 requests from government and private sector to provide 'flyway sensitive' guidelines, best practice, and related materials
- Improved the capacity of BirdLife partners, All Partners scored a total of at least 18 for the trigger assessment score.

- Developed MSB /Flyway monitoring programme tracking conservation status, impact sectors, threats, drivers of change and effectiveness of RFF interventions
- Over 62 partnerships representing joint national project partner-government and project partner-private sector partnerships established in key sectors during project period to achieve mainstreaming of MSB concerns
- 11 MSB/ flyway-mainstreaming “vehicle” projects implemented in target countries in key sectors
- Training and awareness of hunters and guides on best MSB practices and over 13 hunting groups who have endorsed the responsible hunting practices
- 49 new energy projects adopting best practice in avoidance and mitigation of MSB risks
- 17 of monitoring schemes in place at existing and new energy projects to assess mortality rate
- 12 cases where mitigation measures have been adopted following the detection of high levels of MSB mortality
- 12 locations with demonstration of benefits to tourism sector from MSB activities, 154 hotel and tour operators including MSB conservation concerns in their labelling/ certification schemes and 187 tourism guides participated in the trainings sessions
- 8 EIAs for new waste management projects that address MSB concerns in project area
- 14 existing waste management sites where ‘flyway sensitive’ best practice measures have been adopted
- 9 agricultural projects incorporating MSB conservation considerations

Therefore, the overall project outcome rating is Satisfactory (S).

**Relevance & Coherence:** The MSB project is aligned with the national priorities in targeted countries as defined in their NBSAPs, and also aligned with UNDP Strategic Plan as well as GEF mainstreaming objectives. The design of Tranche II continues to mainstream MSB conservation into the five key production sectors largely using sector “vehicles” identified by the targeted flyway countries. A “vehicle” is defined as a planned or existing reform process or project in a targeted sector. The MSB project design follows the mainstreaming approach as defined by the GEF as embedding biodiversity considerations into policies, strategies and practices of key public and private actors that impact or rely on biodiversity, so that it is conserved and sustainably used both locally and globally.

The design of Tranche II of the MSB project has evolved, and built on lessons learned, from Tranche I. The changes did not really affect the project scope or content but provided a more coherent structure and improved the mainstreaming approach and management arrangements for the new phase, improvements included restructuring the components of the project, dropping off the unneeded (and in many cases confusing) terminology of “double mainstreaming” and distributing the GEF grant by sector rather than by countries and instrumental changes on the project management arrangements (reassuring the NGO execution modality).

The overall MSB project strategy is sound; though it is an ambitious Project planning to impact 5 different sectors in highly complex and volatile countries. The PRF is found to be fit for purpose, and indicators provide a clear description of the intended target, however, the PRF included way too many indicators, repetitive indicators that allow for double reporting, some targets are highly ambitious, some indicators are output-based, and no MTR targets were defined.

**Effectiveness and efficiency:** The project met expectations as to the degree of objectives being achieved. This is factual at the objective, output and at the outcome’s levels as the project level achievements in all of the distinct outcomes and outputs were commensurate to the defined targets. The factors that have aided or supported effective achievement of goals include the ability to build upon the lessons learned from Tranche I and other projects, the integrated mainstreaming approach implemented (policy reform, tools development, partnership with private sector and international financing institutions, ect) and strong partnerships strategy with a healthy

inclusion of stakeholders. On the other hand, the project faced a number of very forceful challenges that, although taken care of adaptively to the degree possible, including COVID-19 pandemic, absence of BirdLife partner in Eritrea, limited capacity of some BirdLife partners to implement and political unrest in some countries particularly Ethiopia and Sudan.

The Project has been efficient in achieving outputs/products and in achieving outcomes and effects/impact in a high degree of accomplishment vis-à-vis expected target indicators and other metrics. Also, it has provided value-for-money since it achieved the anticipated results within budgets, agreed disbursement, etc., while leveraging investments and in-kind support from sources external to the project per se (co-funding). The cost-effectiveness of the MSB stems from its foundation on the mainstreaming approach, which is inherently cost-effective, as reasonably argued in the project document. It allows for targeting multiple sectors in multiple countries using the 'vehicle' as an initiative embedded within the sector thus effecting change more positively and quickly, while still engaging government.

Effectiveness and efficiency are rated as Satisfactory (S).

**Project management:** The management arrangements for Tranche II of the MSB project evolved from Tranche I and were designed to: i) apply the NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International and its specific expertise in bird conservation that is critical to the MSB project; ii) avoid having to establish numerous PMUs across the participating flyway countries; iii) use the project to strengthen the NGO network along the flyway to ensure continuity and sustainability. The structure of the Project Board (PB) is found to be unique where the GEF OFP in Jordan represents the OFPs in 6 other countries and is expected to cover on the perspective of these countries, this is unprecedented but understandably the inclusion of 7 GEF OFPs in one board is not practically possible. Nonetheless, the PB has been responsible for making management decisions for the project, acts as the highest strategic and policy-level body of the project (regional and national components) and provides overall guidance and direction to ensure the unity and coherence of the project.

UNDP CO has been effectively supporting the MSB project in establishing and convening the project board, monitoring the financial transactions, conducting annual audit in line with UNDP's standard procedures and facilitating and supporting the PIRs, MTR and TE. The UNDP Jordan has also been providing strategic support to the MSB project by creating linkages with the other projects that the CO is delivering, particularly on biodiversity. The quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight has been Satisfactory (S).

The BirdLife International has been responsible for the regional components of the project delivered through the Regional Flyway Facility/RFF, and for the national level activities to be carried out through Birdlife Partners and Affiliates. BirdLife has been responsible for financial and procedural accountability in line with the signed PCA, and despite, and has been rated as 'low risk' based on the findings of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT), nevertheless, there have been 'major' observations by the audit mainly related to the absence of effective ERP system at the project level, to which BirdLife stated that ERP system has been established centrally in the UK office and in process of decentralising the system into the regional offices and projects.

The RFF has been performing the PMU role in the project and acting as the technical and operational arm established for the purposes of this project, is institutionalised within, and supported by, the BirdLife International management structure. The RFF demonstrated strong leadership not only in facilitating the delivery of the project

activities but also in presenting itself as a reference point in the flyway as a trusted partner among the stakeholders. The Implementing Partner's execution has also been *Satisfactory (S)*. As an amalgamated review, the global quality of implementation and execution, of the executing agencies as well as the quality execution of implementing agencies is *Satisfactory (S)*.

The project design comprises of standard M&E items for UNDP-GEF project, and M&E design adequate for monitoring the project results and tracking the progress toward achieving the objectives notwithstanding the PRF shortcomings noted above. The M&E design is backed with adequate resources (a total of US\$ 80,000 allocated for M&E) and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The actual implementation of overall monitoring and evaluation took place in acceptable and suitable terms, with noting the double counting of same data to report on different indicators, which is primarily attributed to the flaws noted in the PRF (i.e mainly repetitive nature of indicators). A composite ranking that considers monitoring and evaluation design at entry together with the M & E plan's implementation for the overall quality of M&E is *Satisfactory (S)*.

**Sustainability:** The MSB project has recently developed a Rift Valley / Red Sea Flyways Adaptive Management Plan (MSB Project Exit Strategy), the plan is based on the BirdLife wider context of the Global Flyways Programme and defines the future challenges, opportunities and risk for follow up actions, lists the new funded projects with their scope and complementarities to the MSB project, and outlines the strategic outcomes (10 yrs) and objectives (5yrs) and priority activities for the next year. The exits strategy is backed by an assessment of the Conservation Priorities along the Eastern-African Flyway, this assessment that will help to strategically guide the new financial support of the Ecological Restoration Flyway Project, the Luc Hoffman Flyway Fund and the Hans-Wildsorf Safe Flyways 3 and other upcoming projects/initiatives.

For the institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability, there are number of sustainability elements that have been strongly established in the project including the formal endorsement of the policy instruments (e.g guidelines), the effective engagement with the private sector and international financing institutions, capacity building and awareness and strengthening countries participation in the CMS and Raptors MoU. However, at the national level, institutional sustainability varies from one country to another, while BirdLife partners are strongly performing their roles in Jordan and Lebanon, there are number of challenges with other partners including no partner at all (i.e in Eritrea), limited capacity of the partners and unclear role of partners (Djibouti, Sudan, Ethiopia). In Egypt, the PMU has been playing vital role in running the MSBs business in the EEAA, and there is a sustainability concern on the continuation of the MSB function after the project ends and the PMU walks away, particularly, given the limited capacity in EEAA to deal with the matter. Therefore, the ranking for institutional/governance sustainability is Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

The RFF was established largely with project funds but is now securely nested within the BirdLife Secretariat and has been only part-funded with GEF funds during Tranche II, the remainder was provided by BirdLife. The BirdLife is confident that RFF is going to continue operation beyond the project, this confidence is built on the fact that further funding has been secured already to follow up on the project achievements with 3 projects approved for funding with potentially more underway. Also, the RFF team members already have valid contracts until after the GEF funding expiry and planned to be renewed in line with BirdLife policies and procedures.

At the national level, the cost of enforcing policies at the country level are embedded within the Government operations, for instance, the cost of the ongoing monitoring of the MSBs in wind energy projects will be covered

by the project proponents as per the guidelines. Other MSB activities at the national level by BirdLife partners remain highly dependent on additional funding being available via BirdLife resource mobilisation or self-mobilised by the individual partners. To which, some of the new funding mobilised would be used for the purpose of continuing the work. Therefore, the ranking of the financial sustainability is rated Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Likely (ML) in Egypt. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

A flyway-wide network of NGOs and CSOs means that the project itself and the activities are accessible to a very broad cross-section of society in each country which fosters a broad spectrum of support for the flyway and MSBs. However, the political unrests in some of the targeted countries particularly in Sudan and Ethiopia pose a serious risk on the sustainability of the MSB project. As evaluation literature indicates, the conflict context of a project's country has a significant impact correlated with lower possibilities for sustainability and projects taking place in conflict-affected sites are on average less sustainable than projects taking place in non-conflict contexts. Therefore, the ranking for socio – economic sustainability is Likely (L), except in Sudan and Ethiopia it is Moderately Unlikely (MU).

The project's entire goal is to enhance environmental sustainability along the Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway. MSB project seeks to build a framework through which MSBs, and flyway management are integrated into each sector that is currently impacting upon it in a negative way. Therefore, the ranking for environmental sustainability is Likely (L) since there are no identifiable risks to sustainability in this regard.

Taking a composite view of the rankings for financial, socio – economic, institutional as well as environmental sustainability probabilities, the overall likelihood of sustainability is ranked as Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon, Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

## Recommendations summary table

Given that the project is close to be operationally closed at the time of writing this TE evaluation report, the following are forward-looking recommendations/lesson learned focussed on future programming: (more details available in recommendation section).

**Table 2: recommendations table**

#	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Timeframe
1	Investigate the impact of emerging mega cities on MSBs along the flyway and mainstreaming opportunities	BirdLife	Ongoing
2	Further investigate the potential of waste sector across the region for future programming on MSBs	BirdLife	Ongoing
3	Continue resource mobilisation to address emerging MSBs threats in the region	BirdLife	Ongoing
4	Support EEAA to restore its technical capacities after a significant staff turnover and the departure of the MSBs' PMU	BirdLife	Ongoing
5	BirdLife to strengthen its network of partners in countries where it has no partner or under capacitated partner	BirdLife	Ongoing

## Introduction

### Purpose & scope

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) assessed the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and drew lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments.

The TE assessed project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework and results according to the criteria outlined in the [Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#)<sup>2</sup>

The TE provides evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful and comply with the UNDP/GEF Evaluation Guidelines. The TE was undertaken in line with UNEG principles concerning independence, credibility, utility, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethical, participation, competencies and capacities.

The evaluation process has been independent of UNDP and project partners. The opinions and recommendations in the evaluation are those of the Evaluator and do not necessarily reflect the position of any stakeholders.

The TE was carried out between June-July 2023 with a mix of face-to-face engagement in Jordan and Egypt and online engagement with project stakeholders in other countries. For this TE, evidence was gathered by reviewing documents, interviewing key selected stakeholders and from other ad hoc observations.

Mixed methods were used for the TE to generate a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. The use of mixed methods had the advantage of supporting data triangulation across multiple sources, which created the potential for increased data accuracy and credibility to inform the reliability of the evaluation results.

### Methods

#### *Data collection methods*

To strengthen the robustness of the evaluation evidence, a mix qualitative-quantitative data collection methods have been used to best describe project results based on the on the results framework as outlined in the project document. The evaluation used methods of document review and interviews for data collection to obtain answer all of the evaluation questions outlined in the TOR. The evaluation had two levels of data collection and validation of information:

- A desk review of project documentation
- Independent data collected by the evaluators through interviews with key stakeholders

An evaluation matrix was developed as a base for gathering of qualitative inputs for analysis. The evaluation matrix defined the objective for gathering non-biased, valid, reliable, precise, and useful data with integrity to answer the evaluation questions.

Engaging stakeholders has been critical for the success of the evaluation. The project involved multi-stakeholders and teams in different capacities and the TE engaged with various stakeholders to cover different perspectives taking into account the principle of gender responsive. Gender responsiveness has been integrated throughout

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<sup>2</sup> UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Guidance for conducting terminal evaluations, 2020. Available [here](#).



the evaluation process including gender balance during the engagement with stakeholders, assessing the gender integration in the project design and delivery, and ensuring that data collection and analysis are gender sensitive. Throughout the evaluation process, the main stakeholders have been engaged and interviewed using semi-structured interview<sup>3</sup> method. Interviews relied on a targeted and self-selecting sampling strategy to include a diversity and balance of perspectives from each stakeholder category.

### **Data analysis methods**

Data analysis was based on observed facts, evidence, and data. Findings are specific, concise, and supported by quantitative and/or qualitative information that is reliable, valid and generalizable.

The data analysis method involved 1) descriptive analysis to understand and describe its main components, including related activities; partnerships; modalities of delivery; etc. 2) Content analysis of relevant documents and the literature conducted to identify common trends and themes, and patterns for each of the key evaluation issues (as the main units of analysis), and 3) thematic analysis of responses collected from semi-structured interviews and observations.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The TE consultant was held to the highest ethical standards and was required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'<sup>4</sup>. The evaluator ensured to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The evaluator also ensured 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 has been solely used for the evaluation and not be used for other purposes without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

### **Limitations**

The main limitations faced during the evaluation were related the geographical distribution of the project activities and stakeholders over 7 countries, this meant that the evaluator was not able to meet all stakeholders in person and undertake field visits. Alternatively, the evaluator conducted two missions, Jordan and Egypt, and engaged with the rest of the stakeholders in other countries virtually. Also, time and resources available for the TE were limited, and the evaluation team was limited to one person only, despite the project scale, complexity and spectrum of stakeholders to engage with.

### **Structure of the Report**

The TE draft report follows the format suggested by the UNDP-GEF TE guidelines, with a description of the methodology, a description of the project and findings organized around: i) Project Design/Formulation; ii) Project

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<sup>3</sup> A semi-structured interview is a method of research used most often in the social sciences. While a structured interview has a rigorous set of questions which does not allow one to divert, a semi-structured interview is open, allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. The interviewer in a semi-structured interview generally has a framework of themes to be explored.

<sup>4</sup> UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, 2020, available [here](#).

Implementation; iii) Project Results and Impact. Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learnt complete the report. Consistently with requirements, certain aspects of the Project are rated, according to the rating scale of the Guidelines. Co-financing information is presented in the chapter under financial management; and the updated Scorecard and core indicators are included in Annex 9. Comments addressed have been documented in an Audit Trail, prepared as a separate annex 8 to the TE Report.

## Project Description

### Development context

The project covers Tranche II of a two-tranche project originally approved for financing by the GEF under its third funding cycle for a 10-year period. The original project document under Tranche I encompassed eleven countries although it concentrated its efforts mainly on Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. Under Tranche II, the project covers 7 flyway countries, namely, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea. Support for national level activities to be provided to five of these countries, namely, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon and Sudan.

The total population of the eleven countries in the flyway exceed 271 million people. The poorer countries are still largely agrarian-based (% GDP from agriculture: Ethiopia 47%, Sudan 39%) while elsewhere the industrial base is well established (Egypt 33%), but these agrarian-based countries also exhibit the fastest rates on industrial growth. Overall, national agendas are focused on rural development, industrialization, and economic growth. Economic growth and employment tend to dominate political thinking and can be overriding factor of government and political decision-making. Conservation is not a priority. Five key sectors are seen as impacting MSBs along the Rift Valley/Red Sea Flyway – hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism. In the northern states (Lebanon but also Jordan and Egypt) recreational hunting has a very strong cultural basis in society.

In terms of the policy and legislative context, the Convention on the Conservation of Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) provide a broad multi-lateral framework for agreement along the flyway. The project is essentially about translating the CMS, as it relates to MSBs, into effective actions on the ground. The project has also been effective in encouraging countries to sign up to various CMS Agreements and in operationalizing these along the flyway. No country had legislation that related specifically to MSBs in the productive sectors.

The translation of such policy statements into effective national legislation has in many cases not happened or, where the legislation exists, the institutional capacity and resources for effective implementation are lacking. Tranche I of the project strongly influenced the application of the International Finance Institutions (IFIs) safeguards on wind energy projects. Also, hunting requires a much broader and holistic approach. Given the experience gained through Tranche I, a ban on hunting has had little impact on the intensity of hunting and thus a responsible hunting approach is more preferable and effective than a prohibitive approach.

### Problems that Project Seeks to Address

The Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway is the second most important flyway for migratory soaring birds (MSBs) in the world. Over 1.5 million birds of prey and 300,000 storks migrate along this corridor between their breeding grounds in Europe and West Asia and wintering areas in Africa each year. At least 37 species of soaring birds regularly use the flyway. Their passage along the narrow flyway is still relatively poorly managed from a



conservation perspective. This is where MSBs are most physiologically stressed and for some species 50-100% of their global or regional populations pass along the route and through flyway “bottlenecks”. As a result, these birds are highly vulnerable during the migration along the flyway to localized threats such as hunting and collision with wind turbines and associated power lines which could have severe impacts on global populations.

The main critical sectors identified and threats to MSB passing along the flyway are the following:

1. Hunting;
2. Energy (specifically related to wind farms and power lines);
3. Agriculture;
4. Waste Management and
5. Tourism.

## Project Description and Strategy

The project on its tranche II follows the mainstreaming approach as defined by the GEF as “embedding biodiversity considerations into policies, strategies and practices of key public and private actors that impact or rely on biodiversity, so that is conserved and sustainably used both locally and globally requiring interventions in policy, planning, production practice, and financial mechanisms”. It has the RFF at its heart as a “nerve centre” ensuring that the flyway countries follow a common path acting as a link between the countries in the northern breeding and southern wintering ranges of the MSB species.

The project’s overall goal as originally designed in 2007, “to ensure that globally threatened and significant populations of soaring birds that migrate along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway are effectively maintained. The immediate objective is that conservation Management objectives and actions for MSB are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors along the flyway, making this a safer route for soaring birds. To achieve the goal, the project has three components/outcomes:

4. Component 1. Raised awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours among target groups that threaten MSBs in the key sectors, decision-making, and the general public.
5. Component 2. Content, tools, and capacity developed and delivered to mainstream MSBs/Flyway concept into sector processes, practices, and programmes.
6. Component 3. Learning, evaluation, adaptive management, and upscaling.

It is important to highlight that the project mainstreams MSB into the five key production sectors largely using sector “vehicles” identified by the targeted flyway countries. A “vehicle” is defined as a planned or existing reform process or project in a targeted sector.

