Terminal Evaluation of

The Project for Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other wetlands in Iran

UNDP Iran



December 2023



Acknowledgements

The TE consultants would like to acknowledge the logistic support provided by UNDP and the CIWP PMU to effectively complete interviews with all key stakeholders and to meet with project beneficiaries. We also acknowledge the valuable review and validation of results by UNDP and the PMU, thereby ensuring the quality of the TE report. The TE consultants would also like to acknowledge the many stakeholders and beneficiaries who willing shared their knowledge and experience of the project.

Inception Report Prepared by:

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Acronyms

AIG	Alternative Income Generating
APPR	Annual Project Progress Report
BK	Bakhtegan wetland.
BTAS	Bureau of Technical Affairs and Standards (PBO)
CEPA	Communication, Education Participation, and Awareness-raising
CIWP	Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project
CPD	Country Program Document
CSA	Climate Smart Agricultural
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DoE	Department of Environment
GMS	General Management Support
ICCA	Indigenous Community Conserved Areas
LU	Lake Umia Basin
LURP	Lake Urmia Restoration Program
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCTH	Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts
MoJA	Ministry of Jihad-Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Energy
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoIMT	Ministry of Industry, Mines, and Trade
NPD	National Project Director
NPM	National Project Manager
PAPRP	Project Annual Work Planning and Reporting Package
PBO	Plan and Budget Organization
PCPD	Provincial Council of Planning and Development
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PMU	Project Management Unit for CIWP
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PWMS	Provincial Wetland Management Secretariat
SESP	Social and Environmental Screening Process
SD	Shadegan wetland
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ULRP	Urmia Lake Restoration Plan

- UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework
- UNDP United Nations Development Program
- UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group
- WCRO Wetland Conservation and Restoration Office (DOE)
- WESO Water Engineering Standards Office

Executive Summary

Project Information Table

Project/outcome title	The Project for Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other wetlands					
Atlas ID/Quantum Award ID	00128285	6				
Corporate outcome and output	Sustainable Development (Scale 15 Life on Land:				
Corporate outcome and output	Sustainable Development of Protect, restore and promo- terrestrial ecosystems, sust combat desertification, and degradation and halt biodiv Sustainable Development of Take urgent action to comb- impacts UNDP Country Programme 2027: Outcome 3.2 "Biodive reflected in the relevant sec plans of the Government". UNSDCF 2023-2027, Outc- environmental conservation resource management are capacity to address climate strengthened."; Intermediat management of habitats an biodiversity support the hea services of ecosystems" UNDP 2022-2025 Strategic Result 4.1: "Natural resource to enhance sustainable pro-	Joals 15, Life on Land: te sustainable use of tainably manage forests, halt and reverse land ersity loss Joals 13, Climate Action: bat climate change and its a Documents, CPD 2023- ersity conservation is ctoral directives and action ome 3: "By 2027, n and integrated natural enhanced, and the e change challenges is a Outcome 3.2 "Effective ad conservation of alth and sustainable c Plan: Signature solution 4, ces protected and managed ductivity and liveliboods "				
Country	Iran	2				
Region	Asia and Pacific (RBAP)					
Date project document signed	Project Document – June 14 th , 2020					
	Project Document Amendr	nent May 10 th , 2021				
Project dates	Start	Planned end				
	25 th March 2021	29 th February 2024				
Project programable budget	2,915,828.00 USD					
Project expenditure as of December 30 th , 2023	2,654,136.52 USD					
Funding source	Government of Japan, Gov	ernment of Iran, UNDP				

Project Description

More than 85% of Iran is characterized by an arid or semi-arid climate with low annual rainfall and high evapo-transpiration rates. Increasing and unsustainable use of water resources for human purposes is resulting in negative impacts to natural areas, particularly wetlands, and to human livelihoods, particularly those based on agriculture. Exacerbating human caused impacts to the water cycle, is climate change, which is resulting in increasing periods of drought, intense rainfall events within landscapes dominated by human land use (agriculture, orchards, urban) leading to flooding and soil erosion and higher temperatures resulting a greater demand for water for human use and for natural systems.

The traditional sector-based governance within Iran precludes collaboration among key stakeholders (agriculture, environment, energy/water) which is necessary to achieve effective, integrated watershed management. In addition, traditional farming practices use large amounts of water and there is a lack of trust by farmers making it difficult to engage and introduce new technologies.

The key problems the Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project (CIWP) sought to address are:

- unsustainable water use (primarily agricultural use);
- the need for improved intersectoral-based governance of watersheds to support sustainable water use and conservation of wetlands;
- the need for climate smart agriculture to reduce water use and reduce the use of agricultural pesticides and fertilizers; and
- the need for alternative, climate resilient livelihood options in rural communities.

The long term goal of the Phase CIWP is:

Effective application of the Ecosystem Approach in wetland basins enhances the economic situation and wellbeing of local communities and conserves wetlands.

The CIWP includes the following three components:

- **Component 1:** Fragile wetland ecosystems of Iran are well-managed using an innovative framework to integrated basin-management
- **Component 2:** Livelihood options of local communities are enhanced through more sustainable and 'climate-smart' practices
- **Component 3:** Engagement of local communities in wetland management is enhanced through community mobilization and public awareness

Evaluation Ratings Table

Monitoring and Evaluation	Rating*
M&E design at entry	MS
M&E Plan Implementation	S
Overall quality of M&E	MS
Implementing Agency (IA) & Executing Agency (EA) Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation – Implementing Agency	MS
Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	MS
Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	MS
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	S
Effectiveness	S
Efficiency	MS
Overall Project Outcome Rating	S
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	U
Socio-political	L
Institutional framework and governance	MU
Environmental	MU
Overall likelihood of sustainability	MU

* ratings provided in the evaluation table follow the risk ratings shown in Annex 7

Concise summary of findings, conclusions and lessons learned

Findings

The CIWP has achieved end of project targets for seven of the eight Strategic Results Framework (SRF) indicators, with five of the successful indicators exceeding their end of project targets by significant margins (see indicators numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 **Annex 11**).

CIWP indicator number 5 has been assessed as "partially achieved". The is the indicator measuring the percent decrease in water and agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites, with an end of project target of 30% for water and agrochemical usage. An average of the data provided (3 years for LU and 2 years for BK and SD), shows a 27.5% decrease in water and agrochemical usage. A result that very nearly achieves the end of project target.

Conclusions

The CIWP Project Management Unit (PMU) has successfully implemented a model of intersectoral management of wetland basins which, within the selected pilot villages, implemented Climate Smart Agricultural (CSA) practices that reduced water and agrochemical usage and increased crop productivity, and introduced climate smart Alternative Income Generating (AIG) diversified livelihoods that improved the socio-economic situation of rural communities, especially women, while potentially reducing human land use pressures.

While the CIWP CSA has recorded a reduction of water usage among participating farmers in pilot villages (average over three years 27.5% reduction) the CIWP did not include monitoring beyond the pilot farms to determine if the saved water contributed to wetland restoration or if it may have been used for human purposes (agriculture, consumption, industry, etc.).

Given the general interest in water saving and the restoration of wetlands that are known to be drying up, it is unfortunate that the project has not provided a volumetric measure of how much water has been saved through the adoption of CSA and climate smart AIG within the pilot communities. If available, this information could be used to calculate the potential volume of water available to restore degraded wetlands if the CIWP model was applied basin-wide.

While the CIWP is currently developing a sustainability / scaling-up strategy to be implemented at project closure, the Terminal Evaluation (TE) assessment of sustainability (see **Section 3.3.9**) has identified significant concerns regarding the financial, institutional and environmental sustainability of the required scaling-up of the CIWP model. In particular, the limited financial resources of the government, the ongoing top-down, sectoral approach to governance and the increasing demands on water used to sustain human livelihoods in the face of increasing impacts from climate change.

Lessons Learned

A development project bringing innovation to rural communities must always start by building trust between the implementing stakeholders and the rural population (beneficiaries). Where there is a history of a lack of trust between some stakeholders and the rural population, the presence of an international donor (Government of Japan) and a credible international development agency (UNDP) facilitates the building of trust needed for effective project implementation to proceed.

The CIWP suffered from the misconception that one of the outcomes of the project was, restoration of degraded wetlands in the wetland basins where the project was implemented. The CIWP worked in very few pilot villages within the wetland basins, and within the CIWP pilot villages only 5% to 20% of households (farmers) participated in CSA and climate smart

AIG activities. As such, if successful the best CIWP could do would be to demonstrate the possibility of restoring wetlands if all communities in the wetland basin adopted similar CSA and climate smart AIG. To address this misconception UNDP engaged a communication specialist to work with the CIWP PMU to develop communication materials which could effectively communicate the successes of the CIWP.

To improve rural livelihoods with pilot communities and reduce pressure on land and water resources, the CIWP team used a social mobilization and microfinance approach together with vocational training courses based on the interest of the pilot communities. It was noted in communities with more financial resources, there was less interest to participate in CIWP activities aimed at providing access to microcredit funds, establishing self-help groups or micro businesses making handicrafts. After developing micro and small business at the household level, the need for marketing was identified to successfully sell products. The CIWP team addressed this need by providing training courses on product branding, packaging and marketing. Marketing included digital marketing using social media and platforms like DigiKala and BaSalaam websites

Recommendations summary table

The following recommendations are included with justification in the body of the report section as noted in the table below. The lead entity responsible for implementation of each recommendation is also noted. The time frames identified for implementation recognize the CIWP project will be closing in February, 2024 and there will be limited opportunities for the CIWP PMU to act on recommendations. Those recommendations with a time frame of 0 to 3 months are intended to be addressed as a part of project closure. Recommendations with longer time frames are intended to be addressed by the entity responsible within the respective government ministries as part of ongoing implementation of the CIWP model.

Recommendations	Entity Responsible	Time Frame	Justification
Wetland Management	·		
Recommendation 1: Develop a sustainability and scalability plan that outlines a five-year plan to scale- up the CIWP model. The plan should include a lead coordinating agency based on the CIWP National Project Management team and key partner (e.g. MoE, MoJA, etc.) it should also identify a budget and funding sources to achieve basin-wide implementation of the CIWP model.	CIWP	0-3 months	Section 3.1.1
Recommendation 3. The Theory of Change should incorporate outcomes and outputs that engage all water users and potential water polluters within target wetland basins (e.g. industrial users, urban users, etc.) to develop and implement climate smart activities aimed at reducing water usage and potential sources of pollution as part of the long goal to conserve fragile wetlands and wetland biodiversity.	CIWP	0-3 months	Section 3.1.1
Recommendation 6. Combine CSA and climate smart AIG in individual family households to assess the synergistic impact of these activities on reducing household pressures on land and water resources	DoE and MoJa	3-24 months	Section 3.3.5

Recommendations	Entity Responsible	Time Frame	Justification
Recommendation 8. It is recommended that the "High Council for Environment" which includes key stakeholders, DoE, MoJA and MoE, continue to provide financial support of the CIWP model at the national level with implementation led by the "Planning and Development Councils" operating under the management of the State Governor at the provincial level and "Planning Committees" operating under the management of the County Governor at the county level. A decentralized approach that engages local communities ensures locally appropriate, CSA and climate smart AIG are adopted, for greater likelihood of sustainability.	DoE	3-24 months	Section 3.3.9
Monitoring and Evaluation	•		•
 Recommendation 2: Complete a comprehensive water balance of target wetland basins, compiling data on the available surface and groundwater resources, the quantity of water diverted to human uses and the quantity of water required to sustain wetlands. The water balance should incorporate the predicted future impacts of climate change. Based on the water balance determine if basin-wide adoption of the CIWP model can achieve sustainable livelihoods of local communities and the long conservation of wetlands and wetland biodiversity. Recommendation 5: Monitoring and evaluation of 	DoE	3-24 months	Section 3.1.1
water and agrochemical usage should determine if farmers are using "saved" water and agrochemicals to expand the area under cultivation.	MoJA	3-12 months	Section 3.3.1
Project Management and Implementation			
Recommendation 4. To promote an efficient, effective and more sustainable up approach to development, the Project Management Unit should follow a bottom-up approach, whereby PMU staff are located in close proximity to the sites where project activities are implemented.	DoE	3-24 months	Section 3.2.5
Project Financing			-
Recommendation 7. It is recommended that other financial resources for CIWP sustainability be explored, such as, involving the private sector in contract farming following CSA practices, establishment of a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) system to support local farmers that implement CSA practices or communities that that protect Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCA), or the engagement of the private sector in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding.	DoE and MoJA	3-24 months	Section 3.3.

Terminal Evaluation of Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other wetlands, Iran

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and objective of the TE

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) has captured lessons learned, generated evidence, and developed knowledge about the underlying reasons for the Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project's (CIWP) implementation practices, in order to guide and inform future strategic planning and management decisions for similar wetland conservation projects in Iran.

Consultation with stakeholders has included discussions on factors that contribute to the sustainability and scalability of project activities. The latter has been collected to assist the CIWP in the development of a Sustainability and Scalability Strategy and Action Plan that may be used as a tool for scaling up of the project results across the country and to inform similar projects in the future.

The TE has assessed gender equality, women's economic empowerment and social inclusion aspects of the CIWP, documenting evidence-based findings for recommendations and to convey lessons learned that may be used in future development work. The TE also provides an assessment of transparency and accountability of project implementation.

1.2 Scope

The TE has covered the full scope of the Phase III CIWP project funded by the Government of Japan, including all component and output activities undertaken from project start-up in 2021 and planned completion in February 2024. Where relevant, the TE has also reviewed work conducted in previous and parallel phases of the project, particularly the outputs and outcomes of "Modelling Local Community Participation in Restoration of Lake Urmia through Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation", project component that was added to CIWP in 2014 and continued for seven years until September 2021 as part of CIWP Phase II.

1.3 Methodology

The TE was conducted independently following UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021). The following team of individual contractors was engaged by UNDP for the TE:

- Brent Tegler International Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Team Leader
- Seyed Abolfazl Mirghasemi National Evaluation Consultant

Report **Section 1.4** below outlines the key approaches and methodology used in the TE. At the initiation of the TE and prior to commencing the field mission an Inception Report was prepared by the TE team outlining a detailed methodology for review and approval by UNDP and the CIWP Project Management Unit (PMU).

1.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Terminal Evaluation Desk Review

The evaluation reviewed and analyzed relevant documentation provided by UNDP and the PMU. A list of documents reviewed is provided in **Annex 3**.

Terminal Evaluation Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder consultations were a core activity conducted by the TE Team, including a field

mission undertaken by the national evaluator to conduct face-to-face interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries and visits to project sites in the three regions where the CIWP was implemented – Lake Umia Basin (LU), Shadegan (SD) wetland and the Bakhtegan (BK) wetland. The international evaluation consultant also conducted virtual meetings with some stakeholders.

The schedule of the field mission conducted by the national evaluator outlining the timing and location of stakeholder consultations and site visits is provided in **Annex 4**.

An initial list of stakeholders to be consulted was developed in consultation with UNDP and the PMU, some additional stakeholders were identified and consulted by the TE Team over the course of the TE. A complete list of stakeholders is provided in **Annex 5**.

Analysis of the Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) and intervention logic was assessed to determine it is coherent and realistic in the context of CIWP implementation (**Annex 8**). The ToC was also be assessed in the context of possible future project implementation and scaling up, to assess if the intervention logic holds or needs to be adjusted.

The ToC analysis has compared the ToC for previous phases of the project particularly the "Modelling Local Community Participation in Restoration of Lake Urmia through Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation" to analyze the evolution of the project concept.

Analysis of the Logical/Results Framework

The TE assessed the extent to which the project can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion. Evaluability of the project's Strategic Results Framework (SRF) indicators and targets as presented in the ProDoc was assessed using "SMART" criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) as show in **Annex 9**.

Evaluation of project management and implementation

The TE assessed the project management structure and implementation methodology, including: the effectiveness and capacity (sufficient number of staff with required qualifications to address project needs) of the CIWP NPM; the leadership provided by the Project Steering Committee; support provided by UNDP; adaptive project management; how the project budget was affected by exchange rate fluctuations and the adaptive management response implemented; the engagement, project support, roles, responsibilities, and the capacity of national, provincial and county government stakeholders and private sector and CSO implementing partners.

Analysis of Project Finance

With assistance from UNDP and the CIWP PMU key financial aspects of the project were evaluated based on the proposed and actual budgets realized.

Evaluation of ProDoc Risk Ratings

The TE reviewed and updated the Risk Ratings and Risk Treatment and Management Measures provided in the ProDoc (**Annex 10**). The ProDoc SESP did not identify any risks. The TE also evaluated how social and environmental issues, including risks, were addressed during project implementation as part of the CIWP's risk management.

Data Triangulation and Analysis

The TE team has verified results by triangulating the data available from document review with information gathered from stakeholder interviews and field mission site visits. The results of data triangulation have been used to complete TE narrative evaluation of project findings presented in report **Section 3** below. The draft TE report has been shared with UNDP and key stakeholders for review and to validate the data presented.

1.5 Ethics

The evaluation adhered to United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2017) and guidance provided by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (OECD 2021 Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully). The TE Team members have signed a pledge to follow ethical guidelines when engaging stakeholders following UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations (**Annex 6**). Those participating in KII and/or FGD were informed their participation was voluntary, that all information provided would be treated confidentially and that their name(s) would not be associated with information provided in the TE report.

1.6 Limitations of the Evaluation

The TE team has not had the opportunity to meet with all CIWP stakeholders, in part, because of the large number of stakeholders and also due to the limited time available to complete the TE.

1.7 Structure of the TE report

The TE report has assembled all information gathered in a concise and readable format utilizing the report format provided in the ToR. In addition to the narrative assessment provided, some evaluation criteria have been given a TE rating following the rating scales shown in **Annex 7** (see **Section 3**). An outline of the TE table of contents outline is shown below.

Executive Summary (3-4 pages) Introduction (2-3 pages) Project Description (3-5 pages) Findings

- Project Design/Formulation
- Project Implementation
- Project Results

Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons Annexes

2 **Project Description**

2.1 Project Start and Duration

The TE is focused on the proposed Government of Japan Grant Aid funding of USD \$3M¹ to be provided over a three year period from March 2021 to February 2024 (as defined in ProDoc). This is new funding provided by the Government of Japan, which is builds on the previous seven phases of Japan Supplementary Budget support which began in 2014, under the project title "*Modelling Local Community Participation in Restoration of Lake Urmia through Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation*". The CIWP is also a part of the longer LU wetland conservation initiative established by DoE and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) fund in 2005 under the project title "*Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other wetlands*". A brief history and description of each project is provided below.

Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other wetlands (2005)

The project for Promoting Énvironmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other wetlands is referred to as the Conservation of Iranian Wetland Project (CIWP). The CIWP is an intervention to alleviate and resolve threats and issues endangering wetlands in Iran through smart and innovative solutions. The CIWP started as a joint effort by the Department of Environment (DoE), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) in 2005, known as Phase I. Initially and during Phase I, the project objective was to systematically remove or substantially mitigate factors threatening biodiversity of selected sites that included Lake Uromiyeh and Lake Parishan. The project aimed to ensure that the lessons learned through these sites are absorbed within wetland-protected area management systems throughout Iran and most notably at a set of target replication sites. After the successful completion of Phase I in 2013, DoE and UNDP started a scale-up Phase II, to sustain the achievements of CIWP throughout the country.

Currently CIWP is in Phase III (2021 to February 2024), building on the successes of the previous work and introducing an ecosystem-based management approach for several wetlands. Valuable achievements of the project during previous phases include preparation of integrated Management Plans (MPs) for wetlands; establishment of the implementation structures; strengthening the wetland-related legislation, laws, and capacities at the national level; and awareness raising of the stakeholders and the public on the values of the wetlands. These accomplishments will contribute to mainstreaming and replicating the project's model in other Iranian wetlands and sustainable wetland management using innovative participatory approaches.

Modelling Local Community Participation in Restoration of Lake Urmia through Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation (2014)

Shortly after the start of CIWP Phase II described above, the Government of Japan made a financial contribution to the work of CIWP, under a new project component known as "Modelling Local Community Participation in Restoration of Lake Urmia through Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation". Financial support from the Government of Japan was provided through Phases I to VII, from 2014 to 2021. Based on the achievements of CIWP and the seven phases of Government of Japan supported work, a new three year Phase III CIWP joint project titled "*The Project for Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other Wetlands*" was approved by the Government of Japan through its Grant Aid funding

¹ The actual available amount received for UNDP programming was 2,945,281.00 USD

mechanism. The aim of the Phase III CIWP is to sustain the results of previous work in Lake Urmia Basin and replicate the experience in two other wetland sites of the country, including Bakhtegan Wetland in Fars Province and Shadegan Wetland in Khuzestan Province.

2.2 Development Context

More than 85% of Iran is characterized by an arid or semi-arid climate with low annual rainfall and high evapo-transpiration rates. Increasing and unsustainable use of water resources for human purposes is resulting in negative impacts to natural areas, particularly wetlands, and to human livelihoods, particularly those based on agriculture. In rural areas the agricultural sector is responsible for about 90% of total water consumption and the efficiency of agricultural water-irrigation systems is low, approximately 35%.

The influence of humans on the natural water cycle is both intensive and extensive, significantly altering surface water and ground water resources and changing natural evapotranspiration pathways, due to factors that include:

- an increasing population that requires more water;
- changes in human lifestyles that lead to an increase in per capita water consumption;
- increase in the area of irrigated land for agriculture, including both row crop and orchard development;
- changing crop patterns that are selecting cash crops that require more water;
- upstream deforestation and land degradation in watersheds (largely for agriculture, but also urban development) which alters the natural water cycle;
- dam construction for water supply and hydroelectric energy supply;
- diversion of water from one watershed basin to another;
- legal and illegal wells that exploit ground water; and
- water demands for urbanization and industrial development.

Exacerbating human caused impacts to the water cycle, is climate change, which is resulting in increasing periods of drought, intense rainfall events within landscapes dominated by human land use (agriculture, orchards, urban) leading to flooding and soil erosion and higher temperatures resulting a greater demand for water for human use and for natural systems.

The traditional sector-based governance within Iran precludes collaboration among key stakeholders (agriculture, environment, energy/water) which is necessary to achieve effective, integrated watershed management.

Traditional farming practices are difficult to change and there is a lack of trust by farmers making it difficult to engage and introduce new technologies.

2.3 Problems that the Project Sought to Address

The key problems the CIWP sought to address are:

- unsustainable water use (primarily agricultural use);
- the need for improved intersectoral-based governance of watersheds to support sustainable water use and conservation of wetlands;
- the need for climate smart agriculture to reduce water use and reduce the use of agricultural pesticides and fertilizers; and
- the need for alternative, climate resilient livelihood options in rural communities.

2.4 Development Objectives of the Project

The long term goal of the Phase III CIWP is:

Effective application of the Ecosystem Approach in wetland basins enhances the economic situation and wellbeing of local communities and conserves wetlands.

The Phase III CIWP includes the following three components with their associated outcomes:

Component 1: Fragile wetland ecosystems of Iran are well-managed using an innovative framework to integrated basin-management

Component 1 has the following three outcomes:

- I. Developing and implementing wetland management action plans
- II. Increasing Hectarage of fragile ecosystems under the coverage of management plans
- III. Equipping and operationalizing the monitoring stations
- **Component 2:** Livelihood options of local communities are enhanced through more sustainable and 'climate-smart' practices

This component targets three main outputs:

- I. Increasing the number of local communities benefiting from livelihood initiatives
- II. Decreasing water and agrochemical usage
- III. Implementing climate-smart practices in new pilot sites
- **Component 3:** Engagement of local communities in wetland management is enhanced through community mobilization and public awareness

This component targets on two main outputs:

I. Establishing and functionalizing Communication, Education Participation, and Awareness-raising (CEPA) centers

II. Implementing wetland management initiative by the local community

2.5 Expected results

The ultimate goal of CIWP Phase III is the application of an ecosystem approach in the management of wetland basins to enhance the economic situation and well-being of local communities and support participatory conservation of wetlands. This involves identifying and practicing new approaches or complementary tools, and strengthening sustainable management of natural resources in the fragile ecosystems of Iran, by introducing climate-smart practices, drawing on the past achievements in the Lake Urmia Basin project activities implemented under Phases I and II of CIWP. This project effectively contributes to sustaining the previous achievements of the project in LU and replicates the experience in other wetland areas in Iran.

The project is also intended to support the inclusions and economic empowerment of women through training and participation in wetland management leading to enhanced self-confidence and renewed sense of identity among rural women.

The expected results are specified in eight indicators with end of project targets that

measure progress towards the achievement of the three CIWP Components and associated Outputs supported by the Government of Japan as presented above (see **Section 2.4**). CIWP Components and Outputs have eight indicators and with end of project targets as shown in **Table 2** below.

	CIWP Project Results Indicators	CIWP End of Project Indicator Targets
1.	# of customized wetland Management Plan (MP) action plan with allocated budget plans developed/revised and are under implementation	 3 MPs action plan developed/revised and are under implementation (1 action plan for each site – Lake Umia basin (LU), Shadegan wetland (SD) and Bakhtegan wetland (BK)
2.	Hectarage of fragile wetland ecosystems under the coverage of customized management plans (under implementation)	 At least 400,000 ha of fragile wetland ecosystems under the coverage of customized management plans (under implementation) (250,000 ha LU, 100,000 ha SD, 50,000 ha BK)
3.	# of monitoring stations equipped and operational	 3 monitoring stations equipped and operational (1 in each wetland – LU, SD, BK))
4.	# of local communities benefiting from livelihood initiatives (gender-based)	 2,400 local communities benefited from livelihood initiatives (1600 persons in LU basin and 400 persons in each of the SD and BK wetlands, out of which 50% of them are women)
5.	% of decrease in water and agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites	 30% decrease in water usage in selected pilot sites; and 30% decrease in agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites
6.	# of new pilot villages in which climate smart practices have been implemented	 140 new pilot villages in which climate smart practices have been implemented (80 pilots in LU basin and 30 for each of SD and BK wetlands)
7.	# of CEPA centers which are established and functional	 3 CEPA centers which are established and functional (one center in each of LU, SD and BK wetlands)
8.	# of wetland management initiatives being implemented by the local community	 18 wetland management initiatives (e.g., biodiversity conservation, community mobilization, festivals, campaigns, fairs, etc.) being implemented by the local community (12 in LU basin and 3 in each of SD and BK wetlands)

	Table 2.	CIWP	Compo	nent/Out	put India	cators and	d End d	of Proje	ct Targets
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2.6 Main stakeholders – Summary List

The CIWP includes wide range of stakeholders and a large number of individuals within the various stakeholder groups. Within government, the stakeholders range across a variety of government sectors and within individual government sectors include representation at national, provincial and county levels. Non-government stakeholders include private sector organizations, Civil Society Organizations (CSO), and direct beneficiaries in local community groups and as individual households and farmers.

- The *Implementing Partner* for the CIWP is the Department of Environment (DoE), their role is project coordination and facilitation. DoE is the agency responsible for conservation of the natural environment, including wetlands.
- Working closely with DoE, as the *main implementing partner*, is the Ministry of Jihad-Agriculture (MoJA), providing their knowledge and experience on methods to reduce agricultural water usage (i.e. allowing more of the available water to sustain wetlands) through the introduction of Climate Smart Agricultural (CSA) practices. DoE and MoJA have offices that operate at the national, provincial and county levels, all of which are engaged in the project.
- The Ministry of Energy (MoE) is a *collaborating partner*, because MoE is the agency that regulates surface and ground water, including water taking and water diversion projects.
- Provincial Committees for Integrated Wetland Management, established for the LU wetland, SD wetland, and the BK wetland. In addition, there are five local management committees supporting LU satellite wetlands, the committee names are: GhooriGol; Qareqeshlagh; Nowruzloo; KaniBarazan; and Solduz.
- Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness Raising (CEPA) centres are important stakeholders established within project wetlands as they take the lead on awareness raising and advocacy for wetland conservation.
- A partner participating in CIWP Alternative Income Generating (AIG) activities is Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft (MCTH).
- Assisting in community facilitation and training programs are local private companies and cooperatives responsible for facilitation of community engagement and training related to CSA and AIG.
- Local women and men farmers from pilot villages are the direct beneficiaries participating in the project.

2.7 Theory of Change

The CIWP Theory of Change (ToC) illustrated in the CIWP ProDoc is shown in Figure 1 below. The ToC is built on wetland management experience derived from ongoing work in the Lake Umia basin with commenced in 2005.

Important tenets include: a bottom-up planning approach; capacity development of local implementing partners in the areas of sustainable agriculture and Alternative Income Generating (AIG) activities; and inter-sectoral cooperation and partnerships among government organizations and among private sector partners.

The ToC is implemented by assessing and selecting pilot communities and introducing and supporting appropriate Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices and climate smart AIG. The ToC goal is to engage local communities in enhanced wetland management in ways that improves their livelihoods while also improving the management of fragile, natural wetland ecosystems.



Figure 1. CIWP Theory of Change (ToC) as illustrated in CIWP ProDoc

3 CIWP Terminal Evaluation Findings

Using data gathered from the desk review and data collected from the stakeholder interviews, meetings with beneficiaries and visits to project field sites an overall rating for key project categories has been completed (**Table 3**). The evaluation ratings are based on ratings tables shown in **Annex 7** as applied to the findings presented in the relevant sections of the TE report below.

Monitoring and Evaluation	Rating
M&E design at entry	MS
M&E Plan Implementation	S
Overall quality of M&E	MS
Implementing Agency (IA) & Executing Agency (EA) Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation – Implementing Agency	MS
Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	MS
Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	MS
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	S
Effectiveness	S
Efficiency	MS
Overall Project Outcome Rating	S
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	U
Socio-political	L
Institutional framework and governance	MU
Environmental	MU
Overall likelihood of sustainability	MU

Table 3 CIWP Terminal Evaluation Ratings Table

3.1 Project Design/Formulation

3.1.1 Analysis of Strategic Results Framework

Analysis of the Theory of Change

Analysis of the ToC was undertaken through an assessment of Impact Drivers (ID) and Assumptions (A) associated with the project objective and outcomes as shown in **Annex 8 Table 8.1**. The impact of ID and A were further assessed based on the status of project achievements and the Intermediate State (IS) achieved (**Appendix 8 Table 8.2**). The ToC analysis follows the methods and guidance provided in the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) Handbook (2009).

The analysis shows the ToC implementation model has fully achieved most of the targets identified for the CIWP. When the CIWP closes, the scaling up needed to achieve the long term goal of the ToC is unlikely to be fully achieved. The following is a summary of the ToC analysis:

- The CIWP has developed a model to achieve improved management of wetland basins. The model has demonstrated intersectoral cooperation within government, collaboration with the private sector and successful engagement of local communities leading to reduced water and agrochemical usage within the pilot communities where CIWP was implemented.
- To achieve the long term goal of the ToC there is a need for upscaling to introduce key components of the model within the larger wetland basin area.

- In the CIWP successful implementation of the model has relied on Government of Japan funding to support the National Project Management team which provided critical coordination and facilitation functions (particularly among participating government sectors nationally, provincially and locally) and coordinated and used Government of Japan funds to engage the private sector in the facilitation and training of local communities in CSA and climate smart AIG.
- The capacity of DOE, as the Responsible Party for the CIWP, to coordinate and fund scaling up of the CIWP with the main implementing partner, MoJA, is not assured due to competing priorities of DOE and MoJA and due to a lack of available government funds.

Recommendation 1. Develop a sustainability and scalability plan that outlines a five-year plan to scale-up the CIWP model. The plan should include a lead coordinating agency based on the CIWP National Project Management team and key partner (e.g. MoE, MoJA, etc.) it should also identify a budget and funding sources to achieve basin-wide implementation of the CIWP model.

There is a need to develop a comprehensive water balance for wetland basins, that
includes data on the available surface and groundwater resources, the quantity of
water diverted to human uses and the quantity of water required to sustain wetlands.
The water balance should also incorporate the predicted impact of climate change.
With this information it will be possible to determine if basin-wide adoption of the
CIWP model can achieve the ToC long term goal which is Effective application of the
Ecosystem Approach in wetland basins enhances the economic situation and
wellbeing of local communities and conserves wetlands.

Recommendation 2. Complete a comprehensive water balance of target wetland basins, compiling data on the available surface and groundwater resources, the quantity of water diverted to human uses and the quantity of water required to sustain wetlands. The water balance should incorporate the predicted future impacts of climate change. Based on the water balance determine if basin-wide adoption of the CIWP model can achieve sustainable livelihoods of local communities and the long conservation of wetlands and wetland biodiversity.

The CIWP ToC does not include outcomes or outputs directed at engaging large industrial users of water, urban water use, and recreational water use. All of which may represent significantly large water users (and diversion of water from wetlands) and significant sources water pollution that may impact wetlands.

Recommendation 3. The Theory of Change should incorporate outcomes and outputs that engage all water users and potential water polluters within target wetland basins (e.g. industrial users, urban users, etc.) to develop and implement climate smart activities aimed at reducing water usage and potential sources of pollution as part of the long goal to conserve fragile wetlands and wetland biodiversity.

SMART Review of Strategic Results Framework Indicators

The TE review of the eight (8) SRF indicators and targets using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant Time-bound) criteria determined (see **Annex 9**):

- three (3) indicators meet SMART criteria (Indicators 2, 7, 8);
- three (3) indicators meet most SMART criteria, but could be improved by providing more "specific" information in regard to what is being measured (Indicators 1, 3, 6);
- one (1) indicator meets some SMART criteria, but it is not "specific" including several undefined measures for the indicator and in addition "measurability" maybe difficult to determine due to the requirement for the establishment of a baseline needed to determine "percent reduction" (Indicator 5); and
- one (1) indicator is poor because of a lack of information provided to determine if the specifics, measurability, achievability and timeliness of the indicator. The indicator was considered relevant (Indicator 4).

Despite the shortcomings of indicators noted above the CIWP project has reported on all indicators in Annual Project Progress Reports. For further discussion, see the discussion in report section **3.3.3 Effectiveness** and in **Annex 11**.

3.1.2 Assumptions and Risks

The ProDoc Annex 3 Risk Log, identified five risks with an assigned rating based on their potential impact and probability and risk treatment and management measures to mitigate the risks (**Annex 10**). The TE has re-evaluated the risks using UNDP's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) approach, with the complete results provided in **Annex 10**.

A summary of the TE evaluation of CIWP risk is as follows:

- The TE has reduced the risk rating from substantial or moderate to low, for three of the five risks identified in the ProDoc. For two of the risks, the reduced risk rating is a result of effective risk management by the CIWP and for the third risk related to Covid-19, the likelihood of further severe restrictions is not likely.
- The TE considered the risk of the impact of sanctions on project implementation is unchanged, and the risk remains substantial.
- The TE considered the risk of the impact of climate change is "expected" and "extensive", resulting an increase of the risk rating from moderate to high.

3.1.3 Lessons from Other Relevant Projects

The CIWP Phase III project is built on the many years of experience gained in previous phases which started in 2005. Also more recently, the complimentary work on climate smart, integrated sustainable development undertaken in the LU basin, which was supported by the Government of Japan since 2014, provides experience directly related to the output activities identified in the current SRF (see **Annex 11**) that are intended to provide ongoing support to the work started in LU and introduce a similar strategy in BK and SD wetlands.

3.1.4 Planned stakeholder participation

The planned stakeholder participation and coordination for the CIWP project was led by the PMU situated within DoE, thereby facilitating regular meetings with DoE staff (including the National Project Director who is Deputy of Marine Ecosystems and Wetlands DoE). DoE as the Implementing Partner for CIWP, provides the authority and approval of government to implement project activities within project sites.

The CIWP sustainable agriculture activities were proposed to be implemented by the PMU through a close relationship with the MoJA providing oversight of the introduction of CSA in select pilot communities. The delivery of CSA and AIG would be undertaken by private sector companies and cooperatives contracted by the CIWP PMU to facilitate and train participating local farmers. Monitoring of results was to be conducted by the private sector with oversite from MoJA and the CIWP PMU.

Provincial Committee for Wetland Management were to play key role selecting pilot communities to participated in the CIWP.

Within pilot communities a gender balanced approach would engage households and farmers interested in participating in CIWP.

3.1.5 Linkages between Project and Other Interventions within the Sector

There is synergy between the CIWP and the Urmia Lake Restoration Plan (ULRP) implemented by the DoE. The focus of URLP in on the Urmia Lake wetlands with a budget of USD \$1.1B over eight years, with 83% of the budget allocated to MoE, 16% to MoJA and 1% for education, training and awareness raising.

Within the CIWP LU pilot sites there are many complimentary activities being undertaken in association with the ULRP.

3.2 **Project Implementation**

3.2.1 Adaptive management

The CIWP design did not change over the course of project implementation. Project outputs and activities followed those outlined in the ProDoc leading to the achievement of project indicators. (see report **Section 3.3.1**).

The CIWP adapted to Covid-19 restrictions and ensured the continuity of project activities by providing the equipment (laptops) and training required to allow staff in wetland secretariats to work remotely in online meeting platforms. CIWP also put in place the recommended Covid-19 Standard Operating Procedures and preventive measures.

The devaluation of the Iranian Rial currency resulted in an increase in the available local funds (Rial) after conversion of the donor funds provided. While the cost of goods has increased due to inflation, there was a net increase in local funds (Rial) available for the implementation of project activities. The adaptive management strategy of the project was to increase the number of pilot communities and individuals participating in the project. This is reflected in the greater than 100% achievement of SRF indicators # 4 and # 6 (see **Annex 11**).

3.2.2 Actual Stakeholder Participation and Partnership Arrangements

The DoE, as the lead implementing partner and the government office where the CIWP PMU is based, has stated they would have benefitted from greater collaboration with the CIWP, particularly consultation with the PMU to stay informed of ongoing implementation of project activities. This in turn could have led to increased capacity development of DoE staff.



Shadegan CEPA Centre hosting children's education event

At the National Level, the CIWP has a Project

Steering Committee (PSC) with representatives from key government stakeholders, UNDP and the PMU. The PSC has held three meetings since 2021 where the PMU informs project partners about progress of project activities and implementation challenges. The TE has noted the PSC representatives from different ministries or institutions are often not the same from one meeting to the next, suggesting there may be a lack of continuity. In was also noted those representing ministries or institutions were often "senior expert" and not high level decision makers. As such, the PSC was largely a forum to obtain updates on project progress and it did not play an active decision making role "steering" the CIWP.

At County Level, where the CIWP was implemented, there is a coordination committee responsible for implementing the wetland MPs that have been approved by the Provincial Council of Planning and Development (PCPD). The head of the committee is the County Governor and its secretariat is the Head of the DoE office at the County Level. The role of the coordination committee is to brief members on the progress wetland MP implementation and to plan future next activities, including defining the roles and responsibilities of each sector in implementing the wetland MP.

To a large extent, the effectiveness of the County coordination committee is dependent upon the County Governor. Some County Governors take the wetland MP very seriously, resulting in effective implementation by the participating government agencies. Without the support and leadership of the County Governor, the wetland MP may not be implemented. Of the 46 wetland MPs prepared, 26 have been approved by the PCPD, and of these few are being implemented, due to a lack of funds and due to government priorities that focus on income generation to improve the livelihood conditions of local communities.

The CIWP did not successfully engage other stakeholders that may have contributed to the project, including the MoE which has the responsibility for regulating water use, the Plan and Budget Organization (PBO) which could play a role in budget allocation for implementation of wetland MPs, the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade (MoIMT) which oversees industrial water users and potential sources of water pollution, and the MCHTH supporting relevant climate smart AIG.

3.2.3 Project Finance and Co-finance

The ProDoc and Actual project spending for the years 2021 to 2023 is provided in **Table 4**. The annual project budget according to the ProDoc, the Project Annual Work Planning and Reporting Package (PAPRP) and the actual spending is shown in **Figure 2**. Independent financial audits conducted for the 2021 and 2022 year ends concluded financial statements were in conformity with approved budgets, were used for the purposes of the CIWP, were in compliance with UNDP financial regulations, and were supported by appropriate documentation.

The data show the total annual project actual spending was low in 2021 (30% of ProDoc, 55% of PAPRP) but, actual spending increased substantially in 2022 and 2023 such that the cumulative spending for 2023 shown in **Figure 2** is 90% of the total Government of Japan budget of USD \$3M². As of December 30th, 2023 total project spending was 2,654,136.52.



Figure 2. CIWP Cumulative Budget Analysis

The data in **Table 4** shows the planned spending for the three project component was relatively equal, with slightly more funding for Components 1 and 2 with activities on CSA and AIG respectively and slightly less funding for Component 3 with activities focused on awareness raising and advocacy.

The total planned General Management Support (GMS) cost for Project Management was USD \$220,022, which is 7% of the total project budget and the total UNDP Direct Project Costs (DPC) was USD \$129,906, which is 4% of the total project budget. The actual spending for GMS was USD \$146,359.62, which is 5% of total project budget and for DPC was USD \$129,906.10 which is 5% of total project budget.

The data for co-financing shown in **Table 5** includes UNDP Trac funding, government Parallel funding (cash/in-kind) and government Cost-Sharing. Parallel funding, largely from DoE and MoJA, supports government activities that are complimentary to CIWP; Costsharing directly supports CIWP activities. Parallel funds have supported the ongoing Lake Urmia Restoration Program, including the Wetland Office of DoE and implementation of Integrated Management Plans for wetlands. Cost-sharing is provided by DoE and has been used to conduct activities in line with CIWP outputs indicated in the annual work plans.

The doubling of parallel funding, from the planned USD \$957,500 to \$2,006,000 suggest the government is committed to conducting activities that support the CIWP model. The 63% reduction of the available cost-sharing funds, from USD \$187,304.39 to \$69,403.74 is an indicator of the significant financial challenges the Islamic Republic of Iran is facing. The reduction in the available cost-sharing funds did not significantly impact the project, in part due to the positive impact change of a decline in the exchange rate of the Iranian Rial against the USD and due to cost-sharing funds representing a relatively small part (~6%) of the overall USD \$3M budget.

² The UNDP programmable amount is USD 2,915,828 due to fluctuations in the Government of Japan Yen against the United States Dollar

Table 4. Planned and Actual Government of Japan CIWP Financing (Data for planned financing from ProDoc; data for actual financing provided by UNDP December 21st, 2023; all figures in USD)

Broiget Component	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Total	
Project Component	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Component 1	274,509.00	102,415.40	335,511.00	247,388.75	305,010.00	415244.62	915,030.00	765,048.77
Component 2	274,888.80	99,863.77	335,975.20	834,231.49	305,432.00	12849.05	916,296.00	946,944.31
Component 3	236,712.60	25,173.10	289,315.40	68,487.31	263,014.00	572217.7	789,042.00	665,878.11
General Management Support (GMS)	66,006.58	15,271.91	80,674.70	101,243.64	73,340.72	29,844.07	220,022.00	146,359.62
Direct Project Costs (UNDP)	38,971.80	18,971.00	47,632.20	57,632.20	43,302.00	53,302.90	129,906.00	129,906.10
UNDP Resident Coordinator Levy	8,910.90	9,817.66	10,891.10	9,817.67	9,901.00	9,817.67	29,703.00	29,453.00 ³
Total	900,000	271,512.84	1,100,000	1,318,801.06	1,000,000	1,093,276.01	3,000,000.00 ⁴	2,683,589.91

Table 5. Planned and Actual Co-Financing of CIWP (Government Implementing Partner – Department of Environment, I.R. Iran)

Source of Eurod	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Total	
Source of Fund	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
UNDP Trac	50,000.00	49,446.57	60,000.00	57,357.21	60,000.00	56,628.19	170,000.00	163,431.97
Government Parallel Funding (cash/in- kind)	117,500.00	610,000	460,000.00	715,000.00	380,000.00	681,000.00	957,500.00	2,006,000.00
Government Cost- sharing	87,262.39	36,236.97	50,892.00	20,620.48	49,150.00	12,546.29	187,304.39	69,403.74
Total	254,762.39	695,683.54	570,892.00	792,977.69	489,150.00	750,174.48	1,314,804.39	2,238,835.71

³ The UNDP Resident Coordinator Levy of 1%, actual total is based on the total programable amount received by UNDP (see footnote # 4) ⁴ The total amount received by UNDP was USD 2,945,281 due to fluctuations in the exchange rate of the Japanese Yen

3.2.4 CIWP Monitoring & Evaluation

CIWP Monitoring and Evaluation Design at Entry

The CIWP ProDoc includes a monitoring plan to measure project progress against indicator targets, to monitor and manage risks that could challenge achievement of project activities and to monitor and document learnings from the project.

The CIWP includes three components (outcomes) and their associated outputs (see report **Section 2.4**): improvement of an integrated, ecosystem-based approach to management of wetland basins; the adoption of CSA to reduce water and agrochemical usage and the introduction of climate smart AIG to improve livelihoods of local communities and reduce human impact to wetlands; and increased awareness of and participation in improved conservation of wetlands and biodiversity.

The CIWP included a good M&E system to report on the impact of CSA by measuring water use and asking farmers to report on agrochemical use on control farms (no CSA) and CIWP pilot farms where CSA practices are introduced.

The CIWP did not have an M&E plan to measure the impact of climate smart AIG which developed micro or small business and established women self-help groups and microfinancing.

The CIWP M&E provides an indirect measure of improved wetland management by documenting the number of wetland MPs, the area covered by MPs and the establishment of wetland monitoring stations. Wetland monitoring stations established by the CIWP will have the capacity to provide more direct measures of the impact of improved wetland management, such as increased surface and ground water levels and measures of native plant and animal biodiversity.

The CIWP M&E does not provide a measure of capacity development of DoE, MoJA, and private sector and NGO implementing partners. Capacity development is considered an important impact, given the need to scale-up the CIWP pilot activities within the large wetland basin environment.

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

CIWP Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation

The CIWP M&E has been used effectively by the PMU and UNDP to produce good quality Annual Project Progress Reports (APPR) that provide an annual assessment of progress and risks, which is reviewed by key stakeholders to inform decision making. The CIWP has undergone financial audits to produce annual reports in 2021 and 2022 as noted in report **Section 3.2.3**.

The CIWP CSA M&E has effectively used a professional team from MoJA agricultural research institute or provincial research centers to measure, analyze and document the positive impacts of CSA on saving water and improving water productivity, reducing agrochemical use and increases in land and crop productivity.

The CIWP has reported on the completion of AIG activities, but it does not have M&E data to measure impacts on the improvement of the livelihood conditions of the target groups, such as increased household income.

The CIWP tested a new volunteer approach to monitor the condition of wetlands by using the environmental knowledge and experience of local individuals and NGOs. Volunteer conducted field visits to measure different parameters related to the quality of water in the

wetland. The volunteer monitoring approach has proven to be unsustainable due to a lack of financial support required to cover the logistic expenses (field visit travel costs) of monitoring.

<u>Rating</u>: Satisfactory (S)

Overall assessment of CIWP Monitoring and Evaluation

While the CIWP M&E was sufficient to track project progress and report on indicators, there were moderate shortcomings in the quality of the M&E design in terms of measuring the impact of some project activities, particularly the impact of climate smart AIG on households and improved integrated, ecosystem-based management of wetlands on the health and biodiversity of target wetlands.

<u>Rating</u>: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

3.2.5 CIWP Project Implementation, Execution, and Coordination

UNDP Implementation Oversight

UNDP has worked effectively with government partners and the PMU, facilitating cooperation and quality assurance of project implementation.

As suggested by the PMU, during project startup it is recommended UNDP provide comprehensive staff training on the required UNDP financial management and reporting procedures to enhance the of PMU staff to efficiently and effectively complete the required tasks.

Four months prior to project closure UNDP engaged an international and national consultant to develop a sustainability / scaling up strategy. The late development of the strategy may not allow sufficient time to effectively implement the strategy. To ensure orderly project closure and maximize the sustainability of results UNDP should initiate the development of an exit strategy / sustainability plan at least one year before project closure.

<u>Rating</u>: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Implementing Partner Execution

The CIWP PMU had ten staff based in Tehran, in an office co-located with the DoE, Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Bureau. In each of the three pilot sites the PMU had one staff member as the Provincial Technical Expert (PTE) liaising with local government, private sector and NGO implementing partners. PTE were based in provinces in the northwest of Iran (Urmia Lake pilot site), the center of Iran (Bakhtegan pilot site) and the southeast of Iran (Shadegan pilot site). During project implementation the PMU also engaged national and international consultants to provide technical assistance when needed.

Development projects working with farmers in rural communities are known to benefit from a bottom-up development approach. A bottom-up approach contributes to sustainability through the effective engagement of and trust building with beneficiaries, the implementation of locally appropriate activities and greater opportunities for capacity development of the local government and non-government stakeholders participating in, and sustaining the implementation of project activities. The CIWP PMU structure with the majority of staff based in Tehran, has reinforced a top down approach to develop, similar to the existing governance structure of the participating government stakeholders.

Considering the travel and accommodation costs of the PMU operating from Tehran and regularly travelling to each of the three pilot sites the efficiency of the project could have been improved by utilizing a more decentralized management approach.

Recommendation 4. To promote an efficient, effective and more sustainable up approach to development, the Project Management Unit should follow a bottom-up approach, whereby PMU staff are located in close proximity to the sites where project activities are implemented.

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Overall project Implementation and Execution

While the CIWP project implementation and execution followed the model outlined in the ProDoc, the TE has determined there were shortcomings in the approach that have likely reduced the efficiency of project implementation and the sustainability of the results.

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

3.2.6 Risk Management including Social and Environmental Standards

The TE review of the ProDoc has noted in Annex 1. Project Quality Assurance Report the ProDoc states: The Social and Environmental Standards Process (SESP) is not required for projects in which UNDP is Administrative Agent only and/or projects comprised solely of reports, coordination of events, trainings, workshops, meetings, conferences and/or communication materials and information dissemination.

Nonetheless, Annex 2 of the ProDoc provides a completed SESP. The SESP did not identify any social or environmental risks. The TE also reviewed SESP Attachment 1. Social and Environmental Risk Screening Checklist, to which all questions were answered "no". The TE review noted the following questions under Principal 3. Environmental Sustainability that should be answered "yes" based on CIWP activities. The SESP screening questions include:

- 1.2 Are any Project activities proposed within or adjacent to critical habitats and/or environmentally sensitive?
 - The CIWP project is working to protect fragile wetland ecosystems, of which some are protected and Lake Urmia is a designated <u>Ramsar</u> Wetlands site.
- 2.2 Would the potential outcomes of the Project be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change?
 - There is a significant interaction between the outcomes of the project and the potential impacts of climate change.

As the SESP did not identify any risks, CIWP APPR did not include a section on social and environmental risks. Risk identified in the ProDoc Annex 3 Risk Log are discussed above in TE report section **3.1.2 Assumptions and Risks**.

3.3 Project Results

3.3.1 Progress towards Objective and Expected Outcomes

Progress towards achievement of indicator end of project targets has been completed based on information provided in APPR and the information obtained through stakeholder and beneficiary meetings. **Annex 11** provides a detailed assessment of all indicators and assigns an achievement rating for each indicator using the following three-point rating system: **Target Achieved**, **Target Partially Achieved**, or **Target Not Achieved**.

The CIWP has achieved end of project targets for seven (7) of the eight (8) SRF indicators, with five (5) of the successful indicators exceeding their end of project targets by significant margins (see indicators numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 **Annex 11**).

CIWP indicator number 5 has been assessed as "partially achieved". The is the indicator measuring the percent decrease in water and agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites, with an end of project target of 30% for water and agrochemical usage. An average of the data provided (3 years for LU and 2 years for BK and SD), shows a 27.5% decrease in water and agrochemical usage. A result that very nearly achieves the end of project target.

While the CIWP CSA has recorded a reduction of water usage among participating farmers in pilot villages (average over three years 27.5% reduction) the CIWP did not include monitoring beyond the pilot farms to determine if the saved water contributed to wetland restoration or if it may have been used for human purposes (agriculture, consumption, industry, etc.).

The decrease in water and agrochemical usage is intended to contribute to the ToC long term goal which includes enhanced conservation and restoration of wetlands. However, it was noted during the field mission that farmers may utilize the "saved" water and agrochemicals on one part of their farms to expand crop production on another part of their farm. Such that there is no net gain in the enhanced conservation of wetlands.

Recommendation 5. Monitoring and evaluation of water and agrochemical usage should determine if farmers are using "saved" water and agrochemicals to expand the area under cultivation.

Rating: Satisfactory (S)

3.3.2 Relevance

The CIWP has been implemented during United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2022 and the current United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027.

The CIWP contributes to UNDAF Outcome 1. Environment, 1.1 Integrated natural resource management with an outcome of *Responsible government agencies formulate, implement and monitor integrated natural resource management, low carbon economy, and climate*

change policies and programs more effectively. CIWP also contributes to the UNDAF Country Program Document (CPD) Output 1.1 which is Strategies and measures that promote sustainable and integrated management of natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystem services are developed and considered for adoption/implementation by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The CIWP model also strongly supports the following three Intermediate Outcomes of UNSDCF Outcome 3:



Bakhtegan CEPA Centre capacity development for local NGO who will manage the Centre

- 3.1 Support for an environmentally friendly economy, including through the sustainable use of natural resources, is developed in all sectors.
- 3.2 Effective management of habitats and conservation of biodiversity support the health and sustainable services of ecosystems.
- 3.3 Institutional capacities on climate action enhanced through climate informed support for innovative technological solutions, and international advocacy for climate finance.

When initiated in 2005 an important goal of the CIWP was the restoration and protection globally recognized Ramsar Wetlands and the biodiversity they support. As the human population has continued to grow in the Lake Urmia basin and other wetland basins, over time this goal has become more relevant due to increases in the area and intensity of human land use for agriculture, industry, energy and urban areas and the increasing impact of climate change. As such, it more relevant than ever to introduce sustainable models of land use, such as CIWP, to support human needs and protect natural environments.

Rating: Satisfactory (S)

3.3.3 Effectiveness

The CIWP was effective in achieving project indicator targets established in the ProDoc (see **Section 3.3.1** and **Annex 11**). The effectiveness of CIWP is also demonstrated through achievement of the following impacts:

 The collaborative team work demonstrated during CSA implementation within the provincial MoJA organization that involved local officials from the Division of Agricultural Extension Services and from Agricultural Research Centre, the head of the Wetlands Conservation office (under DoE at province level) together with the CIWP staff, including the Local Provincial Coordinator and Technical Expert.



Quri Gol CEPA Centre educational panel showing wetland characteristics for visitors

• Capacity development of local private sector companies engaged to provide specialized extension services and technical training for local farmers. Capacity development included learning participatory approaches and trust building at the community level and

learning new CSA techniques and technologies for water saving and reduced agrochemical use at the farm level.

- The CIWP project was effective in engaging and training local farmers in the use of new technologies for improving water productivity, land productivity and crop productivity by using CSA measures and techniques at the pilot farms in the pilot villages.
- Establishing an accurate monitoring and evaluation system to investigate the impacts of CSA techniques in cultivation and irrigation systems. The CIWP also used the monitoring results to document and share the best practices with other local farmers, convincing them of the potential benefits of CSA if they were to adopt CSA practices on their farms.
- Providing a mechanism for developing micro or small businesses at the household level by using social mobilization and a microfinance approach.
- Assisting the Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Bureau in the preparation of Management Plans (MPs) based on sound environmental management and ecosystembased management approaches, within three of the CIWP pilot wetlands.
- Production of documents and reference material on wetland management in local language to facilitate knowledge sharing.
- Establishment of three functioning CEPA Centres in three provinces to facilitate better communication, education, participation and awareness raising of wetland management issues for the public.
- CIWP knowledge and experience sharing through communication with the Urmia Lake Restoration Plan (ULRP) stakeholders.