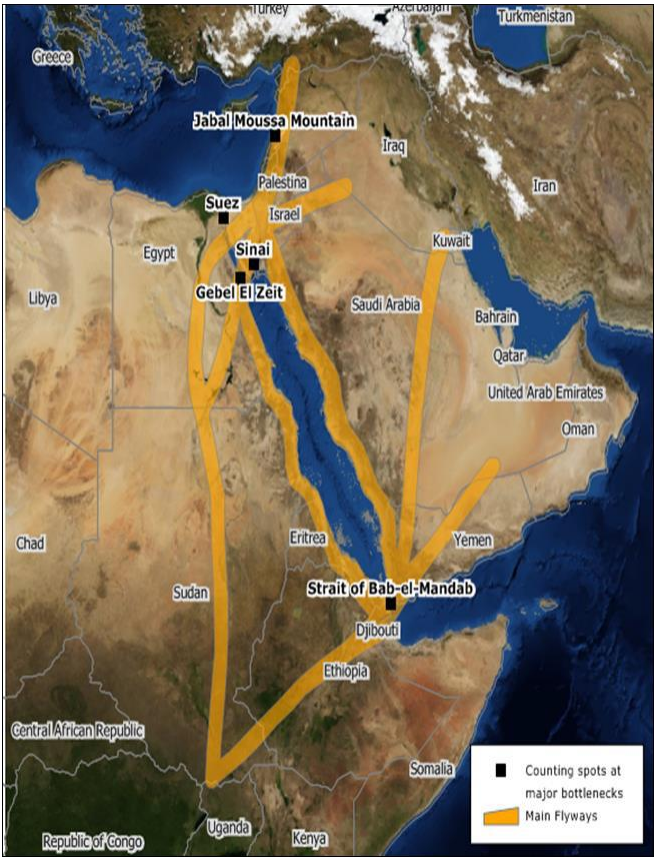
The Project is being executed by BirdLife International and its national partners following the NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International in all countries but Egypt and implemented by UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency. Egypt represents an exception to the overall arrangements due to the current circumstances relating to non-governmental organizations and their inability to receive funds from international sources. The Project is being supervised by a Project Board responsible for making management decisions comprised of UNDP Jordan, BirdLife International and main beneficiaries.

The MSB project management arrangements have evolved over time, in Tranche II, the Project follows an NGO Implementation Modality through BirdLife International with BirdLife Partners as Responsible Partners in country and UNDP as GEF Executing Agency. This applies to all the work conducted regionally and with Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti vehicle projects. Important to highlight the exception for Egypt. This country

represents an exception to the overall arrangements due to the current circumstances relating to NGOs and their inability to receive funds from international sources. As it happened during Tranche I of the project, the management arrangements in Egypt go through UNDP Country Office as responsible party. The specific details of these arrangements are further analysed below.

In terms of the geographic location of the Project, it intends to impact numerous areas within the flyway.

Figure 1: Map of the flyway



Tranche 1 of the project covered 11 countries of the flyway whereas Tranche 2, after negotiation with the GEF Secretariat during project design, reduced the number of countries to seven: Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti.

### Main stakeholders

At the design level, a series of specific main stakeholder groups were identified, and given the geographic scale of the MSB project the stakeholder relations are far-reaching and diverse. The following table provides a breakdown of key stakeholder categories, their interest in the project and their anticipated roles.

Table 3: MSB project stakeholders

Stakeholder	Interest and role
Government agencies	In most instances the government agencies directly involved in the project go beyond the statutory environmental agency because of the different sector engagement. Therefore, Ministries of Agriculture, Energy, Tourism and also

	<p>Municipalities (e.g., local government) were directly involved, mostly through the implementation of the “vehicle” projects.</p> <p>Government agencies play a pivotal role in the project; they are involved in the process of proposing policy recommendations, of implementing regulations, of engaging sectors, they benefit from capacity development, etc.</p>
Non-governmental organizations and civil society groups	<p>In five of the seven project countries that receive GEF resources, the lead executing agency is a national NGO which forms part of the Middle East or Africa Partnership of BirdLife.</p> <p>The project is also engaging with NGOs and CSOs on another level. This is particularly marked in countries where hunting is an issue (e.g., Jordan, Lebanon) where hunter groups are actively involved in the project with a view to developing a rational and responsible framework to protect their interests in the long term.</p> <p>The project therefore engages with NGOs and CSOs on the basis that it does not have absolute authority, but it does provide a level of democratic decision-making with regards the flyway.</p>
Private sector	<p>The private sector interests are many and various. These have mostly been developed through the tourism sector with regard to sustainable tourism and eco-tourism initiatives started by the project.</p> <p>The private sector is engaged at different levels. Essentially the private sector is expected to operate at the lower limits of the regulatory framework or where it provides them with a commercial advantage. The presence of the RFF and BirdLife provides a framework to raise this bar and hold individuals to account.</p>

## Theory of change

The prodoc does not present a theory of change explicitly. Nonetheless, the project and its logical framework follow this hypothesis: “(1) if target groups that threaten MSBs in key sectors, decision-makers and the general public raise their awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours; (2) if the capacity is developed and delivered to mainstream MSB/Flyway concept into sector processes, practices and programmes by providing content and tools and if (3) MSB mainstreaming is upscaled by learning, evaluating and through adaptive management; then the conservation management objectives and actions for MSBs are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway, making this a safer route for soaring birds.

## Findings

### Project Design/Formulation

The design of Tranche II continues to mainstream MSB conservation into the five key production sectors largely using sector “vehicles” identified by the targeted flyway countries. A “vehicle” is defined as a planned or existing reform process or project in a targeted sector. The MSB project design follows the mainstreaming approach as defined by the GEF as embedding biodiversity considerations into policies, strategies and practices of key public and private actors that impact or rely on biodiversity, so that it is conserved and sustainably used both locally and globally.

The design of Tranche II of the MSB project has evolved, and built on lessons learned, from Tranche I. The changes did not really affect the project scope or content but provided a more coherent structure and improved the mainstreaming approach and management arrangements for the new phase. In terms of scope, changes included slightly rewording component 1 and 4, merging Components 2 and 3 were into a single new Component, dropping off the unneeded (and in many cases confusing) terminology of “*double mainstreaming*” and distributing the GEF grant by sector rather than by countries which has provided greater flexibility to the Project to allocate grant resources. On the other side, there has been instrumental changes on the project management arrangements based on Tranche I recommendations, these included reassuring the NGO execution modality, strengthening the role of the RFF as coordinator and flyway “manager” and distributing the GEF grant by sector rather than by countries.

The overall project goal remained the same as in tranche I and is to ensure that globally threatened and significant populations of soaring birds that migrate along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway are effectively maintained. The immediate objective also remained the same and is that conservation management objectives and actions for MSBs are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway, making this a safer route for soaring birds.

The project’s overall strategy is grounded on mainstreaming MSB conservation into the sectors through:

- Awareness, capacity building of BirdLife International national partners to sustain the work in the future,
- Provision of content and tools to effectively mainstream MSB conservation into the five sectors a
- Strengthening the RFF as a leading facility for bird conservation is proving to be an effective route towards expected/intended results.

The overall MSB project strategy is sound; though it is an ambitious Project planning to impact 5 different sectors in highly complex and volatile countries. The project design remains highly dependent on the successful selection of the ‘vehicle’ to achieve the anticipated outcomes. The prodoc has defined number of vehicles based on set criteria, however, the validity of those ‘vehicles’ has been impacted by the lengthy project formulation process (26 months) and resulted in losing several vehicle projects and time had to be invested in the identification, negotiation, and design of new vehicle projects, specifically, in Ethiopia and Sudan.

### **Results Framework Analysis: project logic and strategy, indicators**

This section provides a critical assessment of the Project Results Framework (PRF) in terms of clarity, feasibility and logical sequence of the project outcomes/outputs and their links to the project objective. It also examines the specific indicators and their target values in terms of the SMART<sup>5</sup> criteria.

The project's results framework monitoring system is composed of 5 objective indicators with its respective baseline and end of project targets, 4 indicators for component 1, 20 indicators for component 2 (4 for hunting, 4 for energy, 3 for tourism, 2 for waste management and 2 for agriculture) 6 for component 3.

The objective level indicators and targets meet the "SMART" criteria, the objective- level targets are appropriate and give a good sense of the scope and all that the Project intends to achieve at policy level, engagement with the private sector, MSB conservation integration into production sectors, number of hectares under "flyway sensitive" practices and sites with practices.

Generally, the PRF is found to be fit for purpose, and indicators provide a clear description of the intended target with an economy of words, and targets are largely broken down by sector/country. The simplicity of the indicators provide clarity to the PMU in terms of the activities to be monitored and targets to be reached. However, here are few comments on the indicators:

- There are 35 indicators all together suggested in the PRF, and this is rather too many for monitoring a project at this scale. It is acknowledged that sector-specific indicators were needed under component 2, which resulted in 20 indicators under this component only, however, rooms for integrating and prioritising some of these indicators could have been investigated to come up with more strategic and reasonable number of indicators that can be operationalised within available M&E resources. The GEF projects are normally bound by 20 indicators maximum focused on the outcomes.  
It has been evident through the TE process that indicator monitoring process required a considerable efforts and resources to be kept up to date, and the fact the quantity of indicators has been quite overwhelming in terms of efforts and resources needed to keep indicators relevant and up to date. As an example where some indicators could have been better streamlined is indicator #4 'Land managed for hunting, energy, agriculture and waste management under 'flyway sensitive' practices at selected sites along flyway' and indicator #5 'Number of sites with "flyway sensitive' practices along flyway', evidently, the same sites have been double reported once as an area and once as site counting, and these could have been merged together into one indicator.
- Some indicators are output-based indicators as opposed to outcome indicators, for example, third indicator under component 2 "Existence of a MSB /Flyway monitoring programme tracking conservation status, impact sectors, threats, drivers of change and effectiveness of RFF interventions" has no outcome evidence that can be offered.
- Some of the targets are quite ambitious, particularly related the first objective-level indicator (1. Number of new and revised country sector policies (hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism) incorporating MSB issues approved by national governments). The target is set to be "at least i) 30 policies submitted as recommendation and ii) 20 policies approved by project end". Comparing with other similar (by scale) mainstreaming projects, this target is far too ambitious, and this allowed for reporting stuff that don't necessarily qualify as 'policy' to satisfy the target. Planning to impact 5 different sectors in highly complex and volatile countries at the policy level seems unrealistic.
- The wording of the second indicator under component 1 "*awareness questionnaire developed and applied including to selected focus groups in national and local governments, local communities near sites, private sector, CSO, etc*" is about the questionnaire itself, while it should have been focussed on the change in the level

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<sup>5</sup> SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound.

of awareness, this is just a wording matter as long as the project reports the actual change in the level of the awareness.

- The target for the third indicator under first component “number of government and private sector requests to project for “flyway sensitive” guidelines, best practice, and related materials” is not broken down by country or sector, this assumes that level of investment and outputs in each country/sector are equal, which, according to the reported progress, is not always the case.
- None of the indicators presents midterm project targets, this could misguide the planning process and makes MTR judgment on achieving pre-set targets challenging.
- 3 of the indicator’s baselines and targets were supposed to be established at the inception phase, and the inception report defined 2 out of 3 targets missing in the project document, and one target related to the indicator “Awareness questionnaire developed and applied including to selected focus groups in national and local governments, local communities near sites, private sector, CSOs, etc.” has not been defined in the inception report.
- Outcome 2 indicators related to capacity building were modified and adjusted during the inception meeting which took place in January 2018. Indicator 1 on capacity of national BirdLife partners / civil society to mainstream MSB/flyway issues increased as per the partner’s capacity assessment scorecard was modified to include the gender perspective and the baseline and target for the second capacity related indicator were also included in the results framework during the inception.
- The first indicator under outcome is about “Quality of yearly Progress Implementation Reports”. This is rather a given requirement for UNDP-GEF projects and didn’t need to be included as an indicator, especially when the list of indicators is too long.
- Throughout the results framework, gender is directly monitored via one indicator under component 2 related to capacity of BirdLife partners. The rest of indicators and targets are not disaggregated. Nonetheless, partners are collecting disaggregated data, for example, number of male and females attending training events or receiving capacity building exercises or numbers of men and women employed by the different NGOs.

### **Assumptions and Risks**

Assumptions and risks were articulated in project planning documents. The stated assumptions and risks were logical and robust at the time. The prodoc defines 7 key risks including, 4 of which are carried over from Tranche I. The identified risks are supported with a proper assessment based on impacts and livelihood and backed with relevant mitigation measures. Of the 7 risks, the “Political unrest and security concerns” risk has been reasonably rated as “high risk” based on the ongoing political situation in the region, and this recent political developments in Sudan were an example of how this risk has influenced the project delivery. Other risks identified include 2. Strategic, existing reform vehicles don’t accept, or chose not to implement MSB technical content (M); 3. Recipients of flyway content question technical standard or added value (M); 4. Amendments to legislation & regulations modifications not officially approved (M); 5. Different countries with different priorities making management & administration difficult; 6. Not able to reach consensus on long term flyway objectives (M); 7. Birdlife structure seeks consensus which makes implementation challenging (M). All other risks were assessed to be “Moderate”. The PIRs didn’t include update of the risk on regular basis, with no update on the status of the risks and the mitigation actions, also other risks emerged during the project implementation were not captured nor reported. The MTR identified the following emerged risks:

1. High staff turn-over rate within Governmental institutions (ie. Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt);
2. COVID-19 forced lock down and the delay this has caused on project’s operations in all countries;
3. National NGOs diminishing income due to COVID-19 worsening financial situation of the organizations and;
4. Growing inflation which makes it difficult for vehicle projects to meet costs.



Assumptions are clearly articulated in the PRF and captures key assumptions underpinning the achievement of the outcomes, for example, the prodoc identifies the assumption that awareness campaigns are able to alter behaviour and choices of general public, influencing the political and decision-making process. However, it is worth mentioning that the project document template, as all other GEF-UNDP project documents, allows for the assumptions to be captured in the PRF, but it doesn't include information as to how these assumptions are going to be tested and/or monitored.

### ***Lessons from other relevant projects***

The MSB Tranche II project is totally designed based on lessons learned from Tranche I project, this included slight changes in scope and major changes in the implementation modality (as explained above). The Tranche I recommendations have been referenced and addressed in the design of Tranche II.

The project document identified other UNDP-GEF projects, including two in Jordan and Egypt that are addressing biodiversity and the tourism sector. Specifically, 1) Mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into tourism development and operations in threatened ecosystems in Egypt (GEF # 5073), 2) Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in tourism sector development in Jordan (GEF # 4586), 3) The Sustainable Land Management Project 2 (GEF # 5220), and 4) Promoting Utility Scale Power Generation from Wind Energy (GEF # 4745). As such the prodoc identified areas of overlap and cover significant areas of the flyway in both countries.

The project design is grounded on 'vehicle' selection, and as a "vehicle" is defined as a planned or existing reform process or project in a targeted sector, so as part of vehicle identification and selection process, the project design identified linkages with other projects to be partnered with.

### ***Planned stakeholder participation***

The stakeholder types identified in the Project document vary significantly due to the wide geographic scope of the MSB project and its focus on different sectors. As a result, the project was set to collaborate with a diverse range of Government Agencies that extend beyond the statutory environmental agencies in the respective countries, considering the sector-specific involvement. Additionally, NGOs and Civil Society groups are essential stakeholders. In five out of the seven project countries, which are receiving GEF resources through vehicle projects, a national NGO associated with the Middle East or Africa Partnership of BirdLife serves as the lead executing agency. The private sector also plays a role in the project, primarily through the vehicle projects, along with International Funding Institutions. The project document provides an extensive list of stakeholders involved.

### ***Gender responsiveness of project design***

Section 2.11 of the project document focuses on gender mainstreaming. It states that the Project aims to achieve a UNDP Gender Marker 2 rating and that BirdLife International implements its own internal gender policies and codes of practice. The proposed strategies include promoting gender parity in personnel recruitment, ensuring and documenting equal participation of men and women during field visits, capacity building exercises, and all project activities, among other measures.

The representation of women within RFF and BirdLife partners seems to be appropriate, women are actively participating in events, and efforts are being made to maintain gender balance. During the inception meeting, BirdLife also incorporated the gender dimension into the capacity building indicator of the results framework.

Gender considerations were also overlooked in the design of the vehicle projects. However, it is important to acknowledge the work of the Partnership, Capacity and Communities Department (PCCD) is undertaking with its various partners. One of the project's focal points is the evaluation of gender as a capacity trigger, with the objective of improving the gender approach in collaboration with each partner. This is achieved by assisting partners with gender mainstreaming strategies, personnel recruitment, and communication in a tailored approach to address gender mainstreaming.

### ***Social and Environmental Safeguards***

The SESP of the project provides a clear definition of how the project incorporates overarching principles to enhance Social and Environmental Sustainability. It outlines the integration of a human-rights based approach through sustained collaboration with CSOs, promoting their development and advancing the development agenda. The document also outlines efforts to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment. Rather than simply focusing on gender balance or recognizing gender-specific roles, the project actively supports its partners in integrating gender considerations by developing gender strategies and action plans at the organizational level.

Furthermore, the SESP emphasizes the project's commitment to mainstreaming environmental sustainability, which aligns with its overall objectives. The prodoc explicitly states that the project is designed to avoid any social or environmental risks, and this commitment has been maintained throughout the three years of project operation without revisions to the SESP by the project and its board.

### ***Management arrangements***

The management arrangements for Tranche II of the MSB project evolved from Tranche I and were designed to: i) apply the NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International and its specific expertise in bird conservation that is critical to the MSB project; ii) avoid having to establish numerous PMUs across the participating flyway countries; iii) use the project to strengthen the NGO network along the flyway to ensure continuity and sustainability.

Important to highlight that these changes in implementation follow the recommendations of the Tranche I MTR and look to overcome the difficulties encountered.

The Project is being implemented by BirdLife International for the regional component and its national partners in Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan and Ethiopia and, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) through the Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) in Egypt. As indicated previously, this is a special case due to the inability to transfer funds to national NGOs in Egypt.

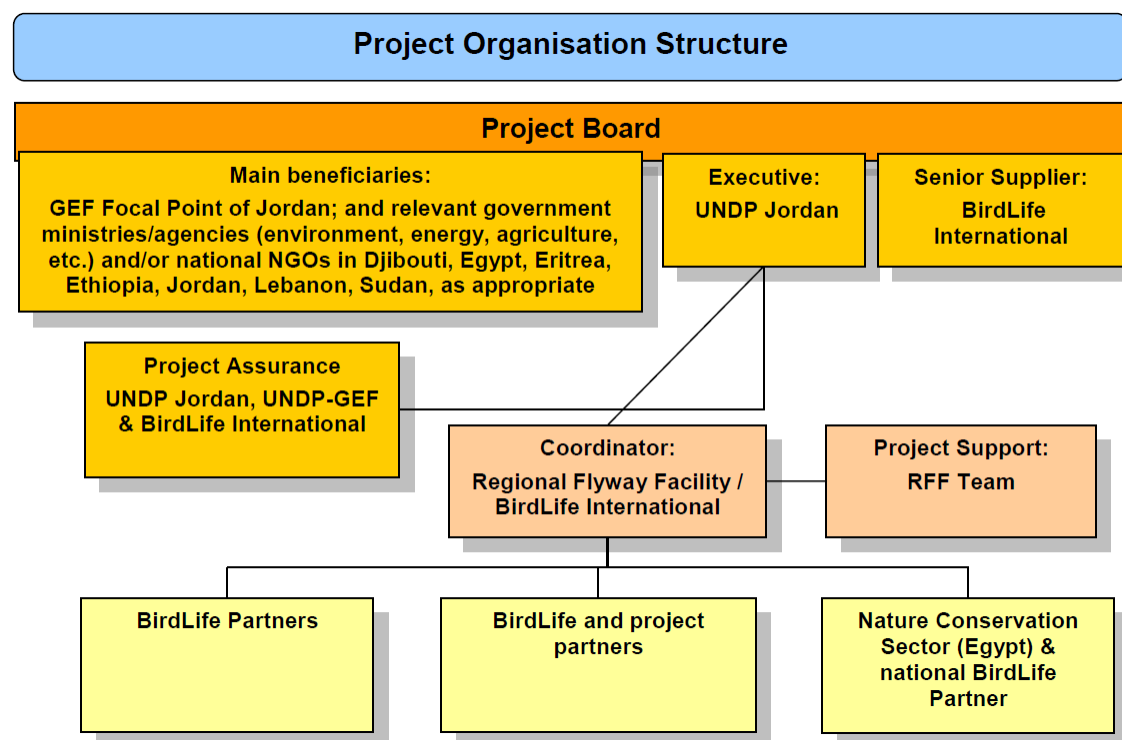
There are two aspects to the project's execution: firstly, with the execution of the RFF and secondly with the execution of the national activities (e.g., the vehicles). The RFF and regional coordination component are through NGO execution modality, through BirdLife International with the RFF acting as the PMU for the entire project.