Rating: Satisfactory (S)

3.3.4 Efficiency

The CIWP utilized approximately 35% (USD \$946,944) of the total spending on the introduction of CSA in 235 pilot villages and climate smart AIG to 3,830 local community members (49% women) in pilot villages (**Table 4**, **Section 3.2.3** and **Annex 11**). The average water saving of 28% and 25 to 30% reduction in agrochemical usage will translate into cost savings for farmers. The dollar value of cost savings was not measured by the CIWP, but this information could be used to assess the cost benefit of CSA. The successful introduction of a wide variety of AIG should increase the household income for participating families in pilot villages. CIWP did not establish baselines for household income and has not reported on new household income arising from AIG introduced by the project.

As discussed in report **Section 3.2.5** the project management budget of USD \$169,819 (6.2% of total spending) could have been used more efficiently if the PMU was based closer to the project sites. Travel and accommodation costs from Tehran would be lower, staff time spent travelling less, and potential enhanced local engagement and capacity development of local stakeholders with PMU staff embedded in the sites where implementation took place.

The CIWP used local private sector companies to provide CSA agricultural extension services and local NGOs to deliver climate smart AIG in the pilot villages. The private sector companies and NGOs engaged by the project, were provided training to provide them with the capacity needed to implement CIWP activities. Engagement of the private sector and NGOs was conducted annually using tender procurement approach. As such each year new contractors were engaged, and for those not previously engaged by the project, training would again be provided. A more efficient approach would have been to engage contractors for the entire duration of the project.

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

3.3.5 Overall Outcome

The CIWP PMU has successfully completed activities related to the three project components aimed at achieving the project goal to implement a model of intersectoral, sustainable management of wetland basins.

The activities of CIWP component 1 achieved the development of wetland MPs that cover significant areas of the wetland basin. The TE noted successful implementation of the MPs has not been adequately measured and there remain challenges to implementation, such as continued sectoral approaches that focus on the priorities of individual government ministries and severe budget limitations of government.

The activities of CIWP component 2 implemented within selected pilot villages, successful introduced CSA practices that reduced water and agrochemical usage and introduced climate smart AIG that diversified livelihoods and potentially improved the socio-economic situation of rural communities, especially of the women who participated.

The CIWP has not reported significant replication or scaling up of the CSA and climate smart AIG activities successfully tested within pilot communities. In addition, while it is important to facilitate the development of wetland MPs, it would have been beneficial to also assist local stakeholders in the implementation of activities outlined in MPs.

The CIWP followed the same approach in all counties where climate smart AIG was introduced. Whereas due to differing socio-economic conditions the TE found in some, "better off communities", there was little interest in having access to microcredit funds or in establishing self-help groups or in micro businesses making handicrafts. In addition, the TE considers the allocation of 100M Rial (approximately USD \$235) to a microcredit fund insufficient to develop a small or micro business enterprise in rural areas.

It would have been instructive to pair implementation of CSA with climate smart AIG within one family household rather that in separate family households as implemented by the CIWP. This would permit measurement of the combined impact of CSA and AIG on reducing household pressures on land and water resources.

Recommendation 6. Combine CSA and climate smart AIG in individual family households to assess the synergistic impact of these activities on reducing household pressures on land and water resources

The CIWP successfully completed component 3 with the establishment of three functional CEPA centers and facilitation of 18 wetland management initiatives to promote advocacy and participation in wetland conservation with local communities in the Lake Umia basin and the Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetlands.

Rating: Satisfactory (S)

3.3.6 Country ownership

The CIWP project started in 2005 and the DoE Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Bureau has 18 years of experience preparing Wetland Management Plans (MP). To date DoE has prepared 46 MPs most of which have been approved by the Provincial Planning and Development Council. This level of effort on wetland conservation demonstrates a good level of country ownership by the led implementing agency for CIWP.

Participation in the introduction of CSA began in 2014, with nine years of pilot projects supported by the Government of Japan. The key implementation partners of DoE, MoJA, MoE



Quri Gol CEPA Centre Environment Day event collecting garbage

and PBO, have not yet taken ownership of the results and achievements of the pilot projects and initiated the basin-wide scaling up of CSA required to effectively protect and restore wetland ecosystems. Current government initiatives tend to follow sectoral planning priorities and there is a lack of coordination and cooperation among the key stakeholder needed to implement and scale-up wetland MPs.

The work on sustainable agriculture measures (i.e. CSA best practices) is the responsibility of MoJA. While MoJA at the Provincial and County level has been engaged in the CIWP pilot communities, to date, MoJA at the national level has not allocated a special budget line to support CSA replication and scaling up of the CIWP model in the provinces and counties where it is needed, suggesting a lack of ownership at the national level.

At the local level private sector extension services and participating local farmers have shown ownership of the CIWP model through their willingness to participate and implement water and agrochemical saving CSA methods and events hosted at CEPA centres.

3.3.7 Gender and Women's Empowerment

The CIWP implemented a gender responsive approach, promoting women's participation in all aspects of the project. In preparation for implementation of the CIWP a short (two page) gender scan was completed to identify opportunities to ensure the participation of women in project activities, to provide activities targeting women's economic empowerment and to include women in decision making roles.

The 14 member PMU included four women, one of whom was the National Project Manager. The one SRF indicator documenting the participation of local communities in livelihood activities included a target participation of 50% women (achievement was 49%). The CIWP collected and reported gender disaggregated data for events implemented by the project. The participation of women in climate smart AIG was the main mechanism targeting inclusion and economic empowerment of women. This activity included the establishment of women Self-Help Groups (SHG). With the assistance of project micro-finance SHGs created a SHG fund used to provide loans to members of the group. Loans are used to support AIG activities such as, processing of agricultural products, handicrafts, ecotourism, animal husbandry or poultry raising, etc.



Shadegan CEPA Centre hosting women's meeting on biodiversity

3.3.8 Cross-Cutting Issues

Gender as a cross-cutting issue is discussed separately in report Section 3.3.7.

The CIWP activities working with rural farm communities targets the poverty-environment nexus through the introduction of CSA that improves crop productivity (and income) for local farmers while reducing impacts on the environment through reduced water and agrochemical usage. The CIWP also introduced climate smart AIG activities that improve household income and contribute to a reduction in environmental impacts by adopting climate smart practices and the diversification of livelihoods dependent on agriculture.

The adoption of CSA and climate smart AIG address the need for climate change adaptation and contribute to greater resilience of rural households vulnerable to the increasing threats of climate change impacts, particularly drought. The main focus of CIWP CSA activities was the introduction of farm irrigation practices that reduce water usage in arid and semi-arid farmlands, which is a direct response to the biggest impact of climate change.

Implementation of the CIWP required capacity development of government, private sector and NGO implementing partners through training programs on facilitation, women's economic empowerment and specialized technical skills for CSA and climate smart AIG. It is anticipated the capacity development will continue to benefit rural communities through the ongoing work of the implementing partners.

3.3.9 Sustainability

Financial Sustainability

The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is facing significant financial challenges in all sectors due to international sanctions. In addition, government budget allocations do not align with the activities of the CIWP model as the priorities are economic development and food security (which is based on conventional models of agricultural development).

The TE noted that despite the government having allocated budget for MoJA to undertake agriculture-related field research and extension, since the beginning of the government fiscal year (April 2023) MoJA has not yet received any funds. Given the important role of MoJA supporting the CSA component of the CIWP model, implementation of CSA project activities could only be undertaken with outside donor funding.

The DoE has a dedicated budget for wetland restoration which can provide ongoing support to the implementation of wetland MPs. It was noted, however, that DoE committed 37% of the planned funding for direct support of CIWP (see report **Section 3.2.3**).
The CIWP has supported a Sustainability and Scalability Advisory Team, comprised of an international consultant, national consultant and the CIWP project coordinator that have been tasked with formulating CIWP's sustainability strategies and advocacy work at the national and provincial level. This includes efforts to secure the necessary funding that will enable MoJA to advance the implementation of CIWP's CSA model.

There are some examples of the private sector providing funds for wetland management through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. One example is a petrochemical corporation in Khuzestan province, which contributed to a World Wetland Day event in 2023 and another is a small private ecotourism firm located in Zarivar wetland, which has been actively involved with the local secretariat to conduct wetland conservation activities.

Recommendation 7. It is recommended that other financial resources for CIWP sustainability be explored, such as, involving the private sector in contract farming following CSA practices, establishment of a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) system to support local farmers that implement CSA practices or communities that that protect Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCA), or the engagement of the private sector in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding.

Given the lack of available government funding to implement CIWP model activities there are *severe risks to financial sustainability*.

Rating: Unlikely (U)

Socio-Economic Sustainability

When the CIWP model is implemented, the benefits gained by the women and men in the participating pilot communities is substantial, in terms of economic empowerment of women and men through climate smart AIG, and reduced water and agrochemical usage needs and increased crop yields from CSA. It should be noted there remain challenges in the marketing of products from climate smart AIG and increased crop yields, which, if overcome will increase the socio-economic benefits.

The realization of these social and economic benefits suggests there are **no risks to socio**economic sustainability where the CIWP model has been implemented.

Rating: Likely (L)

Institutional Framework and Governance Sustainability

The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be dominated by sector-based, top-down governance. Nonetheless, the CIWP has demonstrated that an inter-sectoral, locally appropriate, bottom-up development approach can be implemented.

The CIWP has developed capacity within private sector and CSO implementing partners to facilitate bottom-up community development and the skills needed to introduce CSA and climate smart AIG. Within the organizations participating in the CIWP this capacity is sustainable.

There currently is no agency or institution assigned with the authority to assume the critical leadership, facilitation and coordination functions of the PMU. An agency is needed to provide intersectoral government coordination at the national, provincial and county level to engage appropriate government partners in various CIWP model implementation activities and to manage finances, contracting and capacity development of private sector and CSO partners that facilitate and introduce CSA and climate smart AIG at the community level.

Recommendation 8. It is recommended that the "High Council for Environment" which includes key stakeholders, DoE, MoJA and MoE, continue to provide financial support of the CIWP model at the national level with implementation led by the "Planning and Development Councils" operating under the management of the State Governor at the provincial level and "Planning Committees" operating under the management of the County Governor at the county level. A decentralized approach that engages local communities ensures locally appropriate, CSA and climate smart AIG are adopted, for greater likelihood of sustainability.

Without a process in place to establish an agency or institution to take over the functions of the PMU there are *significant risks to institutional framework and governance sustainability*.

Rating: Moderately Unlikely (MU)

Environmental Sustainability

The arid and semi-arid environments within the project areas of the Islamic Republic of Iran present significant challenges to rural economic development and to the conservation of wetlands, both of which are competing for limited water resources and facing increasing impacts from climate change.

Basin-wide data on the surface and ground water resources are not readily available (i.e. limited data is collected, analyzed, and made available in an accessible format) to inform sustainable environmental planning of the water needed for human uses (agriculture, industry, urban, energy production, recreation, etc.) and water needed to sustain and protect fragile ecosystems, particularly wetlands.

While the CIWP promotes an ecosystem-based wetland management approach, to date activities have focused on agriculture located in downstream areas close to wetlands, whereas sustainable land use within upstream areas of wetland basins could also be targeted.

In addition, to date there has not been a calculation of the positive impact on water resources that could potentially result from basin-wide adoption of CIWP CSA practices in all agricultural operations. As such there is uncertainty regarding the environmental sustainability of the CIWP model. There is the possibility that even with adoption of CIWP CSA practices, basin-wide water consumption for agriculture may not sustainable over the long term, particularly when water saved in one area is used to expand agriculture in another area.

While the environmental sustainability of CSA and AIG in CIWP pilot communities may be moderately likely, there are *significant risks to environmental sustainability* of the wetland basin over the long term.

Rating: Moderately Unlikely (MU)

Overall Likelihood of Sustainability

The TE analysis of sustainability has been undertaken in the context of the long term goal of the ToC, the achievement of which is dependent on the scaling-up of the CIWP model within all areas of the CIWP wetland basins, whereby climate resilient livelihoods are established and water saving practices led to the restoration of degraded wetlands.

Whereas the overall sustainability of the CIWP in the context of pilot communities may be considered to have moderate risks to sustainability, scaling-up the CIWP within all areas of the wetland basins is considered to have *significant risk to overall sustainability* due to the financial, institutional and governance and environmental risks.

Rating: Moderately Unlikely (MU)

4 Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

4.1 Main Findings

The CIWP PMU has successfully implemented a model of intersectoral management of wetland basins which, within the selected pilot villages, implemented CSA practices that reduced water and agrochemical usage and increased crop productivity, and introduced climate smart AIG diversified livelihoods that improved the socio-economic situation of rural communities, especially women while potentially reducing human land use pressures.

While the CIWP CSA has recorded a reduction of water usage among participating farmers in pilot villages (average over three years 27.5% reduction) the CIWP did not include monitoring beyond the pilot farms to determine if the saved water contributed to wetland restoration or if it may have been used for human purposes (agriculture, consumption, industry, etc.).

Given the general interest in water saving and the restoration of wetlands that are known to be drying up it is unfortunate that the project has not provided a volumetric measure of how much water has been saved through the adopting of CSA and climate smart AIG within the pilot communities. If available, this information could be used to calculate the potential volume of water returned to restore degraded wetlands if the CIWP model was applied basin-wide.

While the CIWP is currently developing a sustainability / scaling-up strategy to be implemented at project closure, the TE assessment of sustainability (see **Section 3.3.9**) has identified significant concerns regarding the financial, institutional and environmental sustainability of the required scaling-up of the CIWP model. In particular, the limited financial resources of the government, the ongoing top-down, sectoral approach to governance and the increasing demands on water used to sustain human livelihoods in the face of increasing impacts from climate change.

4.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are included with justification in the body of the report section as noted in the table below. The lead entity responsible for implementation of each recommendation is also noted. The time frames identified for implementation recognize the CIWP project will be closing in February, 2024 and there will be limited opportunities for the CIWP PMU to act on recommendations. Those recommendations with a time frame of 0 to 3 months are intended to be addressed as a part of project closure. Recommendations with longer time frames are intended to be addressed by the entity responsible within the respective government ministries as part of ongoing implementation of the CIWP model.

Recommendations	Entity Responsible	Time Frame	Justification
Wetland Management			
Recommendation 1: Develop a sustainability and scalability plan that outlines a five-year plan to scale- up the CIWP model. The plan should include a lead coordinating agency based on the CIWP National Project Management team and key partner (e.g. MoE, MoJA, etc.) it should also identify a budget and funding sources to achieve basin-wide implementation of the CIWP model.	CIWP	0-3 months	Section 3.1.1

Recommendations	Entity Responsible	Time Frame	Justification
Recommendation 3. The Theory of Change should incorporate outcomes and outputs that engage all water users and potential water polluters within target wetland basins (e.g. industrial users, urban users, etc.) to develop and implement climate smart activities aimed at reducing water usage and potential sources of pollution as part of the long goal to conserve fragile wetlands and wetland biodiversity.	CIWP	0-3 months	Section 3.1.1
Recommendation 6. Combine CSA and climate smart AIG in individual family households to assess the synergistic impact of these activities on reducing household pressures on land and water resources	DoE and MoJa	3-24 months	Section 3.3.5
Recommendation 8. It is recommended that the "High Council for Environment" which includes key stakeholders, DoE, MoJA and MoE, continue to provide financial support of the CIWP model at the national level with implementation led by the "Planning and Development Councils" operating under the management of the State Governor at the provincial level and "Planning Committees" operating under the management of the County Governor at the county level. A decentralized approach that engages local communities ensures locally appropriate, CSA and climate smart AIG are adopted, for greater likelihood of sustainability.	DoE	3-24 months	Section 3.3.9
Monitoring and Evaluation			
Recommendation 2: Complete a comprehensive water balance of target wetland basins, compiling data on the available surface and groundwater resources, the quantity of water diverted to human uses and the quantity of water required to sustain wetlands. The water balance should incorporate the predicted future impacts of climate change. Based on the water balance determine if basin-wide adoption of the CIWP model can achieve sustainable livelihoods of local communities and the long conservation of wetlands and wetland biodiversity.	DoE	3-24 months	Section 3.1.1
Recommendation 5: Monitoring and evaluation of water and agrochemical usage should determine if farmers are using "saved" water and agrochemicals to expand the area under cultivation.	MoJA	3-12 months	Section 3.3.1
Project Management and Implementation			
Recommendation 4. To promote an efficient, effective and more sustainable up approach to development, the Project Management Unit should follow a bottom-up approach, whereby PMU staff are located in close proximity to the sites where project activities are implemented.	DoE	3-24 months	Section 3.2.5

Recommendations	Entity Responsible	Time Frame	Justification
Project Financing			
Recommendation 7. It is recommended that other financial resources for CIWP sustainability be explored, such as, involving the private sector in contract farming following CSA practices, establishment of a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) system to support local farmers that implement CSA practices or communities that that protect Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCA), or the engagement of the private sector in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding.	DoE and MoJA	3-24 months	Section 3.3.9

4.3 Lessons Learned

- 1. A development project bringing innovation to rural communities must always start by building trust between the implementing stakeholders and the rural population (beneficiaries). Where there is a history of a lack of trust between some stakeholders and the rural population, the presence of an international donor (Government of Japan) and a credible international development agency (UNDP) facilitates the building of trust needed for effective project implementation to proceed.
- 2. The CIWP suffered from the misconception that one of the outcomes of the project was, restoration of degraded wetlands in the wetland basins where the project was implemented. The CIWP worked in very few pilot villages within the wetland basins, and within the CIWP pilot villages only 5% to 20% of households (farmers) participated in CSA and climate smart AIG activities. As such, if successful the best CIWP could do would be to demonstrate the possibility of restoring wetlands if all communities in the wetland basin adopted similar CSA and climate smart AIG. To address this misconception UNDP engaged a communication specialist to work with the CIWP PMU to develop communication materials which could effectively communicate the successes of the CIWP.
- 3. To improve rural livelihoods with pilot communities and reduce pressure on land and water resources, the CIWP team used a social mobilization and microfinance approach together with vocational training courses based on the interest of the pilot communities. After developing micro and small business at household level, the need for marketing was identified to successfully sell products. The CIWP team then provided training courses on product branding, packaging and marketing. Marketing included digital marketing using social media and platforms like DigiKala and BaSalaam websites.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference for Terminal Evaluation



Terms of Reference (ToR) Providing International Consultancy for Terminal Evaluation of "The Project for Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other Wetlands" in Islamic Republic of Iran (Special component of UNDP's Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project- Phase 3) (2021-2024)

Background

Conservation of Iranian Wetland Project (CIWP) is an intervention to alleviate and resolve threats and issues endangering wetlands in Iran through smart and innovative solutions. The Project set off its mission as a joint effort by the Department of Environment (DoE), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) in 2005, known as *Phase I*. Initially and during *Phase* I, the project objective was to systematically remove or substantially mitigate factors threatening biodiversity of selected sites. The project aimed to ensure that the lessons learned through these sites are absorbed within wetland-protected area management systems throughout Iran and most notably at a set of target replication sites. After the successful completion of *Phase I* in 2013, DoE and UNDP started a scale-up phase, i.e., *Phase II*, to sustain the achievements of CIWP throughout the country.