The RFF/PMU and BirdLife International report and account directly to the executing agency (UNDP Jordan). Jordan has national NGO execution modality as well through the national BirdLife partner, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). RSCN reports directly to the Steering Committee comprised of UNDP Jordan, Government Representatives as well as RFF Coordinator. Ethiopia, Sudan and Lebanon have national NGO execution modality as well through BirdLife International local partners, namely, Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS), Sudanese Wildlife Society (SWS) and Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) who report to RFF.



The situation is different in Egypt. As indicated previously, the country has national Execution modality through the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) with a national PMU nested in the Nature Conservation Sector reporting directly to UNDP Egypt. The Project is governed, according to the Project, by a Project Board (refer to figure 2) and a BirdLife Supervisory Committee.

Figure 2: MSB project organizational structure



The Project Board (PB) has been responsible for making management decisions for the project, acts as the highest strategic and policy-level body of the project (regional and national components) and provides overall guidance and direction to ensure the unity and coherence of the project. The Project Board was set to meet at least once a year and can invite other stakeholders to participate in its meetings as needed. The PB is comprised of:

- GEF Operational Focal Point in Jordan, representing all flyway countries
- UNDP Jordan Resident Representative acting as UNDP PPRR, or his/her delegate
- Director, Conservation Department, BirdLife International UK or his/her delegate
- RFF Coordinator as Secretary
- Any additional stakeholders invited by the PB

This is a unique board set up for many reasons, including the fact that the GEF OFP in Jordan represents the OFPs in 6 other countries and is expected to cover on the perspective of these countries, this is rather unprecedented and evidently the national interest in the individual countries have not been totally and equally represented in the board. Understandably, the inclusion of 7 GEF OFPs in one board is not practically possible, nor effective, however the expectation that one GEF OFP could represent other countries on the board needed to be thought through more strategically.

Similarly, UNDP Jordan CO was also set to represent all UNDP COs in all other countries on the project board. From accountability point of view, Jordan CO is accountable over the project resources at the regional level as a GEF Implementing agency and therefore the representation on the project board makes sense particularly that other COs (except Egypt) have no specific role in the project design and delivery – see more detail under UNDP implementation/oversight assessment section.

UNDP is the GEF Implementing Agency for the project and as such remains the ultimate responsible party towards the GEF Secretariat and Council with regard to the use of GEF financial resources – and of any cash co-financing passing through UNDP accounts. UNDP Jordan was designated as the lead UNDP Country Office responsible for the overall supervision and monitoring of the project.

BirdLife International, an international non-governmental organization established in and incorporated under the laws of England and Wales, is the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner for Tranche II of the MSB Project, which is run under the NGO modality. To this aim, BirdLife International and UNDP signed a Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) on the basis of the most recent existing UNDP standard text. BirdLife International had “full control over project operations and can use its own supply channels for recruitment and procurement, provided that the process does not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP.

For the duration of the GEF-financed project the RFF functions as the PMU for the regional endeavor. The RFF, as the technical and operational arm established for the purposes of this project, is institutionalized within and supported by the BirdLife International management structure. The RFF is led by a RFF Coordinator backstopped by a part-time Senior Technical Advisor. The coordinator is assisted by one Communications, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Officer based at the RFF office; two Regional Flyways Officers (one based in the BirdLife Amman office, and the other based in the Africa Regional Office), two Conservation Managers for Africa & the Middle East with appropriate technical skills and knowledge of the regions concerned; and one part-time Finance and Administration Officer.

## Project Implementation

### *Adaptive management*

GEF evaluations assess adaptive management in terms of the ability to direct the project design and implementation to adapt to changing political, regulatory, environmental, and other conditions outside of the control of the project implementing teams. The adaptive approach involves exploring alternative ways to navigate the projects towards meeting the planned objectives using one or more of these alternatives.

Adaptive management is defined as the project’s ability to adapt to changes to the project design (project objective, outcomes, or outputs) during implementation resulting from: (a) original objectives that were not sufficiently articulated; (b) exogenous conditions that changed, due to which change was needed; (c) the project’s restructuring because the original expectations were overambitious; or (d) the project’s restructuring because of a lack of progress.

The MSB Project’s adaptive management was proactive and timely and pertinent with regard to several of the above facets of adaptation for implementation. The most salient ones are included here.

The first avenue where adaptive management was essentially needed was to deal with the no longer valid ‘vehicles’ at the inception phase. The prodoc has defined number of vehicles based on set criteria, however, the validity of those ‘vehicles’ has been impacted by the lengthy project formulation process (26 months) and resulted

in losing several vehicle projects and time had to be invested in the identification, negotiation, and design of new vehicle projects, specifically, in Ethiopia and Sudan. In response, the PMU and partners in different countries partners had to invest time and resources to identify, negotiate and initiate new projects, at the time of this TE, there have been more than ten active vehicles that the project is engaged with. The ability of the PMU and BLI's partners to find reasonable alternatives was necessary to meet the project objectives.

As all other projects, the MSB project was also challenged with COVID in terms of difficulties to convene national and international meetings, and advance work in the field. In response, a special COVID-19 Adaptive Plan was developed in 2020 by the PMU to ensure smooth project operation especially during critical lockdown periods. The plan has been implemented successfully. It included regular staff meetings during lockdowns, organizing regional sectoral online webinars and partner online catch-up meetings. The PMU effectively coordinated all activities that could be executed and advanced to be implemented remotely and were clear as to those that had to be postponed. PMU revised all AWP's to adjust them to the new reality and managed to continue operating.

The implementation of the MSB project is dependent on the BLI's partners in targeted countries, the capacity of these partners varies from one country to another and level of readiness to engage in the project also varies. In case of Djibouti, the BirdLife partner was not fully ready in terms of capacity and availability to participate in the project including a potential case for conflict of interest given the role of the BirdLife partner on working with the energy developers at the same time. In Eritrea, the work of the civil society is limited and restricted by Government, and this affected the ability of the BirdLife partner to operate. Alternatively, the BirdLife -RFF opted to engage directly with the energy developers in these countries without necessarily passing through their partners, this allowed the project to mainstream MSB considerations into these developments, but the sustainability of such work on the long-term remains questionable. See sustainability section for more information.

As part of the adaptive management, the project used number of opportunities to raise awareness, for example a country-wide electricity blackout was witnessed in Jordan for long hours, which is something very unusual in Jordan, some of the media attributed this event to migrating birds and triggered a public debate on birds and continuation of electricity service. The BLI's partner in Jordan, RSCN, has successfully taken advantage of this opportunity to clarify the realities around the role of birds in such events but also more importantly about the need for implementing sustainable solutions that protect the birds and yet maintain the electricity services from interruption, this event allowed wide public exposure to promote for the sustainable solutions.

### ***Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements***

As established in the Project Document and at inception, a broad framework for stakeholder analysis was carried out at design. The main partnership arrangements with relevant stakeholders to be involved was established. The implementation of project activities engaged with many key actors, fairly following the planned framework for stakeholder analysis.

Stakeholders' engagement was critical in the MSB project given that the project has been working across multiple countries and different sectors, the project has been designed to facilitate collaboration with public and private stakeholders.

From design onward the project has had a healthy inclusion of stakeholders in all aspects of the project, from consultations at design stage to implementation. Complete and broad stakeholder participation is one of the key positive aspects and successes of the Project.

The perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process were amply supported to be included in design process. The Project Documents contains evidence that captures the broad levels of participation that took place at design. There were national level consultations and site visits to the countries where the project operated to harness delivery.

The project has been effective in coordinating with various stakeholders including the technical commissions, through bilateral meetings and through the Project Board. All this has meant that the level of participation of public and private actors has been very high. The level of knowledge of the subject matter on the part of the technical team has helped a lot in this achievement as they themselves have brought other actors to the table and have a deep understanding of the region and its people.

### **Project Finance and Co-finance**

The Project had a total planned project cost of USD 14,034,885. Planned GEF financing was to be USD 3,500,000, and co-financing of USD \$ 10,534,885. At the time of project start, the planned co – financing was to be provided by the following sources: UNDP (cash) USD 100 000, BirdLife USD\$ 797,956 cash (support to the RFF) and USD\$ 1,458,085 in-kind, and the rest coming from project partners across the targeted countries based on the vehicle selection done at the design stage.

Although co-financing has been a requirement for selecting the “vehicles” projects, however, selection of the vehicles has been done mainly because of their relevance to MSBs and flyway conservation. Some sectors offer much higher opportunities for co-financing (e.g., the energy sector) whereas others prove much harder to co-finance (e.g., waste management because it is often funded from provincial or municipal budgets where the public purse is lighter). Therefore, co-financing has been, as agreed by the project partners (BirdLife Partner, Affiliate or other NIA), aggregated across the flyway and the project and does not equate to a proportion of the GEF fund to match a specific countries co-financing commitment.

Nonetheless, the MSBs project has exceeded its co-financing target by far, a total of \$16,603,005 has been secured throughout Tranche II. This is attributed to the successful partnership strategy that the MSB project has put in place, and additional funds the project has mobilised to its partners. The summary of the co-finance below in table 5, and detailed breakdown included in the Annex 10.

**Table 4: Finance and co-finance table**

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (BLI, its partners and projects) (mill. US\$)		Private sector (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual

Grants	0.1 <sup>6</sup>	0.06			0.8	6.4			0.9	6.46
Loans/Concessions										
• In-kind support			5.5 <sup>7</sup>	4.69	2.12	5.43	2.0 <sup>8</sup>		9.62	10.12
• Other										
Total	0.1	0.06	5.5	4.69	2.25	11.83	2.0		10.5	16.58

The project spent overall US\$ 3,144,008 the GEF finance, this is 87% of the funds – with US\$ 455,991 remaining according to the latest expenditures report – see table 5. It is also noted that there is a marginal variation in spending on third component where nearly 110% of the budget has been spend, this is not seen to affect the overall spending strategy and allocations overall.

Table 5: GEF funds expenditures report at TE

Component	Budget US\$	Cumulative expenditure up to June 2023. US\$	Balance US\$	% Spent
Component 1	275,000.00	167,150.87	107,849.13	61%
Component 2	1,977,000.00	1,783,653.13	193,346.87	90%
Component 3	529,734.10	581,100.17	(51,366.07)	110%
Component 4	292,756.62	189,509.54	103,247.08	65%
PMU	495,509.26	392,594.51	102,914.75	79%
PMC	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	100%
Total	3,599,999.98	3,144,008.22	455,991.76	87%

Regarding financial management, the project has been undergoing periodic mandated audits. The audits have been delivered and there have been major findings coming out of these audits, some finance-related findings in 2022 included:

- The preparation of the monthly payroll sheet was done manually (via excel sheets) – not based on a computerised system. In response, BirdLife is gradually moving into a new ERP system.

<sup>6</sup> Cash co-financing from UNDP

<sup>7</sup> \$2.0 million from the Jordan Ministry of Municipality Affairs, and \$3.5 mil from Egypt National Renewable Energy Authority

<sup>8</sup> Egypt Jaz Hotels and Resorts

- Miscalculation and differences in the calculation salaries for on particular staff member for the whole year 2022 with a total amount of US\$ 13,349. In response, BirdLife rectified and refunded the amount.
- Maintaining and recording accounting transactions on an excel sheet and sends them to the BirdLife HQ in the following month to be integrated into the HQ accounting software.
- Absence of basis for allocating project expenditures (failure to implement prior year's audit finding). BirdLife responded *"In the last year audit, one item fell under this category. This year no such items were found due to proper review process"*
- Misclassification of expenditure between line items where amount of \$1,473 was 'Contractual Services-Companies' as opposed to 'Translate, print, disseminate'.

In brief, the major financial audit finding are around maintaining records in excel rather than using sophisticated computerised system is being addressed by the BirdLife by deploying the new ERP system, and this is considered, by the auditors, as a lack of control; affected accuracy of accounting records; difficulty in tracking vouchers, time consuming however the BirdLife noted that the full transition to ERP is happening in a staggered approach and will take time until it is fully functional at the HQ and regional offices.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry, implementation, and overall assessment of M&E**

Assessment element	Rating
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Design	Satisfactory (S)
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) implementation	Satisfactory (S)
The overall assessment of the M&E	Satisfactory (S)

The M&E Framework was described in detail in Section 6 of the Project Document. It comprises of both standard M&E items for UNDP-GEF project such as the Inception Workshop (IW), meetings of the project board, annual Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs), audit, Mid-Term Review (MTR), Terminal Evaluation (TE), UNDP / GEF Tracking Tools and the final report, and also additional monitoring and reporting tailored to the needs of the MSB project such as the periodic Thematic Reports (upon request by UNDP, GEF or BirdLife, the RFF is to prepare or commission Specific Thematic Reports, focusing on specific issues or areas of activity), technical reports and publications.

Also, the M&E stipulates the need for an exit report which is not a standard UNDP-GEF requirement, but it was recommended to demonstrate continuity between projects ending and the post project period, and it was envisaged to be done prior to the TE. Annex 8 of the project document suggested a template for the exit strategy.

The PRF is a key instrument in the M&E design, and as a result of the large number of indicators and repetitive nature of indicators (see comments under Results Framework Analysis section above), there has been a case of double counting data for some indicators, for examples, sites that are applying flyway sensitive practices (indicator #5) also have been reported in terms of areas (ha) managed for hunting, energy, agriculture and waste management under 'flyway sensitive' practices at selected sites along flyway (indicator #4).

Nonetheless, the overall design of M&E framework meets the standard M&E template for projects of this size and complexity. Overall, the evaluator found the M&E design adequate for monitoring the project results and tracking the progress toward achieving the objectives. The M&E design is backed with adequate resources (a total of US\$ 8,000 allocated for monitoring and terminal evaluations) and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. **Therefore, the M&E design is rated Satisfactory (S).**

**Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) implementation:** The project board was activated in 2019, with the first meeting taking place on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The project board was anticipated to hold at least 1 formal meeting

per each year of the project duration in the project document. The board is responsible for making management decisions for the project, acts as the highest strategic and policy-level body of the project and provides overall guidance and direction to ensure the unity and coherence of the project. It can invite other stakeholders to participate in its meetings as needed.

The project board was updated with the progress and planned activities including challenges and opportunities, the board role in M&E was mainly to provide strategic guidance on oversight based on the progress made, and the board approved endorsed the project extension in August 2023 in its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

The project inception workshop was held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2018 in Amman and was attended by almost 30 participants, including representatives from different stakeholders. The main purpose of workshop was to inform a broader range of stakeholders about the start of the project, their roles in the project, and to allow discussion of important technical issues including providing a clear understanding to all participants of what the project is seeking to achieve and allow discussion of important technical and strategic issues for Tranche II, more importantly reviewing the sector prioritization and vehicle selection in targeted countries.

The inception phase of any project is critical for ensuring the successful future implementation, and usually involves a). an assessment of whether any factors have changed since project development, b). finalization/review of indicators, baseline / target data in PRF if such is needed and the updating / refinement of the original multi-year workplan (plus initial AWP). In the case of the MSB project, the top priority was to validate the vehicle identified in the prodoc and design new vehicle projects to replace the ones that are no longer valid, and the inception phase and report has done so.

The project submitted 4 PIRs in total so far for Tranche II, the first one was in 2019. The PIRs were sufficiently detailed to monitor the performance and impact of the project.

The project commissioned a Mid-Term Review (MTR) between November 2020 and Feb 2021, the MTR offered a total of 17 recommendations aiming at achieving corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project as well as reinforcing the initial benefits of the project. In response, the PMU prepared a management response plan articulating how each recommendation will be addressed, but there have been no regular updates on these recommendations documented through regular reporting processes.

The GEF tracking tools/core indicators were carried out during the project development and were updated at the MTR stage and end of the project (Annex 9) as part of this TE.

As part of the RFF mandate is also to monitor the progress done at the vehicle project level, RFF requests its partners to present interim vehicle project technical and financial reports per sector. RFF has also conducted site visits and they prepare a back to office report each time.

The evaluator has had access to all the reports presented to date and there is evidence of the effective monitoring being conducted by RFF. The format allows for a thorough description of the activities undertaken, hyperlinks to publications and published materials as well as financial reporting. Thus, they receive very well-organized information which helps to build the QPR as well as the IPR.

The project monitoring function is critical particularly in this project given its complexity and the fact that delivery of vehicle projects is done by multiple partners, and the PMU has been allocating considerable time and resources



to meet the UNDP-GEF requirements and do their internal monitoring efficiently, and therefore the **M&E implementation is rated Satisfactory (S)**.

A composite ranking that considers monitoring and evaluation design at entry together with the M & E plan's implementation for the **overall quality of M&E is Satisfactory (S)**.

**UNDP implementation/oversight (\*) and Implementing Partner execution (\*), overall project implementation/execution (\*), coordination, and operational issues**

Assessment element	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation /Oversight	Satisfactory (S)
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	Satisfactory (S)
Overall project implementation/execution	Satisfactory (S)

The project has been implemented following UNDP's NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International and its specific expertise in bird conservation that is critical to the MSB project.

The project management arrangements take into account the Tranche I recommendations which have proven to be effective. Changing to NGO execution has simplified the previous implementation arrangements and reduced considerably the operational costs by reducing the number of PMUs as well as reporting and accounting requirements. The RFF is now supervising the National Implementation Agents which sign a contractual agreement clearly specifying objectives, deliverables and budget and which report directly to RFF, supervised by BirdLife International. They, in turn, report to UNDP Jordan. The RFF is seen as a key player by both Governments and private sector and most importantly, distributing GEF resources by sector rather than by country has provided greater flexibility to the Project Board to allocate grant resources.

UNDP is the GEF Implementing Agency for the project and as such remains the ultimate responsible party towards the GEF Secretariat and Council with regard to the use of GEF financial resources – and of any cash co-financing passing through UNDP accounts. As a designated lead UNDP Country Office, UNDP Jordan is responsible for the overall supervision and monitoring of the project, and has been providing project assurance through the country office and the UNDP-GEF RCU, in addition to an effective network of country offices (COs) – particularly important in the case of Egypt where the UNDP CO in Cairo allows the establishment of an effective Project Management Unit nested in the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) with the participation of the national BirdLife Partner, Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE).

UNDP CO has been effectively supporting the MSB project with 1) establishing and convening the project board in collaboration with BLI; 2) monitoring the financial transactions by the project in terms of delivery, meeting targets and expenditure and ensuring there is no over-expenditure on the project; 3) conducting annual audit in line with UNDP's standard procedures; and 4) facilitating and supporting the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), MTR and TE. UNDP CO didn't provide direct procurement and recruitment services to the project as BirdLife had the capacity to deliver these services under the full NGO execution modality.

The UNDP Jordan has also been providing strategic support to the MSB project by creating linkages with the other projects that the CO is delivering, particularly on biodiversity. For instance, UNDP facilitated MSB project engagement in the NBSAP development in Jordan to ensure that MSBs are integrated appropriately, also other linkages identified with other project, *inter alia*, the biodiversity mainstreaming in the tourism sector project,



GFCR project and others where these linkages resulted in co-delivery of activities and subsequently mutual benefits.

Similarly, the UNDP Egypt has also been providing the support needed to the MSB project in Egypt noting that Egypt component was implemented following the UNDP NIM modality unlike the case with other countries. This meant that UNDP Egypt has been taking a prominent role in the MSB project by supporting the financial transactions, supporting procurement and recruitment when needed, and establishing strategic linkages with other biodiversity projects managed by the country office.

However, other UNDP COs (other than Jordan and Egypt) didn't have a specific role in any form or shape during the project design and implementation. The PMU attempted to leverage the support of country offices to support some activities in the country, but the limited resources at the country office level and the fact that they have no defined role in the project were among the reasons why UNDP COs could not be actively engaged.

Based on this, quality of **UNDP implementation/oversight is rated Satisfactory (S)**.