Shortly after this fresh start, and with the financial contribution from the Government of Japan, a new component known as "Modelling Local Community Participation in Restoration of Lake Urmia through Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation" was added to CIWP in 2014 continuing for seven phases until September 2021 (shortly, phases *I* to *VII* of the Lake Urmia Project).

Currently, in Phase *III* (2022-2025), CIWP builds on the successes of the previous phases since 2005, during which the ecosystem-based management approach was introduced and partly implemented for several wetlands. Valuable achievements of the project during previous phases include preparation of integrated Management Plans (MPs) for wetlands; establishment of the implementation structures; strengthening the wetland-related legislation, laws, and capacities at the national level; and awareness raising of the stakeholders and the public on the values of the wetlands. This will contribute to mainstreaming and replicating the project's model in other Iranian wetlands and sustainable wetland management using innovative participatory approaches.

Besides, upon the achievements of phases *I* to *VII* of the LU Project funded by Japan Supplementary Budget (JSB), a joint project titled "The Project for Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other Wetlands" was approved to be funded by the Government of Japan through Grant Aid funding mechanism. This new project was built on achievements of the previous phase of CIWP (Phase II) to last for three more years with the aim to sustain the results of previous work in Lake Urmia Basin and replicate the experience in two other wetland sites of the country, including Bakhtegan Wetland in Fars Province and Shadegan Wetland in Khuzestan Province.

The overall vision is that the favourable condition of Iranian Wetlands provides the current and future generations the opportunity to use wetland benefits sustainably. The ultimate goal of CIWP Phase III has been application of the ecosystem approach in wetland basins to enhance the economic situation and well-being of local communities and participatory conservation of wetlands along with identifying and practicing new approaches or complementary tools, also to strengthen sustainable management of natural resources in the fragile ecosystems of Iran, while enhancing the economic and livelihood options of communities dependent on such ecosystems - by introducing climate-smart practices, drawing on the past achievements in the Lake Urmia Basin implemented under Phases I and II of CIWP. Drawing on the capacity built and the lessons learnt during seven phases of the project implementation in Lake

Urmia Basin, this project effectively contributes to sustaining the previous achievements of the project in LU and replicating the experience in other wetland areas in Iran.

The project has achieved significant results addressing empowerment of women and social inclusion, through the training of 800 rural women to take role in Lake Urmia restoration. Additionally, 39 micro-credit funds and alternative livelihood have been established by women groups. Over 700 rural women have been involved in green jobs. This engagement has fostered enhanced self-confidence and renewed sense of identity among rural women.

Local community representatives, local/provincial DoE/national DoE, other government entities at various levels, and UNDP are among the key stakeholders of the project. Local communities living in villages located in Lake Urmia, Shadegan and Bakhtegan ecological zones are the main intended beneficiaries of the project. Besides, experts and engineers from the government (MoJA, DoE and Regional Water Authorities) and the private sector are also among the major beneficiaries of this project.

This evaluation aims to capture lessons learned, generate evidence, and develop knowledge regarding effective and ineffective practices to guide future planning and taking informed strategic planning and management decisions. The consultations with stakeholders will also include discussions focused on "sustainability and scalability"⁵. Furthermore, the evaluation will assess women's economic empowerment and social inclusion aspects, offering evidence-based findings and recommendations to convey valuable lessons learned that can lay the groundwork for future development. Additionally, this evaluation will help to assess transparency and accountability throughout the project implementation.

The evaluation results will provide a deeper understanding of the project's achievements, challenges, and impacts (supported by evidence-based findings and recommendations) for the stakeholders including UNDP, the Department of Environment (DoE), CIWP Team, and the government of Japan as the donor.

CIWP's current programme

ClWP's "The Project for Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other Wetlands" project focuses on three components.

Component 1: Fragile wetland ecosystems of Iran are well-managed using an innovative framework to integrated basin-management

This component targets three main outputs:

- I. Developing and implementing wetland management action plans
- II. Increasing Hectarage of fragile ecosystems
- III. Equipping and operationalizing the monitoring stations

Component 2: Livelihood options of local communities are enhanced through more sustainable and 'climate-smart' practices

This component targets three main outputs:

- I. Increasing the number of local communities benefiting from livelihood initiatives
- II. Decreasing water and agrochemical usage
- III. Implementing climate-smart practices in new pilot sites

<u>Component 3</u>: Engagement of local communities in wetland management is enhanced through community mobilization and public awareness

This component targets on two main outputs:

- I. Establishing and functionalizing CEPA centers
- II. Implementing wetland management initiative by the local community

Based on defined components, Table 1 shows the budget break down.

⁵ The project will develop Sustainability and Scalability Strategy and Action Plan which will be built on the findings of this Terminal Evaluation.

Break Down	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Total	Percentage
Technical Assistance and Services	320,260.50	366,518.40	197,260.50	884,039.40	30 %
Equipment and Goods	320,260.50	274,888.80	236,712.60	831,861.90	28 %
Construction	137,254.50	137,444.40	197,260.50	471,959.40	16 %
Communication	91,503.00	91,629.60	78,904.20	262,036.80	9 %
Logistics	45,751.50	45,814.80	78,904.20	170,470.50	6 %
General Management Support				220,022.00	8 %
Direct Project Costs (DPC)	38,971.80	47,632.20	43,302.00	129,906.00	4 %
RC Levy				29,703.00	1 %
Total	954,001.80	963,928.20	832,344.00	2,999,999.00	

Table 1. Project's budget breakdown

Alignment with national and international policies

The strategies outlined are strongly in line with the national macro-policies for environment endorsed by the I.R. Iran's Supreme Leader and addressed in the fifth 5-year national socio-economic development plans (Articles 187,191 and 193).

The strategies have a strong linkage with the provisions in the Law of Conservation, Restoration, and Management of the Iranian Wetlands (issued on May 2017).

Also, the 6th National Development Plan includes several sections which are directly and indirectly related to project outputs and provides a good basis for further linkages of planned and ongoing project activities with resources at the national level. Articles 35-37 of this plan focus on water-related issues including increase in water efficiency, Integrated Water Resources Management, appropriate crop patterns, and article 38 addresses implementation of National Wetlands Conservation Strategy and Action Plan.

The CIWP phase III will constitute a major part of the I.R. of Iran's efforts to fulfill its national and international commitments to Iranian wetlands including Ramsar Sites conservation.

The Project is also in line with the following:

Sustainable Development Goals:

- Sustainable Development Goals 15, Life on Land: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Sustainable Development Goals 13, Climate Action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

UNDP 2022-2025 Strategic Plan: Signature solution 4, Result 4.1: "Natural resources protected and managed to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods ".

UNSDCF 2023-2027, Outcome 3: "By 2027, environmental conservation and integrated natural resource management are enhanced, and the capacity to address climate change challenges is strengthened.", Intermediate Outcome 3.2 "Effective management of habitats and conservation of biodiversity support the health and sustainable services of ecosystems"

UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD 2023-2027): Outcome 3.2 "Biodiversity conservation is reflected in the

relevant sectoral directives and action plans of the Government".

Table 2. Project Summary			
PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMA Project/outcome title	ATION		
Atlas ID/Quantum Award ID	The Project for Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Lake Urmia and other wetlands 00128285		
	00120205		
Corporate outcome and output	Sustainable Development Goals 15, Life on Land: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss		
	Sustainable Development Goals action to combat climate change a	13, Climate Action: Take urgent and its impacts	
	UNDP Country Programme Docu 3.2 "Biodiversity conservation is directives and action plans of the	ments, CPD 2023-2027: Outcome s reflected in the relevant sectoral Government".	
	UNSDCF 2023-2027, Outcome 3: "By 2027, environmental conservation and integrated natural resource management are enhanced, and the capacity to address climate change challenges is strengthened."; Intermediate Outcome 3.2 "Effective management of habitats and conservation of biodiversity support the health and sustainable services of ecosystems" UNDP 2022-2025 Strategic Plan: Signature solution 4, Result 4.1: "Natural resources protected and managed to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods "		
Country	Ira	n	
Region	Asia February	a and Pacific (REAP) 17,2021	
Date project document signed	Start	Planned end	
Project dates	25 March 2021	29 Feb 2024	
Project budget	3'980'000 USD		
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	2'683'00	0 USD	
Funding source	Government of Japan, Gov	vernment of Iran, UNDP	
Implementing party	DOE		

1. Evaluation Purpose, Scope, and Objectives

This evaluation aims to discuss opportunities and explore the elements related to "sustainability and scalability" within the project which will feed into the development of the project's Sustainability and Scalability Strategy and Action Plan. One of the primary goals of this terminal evaluation is to gather compelling evidence and generate a comprehensive knowledge product that captures both effective and ineffective practices, along with the underlying reasons behind them. The ultimate objective is to facilitate the dissemination of project results and to provide guidance in making informed management decisions and strategic planning for future projects of a similar nature. In addition, the evaluation should provide evidence-based findings and recommendations that highlight valuable lessons learned in the areas of women's economic empowerment, and social inclusion. These findings will serve as a solid foundation for future development initiatives. Furthermore, this evaluation needs to assess transparency and accountability throughout the project implementation.

The evaluation results will assist UNDP and Department Of Environment Islamic Republic of Iran (DOE) in line with the government of Japan to make informed management decisions and plan strategically for future same projects. The primary audiences of this evaluation are UNDP, DoE,

CIWP Team and the government of Japan as the donor. Secondary audiences are but not limited to national and subnational government institutions, academia, researchers, and local communities.

The terminal evaluation will cover the full scope of the project, including the activities at the component and output levels covering from 2021 to 2024. It should be noted that the outputs and outcomes of "Modelling Local Community Participation in Restoration of Lake Urmia through Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation" component added to CIWP in 2014 and continued for seven years until September 2021 (CIWP Phase II) which can be included in the scope of the evaluation if required for better understanding and recording the project results.

2. Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions

The evaluation will answer four broad questions as follows:

- 1. What were the key factors, including the implemented strategies and practices, that have either facilitated or hindered the achievement of the intended results related to environmental management, sustainable livelihoods, and local community engagement in Lake Urmia, Shadegan, and Bakhtegan Wetlands?
- 2. What are the main lessons learned from the implementation of "Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project-Phase 3" project - and, based on such experience, what are the main recommendations that should serve as a guide or reference for making informed management decisions for future projects of a similar nature?
- 3. To what extent has the project incorporated economic empowerment of women, social inclusion, and other cross-cutting issues? What are the main achievements and lessons learned, and based on such experience, what are the main recommendations that should guide future developments in these areas?
- 4. To what extent has the project achieved sustainability, and ensured the continuation of the impacts beyond the project's lifespan? and what are the key risks that may jeopardize the project's sustainability?

In connection to the above broad questions, the evaluation is expected to produce answers surrounding the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. In addition, the evaluation will assess how the intervention sought to economic empowerment of women, and social inclusion in development efforts. Guiding questions are presented under each of these headings:

Relevance

- 1. Was the Project relevant, appropriate and strategic to LU, Bakhtegan and Shadegan restoration goals and challenges with focus to local community participation in wetlands restoration?
- 2. Was the Project relevant, appropriate and strategic to the mandate, strategy, functions, roles, and responsibility of the UNDP, the Department of Environment (DOE), and the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad (MoJA) as the major stakeholders of the Project and key actors within those institutions?

- 3. Was the Project relevant, appropriate and strategic to the international and national strategic/upper-hand documents, e.g., SDGs, UNDAF, UNDP CPD, and UNDP Strategic Plan?
- 4. How private sector and local cooperatives were engaged in the process?

5. How was the local community participation and ownership in the Project?

Effectiveness

- 6. How effectively has the project aligned its activities and interventions with the intended theory of change?
- 7. Were there any lessons learned, failures/lost opportunities? What might have been done better or differently?
- 8. How well the Project collaborated with UNDP, DoE, the donor, and the other main stakeholders?
- 9. How did the Project deal with unestimated and risks?
- 10. Were the resources (time, funding, human resources) sufficient?
- 11. Which areas hold the greatest relevance and strategic importance for scaling up the project going forward?

Efficiency

- 12. Were the outputs achieved in a timely manner?
- 13. Were the resources utilized in the best way possible?
- 14. Is the result-based management system operating effectively and is monitoring data informing management decision making?
- 15. How well does the workflow between the Project and local implementing partners perform? Sustainability
- 16. To what extent will targeted men, women and vulnerable people benefit from the project interventions after project conclusion?
- 17. Were the actions and results owned by the local partners and stakeholders?
- 18. Was the capacity (individuals, institution, and system) built through the actions of the Project?
- 19. Did the Project contribute to sustainable management of LU and its satellite wetlands, Bakhtegan and Shadegan Wetlands?
- 20. <u>Socio-economic risks to sustainability</u>: Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of the Project outcomes? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the Project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?
- 21. Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it up in future?
- 22. Institutional framework and coordination mechanisms and risks to sustainability: Do the legal frameworks, policies, management structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.
- 23. <u>Environmental risks to sustainability</u>: Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

Project design

- 24. Was the context, problem, needs and priorities well analyzed while designing the Project?
- 25. Was the Theory of Change (ToC) defined in the project document in a detailed and strategic manner?
- 26. Were there clear objectives and strategy?
- 27. Were there clear baselines indicators and/or benchmark for performance?

- 28. Was the process of project design sufficiently participatory? Was there any impact of the process?
- 29. Were there coherence and complementarity by the Project to the country's wetland conservation efforts by the DOE and its key players within this institution?
- 30. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- 31. Evaluate the extent to which relevant women economic empowerment and social inclusion aspects were considered in the project design.

Project management, Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management arrangements:

- 32. Evaluate overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- 33. Evaluate the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.

Project-level work planning, monitoring and evaluation systems:

- 34. Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- 35. Evaluate the monitoring tools currently being used; Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- 36. Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

Stakeholder engagement:

- 37. <u>Project management</u>: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and secondary stakeholders?
- 38. <u>Participation and country-driven processes</u>: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports effective project implementation?
- 39. <u>Participation and public awareness</u>: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

Communications:

40. Review internal project communication with stakeholders; Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?

Economic Empowerment of Women and Social Inclusion

- 41. To what extent have the economic empowerment of women and social inclusion been addressed in the project design, implementation, and reporting? What are the key achievements?
- 42. In what way could economic empowerment of women and social inclusion be enhanced in future similar projects?

Progress Towards Results Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

43. Review and evaluate the log-frame indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "Not on target to be achieved" (red). If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement

Table 3. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcom	mes against End-of-project Targets
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Indicator ⁶	Baselin Level ⁷	Level in 1 st PIR (self- reported)	Midter m Target ⁸	End- of- project Target	Midterm Level & Assessmen t ⁹	Achieveme nt Rating ¹⁰	Justificati on for Rating
Indicator							
(11 applicable):							
appireacte).							
Indicator 1:							
Indicator 2:							
Indicator 3:							
Indicator 4:							
Etc.							
	Indicator ⁶ Indicator (if applicable): Indicator 1: Indicator 2: Indicator 3: Indicator 4: Etc.	Indicator6Baselin Level7Indicator (if applicable):	Indicator6Baselin Level7Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)Indicator (if applicable):-Indicator 1:-Indicator 2:-Indicator 3:-Indicator 4:-EtcIndicator 4:-	Indicator6Baselin Baselin Level7Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)Midter m Target8Indicator (if applicable):Indicator 1: Indicator 2:Indicator 3: Indicator 4:Indicator 4: EtcIndicator 4: Indicator 4:Indicator 4: Indicator 4:	Indicator6Baselin Level7Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)Midter m Target8End- of- project Target1Indicator (if applicable):	Indicator6Baselin Level7Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)Midter m Target8End- of- project TargetMidterm Level & Assessmen t9Indicator (if applicable):	Indicator6Baselin Level7Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)Midter m Target8End- of- project TargetMidterm Level & Assessmen t9Achieveme nt Rating10Indicator (if applicable):

Indicator Assessment Key

Green - Ashieved	Yellow = On target to be	Red = Not on target to be
Green – Achieved	achieved	achieved

This work will include reference to an ecosystem approach at the core of the project design. The Final Evaluation should be aligned with the principles established in UNDP's <u>Evaluation Policy</u> and the UN Evaluation Group's <u>Norms and Standards for Evaluation</u>.

3. <u>Methodology and approaches</u>

Project Terminal Evaluation methodology will adhere to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards. The evaluation will be carried out by an independent evaluation team. The evaluation team should adopt an integrated approach involving a combination of data collection and

⁶ Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards

⁷ Populate with data from the Project Document

⁸ If available

⁹ Colour code this column only

¹⁰ Use the 6-point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

analysis tools to generate concrete evidence to substantiate all findings. Evidence obtained and used to assess the results of UNDP support should be triangulated from a variety of sources, including verifiable data on indicator achievement, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys and site visits where/when possible. It is expected that the evaluation methodology will comprise of the following elements:

- Review Documents (Desk review); the team of evaluators is expected to review relevant documents including ProDoc, progress reports, any other substantive reports generated during the life of the Project; Quantitative data is expected to be obtained from these reports to a very large extent. Where available, disaggregated data (gender, youth, etc.) to be studied during desk review.
- Key informative interviews with the DOE, MoJA and other national and local key stakeholders as well as the Donor (Government of Japan) and other assistance providers/partners, and UNDP Senior Management, Programme Unit and Project Team in DoE, local communities and beneficiaries;
- Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP Team and project technical consultants as needed.
- Consultations with beneficiaries through interviews and/ or focus group discussions; the CO
 will assist the team of consultants to connect with beneficiaries. The team of evaluators will
 look for project results through interviews including gender mainstreaming and social
 inclusion.
- Survey and/ or questionnaires where appropriate; surveys and questionnaires will be used by evaluators to get a better understanding of the programme level results including gender equality and social inclusion.
- Interviews with partners and stakeholders, government officials, service providers, etc.

The evaluation is expected to use a variety of data sources, primary, secondary, qualitative, quantitative, etc. to be extracted through surveys, storytelling, focus group discussions, face to face interviews, participatory methods, desk reviews, etc. conducted with a variety of partners. Consultants can collect qualitative data/information through interview and consultations with national and local partners as well as beneficiaries. Targeted surveys and questionnaires will also be used to both collect data (both quantitative and qualitative) and triangulate collected data/information. Where available/possible disaggregated data will be populated (on gender, youth, etc.) through different methods elaborated above. A transparent and participatory multi-stakeholder approach should be followed for data collection from government partners, community members, private sector, etc. Evidence will be provided for every claim generated by the evaluation and data will be triangulated to ensure validity. An evaluation matrix or other methods can be used to map the data and triangulate the available evidence. In line with the UNDP's women economic empowerment strategy, gender disaggregation of data is a key element of all UNDP's interventions and data collected for the evaluation will be disaggregated by gender, to the possible extent. During the implementation of the contract, the consultant will report to the UNDP Programme Team, who will provide guidance and ensure satisfactory completion of final evaluation deliverables. There will be close coordination with the Project Team who will assist in connecting the consultant with senior management, development partners, beneficiaries and key stakeholders. In addition, the Project staff will provide key project documentation prior to fieldwork.

4. Duration of work

The detailed schedule of the evaluation and length of the assignment will be discussed with the Consultant prior to the assignment. The estimated duration of the Consultants' assignment is up to two months. The contract shall commence on early September 2023. Please see the detailed timeline in Evaluation arrangements section.

5. Location

Home-based. (The consultant maybe required to travel to Iran for oversite of the evaluation, however, the

details will be discussed prior to contract commencement.)

The UNDP office as well as the project's office in Department of Environment is located in Tehran, Iran. The provincial sites of the project are Lake Urmia, Shadegan and Bakhtegan Wetlands located at West Azerbaijan, East Azerbaijan, Fars and Khuzestan Provinces, Iran.

6. Evaluation products (deliverables)

The consultant is expected to deliver the following outputs:

- Evaluation Inception report (10-15 Pages): on proposed evaluation methodology, work plan and proposed structure of the report; The inception report, containing a succinct underpinning theory of change, and evaluation methodology should be carried out following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP and the project team and desk review. The inception report should include an evaluation matrix presenting the evaluation questions, data sources, data collection, analysis tools and methods to be used. The inception report should detail the specific timing for evaluation activities and deliverables and propose specific site visits and stakeholders to be interviewed (this element can be shared with UNDP well in advance). The inception report should be endorsed by UNDP in consultation with the relevant government partners before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits). The inception report will be reviewed by Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNDP Regional Focal Point and UNDP Country Office(See Annex E for the template)
- Draft evaluation report (Max 30 pages including executive summary (3-4 pages), excluding annexes): UNDP and other designated government representative and key stakeholders in the evaluation, including the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub, will review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluator within an agreed period of time, addressing the content required (as agreed in the TOR and inception report) and quality criteria as outlined in these guidelines
- Final evaluation report: including a 4 pages' executive summary and issues raised during the draft presentation. The evaluation report needs to answer all evaluation questions, well describe the research approach and methodology, address women economic empowerment and social inclusion issues, findings need to be supported by evidence, and the recommendations drawn must be relative to the findings. The Executive summary should include a brief programme description, purpose and objective of the evaluation, and summarize the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

	Output	Target Date
1	Inception report on proposed evaluation methodology, work plan and proposed structure of the report in line with the template agreed with UNDP	14 September 2023
2	A draft preliminary evaluation report and presentation, to be presented at a debriefing meeting with the CIWP and UNDP and partners in line with the template agreed is submitted and accepted and certified by UNDP	5 October 2023
3	Final evaluation report in line with the template agreed with UNDP submitted to and accepted and certified by UNDP	31 October 2023

Table 4. The expected outputs with the target dates

7. <u>Evaluation team composition/ supervision and verification</u>

The international consultant will work closely with a national consultant and will act as the team leader and responsible for finalizing the reports. The national consultant will assist the international consultant in all terminal evaluation processes including preparation, mission, and reporting phases

The international consultant will work under the direct supervision of the assigned UNDP Project Officer and collaboration of CIWP's National Project Manager and in a team with a national consultant to deliver the required tasks.

8. <u>Roles and Responsibilities</u>

The international consultant will work closely in a team with a national consultant. He/she will be the team leader and will be responsible for the following:

S/he has overall responsibility for conducting the terminal evaluation and providing guidance and leadership to the national consultant. In consultation with the national consultant, s/he will be responsible for developing a methodology for the assignment that reflects best practices and encourages the use of a participatory and consultative approach as well as delivering the required deliverables to meet the objective of the assignment. S/he will lead the preparation and revision of the draft and final reports, ensuring the assignments have been completed in the agreed timeframe.

S/he has responsibilities as follows:

- Leading the documentation review and framing of evaluation questions;
- Leading the design of monitoring and evaluation questions and field verification tools;
- Ensure efficient division of tasks between evaluation team members;
- Leading the evaluation team in planning, execution and reporting;
- Incorporating the use of best practice with respect to evaluation methodologies;
- Responsible for and leading the drafting of inception report, finalization/quality control of the evaluation report including timely submission and adjustment;
- Leading the kick-off meeting and debriefing meetings on behalf of the evaluation team with UNDP and stakeholders;

9. <u>Required Qualifications Mandatory requirements:</u>

- Minimum Master's university degree in natural resource management or environment, or any relevant fields;
- Equal or more than 7 years of relevant professional experience in undertaking evaluation in the development sector;
- Having prior experience in including Gender mainstreaming aspects in evaluations
- · Past experiences with result-based management evaluation methodologies.
- Minimum 5 years of experience in international development corporation;
- Fluency in English, both written and spoken;
- Competent in usage of MS Office programmes (MS Word, Excel, Power point);
- Experience in working in Asia/ Middle East (experience in Iran will be an asset);

Desirable experience:

- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.
- Strong knowledge of UNDP and its working approaches including partnership approaches with Government, civil society and community groups;
- Technical knowledge and experience as demonstrated in previous developed documents in any other crosscutting areas is an advantage.

Table 5. Weight and Score

Required Qualification	Weight	Score
Mandatory requirements:	I	L
Minimum Master's university degree in natural resource management or environment, or any relevant fields;	 Master's degree - 80% PhD degree- 90% Degree in exact mentioned fields - +10% 	30
Equal or more than 7 years of relevant professional experience in undertaking evaluation in the development sector;	 Seven years of experience - 90% More than seven years of experience- 100% 	50
Having prior experience in including Gender mainstreaming aspects in evaluations	 One prior evaluation report - 90% More than one prior evaluation report- 100% Please attach a sample previous report 	35
Past experiences with result- based management evaluation methodologies.	 2<a<3 or="" project<br="" years="">exp- 80%</a<3> 3<a<5 or="" project<br="" years="">exp- 90%</a<5> more than 5 years or project exp-100% 	50
Experience in working in Asia/ Middle East (experience in Iran will be an asset);	 1<a<2 or="" project<br="" years="">exp -60%</a<2> 2<a<3 or="" project<br="" years="">exp- 70%</a<3> more than 3 years or project exp- 80% Experience in Iran- +20% 	45
Minimum 5 years of experience in international development corporation;	 five years exp-80% more than 5 years exp- 100% 	25
Fluency in English written; (self-examination to be chosen by the candidate themselves)	 No proficiency Elementary proficiency Limited working proficiency Professional working proficiency Full professional proficiency In addition, one of the submitted 	30

	reports would be subject to review fo the writing quality	r
Competent in usage of MS Office programmes (MS Word, Excel, Power point); (self-examination to be chosen by the candidate themselves)	 No proficiency Elementary proficiency Limited working proficiency Professional working proficiency Full professional proficiency 	10
Desirable Qualifications		
Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.	 One prior experience within UN system- 90% More than one prio experience within UN system- 100% 	e 10 r N
Strong knowledge of UNDP and its working approaches including partnership approaches with Government, civil society and community groups;	 One prior experience - 90% More than one prio experience - 100% 	6 10 r
Technical knowledge and experience as demonstrated in previous developed documents in any other cross-cutting areas is an advantage	 Yes- 100% No- 0% 	5
Table 6. Scoring system for evaluat	ion of Proposal & Methodology:	
Scoring system for evaluation of Pr	oposal & Methodology	
Evaluated Criteria		Scoring Scale %
The response is comprehensive and detailed		100
The response is sufficient, relevant, however not comprehensive		80
The response is sufficient and relevant		60
The response is not sufficient but is	40	
the response is insufficient and irrel	levant	10
no answer submitted		0

10. Application submission process and criteria for selection

The selection process will be carried out in the following manner:

- a) Qualifications and technical proposal will be weighted at 70% based on the following criteria.
- b) Financial proposal will be weighted at 30%.

The evaluation method is cumulative analysis (70/30).

Evaluation Composition	Maximum	obtainable
	score	
Technical review of the proposal	300	
Methodology	200	
Challenges and solutions	110	
Timeline	90	
Financial proposal	300	
Total	1000	

Table 7. Evaluation Composition (Maximum obtainable score)

11. Payment terms

In full consideration for the services performed by the contractor under the terms of this contract, the UNDP shall pay the contractor the total agreed and contracted amount in three installments after completion of the work and finalization and approval of the evaluation report.

Table 8. Payment term

	Output	% of Payment	Target Date
1	Inception report on proposed evaluation methodology, work plan and proposed structure of the report	20%	14 September 2023
2	A draft preliminary evaluation report and presentation, to be presented at a debriefing meeting with the CIWP and UNDP and partners	50%	15 October 2023
3	Final evaluation report	30%	29October 2023
тот	AL:	100%	

- Consultant shall not do any work, provide any equipment, materials and supplies or perform any other services which may result in any cost in excess of the contract's amount.
- The offer shall be submitted in EUR and the contract is also issued in EUR. However, for those consultants who are residing in Iran, the payment can be only made in Iranian Rial. Therefore, the request for payment/invoice shall be submitted in Iranian Rial using the UN official exchange rate of the day of request.
- The risks in fluctuations due to changes in the official exchange rate rests solely with the contractor -i.e., risks associated with currency appreciation or depreciation are expected to be factored in by the contractor when submitting an offer. For using UN Official Exchange Rate, please refer to https://treasury.un.org/operationalrates/default.php.
- Communication costs, costs of typing and preparing the soft and hard copies of documents and any other relevant costs regarding this activity shall be included in the financial proposal.
- The travel costs to join duty station and repatriation, if applicable, shall be included in the financial proposal.
- Upon receiving and verification of deliverables, payments will be transferred by UNDP to the

account number of the consultant introduced through an official letter.

- Payments will be made according to UNDP regulations as explained in the contract documents.
- Payments will be made to the consultant based on invoices submitted by the consultant.
- If the contractor is required to travel inside the country, such arrangement shall be fully coordinated in advance with UNDP. The cost of such travels will be covered by UNDP, i.e., the travel cost is excluded from the total consultancy fee. The travel arrangements should be in line with UNDP rules and regulations.

12. Travel requirements

If travel is required under the contract, the individual contractor shall:

- Obtain the required Security Clearance from UNDP office (the details of travel including date of departure and arrival, accommodation and purpose of travel shall be submitted to UNDP office two working days before date of travel);
- Undertake the training courses on BSAFE and provide UNDP with the certificate. The link to access the course is <u>https://training.dss.un.org/course/category/6</u>
- Undertake a full medical examination including x-rays and obtain medical clearance from an UNapproved physician. This is only applicable for the Consultant on the age of 65 years or more.
 - The Contractors shall consult with the delegated authorities on the bases on Travel requirements before date of departure and arrival, and inform UNDP accordingly.

13. Evaluation arrangements

The below table outlines key roles and responsibilities for the evaluation process. UNDP and evaluation stakeholders will appoint an Evaluation Manager, who will assume the day-to-day responsibility for managing the evaluation and serve as a central person connecting other key parties. The evaluator will report to the Resident Representative (RR) who will be technically supported by the Regional M&E Advisor. The final approval of the report will be made by the RR. The final payment will be made upon the satisfactory completion and approval of the report.

Role	Responsibilities
Commissioner of the	 Lead and ensure the development of comprehensive,
Evaluation:	representative, strategic and costed evaluation; Determine scope of evaluation in consultation with key
UNDP Resident	partners; Provide clear advice to the Evaluation Manager on how the findings will be used; Safeguard the independence of the exercise; Approve TOR, inception report and final report. Allocate adequate funding and human resources. Ensure dissemination of the evaluation report to all the
Representative	stakeholders

-			
Table 9.	Roles	and res	ponsibilities

Evaluation	• Lead the development of the evaluation TOR in consultation with
Manager (M&E	stakeholders;
Focal	• Ensure and safeguard the independence of evaluations;
Point)	• Participate in the selection/ recruitment of external evaluators;
	• Provide executive and coordination support;
	Provide the Evaluation Team with
	• administrative support and
	• required data:
	• Liaise with and respond to the commissioners:
	Connect the Evaluation Team with
	• the wider programme unit, senior management and key evaluation
	stakeholders and ensure a fully inclusive and transparent
	 approach to the evaluation: -
	 Review and approve inception reports including evaluation questions
	and methodologies
	Review and comment on draft evaluation reports, circulate draft and
	consolidate comments.
	Contribute to the development of management responses and key
	actions
Project Manager	• Provide inputs/advice to the evaluation manager on the detail and scope
	of the terms of reference for the evaluation and how the findings will be
	used;
	• Provide the evaluation manager with all required data and documentation
	and contacts/stakeholders list, etc.;
	• Support the arrangement of interview, meetings and field missions;
	• Provide comments and clarification on the terms of reference, inception
	report and draft evaluation reports;
	• In consultation with Government, respond to evaluation
	recommendations by providing management responses and key actions
	to all recommendations addressed to UNDP:
	• Ensure dissemination of the evaluation report to all the stakeholders
	including the project boards:
	 Responsible for the implementation of key actions on evaluation
	recommendations in partnership with Implementing partners
Pagional	• Support the evaluation process and ansure compliance with corporate
Evaluation Eccol	support the evaluation process and ensure compliance with corporate
Points	Standards; • Drovide technical support to country office including advice on the
i onus	development of terms of references
	development of evolutors and maintaining avaluator restard
	• recruitment of evaluators and maintaining evaluator rosters;
	implementation of evaluations; and finalization of evaluations,
	management responses and key actions
	• Provide reedback on the TOK, inception report and Final Report
	• Ensure management response tracking and support M&E capacity
	development and knowledge-sharing;
	• Dispute resolution when issues arise in implementation of evaluations.
	• Contributes to the quality assurance process of the evaluation.

Key Evaluation Partners	 Review of key evaluation deliverables, including inception report and successive versions of the draft evaluation report; Provide inputs/advice how the findings will be used; Assist in collecting required data; Review draft evaluation report for accuracy and factual errors (if any); Responsible for the implementation of key actions on evaluation recommendations and integrate the evaluation lessons learned in the future Country Programme Document and projects where appropriate
Evaluation team (led by Team leader)	 Fulfil the contractual arrangements under the terms of reference as appropriate; Ensure the quality (including editorial) of the report and its findings and recommendations; Develop the evaluation inception report, including an evaluation matrix, in line with the terms of reference, UNEG norms and standards and ethical guidelines; Draft reports and brief the evaluation manager, programme/project managers and stakeholders on the progress and key findings and recommendations; Finalize the evaluation, taking into consideration comments and questions on the evaluation report. Evaluators' feedback should be recorded in the audit trail; Support UNDP efforts in knowledge-sharing and dissemination if required.

14. Timeframe

The contract commences on early September 2023 till 31 October 2023. The timeframe and responsibilities for the evaluation process are tentatively as follows

	D 111	
Activity	Responsible party	Timetrame
Finalize selection of the evaluation team	UNDP / Project team	20 August
Provide necessary information to Evaluation team	UNDP/ Project team	3 September
Hold a kick-off meeting with UNDP and Government	Evaluation team	6 September
Conduct desk review	Evaluation team	13 September
Submit the inception report to UNDP	Evaluation team	14 September
Review and approve the inception report	UNDP / Project team	17 September
Finalize data collection data, field missions, and interviews	Evaluation team	9 October
Present the preliminary findings to UNDP and project team	Evaluation team	15 October
Submit the first draft	Evaluation team	22 October
Review the first draft	UNDP and project team	25 October
Revise the report and submit the final draft	Evaluation team	29 October
Accept the final report and submit the management response	UNDP and project team	31 October
Disseminate the final renport and evaluation brief /stakeholders workshop	UNDP and the project team	31 October

Table 10. Timefram

Table 11. Buggested working	uay anocan	in and schedule for eval		
ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED # OF DAYS	DATE OF COMPLETION	PLACE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Phase One: Desk review and inceptio	on report			
Sharing of the relevant documentation with the evaluation team		3 September	Via email	UNDP and Project Team
Review the Documents	3 working days		Home-based	
Meeting briefing with UNDP and Project team	0.5 day	6 September	UNDP or remote	UNDP and project team
Desk review, Evaluation design, methodology and updated workplan including the list of stakeholders to be interviewed Submission of the inception report (10-15 Pages)	5 working days	13 September Within two weeks of contract signing	Home based Via email	Evaluation Team Evaluation
Comments and approval of inception report		17 September	Via email	UNDP and project team
Phase Two: Data-collection mission				
Consultations and field visits, in-depth interviews, and focus groups	17 days	Within six weeks of contract signing	With field visits	UNDP and Project team to organize with local project partners, local authorities, NGOs, etc.
Desk review	4 days		Home-based	Evaluation team
Debriefing to UNDP and project 1 day team	1 day	Within six weeks of contract signing	UNDP or remote	Evaluation team
Phase Three: Evaluation report writi	ing			
Draft report submission	5 days	Within two weeks of the completion of the field mission	Via email	Evaluation team
Finalization of the evaluation report incorporating additions and comments provided by	5 days	Within one week of submitting draft	Home-based	Evaluation team
Submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP country office		29 October	Home-based	Evaluation team
Estimated total for the evaluation (Working days)	40.5			

Table 11. Suggested working day allocation and schedule for evaluation

16. ToR Annexes

- A. List of Documents to be reviewed
- B. Key stakeholders and partners
- C. Evaluation matrix
- D. Schedule of tasks, milestones and deliverables
- E. Inception report Template
- F. Require format for the evaluation report
- G. Evaluation Recommendations
- H. Evaluation quality assessment
- I. Code of conduct

Annex A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the evaluators

- Project Original Documents, Logframe, Theory of Change
- UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
- Terminal evaluation of CIWP Phase II
- Strategic Results Framework (and proposed revision of the SRF)
- All Project Implementation progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
- Audit reports
- All technical reports and plans produced by the project
- Oversight mission/back-to-office reports
- All monitoring reports prepared by the project
- · Financial and Administration guidelines used by the Project Team
- Financial and Administration documents

The following documents will also be available:

- Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
- UNDP country/countries programme document(s)
- Minutes of the Project Steering Committee and other meetings
- Project site location maps

Annex B. Key stakeholders and partners

- • UNDP Iran
- Department of Environment (DoE) Main Office, Tehran
- DoE of West Azerbaijan Province
- DoE of East Azerbaijan Province
- DoE of Fars Province
- DoE of Khuzestan Province
- The Tehran Embassy of Japan (as the representative of the Government of Japan)
- Agricultural Organization of West Azerbaijan Province
- Agricultural Organization of East Azerbaijan Province
- Agricultural Organization of Fars Province
- Agricultural Organization of Khuzestan Province
- Ministry of Energy
- West Azerbaijan Province Regional Water Authority
- East Azerbaijan Province Regional Water Authority
- Fars Province Regional Water Authority
- Khuzestan Province Regional Water Authority
- Universities and research centres
- The pioneer farmers
- The local farmers' companies
- Relevant NGOs
- Other relevant stakeholders as needed

Annex C: Evaluation matrix (suggested as a deliverable to be included in the inception report)

The evaluation matrix is a tool that evaluators create as map and reference in planning and conducting an evaluation. It also serves as a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the evaluation design and methodology for discussions with stakeholders. It details evaluation questions that the evaluation will answer, data sources, data collection, analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated.