The Implementing Partner for this project is BirdLife International, as an international non-governmental organization established in and incorporated under the laws of England and Wales with a regional office in Jordan (Amman), based on the signed Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA). As an implementing partner, the BirdLife International has been responsible for the regional components of the project delivered through the Regional Flyway Facility/RFF, and for the national level activities to be carried out through Birdlife Partners and Affiliates. The RFF has been performing the PMU role in the project.

BirdLife has been responsible for financial and procedural accountability in line with the signed PCA, and despite, and has been rated as 'low risk' based on the findings of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT), nevertheless, there have been 'major' observations by the audit (refer to finance section of this report).

At the technical and delivery fronts, the RFF, as the technical and operational arm established for the purposes of this project, is institutionalised within, and supported by, the BirdLife International management structure. The RFF demonstrated strong leadership not only in facilitating the delivery of the project activities but also in presenting itself as a reference point in the flyway as a trusted partner among the stakeholders.

The RFF has been providing ongoing support and supervision of the work done by partners across the region, this included identifying, negotiating, contracting and implementing vehicle activities in collaboration with the BirdLife's partners. RFF has been helping to further build the capacity of national partners to enable them to participate in Tranche II and develop relationships with a wider range of stakeholders to effectively mainstream MSBs in the relevant production sectors in each targeted country. The BirdLife's project monitoring has been robust and effective (as explained under M&E section), with ongoing technical support to the project partners across the region.

Based on the above the **quality of Implementing Partner Execution is rated Satisfactory (S)**.

A combined rating of **overall project implementation/execution is Satisfactory (S)**.

### ***Risk management and Social and Environmental Standards***

UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) screening was carried out at design so that project programming would maximize social and environmental opportunities and benefits. Also, this analysis was carried out for

ensuring that adverse social and environmental risks and impacts would be avoided, minimized, mitigated and managed.

Regarding risk management outside the SESP framework, the project document identified 7 risks, 6 of which are assessed as “medium” risk and 1 as “high” risk. The high risk was concerning the political unrest and security concerns impact on the implementation of the project in one or more countries, weakening their ability to engage and for mainstreaming to take place. This has been evidently the case in Ethiopia and more recently in Sudan. The project relied on its extensive experience to operate in unstable countries during Tranche I (such as Syria, Yemen, etc) by deploying a mix of CSOs, international NGO, UNDP and government participation will provide a solid basis for maintaining a presence and a meaningful level of activity in a country until such time as the situation improves.

As a standard UNDP requirement, the Project is to monitor risks quarterly and report on the status of risks to the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP Country Office should record progress in the UNDP ATLAS risk log. The risks have not been updated during the inception phase nor during implementation, and the risk log update didn't seem to have happened quarterly as envisaged the prodoc and there is limited information available in ATLAS (and new system so called Quantum), including PIRs have limited information on risks and mitigation measures. Nonetheless, the MTR identified the following emerged risks:

1. High staff turn-over rate within Governmental institutions (ie. Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt);
2. COVID-19 forced lock down and the delay this has caused on project's operations in all countries;
3. National NGOs diminishing income due to COVID-19 worsening financial situation of the organizations and;
4. Growing inflation which makes it difficult for vehicle projects to meet costs.

The role of risk management seems to be underestimated in project management. An effective risk management strategy allows the project to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. By planning the right mitigation measures, the project can be ready to respond when needed.

## Project Results

### *Progress towards objective, expected outcomes and impacts (\*)*

Assessment element	Rating
Progress towards objective, expected outcomes and impacts	Satisfactory

Overall, the MSB project has lived up to expectations, achieving most of its targets with some targets even surpassing expectations, and only a few partially achieved. Its primary focus was to mainstream MSB considerations into the productive sectors posing the highest risks to the MSBs during migration: hunting, energy, tourism development, agriculture, and waste management. The project's collaborative approach effectively engaged stakeholders, forming coherent partnerships across a broad spectrum to successfully integrate MSB considerations into sectoral policies and strategic processes.

The project has successfully accomplished transformative outcomes by mainstreaming migratory soaring birds into five key sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway. These sectors include hunting, energy, tourism, agriculture, and waste management. Through the collaboration of BirdLife International and its partners, the initiative has led to global environmental benefits by influencing governmental and private sector policies in these areas. The project also provided sector-specific guidance to raise MSB conservation awareness and strengthen the capabilities of local partner organizations in flyway countries.

To achieve its goals, the project strategically formed partnerships with the private sector and international financial institutions, while working closely with local authorities in all five sectors. By involving international and local NGOs as executing partners, the project successfully engaged various stakeholders in a complex region. Additionally, regional cooperation and exchange on MSB conservation, facilitated by the RFF and local CSOs initiatives, have built trust, encouraged dialogue, and fostered strong relationships among the flyway countries. A critical factor in the project's success is its ability to build upon the lessons learned from Tranche I and maintain long-term commitment through GEF engagement.

During the TE process, unintended results of the project were observed and worth mentioning here. As a results of implementing the wind energy guidelines in Egypt, there has been a need to get qualified personnel to implement birds monitoring programme. In response, the project in Egypt developed a training and certification system to obtain qualified, competent and certified bird monitoring personnel. Among others, the Protected Areas' staff participated in the programme at large. However, due to the fact that wind energy companies have more financial capacity and pay higher wages comparing to the Egyptian market, there has been significant staff turnover in the government institutions, particularly EEAA and PAs, as the staff were attracted to work in the bird monitoring market. As discussed in the sustainability section of this report, the limited technical capacity in the area of birds monitoring in EEAA has then become concerning.

**Project Objective: Conservation management objectives and actions for MSBs are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway, making this a safer route for soaring birds.**

Indicator Obj1: Number of new and revised country sector policies (hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism) incorporating MSB issues i) submitted as recommendation to and ii) approved by national governments, in the 7 GEF project countries. Target: At least i) 30 policies submitted as recommendation and ii) 20 policies approved by project end.

In its recent PIR 2023, the project reported total of **21 Submitted policies and 17 approved** new and revised country sector policies developed and approved, these included mainly the endorsement of MSB guidelines in different sectors, Raptors MoUs, joining CMS, and MoUs signed between BLI's partners and government institutions/companies to govern the work on MSB conservation.

The definition of the 'policy' in this context has not been provided for the purpose of reporting on this indicator, as a result, the door was open to consider different types of policy engagements such as membership in the CMS Energy Task Force, which might not necessarily qualify as a 'policy' as such but it certainly such engagement will create a policy dialogue at the national level.

It is noted earlier in this TE that this target is overly ambitious and doesn't not clearly define in terms of what qualifies as policy, and therefore the assessment of this indicator makes a distinction between what is considered as a design flaw vs delivery on important policy reforms.

To this end, and regardless of the dilemma of numbers, it is more important to acknowledge the important achievement done by the MSB project, and the fact that the project was able to bring the MSB issues on the table of policy makers and achieve policy reform in light if the competing development priorities in the targeted countries is indeed fascinating. Knowing that the MSB conservation often doesn't get the enough attention in the

policy making process in targeted countries, yet the project was able to successfully mainstream the MSB into these development sectors and achieve policy reform as well as on ground implementation of the policies. And therefore, the TE assesses the policy target to be satisfactory achieved.

Examples of policies developed:

- Endorsing energy power guidelines by the ministry of environment in Jordan
- Signed MoU between and The National Electric Power Company (NEPCO), included the requirement for mitigation measures for bird protection (Jordan).
- Prime Ministry of Jordan officially published the new Decree 2/z-2021 on regulating bird hunting and trade supported by the project to fill identified gaps in national legislation to be in line with “the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora” (CITES) including conservation status of migratory soaring birds.
- Endorsement of land-use guideline for KBAs in Jordan
- Integrate the birdwatching activities in the national Adventure and Eco-Tourism Strategy. Through the strategy birdwatching will be included within the national tourism promotion plan.
- The cooperation protocol has officially signed between the Ministry of Environment Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) CEO and the head of the Holding Company for Water and Wastewater on 14 August 2022 (Egypt).
- A national Environmental Impact Assessment guidelines and monitoring protocols for power line projects, is under endorsement by EEAA after considering all comments by EETC, RCREEE and Birdlife
- A new policy was adopted by both EEAA and the ministry of defense in Egypt to prevent tourism hunting in lake Naser. This was according to participation of MSB project in key stakeholder meeting with regards to organizing activities in lake Naser.
- A new agreement between the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), the Egyptian Electricity Transmission Company (EETC), New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA) and Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RECREE) regarding bird-monitoring obligations was agreed. It has become mandatory that all private sectors wind farm projects implementing the Joint Protocol will integrate in their Power Purchasing Agreements (PPAs) signed with EETC a new attachment (named Schedule 5) stating wind developers commitments to run bird monitoring programs at their sites.
- Ethiopia became Party to the CMS Raptors MOU at the 13th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to CMS, in Gandhinagar, India in February 2020.
- The Lebanon government issued the new law for protected areas management. The new law identified 4 categories but recognizing for the first time Hima community-based approach as a legal category of protected areas in Lebanon.
- Lebanon joined officially the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals CMS
- A list of suggestions to include MSB conservation into the agriculture sector was officially submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry waiting endorsement.

Indicator 2. Number of new private sector projects and schemes incorporating MSB concerns in each target sector.

Target: At least 1 in each participating country by project end.

The 2023 PIR reports that a total of 99 projects and schemes are now incorporating the MSB concerns of which **88 projects during Tranche II**. These include tourism developments such as Ayla in Aqaba, energy development projects such as ACWA wind energy project in Egypt, new Hima areas declared in Lebanon, and agricultural schemes incorporating MSB considerations in Sudan.

The MSB project work at the policy level (indicator 1) accompanied with working closely with projects on the ground has evidently led to greater incorporation of the MSB concerns at the project level by private sector. A straightforward example would be the implementation of the energy guidelines in Egypt on all new wind energy

developments as a direct result of adopting the MSB guidelines. Also, the tourism developments in Aqaba and Jazz hotel group in Egypt also incorporating the MSB conservation into the site management and eco-tourism activities.

Indicator 3. Degree of MSB conservation integration into production sectors (as measured by GEF BD-2 Tracking Tool). Target: BD2 TT shows positive gains over time.

A new GEF BD2 tracking tool was prepared and submitted as part of this Terminal Evaluation of the MSB project. Overall, the revised version showed positive gains during the second half of MSB Tranche II. In part V, Policy and Regulatory Framework, greater values compared to MTR 2020 level was achieved in Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Jordan and Sudan (from 85/180 to 96/180).

Indicator 4: Land managed for hunting, energy, agriculture and waste management under 'flyway sensitive' practices at selected sites along flyway. Target: 40% increase by project end.

The project reports a total of (5,897,710.63) ha cumulative, this means 5,709,771 ha on top of the baseline (187,939.4 ha). This is by far exceeding the 40% increase target as set in the project document.

The reported areas represent areas defined as KBAs in Jordan or Hima in Lebanon, areas designated for bird watching (e.g Drraya and Dinnieh in Lebanon), areas where energy projects considered MSBs (e.g insulation of power lines in Jafar/Jordan and wind farms in all countries), reforestation plans and tree planting, waste water ponds (e.g Ras Gharib in Egypt), no hunting zone declaration as in lake Naser (Egypt) and land areas in the agricultural sector were under MSB flyway sensitive considerations such as Greater Kordofan in Sudan.

Indicator 5: Number of sites with "'flyway sensitive' practices along flyway. Target: Minimum of 23 bottleneck sites by project end.

The project reports a cumulative total of 35 sites including the 16 sites in the baseline, this means that **19 new sites with "'flyway sensitive' practices along flyway during the Tranche II of the project.**

There have been number of bottleneck sites identified including 2 new bottleneck sites are under the consideration as flyway sensitive practices (Ain El-Sokhna & Suez), new waste management sites (Al Tour and Ras Sdr) are following flyway sensitive practices and lake Naser is now following hunting flyway sensitive practices in Egypt.

All eight wind farm projects in Jordan implemented the pre-construction requirements, two of them are now operational wind farms operating under the National Guidelines and following flyway sensitive practices.

In Lebanon, 6 sites in Hammana, Ras AMatn, Kherbet Qanafar, and Ain Zebdeh were declared as Hima farms, and 4 locations (Mansoura, Jdeiet Chouf Baakleen and Chemlan) where responsible hunting practiced.

In Ethiopia, there are no known specific bottleneck sites per se within the flyway leg of Ethiopia. However, the implementation of ELEAP project (Vehicle Project) takes place mainly in Addis Ababa (Capital City) but also at quite a large number of towns, cities and rural Kebels throughout the country. The project activities focus both on upgrading of existing power/distribution lines and poles, and outreaching areas that have not been previously connected to the national grid. The upgrading component focuses on taking appropriate corrective measures on problematic infrastructures, such as replacing dangerous bare wires with insulated ones. Thus, there is a move towards making energy infrastructures flyway-sensitive, though there remains much to be done in that front.

Furthermore, the MSB Energy and EU EV New LIFE projects have also contributed towards retrofitting identified energy infrastructures at four sites (Koka, Matahara, Logia and Samara) within the flyway, making the distribution lines 'flyway-sensitive'.

**Outcome 1: Raised awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours among target groups that threaten MSBs in the key sectors, decision-makers and the general public**

Indicator 6. Number of articles or other substantive media releases highlighting MSBs and flyway importance, per country each year by the end of the project. target: Minimum of 15 articles (and other media releases) in each country annually by project end

The project reported a total of **1923 articles in Tranche II**. These included radio interviews, TV interviews, documentary films, online publications, articles on MSB project website, social media posts and articles published in various newspapers.

Among these publications:

- The project produced documentary Film on Bird electrocution and best practices for mitigation and minimize bird mortality
- H.E the Minister of Environment (Egypt) highlights on MSB project in COP27 and the celebration world migratory Day.
- Documentary film that presenting a great opportunity to invest in environmental tourism by turning the wastewater management site in Aqaba
- Documentary Film on Shutdown on demand protocol in Jordan's windfarm projects
- Documentary film on best practices implemented in Al Ekeider landfill area

Indicator 7. Awareness questionnaire developed and applied including to selected focus groups in national and local governments, local communities near sites, private sector, CSOs, etc.

Despite the flaw in the wording of the indicator itself, the MSB project team has rightly measured the change in awareness, attitude and behavior change of the national stakeholders in the relevant sectors at national level. The Awareness Questionnaire is a tool developed by the Migratory Soaring Birds project to measure the change in attitude and awareness of threats to migratory species along the Red Sea and Rift Valley flyway. The aim of the questionnaire is to demonstrate that 70% of key stakeholders surveyed have a positive attitude towards MSB safe practices, and that 50% have positive behavior change.

Results from the second-round questionnaire demonstrate that the project has met this goal. It has also seen an increase in positive attitude and behaviour change from when the survey was first deployed in 2020 to 2022. The results of the second round from the project indicated that the awareness questionnaire met its aim of 70% of stakeholders demonstrating positive attitude toward MSB practices, and 50% demonstrating positive behaviour change. Results show that there has been an increase in positive attitudes and behaviors between 2020 and 2022. In 2020, 47.72% of national stakeholders showed a positive attitude compared to 75% in 2022. In 2020, 37.78% showed positive behavior change, with 89% in 2022. Anecdotal results from the questionnaire indicate that they have greatly benefited from interventions from MSB partners in the form of workshops and other engagements.

Results from respondents have indicated that they have greatly benefited from interventions from MSB partners in the form of workshops and other engagements. Key recommendations from respondents included reducing the length of the survey to make it quicker to answer and potentially increase stakeholder engagement. Further



analysis of the responses also demonstrates that while the MSB project has greatly increased awareness and MSB-safe practices, there is more to be done to cement these practices further into each of the key project sectors.

8. Number of government and private sector requests to project 'flyway sensitive' guidelines, best practice, and related materials. Target: At least 100 requests by project end.

The project reported a total of **96 requests** done so far for 'flyway sensitive' guidelines by private sector and governments. Requests mainly came from electricity distribution companies, electric power companies, wind energy developers, landfill sites, tourism companies, academic institutions, international organizations and various government authorities.

It is important to note that MSB project has been able to promote its product beyond the targeted countries, and the MSB products, particularly the guidelines, have been requested by agencies and government beyond the scope of the project, for example, the General Authority for Wildlife and Environmental Management in the Saudi initiative has requested a cooperation with MSB project for capacity building in MSB conservation programs and demonstrated interest in applying energy guidelines.

**Outcome 2: Content, tools and capacity developed and delivered to mainstream MSBs/Flyway concept into sector processes, practices and programmes**

Indicator 9: Capacity of national BirdLife partners / civil society to mainstream MSB/flyway issues increased, as indicated by partner capacity assessment scores including new gender-specific component (number of staff trained and have experience on gender equality and women empowerment; number of women engaged in project work.) Additional organisational development (OD) indicators will be cross-referenced with the BirdLife International Quality Assurance System (an OD diagnostics tool). Target: National BirdLife Partners in all participating countries in the capacity program score over 20 at final assessment.

A key output of the MSB project is to develop the institutional capacity of the project partners and increase their ability to promote the concept of the flyway in their country and sectors. Tranche II II of the MSB project has seen an increase in the tailored support and guidance provided to partners. This support and guidance were delivered in the form of tools, facilitation, funding, and training to help partners develop their capacity to meet identified gaps.

Project partners and PCCD use tailored 'roadmaps' to identify these capacity gaps. These roadmaps determine the support required for each project partner to fulfil the capacity requirements of the project based on the Trigger Assessment. The assessment is a tool derived from UNDP-GEF that measures the organizational capacity of the partner organisations against 10 key capacity thematic areas. The Trigger Assessment originally measured 9 thematic areas until the 10th component of gender was added in Tranche II.

Full assessment of BirdLife/project partners was completed. **All Partners scored a total of at least 18** for the trigger assessment score. The MSB project provided additional Co-funding in the Capacity Development through MAVA Foundation. Hatch platform was created as a tool for network engagement where MSB partners are members and part of various groups including the capacity development group. Diverse capacity development tools were generated including HR manual, Building Civil Society Support, Learning from failures report, and a MEL toolkit. Below is a snapshot of scores by BirdLife partners.

Terminal Evaluation of 'Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into key productive sectors along valley/Red Sea flyway (PIMS1787)' project.

	ADN		EWNHS		NCE	
	2015	2022	2015	2022	2015	2022
1: Organisational Management	2	-	2	2	1	3
2: Strategic planning	2	-	2	2	1	3
3: Financial controls	2	-	3	3	3	3
4: Quality Assurance	2	-	2	3	2	2
5: Technical Expertise	2	-	3	2	3	3
6: Regional/Global mentoring	2	-	3	2	3	3
7: Staff Appraisals	2	-	3	3	2	0
8: Participatory approaches	3	-	3	3	3	3
9: Communications	2	-	3	2	2	2
10: Gender mainstreaming	-	-	-	3	-	2
Total	19	-	24	25	20	24

	RSCN		SPNL		SWS	
	2015	2022	2015	2022	2015	2022
1: Organisational Management	3	3	1	3	2	1
2: Strategic planning	2	3	1	3	2	3
3: Financial controls	3	3	3	3	2	3
4: Quality Assurance	3	3	2	3	2	2
5: Technical Expertise	3	3	3	3	2	3
6: Regional/Global mentoring	3	3	3	3	2	2
7: Staff Appraisals	2	3	3	3	2	2
8: Participatory approaches	3	3	3	3	2	3
9: Communications	2	3	2	3	2	1
10: Gender mainstreaming	-	2	-	3	-	3
Total	24	29	21	30	18	23

Indicator 10. Capacity of other key national stakeholders in government and private sector to mainstream MSB/flyway issues increased, as indicated by an adapted new scorecard built on the UNDP-GEF capacity development scorecard. Target: At least one national stakeholder per country where vehicle project is supported score a minimum of 2 for each trigger on the assessment scorecard developed informed by the UNDP/GEF scorecard for government/private sector.

BLI created a scorecard that was designed to measure the suitability of the main sector stakeholder to implement MSB friendly practices in each of the sectors and regions the MSB partners work in. The structure of the scorecard can be divided into 5 high level capacity results that are applicable within all the MSB sectors. Under which there are a total of 15 indicators that can be ranked against staged indicators, providing an indicator score between 0 and 3. The rating score of each staged indicator is tallied to provide the overall rating for each of the stakeholders. The scorecard was disseminated in 2020 and 2022, capturing a retrospective baseline from when the stakeholder began collaborating with the project, a 2020 and 2022 data point. The aim of the scorecard is to ensure that the stakeholders measured have a score of at least 2 for each of the indicators.

The distribution of country stakeholders within each relevant sector for the MSB Project Partners is as follows:

- EWNHS – Ethiopia Electricity Unit (EEU, Energy)
- RSCN – Ministry of Local Administration (MoLA, as a representative of all 5 sectors)
- SPNL - Higher Hunting Council (HHC, Hunting), Hima Farms (Agriculture), Ministry of Tourism (MoT, Tourism)
- Egyptian Ministry of Environment (EEAA) - NREA (Energy), Waste and water management company (waste management) and JAZ hotels (tourism).
- SWS – Plant Protection Directorate (PPD, Agriculture)

All of the vehicle organisations, except for EWNHS, successfully met the goal listed below of all scores meeting the required score of at least two per indicator. Although EWNHS did not meet the target set for this outcome, they



have forged a strong relationship with EEU and are continuing to work together to implement MSB safe practices, even after the project completion.

Indicator 11. Existence of a MSB /Flyway monitoring programme tracking conservation status, impact sectors, threats, drivers of change and effectiveness of RFF interventions. Target: Flyway-wide monitoring programme established by project end.

As a first step, the MSB Project funded a review work for the migratory soaring bird monitoring in the wider Red Sea / Rift Valley flyway - a review and recommendations for future steps. This report was further developed into a peer-reviewed paper titled 'Monitoring of migratory soaring birds in the East African-Eurasian flyway: a review and recommendations for future steps' Published in the Sandgrouse journal in 2021<sup>9</sup>; aimed to assess the status of monitoring across the flyway, update information on the priority locations to monitor, and present recommendations for future coordination across the flyway.

The project, then, completed a comprehensive Flyway Monitoring Plan for Migratory Soaring Birds Along the Rift Valley / Red Sea Flyway. The Plan explained in full detail both the methodology and the monitoring, coordination, and networking along the flyway.

The overall objective of this flyway monitoring plan is to establish the soaring bird's migration monitoring in key bottleneck sites along the Rift Valley/Red Sea Flyway. It specifically aims to:

- Identify key MSB species and Bottleneck sites for monitoring.
- Provide a review of the Rift Valley/Red Sea Flyway population for MSBs.
- Detail the monitoring design and protocol for standardized field implementation.
- Propose a coordination facility for the monitoring program.
- Identify the financial and material resources for the implementation of the monitoring program.

Indicator 12. Number of joint national project partner-government and project partner-private sector partnerships established in key sectors during project period to achieve mainstreaming of MSB concerns. Target: 2015 figure + minimum of 10 by project end for each national partner.

The project reported 62 new partnerships established during the Tranche II of the project. These include partnerships with energy companies such as National Electricity Company (NEPCO) in Jordan, energy government institutions such as NREA in Egypt, water service company such Holding Company for Drinking Water and Wastewater treatment in Egypt, tourism operators such as Jazz hotel group and government institutions and other projects funded by other donors.

The partnership strategy that was followed by the MSB project is assessed as a success factor, the nature of the project being multi-countries, multi sector and multi-levels of mainstreaming required an effective partnership strategy to be in place to be able to work on all aspects of the project simultaneously. In the first place, the project is grounded on the BLI's network of partners as key implementing agencies in the individual countries, BLI's partners, in their turn, were also able to establish coherent partnerships with private sector and government institutions, for example, the recently signed MoU between the RSCN and National Electricity Company (NEPCO) in Jordan to decrease bird mortality caused by the electric power grid in Jordan and implement mitigation measures at identified hotspots. This MoU has been, and will continue to be, instrumental in mainstreaming the

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<sup>9</sup> Available [here](#).

MSB conservation in the energy powerline sector, through this MoU, an ongoing engagement between both organisations will be maintained to address key hotspots with MSB concerns, also NEPCO is now committed to share data on birds' mortality observed along the power lines.

Indicator 13. Number of MSB/ flyway-mainstreaming "vehicle" projects implemented in target countries in key sectors. Target: At least 10 programmes with MSB issues integrated into project activities by project end.

The project reported total of 14 vehicles that have been identified and implemented, the project counted individual MoUs signed with electric companies in Jordan as a standalone vehicle, hence the list below is showing 11 instead. Either way, the target is achieved.

#### Jordan

1. Decrease bird mortality caused by the electric power grid in the northern part of Jordan and implement mitigation measures at identified hotspots. Three MoUs were signed between RSCN and two electricity companies (Irbid District Electricity Company, Electricity Distribution Company and the National Electricity Company).
2. RSCN is leading a full five sector vehicle under the umbrella of land use planning to mainstream MSB conservation into all related sector processes. The objective is to integrate the boundaries of Important Bird Areas and bottleneck sites in the national/ regional/ local land use plans through development of comprehensive GIS Database of land use classifications.
3. Supporting the Aqaba Bird Observatory and establishing the Feathers Trail. Agreement in place between RSCN and Ayla Oasis.

#### Egypt

4. Active Turbine Management for Wind Energy Developments in Gulf of Suez (as a vehicle agreement for private sector projects at the Gulf of Suez) is running with partnership with Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency RECREE under the Arab League that is responsible for implementation and monitoring through a committee from EEAA, MSB, NREA and EETC.
5. The conservation of MSBs from collision and electrocution risks from power lines along the flyway with the Egyptian Electricity Transmission Company EETC and EEAA

#### Lebanon

6. Decrease the impact of poisoning on MSBs from agrochemicals and illegal hunting on MSBs. A partnership agreement was signed between SPNL and LRA on 31 December 2018
7. The Ministry of Tourism (travel agents & guides division) to initiate a certification program that includes MSB considerations. MoU was signed between SPNL and the Ministry of Tourism.
8. Signed MoU between SPNL and Ministry of Agriculture on the 27th of August 2020

#### Ethiopia

9. Mainstreaming bird considerations within the energy sector under National Electrification Programme in Ethiopia. EWHNS led the MOU signature with the two energy utilities (EEU and EEP).

#### Djibouti

10. Ghoubet Wind Farm engaged in Djibouti; regular meetings are taking place to ensure MSB conservation considerations in the operations of the wind farm are taken into account.

#### Sudan

11. Mainstream MSB considerations within the agrochemical sector to ensure bird safety (from potential poisoning).

Understandably, the energy sector has been taking the most attention and funding from the project due to the fact that wind energy developments are rapidly growing in the region and urgency of addressing the electrocution from the power lines. Energy sector imposes direct threat on MSB, and the mainstreaming efforts are expected to have direct impacts in terms of reducing mortalities.

To help with, and guide the vehicle selection, BirdLife has developed vehicle scorecard to help BirdLife Partners within the MSB project to assess the capacity of vehicle organisations to mainstream and implement safeguards and MSB friendly activities. The objective of the survey is to gather information on how and to what extent the vehicle projects have the appropriate capacity to mainstream MSB safeguards within the relevant sectors in their region. The scorecard is divided up into 5 high level Capacity Result indicators that are applicable across all MSB sectors. These are: 1) Capacity for engagement, 2) Capacity for strategy, policy and legislation development, 3) Capacity to generate, access and use information and knowledge, 4) Capacity for management and implementation, and 5) Capacity to monitor and evaluate.

The project was not able to intervene in Eritrea as was initially planned in the project document. BirdLife International has no partner in the country, and after direct engagement with the Eritrean Government, it was demanded that the financial support to be given directly to the GoE in which it would become part of the government budget and would therefore need to be allocated to project activities as per government fiscal plans. The delegation was not open to MSB Project missions to the country. The MSB Project considered that the risks to be high in the absence of enough monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

The project, based on the board recommendation, developed a report on the situation in Eritrea and concluded that working in the country is constrained by engagement and implementation modalities in the country.

Indicator 14. Number of hunters and tour guides trained in MSB conservation awareness and best (sector) practices. Target: Lebanon: 2,000 hunters trained. Jordan: 50% of hunters are licensed.

The project reported a total of 14,538 hunters and tour guides trained in MSB conservation awareness and best practices. 2538 hunters in Jordan and 12,000 hunters in Lebanon / (455) tour Guides.

The total number of licensed hunters in Jordan is 8500 hunters, all of them trained and aware of the MSB responsible hunting rules. The target for Jordan stipulates that 50% of hunters are licensed, and this is hard to calculate in absence of data on non-licensed hunters.

Further, RSCN organized two Judges Dialogue Meeting held in Azraq Wetland Reserve to strengthen the implementation of hunting and biodiversity protection laws. Also, RSCN and Royal Rangers organized a specific training for best hunting practices which targeted young hunters.

In Lebanon, 258 participants participated in (16) sessions were organized on sustainable hunting and hunting laws. Additionally, (50) ISF including high caliber attended a session with Internal Security Forces on the hunting law and sustainable hunting and 2 Trainings on First Aid Procedures for Bird Rescuing organized with BSPB.

Indicator 15. Number of hunted MSBs recorded for sale (live and dead) at specific markets in Beirut including Sunday flea market, and Jordan. Target: 80 % reduction in number birds traded by project end compared to year 1.

In Jordan, through a survey covering 15 months, A total of 124 individuals of soaring birds were offered for sale online. In Lebanon, SPNL conducted a market survey in July 2020, and in total, there were (215) individuals of (36)

species of recorded as exhibited or advertised for sale by a total of 43 vendors. Out of them, 14 species (38% of species) with 41 individuals (19% of the individuals) are soaring birds and 22 species are non-soaring birds. Of the soaring birds, the White Pelican and the Black-winged kites were the most affected by poaching and trading.

Comparing this data to the baseline there seems to be an increase in number of traded MSBs in the market as opposed to decrease, see table below. However, it should be noted that number of external factors contributing to these numbers are way beyond the sphere of control of the project, for example, the economic crisis in Lebanon has led to extra pressure on natural resources, and this could be a contributing factor as to why numbers are increasing rather than decreasing.

Also, an active online and physical illegal trade of raptors is being fueled by the high prices offered in the Arab Gulf for the birds along with difficult economic situation in the Levant and Egypt. This led to huge increase of illegal activities e.g., in Northeast Syria and Jordan through illegal trade routes through Iraq.

Country	Baseline	Latest data	% change
<b>Lebanon</b>	<u>Recorded</u> : 37 MSBs over 4 months <u>Estimated</u> : 111 MSBs over 1 year	<u>Recorded</u> : 41 in one-month (July) 2020 <u>Estimated</u> : 492 all over the year	More than 5 times increase
<b>Jordan</b>	<u>Recorded</u> : 5 MSBs (no duration defined)	<u>Recorded</u> : 124 MSBs over 15 months 2022 <u>Estimated</u> : 99 MSBs per year	Can not be decided without knowing the period over which baselines data was reported

Indicator 16. Number of hunting groups along the flyway endorsing responsible hunting practices. Target: At least 12 hunting groups endorsing responsible hunting practices by project end.

The project reported 13 hunting groups who have endorsed responsible hunting practices. These include hunters in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt, raptors club members, hunter associations as well as guides who attended the trainings.

Indicator 17. Number of ammunition and gun suppliers in Lebanon endorsing responsible hunting. Target: At least 50% of suppliers in Lebanon endorse responsible hunting by project end.

53% of suppliers in Lebanon endorse responsible hunting. SPNL conducted a workshop for ammunition and gun suppliers in Lebanon on 17th December 2020. It turned out that due to Covid-19, the total new number of major ammunition and gun suppliers in Lebanon is 15 traders, to be taken as the new baseline for this indicator. 8 traders (53%) signed the Charter of responsible hunting in Lebanon.

18. Number of planners taking account of bottlenecks in national and local energy planning. Target: At least 5 countries by project end.

The project reported that all 5 countries are now taking account of bottlenecks in national and local energy planning.

RSCN submitted the KBAs review report (including Delineation High Risk zones (reserves, and IBA's under special regulations) to layer incorporated within national land-use plans with associated regulations/bylaws and sensitivity map. RSCN developed Land use guideline and enforcement procedures based on the regional MSBs

guidelines to secure and maintain mainstreaming of MSBs IBAs, bottlenecks and other special conservation areas conservation. The guideline will include classification system for integrating MSB bottlenecks in the different classes of Ministry of the Local Administration (MoLA) Natural Heritage System (NHS) according to the level of protection necessary for their conservation. MOE Approved endorsement KBAs map in the national regulations on 10 October 2022. A GIS database was established for all development types and land uses in all existed in MSBs IBAs and bottleneck areas and categorized according to their respective productive sectors at GIS unit in RSCN.

In Lebanon, the 3 approved wind farms are located within the Upper Akkar IBA & bottleneck. EIA including bird surveys are mandated for these wind farms.

In Egypt, 11 Wind farms' developers at Gabel Al Zayt and Gulf of Suez continue to take accounts of birds' mitigation measures at existing and new planned wind farm projects.

In Djibouti, Ghoubet Wind Farm is located next to the lake Assal and approximately 1 km west of lake Ghoubet in the Arta region along the border with the Tadjura region of Djibouti.

In Ethiopia, it is the Ethiopian Energy Authority (EEA), EEU and EEP that are the sole Federal level agencies that are mandated and involved in issues related to planning regarding energy generation and distribution.

Indicator 19. Number of new energy projects adopting best practice in avoidance and mitigation of MSB risks. Target: Minimum of 10 projects by project end.

The project reported 49 new energy projects adopting best practice in avoidance and mitigation of MSB risks in Tranche II. The high number achieved reflects the large focus on the energy sector in Tranche II, and as explained above, the energy sector has been rightly prioritized given the urgency and the growing market for wind energy in the region. This is one of the most significant achievements of the project during Tranche II.

20. Number of collaborative monitoring schemes in place at existing and new energy projects to assess mortality rate. Target: Monitoring schemes in place for at least 10 projects by project end with full stakeholder participation/endorsement.

A total of 17 monitoring schemes reported by the project in Tranche II were all done and agreed with wind energy developers in the region.

21. Number of cases where mitigation measures have been adopted following the detection of high levels of MSB mortality. Target: 10 cases.

A total of 12 cases were recorded during Tranche II. The project has kept good records of all cases reported by the energy developers and where mitigation measures were taken. Wide range of mitigation measures have been applied including increasing number of staff increased per vantage points (NREA), insulate 750 of hazardous poles for bird electrocution, reflectors to cover 18 km from powerlines in southern Sinai and monitoring to measure the effectiveness of the reflectors following identified mortalities of birds, increasing the tip heights up to 220 m in Gulf of suez, such as using 3D radars with automatic shutdown, financial support for capacity building programs, and retrofit the identified dangerous infrastructures at Koka, Matahara and Logia areas (Ethiopia).

Indicator 22. Number of locations with demonstration of benefits to tourism sector from MSB activities. Target: 15 tourist locations at project end.

The project reported 12 locations with demonstrations of benefits to tourism sector from MSB activities. These including developing an observation point to become a birdwatching tourist location (Al-Galala in Egypt, Ayla in Jordan), installing bird watching sign in wastewater ponds areas, and designing bird watching trips and routes for tourism.

Indicator 23. Number of hotels and tour operators including MSB conservation concerns in their labelling/certification schemes. Target: 15 by project end.

The project reported 154 hotels and tour operators including MSB conservation concerns in their labelling/certification schemes as a result of cooperation with AMAR SINA Hotel, TRAVCO and Jazz hotel group in Egypt. The MSB Project is collaborating in Egypt with the GEF-UNDP Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Egypt's Tourism Project. The national certification system of "Green Star Hotels" now includes 150 hotels along the flyway. TRAVCO has added the bird watching activity at the sewage ponds of Sharm El Sheikh to their trip packages. It is also launched on the company website.

24. Number of hotels and tourism operations (e.g. guides, etc.) implementing labelling/ certification schemes especially adapted for MSBs. Target: At least 30.

The project reported a total of 187 certified tour guides and (150) hotels. These numbers represent the number of guides participating in the trainings sessions. However, the update of the Green Star national hotel certification system is still being under validation. Once completed, including mainstreaming biodiversity and MSB considerations in tourism, the certification is planned to be implemented in all 80 participating hotels along the flyway.

On hotels, Egypt. This was attained through a partnership with the GEF/UNDP "Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Egypt's Tourism" project. The national "Green Star "label in Egypt includes a list of recommendations for hotels including bird-friendly practices.

Trainings done so far, included

- A training workshop for a group of 30 participants of JAZ hotels in Sharm El Sheikh on ecotourism programs including bird watching activities and eco-hotels.
- Participation in the regional online workshop entitled "Tourism for Inclusive Growth: Resumption of Bird Watching Activities along the Migration Flyway in the Rift valley/ Red Sea, where the Deputy General Director of Tourism Services Branches in TRAVCO made a presentation on the cooperation between the MSB project and the company to support
- A training program for the JAZ Hotels Group for including MSB conservation concerns in their labelling/certification schemes. A number of 26 workers, administrators and guides at the JAZ hotels participated in the program.

25. Number of EIAs for new waste management projects that address MSB concerns in project area. At least 5 new EIAs address MSBs by project end in areas receiving mainstreaming support. Target: At least 5 new EIAs address MSBs by project end in areas receiving mainstreaming support.

The project reported a total of 8 EIAs for new waste management projects that address MSB concerns in Tranche II. This included reviewing EIAs and providing all technical recommendations that address MSB concerns in project area. Projects are (All in Jordan):

- A new waste management project in Jarash near King Talal Dam North of Jordan



- Establish wastewater treatment site in Azraq area.
- A new industrial wastewater treatment plant project in Zarqa governorate in the east of Jordan
- Azraq landfill project near Azraq Ramsar area
- Fabric Industry Project in Mafraq
- Constructing slaughterhouse in Irbid
- Water treatment project in Wadi Al Arab dam including hydropower to supply the treatment station with electricity.
- A sewage system of Karak

Indicator 26. Number of existing waste management sites where 'flyway sensitive' best practice measures have been adopted. Target: At least 5 sites.

The project reports a total of 14 of existing waste management sites where 'flyway sensitive' best practice measures have been adopted.

The MSB project in Egypt has been cooperating with the Egyptian Holding Company for Water and Wastewater Treatment to review EIA of 3 sites all within the flyway of MSBs in Egypt (Sharm El Sheikh, El Tor, capital of the South Sinai and Ras Sedr, located on the Gulf of Suez and the Red Sea coast).

In Jordan, RSCN participated with Aqaba authorities in developing the transition management plan of Aqaba water treatment site, including the creation of new pools for birds to make sure Aqaba Bird Observatory remains a healthy stop over area for migratory birds, ended with signing an MoU with USAID, water treatment company, ASEZA, and Aqaba development corporation for achieving the mitigation plan for the impact of the waste treatment plant development on the ABO with total fund reached to 1,700,000 USD Dollar.

Also, efforts were made to promote the waste management guidelines that were produced by the MSB project with the consultant delivering EIA or developing a waste management plan for specific sites to be integrated.

Indicator 27. Number of agriculture development plans incorporating MSB conservation considerations. Target: At least five agriculture development plans by project end.

The project reported the development of 6 agriculture development plans during Tranche II of the project.

The action plan between SPNL and Litani River Authority includes development/update of agriculture development plans incorporating MSB conservation considerations including reducing use of agrochemicals which would decrease the impact of poisoning on MSBs from agrochemicals. Also, SPNL has initiated the Hima Farm programme. This is a community based managed farm to promote nature friendly farming, permaculture, the sustainable use of natural resources, ensures no child labor, ensures no hunting, raises the capacity of local communities especially youth and women, provides jobs for locals and refugees, conserves native plants, and assures financial sustainability to Hima local communities. Hima Farm provides positive impact on birds, especially migrating soaring birds, as zero tolerance policy for illegal killing is enforced and only bio-chemicals are used on agriculture produce. Successful banning of hunting (including enforcement) led to Hima Hammana becoming a bird observatory for Lebanon. To date SPNL has initiated 4 Hima farms (Hammana, West Bekaa, Kfar Matta, Ras al Matn). Criteria for Hima farms based on the MSB guidance for Agriculture are under development. Hima farms will be labelled/certified by SPNL

In Jordan, the project joined the environment committee of the Agricultural Engineers Association to ensure that MSB guidelines are included in agricultural planning. Also, in cooperation with the Integrated Management and

Conservation of Water Resources in Yarmouk Reserve project RSCN developed an agricultural plan incorporating the best agriculture practices in Yarmouk IBA area.