Table 12. Samp	ole Evaluation	n Matrix				
Relevant Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Specific Sub Questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Indicators/Success Standards	Methods for D Analysis

Annex D: Schedule of tasks, milestones and deliverables.

Based on the time frame specified in the ToR, the evaluators present the detailed schedule.

Annex E: Inception report template

Follow the link: Inception report content outline

Annex F: Required format for the evaluation report.

The final report must include, but not necessarily be limited to, the elements outlined in the quality criteria for evaluation reports. Follow the link: Evaluation report template and quality standards

Annex G: Evaluation recommendations.

Follow the link: Evaluation Management Response Template

Annex H: Evaluation quality assessment

Evaluations commissioned by UNDP country offices are subject to a quality assessment, including this evaluation. Final evaluation reports will be uploaded to the Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC site) after the evaluations complete. IEO will later undertake the quality assessment and assign a rating. IEO will notify the assessment results to country offices and makes the results publicized in the ERC site. UNDP Lao PDR aims to ensure evaluation quality. To do so, the consultant should put in place the quality control of deliverables. Also, consultants should familiarize themselves with rating criteria and assessment questions outlined in the Section six of UNDP Evaluation Guidelines

Annex I: Code of conduct.

UNDP requests each member of the evaluation team to read carefully, understand and sign the 'Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the United Nations system', which may be made available as an attachment evaluation Follow to the report. this link: http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100

Data

Annex 2. Evaluation Matrix

The table below provides questions that provide direction when hosting stakeholder Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Group Discussions (GD). Stakeholder consultations will follow ethical guidelines to ensure safe, non-discriminatory, respectful engagement of stakeholders following UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations.

	Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
RE	LEVANCE:			
1.	Was the Project relevant, appropriate and strategic to	 alignment of project outcomes with 	ProDoc	 document review
	LU, Bakhtegan and Shadegan restoration goals and	restoration goals and challenges	• APR	
	challenges with focus to local community participation in	 participation of local communities in 		
	wetlands restoration?	project activities contribution to		
		restoration goals		
2.	Was the Project relevant, appropriate and strategic to	 alignment with UNDP Country 	ProDoc	 document review
	the mandate, strategy, functions, roles, and	Program Document (CPD) and	UNDP staff	• KII
	responsibility of the UNDP, the Department of	Strategic Plan and Development	 CIWP Team staff 	
	Environment (DOE), and the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad	Assistance Framework (UNDAF)	Government stakeholders	
	(MoJA) as the major stakeholders of the Project and key	 alignment with Iran's National 	Local NGOs	
	actors within those institutions?	Development Plan and National		
		Wetlands Conservation Strategy		
3.	Was the Project relevant, appropriate and to the	 contribution of project activities to 	 related documents 	 document review
	international and national strategic/upper-hand	SDGs, UNDAF, UNDP CPD, and UNDP		
	documents, e.g., SDGs, UNDAF, UNDP CPD, and UNDP	Strategic Plan		
	Strategic Plan?	 contribution to achievement of 		
		international wetland agreements		
		such as RAMSAR		

	Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
4.	How private sector and local cooperatives were engaged	 level of engagement of private sector 	• APR	 document review
	in the process?	and local cooperatives	UNDP staff	• KII
			 CIWP Team staff 	
			 Government stakeholders 	
			 Implementing partners 	
			 Private sectors 	
			 Local cooperatives 	
5.	How was the local community participation and	 level of understanding and 	• APR	 document review
	ownership in the Project?	engagement of local community in	 local community 	 KII and FGD
		project activities	members	
		 # of community members engaged in 		
		project activities		
EFF	ECTIVENESS			
6.	How effectively has the project aligned its activities and	 alignment of project activities with 	 Theory of Change analysis 	 document review
	interventions with the intended theory of change?	Theory of Change	• APR	
7.	Were there any lessons learned, failures/lost	 best practices reported/documented 	• APR	 document review
	opportunities? What might have been done better or	 adaptive management strategies 	UNDP staff	 KII and FGD
	differently?	implemented reported/documented	 CIWP Team staff 	
		 failures reported/documented 	Government stakeholders	
		 lost opportunities 	 Implementing partners 	
		reported/documented	 beneficiaries 	
8.	How well the Project collaborated with UNDP, DoE, the	 frequency of meetings among project 	 meeting minutes 	 document review
	donor, and the other main stakeholders?	partners	UNDP staff	• KII
		 level of shared understanding by 	 CIWP Team staff 	
		project partners	Government stakeholders	
		 communication tools prepared by 	• donor	
		project	 Implementing partners 	
			 communication materials 	

Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
9. How did the Project deal with un-estimated and risks?	 adaptive management strategies 	• APR	document review
	implemented reported/documented	 UNDP staff 	• KII
		 CIWP Team staff 	
		 Government stakeholders 	
		 Implementing partners 	
10. Were the resources (time, funding, human resources)	 achievement of project targets 	• APR	 document review
sufficient?	quality of implementation of project	UNDP staff	• KII
	activities	 CIWP Team staff 	
		 Government stakeholders 	
		 Implementing partners 	
11. Which areas hold the greatest relevance and strategic	 activities successfully completed and 	• APR	 document review
importance for scaling up the project going forward?	making a significant contribution to	 UNDP staff 	• KII
	project outcome(s)	 CIWP Team staff 	
		 Government stakeholders 	
		 Implementing partners 	
EFFICIENCY			
12. Were the outputs achieved in a timely manner?	completion of project activities	• AWP	document review
	according to AWP	• APR	
13. Were the resources utilized in the best way possible?	 project stakeholders and 	• AWP	document review
	implementing partners effectively	• APR	• KII
	engaged in the implementation of	UNDP staff	
	project activities	 CIWP Team staff 	
	 project financial resources deliver 	 Government stakeholders 	
	best cost benefit	 Implementing partners 	

Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
14. Is the result-based management system operating	 timely completion of project activities 	• APR	 document review
effectively and is monitoring data informing	according to proposed AWP	UNDP staff	• KII
management decision making?	 consistent, comprehensive collection 	 CIWP Project staff 	
	of monitoring data	Government stakeholders	
	 evidence of adaptive management 	 Implementing partners 	
	strategies responding to monitoring		
	data		
15. How well does the workflow between the Project and	 frequency of meetings among project 	CIWP PMU staff	• KII
local implementing partners perform?	partners	 Implementing partners 	
	 level of shared understanding by 		
	project partners		
16. To what extent will targeted men, women and	 benefits received by project 	• APR	• KII
vulnerable people benefit from the project interventions	beneficiaries	UNDP staff	
after project conclusion?	 sustainability of project benefits 	 CIWP Project staff 	
		Government stakeholders	
		 Implementing partners 	
17. Were the actions and results owned by the local partner	 level of knowledge of CIWP project 	CIWP Project staff	• KII
and stakeholders?	logic and activities	Government stakeholders	
	 level of support provided to CIWP 	 Implementing partners 	
	project		
	 ongoing commitment to and 		
	replication of project results		
18. Was the capacity (individuals, institution, and system)	 training opportunities provided by 	 CIWP Project staff 	KII and FGD
built through the actions of the Project?	CIWP	Government stakeholders	
	 new capacity(ies) demonstrated by 	 Implementing partners 	
	individuals, institutions and systems	beneficiaries	
19. Did the Project contribute to sustainable management of	• development and implementation of	 CIWP Project staff 	 KII and FGD
LU and its satellite wetlands, Bakhtegan and Shadegan	sustainable management plans	Government stakeholders	 site visits
Wetlands?	 evidence of sustainable management 	 Implementing partners 	
	activities in the field	 beneficiaries 	

Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
SOCIO-ECONOMIC RISKS TO SUSTAINABILITY			
 20. Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of the Project outcomes? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the Project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? 21. Are lessons learned being documented by the NPM on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it up in future? 	 level of ongoing social and political support to project activities evidence of replication of project activities government, private sector and public advocacy for project activities documentation of lessons learned shared learning opportunities organized by CIWP 	 APR CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners beneficiaries APR CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners beneficiaries 	 document review KII and FGD document review KII and FGD
		• beneficiaries	
IINSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND COORDINATION MECHAN	ISMS RISKS TO SUSTAINABILITY		Γ
22. : Do the legal frameworks, policies, management structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.	 legal frameworks, policies, and management structures and processes in place to provide ongoing support to project benefits government monitoring systems in place to measure performance of ongoing support to project benefits 	 CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners beneficiaries 	• KII and FGD
ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS TO SUSTAINABILITY			
23. Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?	 awareness of environmental risks by CIWP stakeholders documentation of environmental risk screening and avoidance mechanisms ongoing monitoring of environmental risks and adaptive management 	 CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners beneficiaries 	• KII and FGD

Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
PROJECT DESIGN			
24. Were the context, problem, needs and priorities well	 quality of analysis presented in 	ProDoc	document review
analyzed while designing the Project?	ProDoc	 CIWP Project staff 	• KII
		Government stakeholders	
		 Implementing partners 	
		 beneficiaries 	
		 other wetland 	
		conservation stakeholders	
25. Was the Theory of Change (ToC) defined in the project	 analysis of ToC 	ProDoc	 document review
document in a detailed and strategic manner?			
26. Were there clear objectives and strategy?	 clarity of strategic results framework 	ProDoc	 document review
27. Were there clear baselines indicators and/or benchmark	 SMART analysis of SRF indicators 	SRF indicators	 document review
for performance?			
28. Was the process of project design sufficiently	 documentation of participation in 	ProDoc	 document review
participatory? Was there any impact of the process?	project design process	UNDP staff	• KII
		 project stakeholders 	
29. Were there coherence and complementarity by the	 relationship of CIWP to other wetland 	ProDoc	 document review
Project to the country's wetland conservation efforts by	conservation efforts	UNDP staff	KII and FGD
the DOE and its key players within this institution?		 CIWP Project staff 	
		Government stakeholders	
		 Implementing partners 	
		beneficiaries	
30. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly	ProDoc documentation of responsive	• ProDoc	 document review
incorporated into the project design?	project design to lessons learned from	UNDP staff	• KII
	other relevant projects		

Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
31. Evaluate the extent to which relevant women economic empowerment and social inclusion aspects were considered in the project design.	 women and socially isolated groups participated in project design gender responsive and socially inclusive project programming gender disaggregated data collected and reported on as well as data disaggregated for other groups such as persons with disability, sovially isolated cultural groups, etc. 	 ProDoc Gender Scan of CIWP Project APR CIWP communication materials UNDP staff CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners beneficiaries 	 document review KII and FGD
PROJECT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS			
32. Evaluate overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.	 Variation of proposed (ProDoc) versus actual project management structure Effectiveness of project management structure 	 ProDoc UNDP staff CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners 	document reviewKII
33. Evaluate the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.	 Effectiveness executing agency (DOE) implementation Effectiveness of implementing partner(s) implementation 	 UNDP staff CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners 	• KII
PROJECT-LEVEL WORK PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS			
34. Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?	 alignment of AWP activities and project indicator targets 	SRFAWP	document review

	Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
35. Ev	valuate the monitoring tools currently being used; Do	M&E activities	• APR	 document review
th	ney provide the necessary information? Do they involve		• AWP	• KII
ke	ey partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with		 M&E reports 	
na	ational systems? Do they use existing information? Are		UNDP staff	
th	ney efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional		 CIWP Team staff 	
to	ools required? How could they be made more			
pa	articipatory and inclusive?			
36. Ex	xamine the financial management of the project	 M&E budget 	• APR	 document review
m	nonitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient	 M&E activities 	• AWP	• KII
re	esources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation?	 M&E reporting 	 M&E reports 	
Ar	re these resources being allocated effectively?		UNDP staff	
			CIWP Team staff	
STAKE	HOLDER ENGAGEMENT			
37. <u>Pr</u>	roject management: Has the project developed and	 proposed versus actual stakeholder 	ProDoc	 document review
le	veraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships	engagement	• APR	• KII
wi	ith direct and secondary stakeholders?		 CIWP Project staff 	
			Government stakeholders	
			 Implementing partners 	
38. <u>Pa</u>	articipation and country-driven processes: Do local and	 level of engagement of government 	 CIWP Project staff 	• KII
na	ational government stakeholders support the	stakeholders	Government stakeholders	
ot	bjectives of the project? Do they continue to have an	 level of understanding of CIWP by 	 Implementing partners 	
ac	ctive role in project decision-making that supports	government stakeholders		
ef	ffective project implementation?	 evidence of ongoing support and/or 		
		replication of CIWP project activities		
39. <u>Pa</u>	articipation and public awareness: To what extent has	 evidence of advocacy for CIWP by 	• APR	 document review
sta	akeholder involvement and public awareness	stakeholders and beneficiaries	 CIWP Project staff 	 KII and FGD
со	ontributed to the progress towards achievement of	 evidence of contributions made by 	Government stakeholders	
pr	roject objectives?	stakeholders and beneficiaries to	 Implementing partners 	
		successful achievement of project	 beneficiaries 	
		outcomes		

Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
COMMUNICATIONS			
40. Review internal project communication with stakeholders; Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?	 frequency of meetings among project stakeholders level of understanding of CIWP project by project stakeholders 	 UNDP staff CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners 	• KII
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND SOCIAL INCLUS	ION		
41. To what extent have the economic empowerment of women and social inclusion been addressed in the project design, implementation, and reporting? What are the key achievements?	 women and socially isolated groups participated in project design gender responsive and socially inclusive project programming gender disaggregated data collected and reported on as well as data disaggregated for other groups such as persons with disability, socially isolated cultural groups, etc. 	 ProDoc Gender Scan of CIWP Project APR CIWP communication materials UNDP staff CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners beneficiaries 	 document review KII and FGD
42. In what way could economic empowerment of women and social inclusion be enhanced in future similar projects?	 recommendations provided by beneficiaries, women's groups, UNDP, project stakeholders and documented by project 	 APR UNDP staff CIWP Project staff Government stakeholders Implementing partners beneficiaries 	 document review KII and FGD
Evaluation Category and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
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PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS			
43. Review and evaluate the log-frame indicators against	 strategic results framework indicators 	• APR	 document review
progress made towards the end-of-project targets using		UNDP staff	 KII and FGD
the Progress Towards Results Matrix; colour code		 CIWP Project staff 	
progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of		 Government stakeholders 	
progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each		 Implementing partners 	
outcome; make recommendations from the areas		beneficiaries	
marked as "Not on target to be achieved" (red). If there			
are major areas of concern, recommend areas for			
improvement			

Annex 3. List of Documents Reviewed

- UNDP Project Document with all annexes (signed 14th June, 2020)
- Amendment of Project Document (signed 10th May, 2021)
- Special Purpose Audits 2020, 2021, and 2022
- Annual Work Plans 2021, 2022, and 2023
- Combined Delivery Reports 2020, 2021, and 2022
- CIWP Factsheet
- Annual Progress Reports 2021, 2022, and 2023
- Donor reports
- CIWP Summary and Map Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture in the Lake Urmia Basin (LU), Bakhtegan (BAK) and Shadegan (SHD) Wetlands
- Project Steering Committee meeting minutes
- Project communications materials
- Back to Office Reports (BTOR)
- Gender Scan of CIWP Project (undated)
- Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihood Repots
- Economic, Social and Ecological Evaluation Report (Zanjan University)
- Final Report of Participatory Technology Development Project
- Evaluating the Effectiveness of Crop Management Techniques on Reducing Water Consumption and Chemical Inputs at the Level of Pilot Farms to Establish Sustainable Agriculture
- Project Terminal Evaluation Report of Seven Phases (2014-2021)

Annex 4. Field Mission Schedule

With limited time to conduct the field mission with provincial partners, a filed visit was conducted in West and East Azerbaijan and Fars province and virtual (phone) meetings were conducted in Khuzestan provinces.