In Sudan, there have been 3 new development plans for Greater Kordofan – 246,327 ha; and Greater Darfur – 755,580; Nile State – 300,000ha.

Indicator 28. Number of agricultural projects incorporating MSB conservation considerations. Target: At least three projects by project end.

The project reported a total of 9 projects that incorporate MSB conservation considerations during Tranche II of the project. In Lebanon, Building the ecological and socio-economical resilience of the Shouf Mountain Landscape by restoring and strengthening the socio-cultural fabric which sustains its biodiversity and cultural values (funded by MAVA) including implementing MSB agricultural guidance. It covers West Bekaa region. Litani River Authority – LRA is implementing and promoting MSB agricultural guidance at its areas. Also, Hima Framers landowners: Wajih Ammouri, Ihab Dahdouh, Hima farms at Hammana, and Kherbet Qanafar agreed to integrate bird-friendly guidelines within their agricultural practices.

In Jordan, the Integrated Management and Conservation of Water Resources in Yarmouk Reserve project RSCN developed an agricultural pilot project implemented the best agriculture practices in Yarmouk IBA area.

In Sudan, Dal agricultural company agreed to apply the MSB agricultural guidelines while implementing their projects (not done yet).

### **Outcome 3: Learning, evaluation, adaptive management an upscaling.**

Indicator 29. Quality of yearly Progress Implementation Reports. Target: PIR quality rated S or HS each year.

The MSB project has submitted all requested yearly progress reports in a timely manner including the PIRs.

Indicator 30. Existence of Flyway/RFF adaptive management plan and implementation. Target: Developed and Implemented as required.

The MSB project embarked on a Flyway/RFF adaptive management plan and implementation though the new guaranteed projects/funds support.

A special COVID-19 Adaptive Plan was developed in 2020 to ensure smooth project operation especially during critical lockdown periods. The plan has been implemented successfully. It included regular staff meetings during lockdowns, organizing regional sectoral online webinars and partner online catch-up meetings.

Indicator 31. Existence of project-based learning and knowledge management products. Target: At least 1 major dissemination report by project end.

The MSB project has been very active in producing and promoting knowledge products, examples of key knowledge products reported are:

- Homat Al Hima curriculum (Level I & II)
- Curriculum for National Guides
- SPNL in collaboration with Balamand University finalized an online National map for Responsible Hunting Areas (RHAs) in Lebanon



- RSCN developed a regional curriculum “technical tailored training modules on the threats of powerlines to birds and appropriate mitigations measures” enabling the national energy task force and national stakeholders to include addressing powerlines collision and electrocution of birds.
- Position and factsheet on MSB situation in relation to Energy.
- National Wind and Powerlines Guidance; Impact of Energy on MSBs.
- The MSB project has developed the certification schemes for the training programs at the Centre of Environmental Excellence to build and strengthen the national and regional capacities of those working in the field of conservation programs for migratory soaring birds in Egypt, in preparation for its approval and taking the necessary measures to implement them and the accreditation of the centre for ISO 14001.
- 2 papers on energy and bird electrocution published in peer reviewed journals

Indicator 32. Existence of a coherent approach to Flyway and MSB financing and fundraising. Target: Coherent financial plan for the RFF including key funding areas, sources of financing, financing gaps, financial strategy for flyway conservation activities.

The MSB project has been working on resource mobilisation to ensure the financial sustainability of the RFF services. So far, the guaranteed new funding includes:

- Ecological Restoration Fund (ERF) 3 years - July 2023 – July 2026 with \$3M.
- Hans Wilsdorf Foundation - Safe Flyways: Tackling illegal killing of birds 3 - 5 years - Oct. 2022 – Sep. 2027 - \$5M.

The financial sustainability is further discussed under the sustainability section below.

Indicator 33. Number of other sites along the flyway in which newly raised / assigned financing allows the application of lessons learned from demonstration activities. Target: At least 10 further sites along flyway by project end.

The project reports a total of 13 new sites along the flyway in which newly raised / assigned financing allows the application of lessons learned from demonstration activities. 10 of which are sites in Ethiopia where experts from EWNHS, EEP, EEU through monitoring low and medium powerlines identified 10 sites through field missions to be risky to MSB's with mortality reports produced. However, there was no action/implementation in the 10 sites identified in Ethiopia, and these should not be accounted under in this indicator.

**The TE believe only the 3 sites reported** below should be included in the data reported under this indicator.

Beyond the countries already targeted in Tranche II, the project documented 1 site in Syria where new sites have been included in the new Safe Flyways Tackling IKB Project 3, and 2 sites in Palestine.

SSCW (BirdLife Syria) is now contracted by BirdLife International under the Hans Wilsdorf Foundation funded Safe Flyways IKB 3 project to run an anti-IKB project with focus on al Jabboul wetland. SSCW will continue the very important work in the only Ramsar site in Syria – Al Jabboul – that was declared to be a protected area by the national authorities on 09 Nov. 2021. Specifically, SSCW will support the intended Management Unit(s) of the Protected Area to ensure tackling IKB is well-placed among the priorities of the site. A new socio-economic survey will be launched in the region to deeply analyse changes, trends, dependency on legal actions and illegal hunting activities.

Moreover, SSCW for the first time will start monitoring bird markets in both Damascus & Aleppo being the biggest two cities in the country to assess and understand this illegal trade market and lobby the stakeholders to tackle

this and pass such data and records to the relevant enforcement entities to combat such problem. Finally, SSCW will also support the BirdLife International planned 2025 Med IKB review as did in the 2015.

Palestine Wildlife Society (BirdLife Palestine) is now being contracted by BirdLife International under the Hans Wilsdorf Foundation funded Safe Flyways IKB 3 project to run an anti-IBK project with focus on al Jericho and Jenin sites. A desk study on the status of IKB in Jericho and Jenin will be undertaken to improve overall knowledge of IKB in Palestine. Then a survey questionnaire to better understand the methods, motivations, and drivers of hunters in Jericho and Jenin will be conducted. Meanwhile a field monitoring programme will be set up in Jenin to assess the scale and target species of IKB at this site (baseline at the beginning of the project and in at regular intervals over the course of the project), this will be used to assess the impact of the conservation actions PLWS is conducting in Jenin. Market monitoring will also be carried out to provide information to police and policy makers.

### Relevance (\*)

Assessment element	Rating
Relevance	Satisfactory (S)

Relevance is the extent to which a project's objectives are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country (ies) needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. Regarding alignment with national development and environmental priorities, all countries in the Rift Valley/Red Sea migratory flyway region have National Environmental Action Plans (NEAPs), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and/or other relevant strategies (wildlife or coastal/marine policies/strategies, etc.) with biodiversity elements relevant to the conservation of migratory birds – including most notably the thirty-seven key species of soaring birds at the core of the project.

Further, UNDP is leading the update of the NBSAP in number of countries, including those targeted by the MSB project, and during the Tranche II implementation, the project increased the relevance with NBSAPs by mainstreaming the MSB into the update process with help of UND, particularly in Jordan and Egypt.

The project is aligned with the UNDP development agenda, the UNDP strategic plan acknowledges the loss of biodiversity as a sustainable development challenge that needs to be addressed. Outcome 1 of the UNDP strategic plan is "Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded".

Also, the project is directly relevant to global environmental agreement including the CBD and voluntary CMS and Raptors MoU. During the implementation, the MSB project played a significant role in facilitating the engagement of targeted countries with CMS and Raptors MoU particularly to the Energy Task Force on Reconciling Selected Energy Sector Developments with Migratory Species Conservation.

Therefore, relevance is assessed on a six-point scale as Satisfactory (S).

### Effectiveness (\*)

Assessment element	Rating
Effectiveness	Satisfactory (S)

The effectiveness of a project is defined as the degree to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved. The valorization of effectiveness is used as an aggregate for judgment of the merit or worth of an activity, (i.e., the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain,

its major relevant objectives proficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact).

The effectiveness of this project can be rated as S (Satisfactory) since it met expectations as to the degree of objectives being achieved. This is factual at the objective, output and at the outcome's levels.

The project reports that, to date, the main targets have been achieved, some even slightly overachieved, with a few partially achieved. The project achieved key milestones.

The factors that have aided or supported effective achievement of goals have been identified as follows:

- **The ability to build upon the lessons learned** from Tranche I has been a crucial success factor in this project. During Tranche I, the project has experienced major challenges, some of which, resulted in pausing the project delivery for a long time, however, the experience to deal with these challenges have been used wisely and effectively as lessons learned in Tranche II of the project, and accordingly so many pitfalls have been successfully avoided, for example, the management arrangements have been better streamlined in Tranche II and led to smoother implementation.
- **Mastering the implementation of the mainstreaming approach.** The MSB project offers a best practice in implementing biodiversity mainstreaming approach into development sectors, the project mastered the implementation of the mainstreaming approach by developing tools and guidelines at the regional level, tailoring the guidelines to national context and partnering with governments to achieve effective and sustainable policy reforms. What makes this mainstreaming approach so exceptional is the fact that the work resulted in direct impacts on birds mortalities, and mainstreaming MSBs into the energy sector has been exemplary in this area, where governments in the region adopted the energy guidelines, private sector applied mitigation measures and birds mortality has been reduced accordingly.
- **Strong partnership settings:** The nature of the project being multi-countries, multi sector and multi-levels of mainstreaming required an effective partnership strategy to be in place to be able to work on all aspects of the project simultaneously. In addition to the BirdLife network of partners, the MSB project implemented a healthy inclusion of stakeholders in all aspects of the project and established new partnerships with governments and private sector to mainstream MSBs.
- **Engaging the private sector and international financing institutions:** The MSB project has successfully established a strategic partnership with the private sector and international financial institutions such as IFC/WB, Japanese International Corporation Agency, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and KfW to ensure that new projects in the region consider MSB risks and concerns. This strategic partnership has contributed to mainstreaming MSB concerns into 65 private sector energy projects along the flyway in Egypt, Jordan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. This includes the upscaling of shutdown-on-demand operations, which are being successfully piloted at wind farms in the Gulf of Suez. In Jordan, eight windfarm projects have incorporated MSB pre-construction requirements into their designs.

On the other hand, the project faced a number of very forceful challenges that, although taken care of adaptively to the degree possible, in some ways required resources (mainly time) to adapt and these externalities had had an impact on the project implementation as well as on the results. The main hindering issues are:

- **COVID-19 pandemic.** The pandemic affected the project in different ways, mainly, the implementation modality had to be thoroughly changed to adapt from physical interactions between project partners with local stakeholders to an online engagement for monitoring, workshops, exchanges, and the like. However, this was asymmetrical in many ways since there is a large digital gap between the participating countries in the project and the ability of local stakeholders to deal with online technologies varied. In response, a special COVID-19 Adaptive Plan was developed in 2020 to ensure smooth project operation especially during critical lockdown periods. The plan has been implemented successfully. It included regular staff meetings during lockdowns, organizing regional sectoral online webinars and partner online catch-up meetings.

- **Absence of BirdLife partner in Eritrea, and no longer active partner in Djibouti.** As the project implementation modality fundamentally rely on BirdLife partners in the region, the absence of active partners in these two countries has been a limiting factor for the project ability to intervene effectively, particularly in terms of direct engagement with the Government to achieve policy reforms. The work that the project has done directly with the energy developers in these countries is acknowledged but will have limited impacts on the future in absence of sustainable policy framework supporting the work in these two countries. This has had a major negative impact on the project delivery in these countries.
- **The role of NCE in Egypt:** Unlike other BirdLife partners in other countries, the NCE in Egypt had a limited role, and the project was implemented following the NIM modality in Egypt for the reasons explained earlier in this report and in the project document. However, initially, NCE was meant to be engaged, even though in a different capacity, in the project, but that role was not clearly defined neither in the project document nor during the implementation, and NCE has been playing different roles in the MSBs business in the energy sector in partnership with the developers in Egypt. This caused some disruptions in the implementation and also poses a sustainability risk on the continuation of MSBs activities/outcomes beyond the project (see sustainability section for more details).
- **Limited capacity of some BirdLife partners:** Despite capacity improvement, BirdLife partners in some countries have identified significant capacity gaps to be able to mainstream the MSBs into the development sectors.
- **Political unrest:** the political unrests in some of the targeted countries particularly in Sudan and Ethiopia pose a serious risk on the sustainability of the MSB project. In Sudan, continued conflict has caused further displacement and insecurity in border regions of Sudan. Limited state authority and unresolved local disputes over scarce land and natural resources increased fighting and displacement throughout 2022. In Ethiopia, there are a number of political risks in Ethiopia in general and in some of the target zones in particular that directly and indirectly pose hazards for socio-economic aspects linked to sustainability. The country has had for the last five years several types of political unrest. Also, Ethiopia is affected in the last few years by an escalating armed conflict, that affects several of the regions where the project was implemented and evidently the whole of the Ethiopian society

### Efficiency (\*)

Assessment element	Rating
Efficiency	Satisfactory (S)

Efficiency is defined as the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible. Efficiency is a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results.

The Project has been efficient in achieving outputs/products and in achieving outcomes and effects/impact in targeted countries in a high degree of accomplishment vis-à-vis expected target indicators and other metrics. Also, it has provided value-for-money since it achieved the results within budgets, agreed disbursement, etc., while leveraging investments and in-kind support from sources external to the project per se (co-funding).

The cost-effectiveness of the MSB stems from its foundation on the mainstreaming approach, which is inherently cost-effective, as reasonably argued in the project document. It allows for targeting multiple sectors in multiple countries using the 'vehicle' as an initiative embedded within the sector thus effecting change more positively and quickly, while still engaging government.

Also, the network of BirdLife Partners reduces the need for costly national PMUs in each country. In Tranche II, only Egypt had a GEF-funded national PMU, all other countries have been operating through their respective BirdLife Partners or directly through the RFF. Regionally, having the RFF embedded in, and largely funded by, the BirdLife reduces the project management cost as well.

Despite the six-month extension (two extensions from 1) Extension 1: Feb 2023 to June 2023, and 2) from June to August 2023), generally speaking, the Project Management Unit played a role in the timely resourceful delivery of expected results, adapting to changing circumstances and other externalities. The extension is found to be reasonable given challenges and risks faced by the project such COVID19, political unrest, changes in vehicle selection, etc.

As explored elsewhere in this report, the project had to adapt (successfully) to a series of externalities that could have profoundly hindered achievements, but it did not.

As of June 2023, the project reports that 87 percent delivery with high achievements as measured by framework metrics (indicators).

Given the above, the efficiency of implementation met expectations with some shortcomings. Therefore, the overall ranking of efficiency is Satisfactory (S).

### **Overall Outcome (\*)**

Given the high degree of relevance and the satisfactory degree of effectiveness and efficiency, the overall project outcome is ranked as Satisfactory (S).

### **Sustainability: financial (\*), socio-economic (\*), institutional framework and governance (\*), environmental (\*), and overall likelihood (\*)**

Assessment element	Rating
Institutional Framework and governance	Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.
Financial	Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Likely (ML) in Egypt. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.
Socio-economic	Likely (L), except in Sudan and Ethiopia it is Moderately Unlikely (MU)
Environmental	Likely (L)
<b>Overall Likelihood of Sustainability</b>	Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon, Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

Sustainability of the project is judged by the commitment of the project benefits to continue and replicate beyond the project completion date. The evaluation identifies key risks to sustainability and explains how these risks may affect continuation of the project benefits after the project closes. The assessment covers institutional/governance risks, financial, socio-political, and environmental risks.

The MSB project has recently developed a Rift Valley / Red Sea Flyways **Adaptive Management Plan (MSB Project Exit Strategy)**, the plan is based on the BirdLife wider context of the Global Flyways Programme that aims, through sharing of BirdLife values, expertise and practical conservation action, to empower BirdLife partners along the flyway and people within and beyond the BirdLife Partnership to influence policy, legislation, attitudes and behaviour, for the long-term benefit of migratory birds and to stop and reverse the decline of biodiversity.

The plan defines the future challenges, opportunities and risk for follow up actions, lists the new funded projects with their scope and complementarities to the MSB project, and outlines the strategic outcomes (10 yrs) and objectives (5yrs) and priority activities for the next year.

BirdLife has also recently completed an assessment of the Conservation Priorities along the Eastern-African Flyway, this assessment aimed to analyse the needs, options and interest for stronger collaboration of BirdLife Partners (and close allies) to conserve migratory birds along EAEEF, this will help to strategically guide the new

financial support of the Ecological Restoration Flyway Project, the Luc Hoffman Flyway Fund and the Hans-Wildsdorf Safe Flyways 3 and other upcoming projects/initiatives.

### **Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability**

Assessing the institutional and governance risks to sustainability in the MSB project requires addressing number of elements:

**Formal endorsement of policy/legal tools:** In fact, the MSB project has evidently proven that NGOs are capable of achieving policy reform by 1) investing in coherent partnerships with governments, and 2) effective implementing of the mainstreaming approach at all levels. Through close working relationships with governments, the project has been able to foster a more favourable enabling environment for MSB conservation, and managed to get more than 17 policy documents formally approved by the participating countries, these included power lines energy guidelines, wind energy guidelines, EIA guidelines, hunting policies for specific sites, etc. The endorsement of these policies means that they will continue to operationalise beyond the project. Also, there is strong evidence coming from the operation level, for example mitigation measures applied to wind energy projects, demonstrating effective implementation of policy tools. In Egypt, mandatory MSB safeguards are now built into Power Purchasing Agreements with private sector wind farm developers. Unlike other countries, the project was unable to achieve policy reforms in Djibouti with some limited work done directly with the wind energy project developer, in which case, the replication of such work in Djibouti would not be guaranteed.

Further, the MSB considerations have also been mainstreamed into the NBSAP review process that is happening in some of the participating countries, in Jordan as an example, which will hopefully bring more MSB conservation measures into action in the future.

**Engaging the private sector and international financing institutions:** The MSB project has successfully established a strategic partnership with the private sector and international financial institutions such as IFC/WB, Japanese International Corporation Agency, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and KfW to ensure that new projects in the region consider MSB risks and concerns. This strategic partnership has contributed to mainstreaming MSB concerns into 65 private sector energy projects along the flyway in Egypt, Jordan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. This includes the upscaling of shutdown-on-demand operations, which is being successfully piloted at wind farms in the Gulf of Suez. In Jordan, eight windfarm projects have incorporated MSB pre-construction requirements into their designs.

**Membership into the Convention of Migratory Species (CMS),** bringing more countries to the CMS, particularly to the Energy Task Force on Reconciling Selected Energy Sector Developments with Migratory Species Conservation is also a sustainability element that enhance continuation of the MSB efforts. The MSB project succeeded in facilitating the membership of Egypt, Jordan, and Ethiopia of the Convention of Migratory Species Energy Task Force.

**Capacity building:** The MSB project invested in developing systemic and institutional capacities of governments, NGOs and other stakeholders, through a strong focus on training personnel (for research, planning, management, education), legislation and policy and building new partnerships between the public and private sectors as this will be supporting biodiversity conservation in the long term. The engagement of key sector agencies has been contributing to the integration of bird sensitive measures within broader development activities in the agriculture,



energy, urban development and environmental sectors. The BirdLife partners have improved capacity scorecard scoring with time (see indicator 10). These are likely to persist post project.

**At national level**, the project during Tranche II continued to work through existing national and local structures and institutions and donor-funded programmes, for project execution, management and coordination to help ensure sustainability. Egypt is the only exception, because restrictions placed upon external support to NGOs required the project to work through a conventional PMU. The BirdLife Partner in Egypt NCE didn't seem to have been engaged fully in the project implementation unlike other countries, where the PMU in Egypt has been taking a leadership role in delivering the project activities. In fact, the project PMU in Egypt is so embedded within the EEAA structure and has been performing an institutional role in dealing with the MSB conservation issues, for example, representing the EEAA on the EIA reviews and validation of the energy project reports. As good as this looks, in fact, it places a sustainability concern as to who is going to continue these functions with EEAA in light of the limited role that NCE had (and still have) and the fact that EEAA is extremely under resourced and have limited technical capacity in this area.

Further, the BLI's partner in Djibouti, Association Djibouti Nature (ADN), has not been engaged in the project delivery due to potential conflict of interest situation where the CEO is also hired by wind energy project at the same time, hence the RFF worked directly with the project proponents. However, this situation creates institutional sustainability concern on the continuation of the MSB work in Djibouti.

In Eritrea, the work of the civil society is limited and restricted by Government, and with no BirdLife partner in Eritrea, delivering results on the ground has been challenging. These institutional challenges will continue to be impediments towards advancing the MSB conservation in the country.

In Sudan, the political and security situation (further explained below) is a high risk for the ability of the BLI's partner to operate. Similarly, to a less extent, the same applies to Ethiopia.

BLI's partners in Jordan and Lebanon (RSCN and SPNL) are strongly present in their countries and well-institutionalised to continue partnering with BirdLife and other to deliver on the MSB agenda.

**Therefore, due to this combination of factors, the general likelihood of institutional/governance sustainability is ranked Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.**

### Financial sustainability

Financial risks to sustainability relate to the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends. In this regard, the main financial sustainability element would be related to the funding available for RFF to continue its services beyond the GEF funding era. The RFF was established largely with project funds but is now securely nested within the BirdLife Secretariat and has been only part-funded with GEF funds during Tranche II, the remainder was provided by BirdLife. The BirdLife is confident that RFF is going to continue operation beyond the project, this confidence is built on the fact that further funding has been secured already to follow up on the project achievements with 3 projects approved for funding with potentially more underway. Also, the RFF team members already have valid contracts until after the GEF funding expiry and planned to be renewed in line with BirdLife policies and procedures and will be part-funded by new funding mobilised.

The guaranteed new funding includes:



1. Ecological Restoration Fund (ERF) 3 years - July 2023 – July 2026 with \$3M.
2. Hans Wilsdorf Foundation - Safe Flyways: Tackling illegal killing of birds 3 - 5 years - Oct. 2022 – Sep. 2027 - \$5M.
3. Luc Hoffmann Flyways Fund (started in 2022) - \$10 million

In Egypt, EEAA is considering a new project concept entitled “Nature-safe Renewable Energy Development in Egypt and support to the wider Middle East and North Africa region” to be funded out of the GEF 8 STAR allocation, though no final decision on this as of yet. This project aims to support Egypt, and assist countries in the MENA region, to fast-track their transition to renewable energy, and deliver on biodiversity and climate goals, through supporting the adoption of nature-safe solutions to managing environmental risks with energy generation and transmission

The RFF holds a crucial position within the broader BirdLife system and leverages the network of BirdLife Partners whenever possible, leading to significant cost efficiencies compared to implementing separate Project Management Units (PMUs) in each country. This approach results in reduced overheads as the BirdLife Partners are pre-existing entities, bringing substantial in-kind co-financing and showcasing their effectiveness in fundraising independently.

At the national level, the cost of enforcing policies at the country level are embedded within the Government operations, for instance, the cost of the ongoing monitoring of the MSBs in wind energy projects will be covered by the project proponents as per the guidelines. Exceptionally in Egypt, the new wind energy development will allocate funds specifically for bird protection programs as clearly stated in the power purchase agreement. The funds will be managed by RCREEE, based on the PPA, and will be spent on the MSB conservation activities.

Other MSB activities at the national level by BirdLife partners remain highly dependent on additional funding being available via BirdLife resource mobilisation or self-mobilised by the individual partners. To which, some of the new funding mobilised would be used for the purpose of continuing the work.

Therefore, the ranking of the financial sustainability is rated Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Likely (ML) in Egypt. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

### Socio-economic risks to sustainability

When analysing socio economic risks to sustainability, an examination is made of the potential social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes, particularly when there is no evident ownership. The level of stakeholder ownership (regionally and locally), as seen in the narrative of this report, and as reported by stakeholders participated in this TE, is very strong and the accomplishments of the project support ownership. The project has been positively recognised by partners in multiple occasions including through the participation in this evaluation.

The use of the BirdLife Partners, a flyway-wide network of NGOs and CSOs means that the project itself and the activities are accessible to a very broad cross-section of society in each country which fosters a broad spectrum of support for the flyway and MSBs. A number of the “vehicles” are targeted at community-level participation (e.g., ecotourism training in Egypt, small-scale producer pesticide application training and IMP in Ethiopia and Sudan). Through these “vehicles” the benefits of the project will be embedded with local producers providing a basis for sustainability at this level. National, local and provincial government authorities and institutions have been

involved from the start of the project in the capacity building and education activities which have increased awareness and experience of the importance of MSBs and flyway sensitive practices as factors in decision-making processes and have helped build political will in government institutions.

However, the political unrests in some of the targeted countries particularly in Sudan and Ethiopia pose a serious risk on the sustainability of the MSB project. In Sudan, continued conflict has caused further displacement and insecurity in border regions of Sudan. Limited state authority and unresolved local disputes over scarce land and natural resources increased fighting and displacement throughout 2022. In Ethiopia, there are a number of political risks in Ethiopia in general and in some of the target zones in particular that directly and indirectly pose hazards for socio-economic aspects linked to sustainability. The country has had for the last five years several types of political unrest. Also, Ethiopia is affected in the last few years by an escalating armed conflict, that affects several of the regions where the project was implemented and evidently the whole of the Ethiopian society.

As evaluation literature indicates, the conflict context of a project's country has a significant impact correlated with lower possibilities for sustainability and projects taking place in conflict-affected sites are on average less sustainable than projects taking place in non-conflict contexts. Therefore, the ranking for socio – economic sustainability is Likely (L), except in Sudan and Ethiopia it is Moderately Unlikely (MU).

### Environmental risks to sustainability

Environmental risks to sustainability are externalities that do have an impact not only in project implementation but also regarding sustainability. In case of the MSB project, the project's entire goal is to enhance environmental sustainability along the Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway. MSB project seeks to build a framework through which MSB, and flyway management are integrated into each sector that is currently impacting upon it in a negative way.

Therefore, the ranking for environmental sustainability is Likely (L) since there are no identifiable risks to sustainability in this regard.

Taking a composite view of the rankings for financial, socio – economic, institutional as well as environmental sustainability probabilities, the overall likelihood of sustainability is ranked as Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon, Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

### Country ownership

Country ownership from national governmental institutions in targeted countries is reasonable with exception of Eritrea. The endorsement of the policies related to MSBs conservation is an important element of the ownership, however, the level of enforcement of those policies and guidelines varies from one country to another, it is apparent that Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon have stronger enforcement capabilities than other countries in this project. Eritrean Government, as noted earlier, has not been open enough for this project and its funding and very little done in Eritrea directly with the energy developers and no involvement of Government.

In Egypt, the fact that a GEF 8 proposal is shortlisted by the Government to be considered for GEF STAR funding to continue the work on MSBs is, indeed, a great sign of ownership and genuine interest. The GEF OFP in Egypt sees the value and appreciates the work done by the MSB project and suggests a follow-up course of actions to maintain the benefits of the project.

At the NGO levels (i.e BirdLife and its partners), stakeholder ownership is very high with MSBs conservation issues are seen to be essential element of their business and vision in the future.

### ***Gender equality and women empowerment***

The focus is on gender mainstreaming, as per the prodoc, is to achieve a UNDP Gender Marker 2 rating. BirdLife International, as part of the project, is meant to apply its own internal gender policies and codes of practice. The strategy involves striving for gender parity through various means, including equitable personnel recruitment, documenting men and women's participation in field visits, capacity building exercises, and all project activities. BirdLife, during the inception meeting, also included the gender dimension to the capacity building indicator of the results framework.

To this end, the ratio of women working within RFF and BirdLife partners is appropriate, women are indeed participating on the events and consideration is being placed to keep the gender balance. However, Gender was not included on the vehicle projects design. Nonetheless it is important to highlight the work PCCD is carrying out with the different partners. One of the capacity triggers being evaluated throughout the project is gender. As such, the Project has the objective to improve, with each of its partners, the gender approach. They have done so by helping with gender mainstreaming strategies, hiring personnel and communication. The TE finds that this is a much stronger approach than the traditional "gender mainstreaming" all throughout the project document by simply counting how many men and women do participate on different activities and training events.

### ***Cross-cutting Issues***

In addition to gender and women empowerment issues covered above, an area where the project is delivering on cross-cutting issue is the environment sustainability. By integrated MSBS consideration into key development sectors in the region enhances land and environmental stewardship while creating green job opportunities, is a cross – cutting approach. Amongst others the project involved the promotion of integrated pest management as a means to reduce the harm from pesticide use, mitigation of the impact of wind farms and associated power transmission infrastructure, promotion of eco-tourism, regulation and improved management of hunting systems, improvement of waste management facilities and procedures, etc. All of these amount to considerable interventions to reduce the impact of these five production sectors on the environment and in particular on the MSBs.

### ***GEF Additionality***

GEF additionality, defined as the additional outcome (both environmental and otherwise) that can be directly associated with the GEF-supported project. In December 2018, the GEF Council approved 'An Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF's Additionality'. GEF IEO classifies additionality into six factors: Specific Environmental Additionality; Legal/Regulatory Additionality; Institutional Additionality/Governance additionality; Financial Additionality; Socio-Economic Additionality; and Innovation Additionality<sup>10</sup>.

It is almost impossible to see how the MSBs issues would have been brought to table in such a complex region without the MSBs project intervening using GEF funding. It is fair to suggest that all MSBs project outcomes (results, effects, impact) are attributed to the GEF-additionality, and those benefits would not have been achieved without the GEF funding through this project. This includes environmental results (reducing birds mortality in particular), policy and regulatory settings to conserve the MSBs and institutional capacity built to deal with the MSBs conservation. And therefore, the project is assessed to be closely related to incremental reasoning for all components, and a catalyst for the incremental benefits of GEF support.

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<sup>10</sup> GEF -IEO, An Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF's Additionality, 2018.

### ***Catalytic Role / Replication Effect***

Replication of the project's approach is at the heart of the project strategy and design, conceptually the project is meant to develop a well thought-through response to flyway challenges and tailor them to each sector by addressing aspects of technology, adaptation, financing, regulation. These solutions are, in principle, transferable from one country to another.

The knowledge and experience gained from project activities, along with the documentation of valuable lessons learned, have been actively shared and will continue to be disseminated to benefit similar initiatives elsewhere. The regional facilitation and coordination by RFF played a crucial role in promoting cooperation and facilitating the exchange of experiences among flyway countries.

Working closely with BirdLife local partners, the project has made significant progress in mainstreaming conservation efforts related to MSBs across different sectors in targeted countries. The RFF's diligent monitoring of regional and national activities, though time-consuming, allows for the prompt identification of potential mainstreaming opportunities in other flyway countries.

By strengthening the role of the RFF as a key player in the region, the project ensures the sustainability of its actions and establishes robust monitoring processes to support effective planning and decision-making throughout the flyway region. The establishment of the RFF as the leading regional institution not only promotes capacity-building within the region but also provides valuable expertise and technical knowledge.

Additionally, the collaboration between the RFF and BirdLife local partners contributes significantly to mainstreaming MSB risks in the flyway countries, fostering effective conservation efforts in the region.

Examples of replication potential:

- The General Authority for Wildlife and Environmental Management in the Saudi initiative has requested a cooperation with MSB project for capacity building in MSB conservation programs, also solutions tested in the project such as insolation of power lines to protect MSBs have also been shared with the Saudi for replication.
- In October 2022, the "Safe Flyways: Conference on Energy and Birds" took place in Cairo, Egypt. The primary objective of this conference was to foster stronger connections and mutual understanding between the energy industry and the conservation community along the African-Eurasian Flyway. The aim was to establish a harmonious relationship that benefits both nature conservation and energy infrastructures throughout the flyway. By facilitating dialogue and collaboration, the conference sought to create a win-win situation for both sectors and identified opportunities for replication of the MSBs conservation solutions.
- In October 2021, a significant regional hunting workshop took place in Jordan, marking the first-ever attempt at exchanging regulations and implementation practices among countries along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway. Hunting holds deep cultural and traditional significance in many of the northern flyway countries, and it remains a prevalent activity in the region. However, its extent and impact are comparatively lower in the African states. The workshop included the participation of ten countries, namely Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the UAE. The main focus of the workshop was to create a roadmap to address the critical issue of illegal killing, taking, and trade of birds (IKB) in the Middle East region. This collaborative effort aimed to tackle the challenges posed by such activities and promote sustainable bird conservation measures in the area.

### ***Progress to impacts***

Long-term impacts (of different sorts) can be expected from the MSBs project on the short term and long-term. The project achievements on policy reforms, capacity building, tools development and directly integrating

mitigation measures into the development sector will result in number of impacts, mainly, **a safer flyway** in the region with less mortality of birds happening, particularly as a consequence of wind energy turbines, power lines electrocution, pesticides in agriculture and more responsible and sustainable hunting practices.

Also, the application of flyway sensitive best practices in areas of land is expected to achieve environmental sustainability gains beyond the MSBs. For example, flyway sensitive practices in agriculture would have a positive impact on the wildlife as whole and opportunities for more sustainable farming practices, better crops and potentially more income. In Egypt, it was evident that the project helped in creating green jobs based on the training and certification program for bird monitoring, the qualified/certified graduates have been able to get job opportunities in the energy development projects to apply the new skills gained through the program.

## Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

### Main Findings & conclusions

**Project results:** Overall, the MSB project has lived up to expectations, achieving most of its targets with some targets surpassing expectations, and only a few partially achieved. Its primary focus was to mainstream MSB considerations into the productive sectors posing the highest risks to the MSBs during migration: hunting, energy, tourism development, agriculture, and waste management. The project's collaborative approach effectively engaged stakeholders, forming coherent partnerships across a broad spectrum to successfully integrate MSB considerations into sectoral policies and strategic processes.

The project has successfully accomplished transformative outcomes by mainstreaming migratory soaring birds into five key sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway. These sectors include hunting, energy, tourism, agriculture, and waste management. Through the collaboration of BirdLife International and its partners, the initiative has led to global environmental benefits by influencing governmental and private sector policies in these areas. The project also provided sector-specific guidance to raise MSB conservation awareness and strengthen the capabilities of local partner organizations in flyway countries.

The project strategically formed partnerships with the private sector and international financial institutions, while working closely with local authorities in all five sectors. By involving international and local NGOs as executing partners, the project successfully engaged various stakeholders in a complex region. Additionally, regional cooperation and exchange on MSB conservation, facilitated by the RFF and local CSOs initiatives, have built trust, encouraged dialogue, and fostered strong relationships among the flyway countries. A critical factor in the project's success is its ability to build upon the lessons learned from Tranche I and maintain long-term commitment through GEF engagement.

The project achieved significant results including:

- 21 Submitted policies and 17 approved new and revised country sector policies developed and approved
- 99 projects and schemes are now incorporating the MSB concerns of which 88 projects during Tranche II
- 35 sites covering 5,709,771 ha in of land managed for hunting, energy, agriculture and waste management under 'flyway sensitive' practices at selected sites along flyway
- 1923 articles or other media releases highlighting MSBs, and flyway importance have been produced
- Sensitivity mapping developed by the project has attracted several international financial institutions and the Asian Development Bank is working on sensitivity mapping with BirdLife in India, Thailand, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.
- Improved awareness of national and local governments, local communities near sites, private sector, CSOs on MSB considerations. 70% of key stakeholders surveyed have a positive attitude towards MSB safe practices, and that 50% have positive behavior change.
- The project responded to 96 requests from government and private sector to provide 'flyway sensitive' guidelines, best practice, and related materials
- Improved the capacity of BirdLife partners, All Partners scored a total of at least 18 for the trigger assessment score.
- Developed MSB /Flyway monitoring programme tracking conservation status, impact sectors, threats, drivers of change and effectiveness of RFF interventions
- Over 62 partnerships representing joint national project partner-government and project partner-private sector partnerships established in key sectors during project period to achieve mainstreaming of MSB concerns
- 11 MSB/ flyway-mainstreaming "vehicle" projects implemented in target countries in key sectors

- Training and awareness of hunters and guides on best MSB practices and over 13 hunting groups who have endorsed the responsible hunting practices
- 49 new energy projects adopting best practice in avoidance and mitigation of MSB risks
- 17 of monitoring schemes in place at existing and new energy projects to assess mortality rate
- 12 cases where mitigation measures have been adopted following the detection of high levels of MSB mortality
- 12 locations with demonstration of benefits to tourism sector from MSB activities, 154 hotel and tour operators including MSB conservation concerns in their labelling/ certification schemes and 187 tourism guides participated in the trainings sessions
- 8 EIAs for new waste management projects that address MSB concerns in project area
- 14 existing waste management sites where 'flyway sensitive' best practice measures have been adopted
- 9 agricultural projects incorporating MSB conservation considerations

Therefore, the overall project outcome rating is Satisfactory (S).

**Relevance & Coherence:** The MSB project is aligned with the national priorities in targeted countries as defined in their NBSAPs, and also aligned with UNDP Strategic Plan as well as GEF mainstreaming objectives. The design of Tranche II continues to mainstream MSB conservation into the five key production sectors largely using sector "vehicles" identified by the targeted flyway countries. A "vehicle" is defined as a planned or existing reform process or project in a targeted sector. The MSB project design follows the mainstreaming approach as defined by the GEF as embedding biodiversity considerations into policies, strategies and practices of key public and private actors that impact or rely on biodiversity, so that it is conserved and sustainably used both locally and globally.

The design of Tranche II of the MSB project has evolved, and built on lessons learned, from Tranche I. The changes did not really affect the project scope or content but provided a more coherent structure and improved the mainstreaming approach and management arrangements for the new phase, improvements included restructuring the components of the project, dropping off the unneeded (and in many cases confusing) terminology of "double mainstreaming" and distributing the GEF grant by sector rather than by countries and instrumental changes on the project management arrangements (reassuring the NGO execution modality).

The overall MSB project strategy is sound; though it is an ambitious Project planning to impact 5 different sectors in highly complex and volatile countries. The PRF is found to be fit for purpose, and indicators provide a clear description of the intended target, however, the PRF included way too many indicators, repetitive indicators that allow for double reporting, some targets are highly ambitious, some indicators are output-based, and no MTR targets were defined.

**Effectiveness and efficiency:** The project met expectations as to the degree of objectives being achieved. This is factual at the objective, output and at the outcome's levels as the project level achievements in all of the distinct outcomes and outputs were commensurate to the defined targets. The factors that have aided or supported effective achievement of goals include the ability to build upon the lessons learned from Tranche I and other projects, the integrated mainstreaming approach implemented (policy reform, tools development, partnership with private sector and international financing institutions, ect) and strong partnerships strategy with a healthy inclusion of stakeholders. On the other hand, the project faced a number of very forceful challenges that, although taken care of adaptively to the degree possible, including COVID-19 pandemic, absence of BirdLife partner in Eritrea, limited capacity of some BirdLife partners to implement and political unrest in some countries particularly Ethiopia and Sudan.



The Project has been efficient in achieving outputs/products and in achieving outcomes and effects/impact in a high degree of accomplishment vis-à-vis expected target indicators and other metrics. Also, it has provided value-for-money since it achieved results within budgets, agreed disbursement, etc., while leveraging investments and in-kind support from sources external to the project per se (co-funding). The cost-effectiveness of the MSB stems from its foundation on the mainstreaming approach, which is inherently cost-effective, as reasonably argued in the project document. It allows for targeting multiple sectors in multiple countries using the 'vehicle' as an initiative embedded within the sector thus effecting change more positively and quickly, while still engaging government.

Effectiveness and efficiency are rated as Satisfactory (S).

**Project management:** The management arrangements for Tranche II of the MSB project evolved from Tranche I and were designed to: i) apply the NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International and its specific expertise in bird conservation that is critical to the MSB project; ii) avoid having to establish numerous PMUs across the participating flyway countries; iii) use the project to strengthen the NGO network along the flyway to ensure continuity and sustainability. The structure of the Project Board (PB) is found to be unique where the GEF OFP in Jordan represents the OFPs in 6 other countries and is expected to cover on the perspective of these countries, this is unprecedented but understandably the inclusion of 7 GEF OFPs in one board is not practically possible. Nonetheless, the PB has been responsible for making management decisions for the project, acts as the highest strategic and policy-level body of the project (regional and national components) and provides overall guidance and direction to ensure the unity and coherence of the project.

UNDP CO has been effectively supporting the MSB project in establishing and convening the project board, monitoring the financial transactions, conducting annual audit in line with UNDP's standard procedures and facilitating and supporting the PIRs, MTR and TE. The UNDP Jordan has also been providing strategic support to the MSB project by creating linkages with the other projects that the CO is delivering, particularly on biodiversity. The quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight has been Satisfactory (S).

The BirdLife International has been responsible for the regional components of the project delivered through the Regional Flyway Facility/RFF, and for the national level activities to be carried out through Birdlife Partners and Affiliates. BirdLife has been responsible for financial and procedural accountability in line with the signed PCA, and despite, and has been rated as 'low risk' based on the findings of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT), nevertheless, there have been 'major' observations by the audit mainly related to the absence of effective ERP system at the project level.

The RFF has been performing the PMU role in the project and acting as the technical and operational arm established for the purposes of this project, is institutionalised within, and supported by, the BirdLife International management structure. The RFF demonstrated strong leadership not only in facilitating the delivery of the project activities but also in presenting itself as a reference point in the flyway as a trusted partner among the stakeholders. The Implementing Partner's execution has also been *Satisfactory (S)*. As an amalgamated review, the global quality of implementation and execution, of the executing agencies as well as the quality execution of implementing agencies is *Satisfactory (S)*.

The project design comprises of standard M&E items for UNDP-GEF project, and M&E design adequate for monitoring the project results and tracking the progress toward achieving the objectives notwithstanding the PRF shortcomings noted above. The M&E design is backed with adequate resources (a total of US\$ 80,000 allocated for M&E) and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The actual implementation of overall monitoring and evaluation took place in acceptable and suitable terms, with noting the double counting of same data to report on different indicators, which is primarily attributed to the flaws noted in the PRF (i.e mainly repetitive nature of indicators). A composite ranking that considers monitoring and evaluation design at entry together with the M & E plan's implementation for the overall quality of M&E is *Satisfactory (S)*.

**Sustainability:** The MSB project has recently developed a Rift Valley / Red Sea Flyways Adaptive Management Plan (MSB Project Exit Strategy), the plan is based on the BirdLife wider context of the Global Flyways Programme and defines the future challenges, opportunities and risk for follow up actions, lists the new funded projects with their scope and complementarities to the MSB project, and outlines the strategic outcomes (10 yrs) and objectives (5yrs) and priority activities for the next year. The exits strategy is backed by an assessment of the Conservation Priorities along the Eastern-African Flyway, this assessment that will help to strategically guide the new financial support of the Ecological Restoration Flyway Project, the Luc Hoffman Flyway Fund and the Hans-Wildsord Safe Flyways 3 and other upcoming projects/initiatives.

For the institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability, there are number of sustainability elements that have been strongly established in the project including the formal endorsement of the policy instruments (e.g guidelines), the effective engagement with the private sector and international financing institutions, capacity building and awareness and strengthening countries participation in the CMS and Raptors MoU. However, at the national level, institutional sustainability varies from one country to another, while BirdLife partners are strongly performing their roles in Jordan and Lebanon, there are number of challenges with other partners including no partner at all (i.e in Eritrea), limited capacity of the partners and unclear role of partners (Djibouti, Sudan, Ethiopia). In Egypt, the PMU has been playing vital role in running the MSBs business in the EEAA, and there is a sustainability concern on the continuation of the MSB function after the project ends and the PMU walks away, particularly, given the limited capacity in EEAA to deal with the matter. Therefore, the ranking for institutional/governance sustainability is Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

The RFF was established largely with project funds but is now securely nested within the BirdLife Secretariat and has been only part-funded with GEF funds during Tranche II, the remainder was provided by BirdLife. The BirdLife is confident that RFF is going to continue operation beyond the project, this confidence is built on the fact that further funding has been secured already to follow up on the project achievements with 3 projects approved for funding with potentially more underway. Also, the RFF team members already have valid contracts until after the GEF funding expiry and planned to be renewed in line with BirdLife policies and procedures.

At the national level, the cost of enforcing policies at the country level are embedded within the Government operations, for instance, the cost of the ongoing monitoring of the MSBs in wind energy projects will be covered by the project proponents as per the guidelines. Other MSB activities at the national level by BirdLife partners remain highly dependent on additional funding being available via BirdLife resource mobilisation or self-mobilised by the individual partners. To which, some of the new funding mobilised would be used for the purpose of continuing the work. Therefore, the ranking of the financial sustainability is rated Likely (L) at the regional level,

in Jordan and Lebanon. Moderately Likely (ML) in Egypt. Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

A flyway-wide network of NGOs and CSOs means that the project itself and the activities are accessible to a very broad cross-section of society in each country which fosters a broad spectrum of support for the flyway and MSBs. However, the political unrests in some of the targeted countries particularly in Sudan and Ethiopia pose a serious risk on the sustainability of the MSB project. As evaluation literature indicates, the conflict context of a project's country has a significant impact correlated with lower possibilities for sustainability and projects taking place in conflict-affected sites are on average less sustainable than projects taking place in non-conflict contexts. Therefore, the ranking for socio – economic sustainability is Likely (L), except in Sudan and Ethiopia it is Moderately Unlikely (MU).

The project's entire goal is to enhance environmental sustainability along the Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway. MSB project seeks to build a framework through which MSBs, and flyway management are integrated into each sector that is currently impacting upon it in a negative way. Therefore, the ranking for environmental sustainability is Likely (L) since there are no identifiable risks to sustainability in this regard.

Taking a composite view of the rankings for financial, socio – economic, institutional as well as environmental sustainability probabilities, the overall likelihood of sustainability is ranked as Likely (L) at the regional level, in Jordan and Lebanon, Moderately Unlikely (MU) in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

## Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Given that the project is so close to be operationally closed at the time of drafting this TE evaluation report, the following are forward-looking recommendations/lesson learned focussed on future programming:

1. **Investigate the impact of emerging mega cities on MSBs along the flyway and mainstreaming opportunities.** Saudia Arabia and Egypt in particular are going through a mass development of new cities that are planned to be powered by renewable energies. The spectrum of impacts of the mega cities on MSBs needs to be investigated and addressed as soon as possible to early mainstream MSBs during the design/construction phases and beyond.
2. **Further investigate the potential of waste sector across the region for future programming on MSBs.** The TE believes that the Waste management sector has a lot of potential across the region as well as demonstrated in Egypt although is not as visible as energy. Tranche I described waste as: *"becoming an increasing problem along the flyway as human populations rise and industrialisation increases"*. While the project document recognises that the waste management appears to be an issue in Egypt, it assumes that it is not at the same level of significance in other countries along the flyway despite the fact that most of the countries, if not all, share the same root causes (i.e human populations rise, and industrialisation increases) and wastewater increases accordingly. For future programming, the case of Egypt can be replicated and learned from.
3. **Continue resource mobilisation to address emerging MSBs threats in the region.** BirdLife has already started doing so and three projects are almost guaranteed for funding, and more funding would need to be mobilised at the local level as well.
4. **Support EEAA to restore its technical capacities after a significant staff turnover and the departure of the MSBs' PMU.** The EEAA's technical capacities has been negatively impacted by the staff turnover and will be further impacted after the departure of the PMU once the GEF funds seizes – as explained earlier in this report, particularly with regards to its ability to perform technical reviews of the EIAs and MSB monitoring data coming back from the energy developers from MSBs point of view. The EEAA has an idea of establishing birds unit in the organisation structure and this requires some financial and technical support to do so.
5. **BirdLife to strengthen its network of partners in countries where it has no partner or under capacitated partner.** As outlined earlier in this report, there are significant limitations with the partnership model in some countries involved in the project, the limitation varies from no partner at (e.g in Eritrea and Djibouti) or limited capacity partners. The BirdLife needs to consider reviewing its implementation arrangements in these countries and find ways to strengthen the capacities and find alternatives & Sustainable institutional arrangements needed where BirdLife partners don't exist or are unable to deliver.

### Lessons learned

- **An integrated, multi-sectoral and multi-level mainstreaming approach is very effective.** The MSB project offers a best practice in implementing biodiversity mainstreaming approach into development sectors, the project mastered the implementation of the mainstreaming approach by developing tools and guidelines at the regional level, tailoring the guidelines to national context and partnering with governments to achieve effective and sustainable policy reforms. What makes this mainstreaming approach so exceptional is the fact that the work resulted in direct impacts on birds' mortalities, and mainstreaming MSBs into the energy sector has been exemplary in this area, where governments in the region adopted the energy guidelines, private sector applied mitigation measures and birds mortality has been reduced accordingly. Another best practice presented by this project is the fact that mainstreaming was multi-sectors and multi-levels, multi-sector by targeting energy, waste, tourism, agriculture and hunting, and multi-level where MSB mainstreamed into with local communities/authorities, national government, private sector as well as international financing institutions such as IFC/WB, Japanese International Corporation Agency, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and KfW to ensure that new projects in the region consider MSB risks and concerns. This strategic partnership has contributed to mainstreaming MSB concerns into 65 private sector energy projects along the flyway in Egypt, Jordan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti.

- **The role of NGOs in driving policy reforms should not be underestimated.** We learned from the MSBs project how influential NGOs' role can be in driving policy reform at the national level. This required to have strong and coherent partnerships with the Government and being able to provide technical backstopping when and where needed along with capacity building and awareness.

**Effective use of lessons learned.** Often, lessons learned are underutilised during the lifetime of the project and beyond. The experience from MSBs project demonstrates a good use of the lessons learned from Tranche I to Tranche II where with so many pitfalls have been successfully avoided, for example, the management arrangements have been better streamlined in Tranche II and led to smoother implementation. The project has properly documented the lessons learned through the M&E process of Tranche I and successfully integrated these lessons into the design of Tranche II.

**Regional cooperation is one added value of regional projects.** The regional facilitation and coordination by the RFF played a crucial role in fostering cooperation and facilitating the exchange of experiences among flyway countries. Alongside BirdLife local partners, the project has made significant progress in mainstreaming conservation efforts related to MSBs (Migratory Soaring Birds) across various sectors in Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon, and it is currently making strides in Ethiopia and Sudan. The establishment of the RFF as the leading regional institution ensures capacity-building and sustainability within the region while providing valuable expertise and technical know-how. Moreover, it contributes to the mainstreaming of MSB risks in the flyway countries through effective collaboration with BirdLife local partners.

## Annexes

### Annex 1: TE ToR (excluding ToR annexes)

To be added

### Annex 2: List of documents reviewed.

List of documents that have been reviewed includes, but not limited to:

- Project document;
- Project PIRs
- Action plans
- Project budgets and expenditures
- Inception report
- Project progress report (progress on project identified indicators and updates on risks)
- Project board minutes of meetings
- The project governance structure (for example a ToR of a steering committee)
- Project Identification Form (PIF)
- Mid-term review report and management response plan
- Project data base;
- Project technical deliverables
- Audit reports and management response plans
- An Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF's Additionality, <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/evaluative-approach-assessing-gef-s-additionality>
- Flyway monitoring plan
- Project exit strategy
- Capacity development report
- Awareness questionnaire and awareness report
- Conference reports/ workshop reports
- Finance and Co-finance data
- Eritrea country profile report
- Assessment of the Conservation Priorities along the Eastern-African Flyway
- MSB Tracking tools and core indicators report
- MSBs project website
- Sample of the MSB guidelines for mitigating the impact of key sectors on MSBs

### Annex 3: Evaluation Question Matrix

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators/evidence	Sources	Methodology
<b>Relevance: How does the project relate to the needs of stakeholders? Was the project designed coherently?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project addressing the needs of target beneficiaries/stakeholders?</li> <li>Does the project's objective align with the priorities of the local government/s?</li> <li>Was the project linked with and in line with UNDP priorities and strategies for the country?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of alignment of project's activities with relevant stakeholders' plans</li> <li>Stakeholders' perceptions on the relevance of project's activities to their needs</li> <li>Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of beneficiaries and stakeholders in project design and implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>project documentations</li> <li>national policies or strategies, project websites</li> <li>Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk review</li> <li>Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project internally coherent in its design?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree of coherence of the project design in terms of theory of change, components, choice of partners, structure, delivery mechanism, scope, budget, use of resources, etc.</li> <li>Level of coherence between programme design and project implementation approach</li> <li>Identification of the problem and its causes in the project being addressed?</li> <li>Suitability assessment of the defined indicators/measures to demonstrate impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>project documentations</li> <li>national policies or strategies, websites</li> <li>Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk review</li> <li>Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the programme being effective in achieving its expected outcomes and outputs?</li> <li>What are the main Programme accomplishments?</li> <li>Are impact level results likely to be achieved? Are the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery on project targets defined in the PRF</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback on the delivery and most significant achievements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>project documentations (PIRs)</li> <li>Progress reports</li> <li>Project deliverables</li> <li>Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk review</li> <li>Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>



likely to be at the scale sufficient to be considered Global Environmental Benefits?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What worked so well and what didn't work so well? and why?</li> <li>- What reasons behind the success (or failure) of the Programme in producing its different outputs and reaching outcomes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholders' perceptions on the barriers and success factors?</li> <li>- Quality of existing information systems in place to identify emerging issues and risks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- risk/issue register</li> <li>- Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically and economically to achieve the project results?</li> <li>- Were the project activities implemented as scheduled and with the planned financial resources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations</li> <li>- Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures</li> <li>- Planned vs. actual funds leveraged</li> <li>- Timeliness of activities delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- risk/issue register</li> <li>- Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Occurrence of change in project design/ implementation approach when needed to improve project efficiency</li> <li>- Existence, quality and use of M&amp;E, feedback and dissemination mechanism to share findings, lessons learned and recommendation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- risk/issue register</li> <li>- Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Co-financing data and evidence</li> <li>- Level of cash and in-kind co-financing relative to expected level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- risk/issue register</li> <li>- project staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How efficient were partnership arrangements for the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- risk/issue register</li> <li>- project staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized</li> <li>- Coherence of the established partnerships</li> </ul>		
<b>Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-political, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Were sustainability issues adequately integrated in project design?</li> <li>- Are the necessary preconditions being created to ensure the sustainability of impacts of the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coherence of risk management (risk identification and response)</li> <li>- Evidence/Quality of sustainability strategy</li> <li>- Evidence/Quality of steps taken to address sustainability</li> <li>- Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts</li> <li>- Elements in place in those different management functions, at appropriate levels (globally and at country level) in terms of adequate structures, strategies, systems, skills, incentives and interrelationships with other key actors</li> <li>- Exit strategy in place and actively operationalisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- risk/issue register</li> <li>- Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent are project results likely to be dependent on continued financial support?</li> <li>- Do relevant stakeholders have or are likely to achieve an adequate level of "ownership" of results, to have the interest in ensuring that project benefits are maintained?</li> <li>- To what extent are the project results dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level and source of future financial support to be provided to relevant activities globally and at the country level</li> <li>- Evidence of commitments from government or other stakeholder to financially support relevant sectors of activities after project end</li> <li>- Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- risk/issue register</li> <li>- Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>

Does the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?			
Was an enabling environment developed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-level of capacities at the country level to continue climate financing management</li> <li>- Efforts to support the development of relevant policies at the country level</li> <li>- Evidences of commitment by the targeted stakeholders to pursue the supported activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Gender equality and women's empowerment: How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?</b>			
To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been mainstreamed in the project design and implementation? Has the Programme had any positive or negative effects on gender equality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extent to which programme products are sensitive to gender, age and disability</li> <li>- Extent to which programme data are gender-disaggregated</li> <li>- Existence of logical linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project documentations</li> <li>- Project stakeholders feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk review</li> <li>- Stakeholders' interviews</li> </ul>

## Annex 4: TE Rating scales

**Evaluation criteria and ratings:** The standard evaluation criteria according to UNDP/GEF evaluation policy are Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability. The different scales for rating various criteria are shown in the tables below.

Table 6: TE Rating Scales & Evaluation Ratings Table

TE Rating Scales	
Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance	Sustainability ratings:
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings	4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability
5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings	3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings	2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability
	1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability

3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings	Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability
2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings	
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings	
Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment	

## Annex 5: list of persons consulted

Stakeholders and beneficiaries engaged:

1. Nedal Alouran, UNDP Jordan Program Manager
2. Rana Saleh, UNDP Jordan, Programme Analyst
3. Richard Grimmett, Director of Conservation.
4. Ibrahim Kaher, ME Regional Director
5. Osama Al Nouri, Regional project coordinator
6. Alex Ngari, Programme Manager, Migratory Birds and Flyways
7. Muna Al Taq, Africa Flyway Officer
8. Rhiannon Niven, BLI, Policy Department
9. Tris Allinson BirdLife, International, Senior Global Science Officer
10. Lenke Balint, BLI, Capacity Development and Awareness Component
11. Shannon Anstee, BLI, Capacity Development and Awareness Component
12. Tareq Qaneer – Jordan, RSCN Head of Birds Unit
13. Belal Qtishat – Jordan, Ministry of Environment of Jordan
14. Amany Nakhla –Egypt, UNDP Program Analyst
15. Osama El Gebaly, MSB Egypt, Project Manager
16. Dr. Ali Abo Senna CEO, Egyptian environmental Agffairs Agency (EEAA)
17. Dr Mohammad Mostafa El-Khayat, Executive Chairman, NREA: New and Renewable Energy Authority.
18. Ms. Hoda Omar Assistant to the Minister of Environment for ecotourism and GEF unit director
19. Eng. Haitham, Head sector, Nature Conservation Sector (NCS)
20. Eng. Mohamed Abdalla General manager of energy projects at EIA department
21. Eng. Iman Rashad Head sector for private sector projects
22. Eng. Ahmed Gamal Driector of Environmental Affairs Department
23. Mr. Tarek Abdel Moneim, Egypt, CEO, Chamber of Tourism Companies/ Director of TRAVCO company
24. Mengistu Wondafrash – Ethiopia, CEO EWHNS
25. Assad Serhal, Lebanon, SPNL Director General
26. Bassima Khatib, Lebanon, Assistant Director General
27. Andre Bechara, Lebanon, Hima Farm Project
28. Adonis, Lebanon, Hunting Sector in Lebanon
29. Mohamad Hajj, LCEC, Senior Energy Engineer – Project Coordinator. Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation – LCEC
30. Petra Obied, Ministry of Tourism, Lebanon.
31. Prof. Ibrahim Hashim, President, Sudanese Wildlife Society (SWS)
32. Dr. Tahani Hasan ElHaj
33. Assistant Professor, Wildlife Department, University of Bahri, Sudan
34. Mr Dereje Getachew, Ethiopia Electric Utility (EEU)

## **Annex 6: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form**

Independence entails the ability to evaluate without undue influence or pressure by any party (including the hiring unit) and providing evaluators with free access to information on the evaluation subject. Independence provides legitimacy to and ensures an objective perspective on evaluations. An independent evaluation reduces the potential for conflicts of interest which might arise with self-reported ratings by those involved in the management of the project being evaluated. Independence is one of ten general principles for evaluations (together with internationally agreed principles, goals, and targets: utility, credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism).

**Evaluators/Consultants:**

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

**Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form**

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

Name of Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Mohammad Alatoom \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Signed at \_\_\_\_July 2023\_\_\_\_ (Place) on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Mohammad Alatoom \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex 7: Signed TE Report Clearance form

**Terminal Evaluation Report for Terminal Evaluation of 'Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into key productive sectors along valley/Red Sea flyway (PIMS1787)' project.**

**Reviewed and Cleared By:**

**Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Annexed 8: TE Audit Trail (in a separate file)**

**Annexed 9: Tracking Tools (in a separate file)**

**Annex 10: Co-Financing for The Project By Name and By Type (A separate file)**