Date	Activity	Place	Remarks
9 Dec. Sat.	Meeting with Ms. Shojaeifar, Head of Wetland conservation office in West Azerbaijan DoE and provincial expert of the project + local officials from DoE + Dr. Verdinejhad, the local M&E expert + meeting with agricultural extension services division in MoJA (Dr. Khezerloo and Md. Roqayye Heydarzadeh) + Meeting with Dr. Alireza Seyed Qorayshi in ULRP, Field visit of Arnesaa Village (AIG) + Meeting with Dr. Ghaffari, former head of agricultural research centre in Urmia	Urmia city	Flight to Urmia city on Saturday early morning
10 Dec. Sun.	Filed Visit form Mahabad and Miandoab + Meeting with Mr. Farooq Soleymani (Head of DoE office in Mahabad county) + Dr Behzad Qanbari (Head of local Agricultural research and education center in Miandoab county) + Meeting with local private companies active in providing agricultural extension services + 2 local farmers from Miandoab pilot villages + Telephone call to Mr. Vahed Jamshidion, local NGO + Mr. Asoo Soleymanpour (local NGO active in the Kani Borazan wetland) + Mr. Shirbachcheh, expert in wild life + Visit form Kani borazan wetland and bird watching center (local office of DoE for protection of wetland)	Mahabad and Miandoab county + Visit form Kani borazan wetland	Night in Hotel
11 Dec. Mon. AM	Telephone call to Mr. Mohammad Darvish, Senior research scientist and environmental activist + Meeting with Mr. Alireza Baqqali and Mr. Kamran Hosseini (from DoE), and Mr. Feraydoon Khanbabaei from DoE.	Day in Urmia, night in Tabriz	Afternoon travel to Tabriz by car
11 Dec. Mon. PM	Afternoon, departure from Urmia city to Tabriz city by car (Taxi) and passing the bridge in the middle of Urmia lake (most part of the lake is dried up and covered with salt)		
12 Dec. Tues.	Meeting with Mr. Azarhava, Head of Wetland conservation office in West Azerbaijan DoE and the provincial environment expert of the project. + MoJA experts form Extension division and research center (CSA) + Field visit from BostanAbad county (Mr. Shahrokh Sadeqpour, Head of DoE office in Bostan Abad+ Quri Gol CEPA center + Telephone call to Mr. Majid Rahmani (Local NGO)	Tabriz city+ Bostan Abad county	Visiting Quri Gol wetland & CEPA center
13 Dec. Wed.	Filed Visit from Bonab County, Meeting with local private company, local farmer and representative of women self-help group in MoJA office of Bonab (Ms. Maryam FazlAlipour, head of extension office)+ Meeting with Mr. Naqavi, Head of DoE office in Bonab and Mr. Sayad Lotfi, former Head of DoE office in Bonab.	Bonab city + Tabriz city	Flight back to Tehran at night
14 Dec. Thurs.	Telephone call to Key Partners in Khuzestan province and those who were engaged in the project (Shadegan wetland)	Home	
16 Dec. Sat.	Meeting with MoJA team in Fars province	Shiraz city	Flight early morning
17 Dec. Sun.	Filed Visit from Bakhtegan wetland + 2 pilot villages in Estahban county + Meeting with local NGO (active in AIG) + local private company who is active in CSA	Estahban Rural area	
18 Dec. Mon.	Meeting with MoJA and DoE team in Fars province	Shiraz city	Flight back to Tehran at mid night
19 Dec. Tues.	Telephone call to Key Partners in Khuzestan province and those who were engaged in the project (Shadegan wetland)	Home	

Annex 5.	Stakeholders	and Bene	ficiaries	Consulted
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Stakeholder / group of stakeholders	Proposed person / organization from the group to interview	Contact Information			
National Government Agencies					
Department of the	Mr. Zolioudi	09128117073			
Environment	Mr. Tahmasebi Birgani	9123895963			
Wetlands	Ms. Arezoo Ashrafizadeh	09123581474			
Conservation and	Mr. Masoud Baqerzadeh Karimi	09121399916			
Restoration Bureau	-				
Ministry of Jihad	 Mr. Hossein Dehqani Sanij 	09121675238			
Agriculture		00405000077			
Ministry of Energy	Mr. Mohammad Hobbevatan	09125003277			
Planning and	Mr. Farzam Pourasghar	09127004902			
Budget	Mr. Habib Jabbari	00122191621			
Miniatry of Earoign	Mir. Hamid Hosseinpour	09123181051			
Affairs	Mir. Abbas Goiriz	09122895055			
National	 Mr. Mohammad Darvish 	09124570290			
Environmental					
Activist or NGOs					
Provincial and Loca	al Government Agencies	00144040074			
Provincial Wetland	Mr Mikaeil Naqavi (Bonab)	09144212071			
Conservation	Mir. Farouq Soleymani (Mahahad)	09143442097			
Secretariats	(Manabad)	09141241745			
	West Azorbaijan				
	- Ms. Lida Shojaeifar	09396980430			
	 Ms. Khoshamad 	09149218835			
	Mr. Koorush Pourzand	09192416088			
	Mr. Shirpanieh	09143413296			
	Mr. Alireza Baggali	09141882820			
	Mr. Kamran Hosseini	09144443614			
Provincial	East Azerbaijan				
Department of	Mr. Yaddollah Azarhava	09149119864			
Environment	Mr. Davood Ghanipour	09144057139			
	Mr. Sayyad Lotfi	09144284514			
	Fars province				
	 Mr. Nabiyollah Moradi 	09177712216			
	 Mr. Aqaya Moradi 	09177731747			
	Ms. Shafiei	09177099811			
	Mr. Zabihollah Mohammadi	09171342603			
	West Azerbaijan	00440470004			
Provincial Jihad	Mr. Khezerloo	09143478291			
Agriculture	Mis. Roqayyeh Heydarzadeh	09143409009			
Organization	IVIr. Behzad Qanbari	09147000042			
	• IVIR. Vaniakeza Verdinejnad	0014/11/0/0			

Stakeholder / group of stakeholders	Proposed person / organization from the group to interview	Contact Information
	 East Azerbaijan Mr. Atabak Mohammadi Mr. Asghar Hamdast Mr. Ramin Nikanfar Mr. Hossein Mohammadi Mazraeh Mr. Seyed Farhad Dorri Ms. Maryam Fazlalipour Fars province Mr. Mojtaba Dehqanpour Mr. Vahedipour 	09143073581 09144321228 09143135392 09144477404 09144011530 09141218308 09173159871 09177165860
Provincial Water	 Mr. Vanedipoul Mr. Hazhir Mohaqqeqzadeh Mr. BehAeein Mr. Shahrokhnia Ms. Mona Mortezaei Ms. Moayyedi Ms. Zahra Tabesh Mr. Faraydaan Khanhahaai 	09177214115 09370860215 09177109159 09179447907 09173017040 09177317055
Authority Board (MoE)	(Urmia)	09144741990
Urmia Lake Restoration Plan	Mr. Alireza Seyed QoreyshiMr. Hojjat Jabbari	09144403872 09143408567
	 West Azerbaijan Mr. Vahed Jamshidoon Ms. Azizeh Alizadeh 	09148255843 09149099663
Provincial NGO	East AzerbaijanMr. Majid Rahmani	09143076055
	 Fars province Mr. Mohammad Javad Sayyahpour Mr. Rasoul Haji Baqeri 	09372204685 09171305874
Beneficiaries		
Local communities / villages located in Lake Urmia ecological region	 Mr. Younes Shakourifard (CSA) Mr. Noorddin Dadashfaam (CSA) Mr. Mahmood Nayebi (CSA) Ms. Abbasnejhad (AIG) Ms. Moosavi (AIG) 	091448104980 09142627417 09144089926 09302635128 09055310636
Local communities / villages located in Bakhtegan ecological region	 Ms. Rahjooyan (AIG) Ms. Shafiei (AIG) Mr. Yousef Dehqan Manesh (CSA) 	09164111518 09176991295 09176795762
Non-Government O	rganizations	
Wetlands NGOs Group	Ms. Nasim Tavafzadeh	09111310012
National NGOs Network	Mr. Mohammad Alamouti	09122833255
NGOs network	Mr. Noorian	09148844026

Stakeholder / group of stakeholders	Proposed pe from the g	rson / organization roup to interview	Contact Information
East Azerbaijan NGOs network	• Mr. Majid R	ahmani	09143076055
Private Sector Stak	holders direct	ly involved in project	implementation
	Mr. Siamak	Mostafanejhad	09143107859
West Azerbaijan	• Mr. Norooz	Shahamat Azar	09036834710
	Mr. Asoo So	oleymanpour	09141693370
	 Mr. Mohsen 	Vahabi	09148675638
East Azerbaijan	 Ms. Monirel 	n Farhangi	09141762784
	 Ms. Fariba I 	Fallahi	0936107097
Fars Province	 Mr. Mohami Shahsavani 	mad Javad	09171323291
Khuzestan	 Ms. Khadije 	h Yarali	09128473750
UN Organizations			
UNDP CO	 Mr. Mohami 	madreza Khosravi	mohammadreza.khosravi@undp.org
UNDP CO	Mr. Alireza	Mohammadi	alireza.mohammadi@undp.org
UNDP CO	 MS. Zahra (Golshan	09177527458
UNDP CO	 M&E Adviso 	or	09121987445
Iran CIWP PMU			
National Project Manager	 Ms. Mehri A 	snaashari	09127245039
Deputy National Project Manager	Mr.Yousef A	Ahmadi	09143053286
M&E Expert	Mr. Tareghi	an	09155030502
Project Finance staff	• Mr. Reza D	erakhshandeh	09125631432
	Ms. Gisso F	arvaz	09142162776
Provincial Project	• Mr. Armin H	labibi	09144401350
rechnical Expens	• Mr. Yousef	Rafiei	09124337661
Technical National Experts contracted	 Dr. Alireza I 	Massah	09124241275
Project Sustainability Coordinator	Mr. Mehdi S	afari Oskuee	09124438119
Technical Expert & Coordinator of Shadegan pilot site	Mr. Hamidre	eza Gharachaee	09177248544
Donor			
Government of Japan	• Mr. Nishi Hi	roki	hiroki.nishi@mofa.go.jp

Annex 6. Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation

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 limitations, 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.

Interim Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: Brent Tegler

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 (Date)	Fergus, Canada	_ (Place) on	1 st November, 2023
Signature:	Brent regler		

Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation

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 limitations, 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.

Terminal Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: Abolfazl Mirghasemi

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 Tehran (Place) on December 4, 2023 (Date)

Signature:

Annex 7. Terminal Evaluation Rating Scales

Monitoring & Evaluation Ratings Scale			
Rating	Description		
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS	There were no short comings; quality of M&E design/implementation exceeded expectations		
5 = Satisfactory (S)	There were minor shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation met expectations		
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were moderate shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation more or less met expectations		
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation was somewhat lower than expected		
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation was substantially lower than expected		
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in M&E design/implementation		
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design/implementation.		

Implementation/Oversight and Execution Ratings Scale			
Rating	Description		
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution exceeded expectations		
5 = Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution met expectations.		
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution more or less met expectations.		
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was somewhat lower than expected		
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was substantially lower than expected		
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of implementation/execution		
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation and execution		

Sustainability Ratings Scale			
Ratings	Description		
4 = Likely (L)	There are little or no risks to sustainability		
3 = Moderately Likely (ML)	There are moderate risks to sustainability		
2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability		
1 = Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks to sustainability		
Unable to Assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability		

Outcome Ratings Scale - Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency		
Ratings	Description	
	Level of outcomes achieved clearly	
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	exceeds expectations and/or there were no	
	shortcomings	
	Level of outcomes achieved was as	
5 = Satisfactory (S)	expected and/or there were no or minor	
	shortcomings	
	Level of outcomes achieved more or less	
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	as expected and/or there were moderate	
	shortcomings.	
	Level of outcomes achieved somewhat	
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	lower than expected and/or there were	
	significant shortcomings	
	Level of outcomes achieved substantially	
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	lower than expected and/or there were	
	major shortcomings.	
	Only a negligible level of outcomes	
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	achieved and/or there were severe	
	shortcomings	
	The available information does not allow an	
Unable to Assess (UA)	assessment of the level of outcome	
	achievements	

Annex 8. Theory of Change Analysis Tables

Table 3-1: Theory of Change Impact Drivers, Assumptions, Intermediate States and Impact

Project Components and Outputs	Impact Drivers & Assumptions	Intermediate States	Impact
Fragile wetland ecosystem	Component 1:	to integrated basin management	
OUTPUT 1.1 Developing and implementing wetland management action plans	 ID: Through intersectoral, participatory development and implementation of wetland management plans wetland basin health is improved A: Government, private sector, CSO and local farmers are willing and able to work cooperatively towards a common goal of improved wetland basing management 	<i>IS:</i> The CIWP has developed new wetland management plans that have lead to the implementation of new wetland management initiatives	Long Term Goal:
OUTPUT 1.2 Increasing hectarage of fragile ecosystems	<i>ID:</i> The development of customized wetland management plans will lead to the protection of fragile wetland ecosystems	<i>IS:</i> The customized wetland management	Effective application of the Ecosystem Approach in wetland basins enhances the economic situation and wellbeing of local communities and conserves wetlands.
	 A: The customized wetland management plans include measures that are effectively implemented and which provide adequate protection 	plans have been developed	
OUTPUT 1.3 Equipping and operationalizing the monitoring stations	<i>ID:</i> The installation of monitoring stations will provide the information needed for effective management and increase awareness of the issues.	IS: Monitoring stations have been	
	A: The data gathered from monitoring stations will be analyzed and used to inform effective wetland basin management. The data will be used to educate and advocate for improved wetland basin management.	operational.	

Project Components and Outputs	Impact Drivers & Assumptions	Impact				
Livelihood options of						
OUTPUT 2.1 Increasing the number of local	<i>ID:</i> Local community members in pilot communities participate in livelihood initiatives	munity members in pilot communities e in livelihood initiatives IS: Local community members in pilot				
communities benefiting from livelihood initiatives	 A: Participation in livelihood initiatives will improve socio-economic conditions, including the economic empowerment of women and contribute to reduced pressure on water resources 	livelihood initiatives				
OUTPUT 2.2	<i>ID:</i> The introduction of climate smart agricultural (CSA) technologies and practices will reduce water and agrochemical usage	<i>IS:</i> Monitoring shows the introduction of CSA reduces water and agrochemical	Long Term Goal: Effective application of the Ecosystem Approach in wetland basins enhances the economic situation and wellbeing of local communities and conserves wetlands.			
Decreasing water and agrochemical usage	 A: There are locally appropriate CSA practices to reduce water and agrochemical usage 	usage is local farms compared to farms what do not use CSA				
OUTPUT 2.3	<i>ID:</i> Government and private sector organizations train farmers in the use of CSA	<i>IS:</i> With oversite from MoJA and the private sector farmers in pilot				
Implementing climate-smart practices in new pilot sites	A: Government and private sector organizations have the capacity to provide CSA training and local farmers in pilot communities are willing to participate in programs to introduce CSA	communities have been trained in CSA and water and agrochemical usage has decreased				

Table 3-1: Theory of Change Impact Drivers, Assumptions, Intermediate States and Impact

Project Components and Outputs	Impact Drivers & Assumptions	Intermediate States	Impact		
Engagement of local commun					
OUTPUT 3.1	<i>ID:</i> Establishing and operationalizing CEPA centres to engage local communities in wetland management	Establishing and operationalizing CEPA centres to engage local communities in wetland management			
Establishing and functionalizing CEPA centers	A: With the establishment of CEPA centres, local communities will be mobilized to participate in wetland management and public awareness of wetland management issues will increase	are they are operational.	Effective application of the Ecosystem Approach in wetland basins enhances the economic		
OUTPUT 3.2 Implementing wetland	<i>ID:</i> Encourage local community engagement in wetland management initiatives	IS: CIWP pilot communities have	situation and wellbeing of local communities and conserves wetlands.		
management initiative by the local community	 A: Local communities are willing to participate in wetland management initiatives and this participation leads to increased awareness and advocacy for improved wetland management 	participated in wetland management initiatives			

Table 3-1: Theory of Change Impact Drivers, Assumptions, Intermediate States and Impact

Table 3-2: Impact Assessment of the Theory of Change

Theory of Change Components and Outputs	Qualitative Analysis	Rating ¹¹						
	Component 1:							
Fragile wetland ecosystems of Iran are well-m	Fragile wetland ecosystems of Iran are well-managed using an innovative framework to integrated basin-management							
Output 1.1: Developing and implementing wetland management action	on plans							
ID: Through intersectoral, participatory development and implementation of wetland management plans wetland basin health is improved	• The development and implementation of wetland management plans has exceeded the CIWP project target. The concept of improving wetland basin health has been demonstrated, however there is a need for scaling up to include the entire wetland basin.	3						
 Government, private sector, CSO and local farmers are willing and able to work cooperatively towards a common goal of improved wetland basing management 	 The CIWP has effectively engaged stakeholders improving capacity of government, private sector and CSOs to lead improved wetland management and CIWP has built trust between farmers and government to adopt effective CSA practices 	3						
Output 1.2: Increasing hectarage of fragile ecosystems								
<i>ID</i> : The development of customized wetland management plans will lead to the protection of fragile wetland ecosystems	• The CIWP has exceeded the target for increased hectarage of fragile ecosystems for which customized wetland plans have been developed. The scale of implementation in CIWP is at the "pilot level" which must be scaled-up to achieve effective, meaningful results to achieve protection of fragile wetland ecosystems.	3						
 A: The customized wetland management plans include measures that are effectively implemented and which provide adequate protection 	 Customized wetland management include innovative approaches to enhancing the protection of fragile wetland ecosystems 	3						
Output 1.3: Equipping and operationalizing the monitoring stations								
<i>ID:</i> The installation of monitoring stations will provide the information needed for effective management and increase awareness of the issues.	 The installation and operationalization of monitoring stations has exceeded project targets. 	3						
A: The data gathered from monitoring stations will be analyzed and used to inform effective wetland basin management. The data will be used to educate and advocate for improved wetland basin management.	 Data are being used to inform wetland management 	3						

¹¹ see description of rating scale provided at the end of **Table 3-2**

Terminal Evaluation of Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihood in Lake Urmia and other wetlands

Table 3-2: Impact Assessment of the Theory of Change

Theory of Change Components and Outputs	Qualitative Analysis	Rating ¹¹						
	Component 2							
Livelihood options of local communities are enhanced through more sustainable and 'climate-smart' practices								
Output 2.1: Increasing the number of local communities benefiting from livelihood initiatives								
<i>ID:</i> Local community members in pilot communities participate in livelihood initiatives	• The target for community participation in livelihood activities has been exceeded by the CIWP	3						
 A: Participation in livelihood initiatives will improve socio- economic conditions, including the economic empowerment of women and contribute to reduced pressure on water resources 	• Livelihood activities that do not negatively impact wetlands have been promoted and adopted by participating communities, with 49% participants being women.	3						
Output 2.2: Decreasing water and agrochemical usage								
 ID: The introduction of climate smart agricultural (CSA) technologies and practices will reduce water and agrochemical usage 	 On participating pilot farms CIWP activities have achieved a reduction of water usage of between 26% to 29% and a reduction in the use of agrochemicals of between 25% to 30% 	2						
A: There are locally appropriate CSA practices to reduce water and agrochemical usage	• CIWP has introduced CSA practices that reduce water and agrochemical usage, close the intended target of 30%. In order to achieve the ToC long range goal these practices require significant upscaling across wetland basins.	2						
Output 2.3: Implementing climate-smart practices in new pilot sites								
<i>ID:</i> Government and private sector organizations train farmers in the use of CSA	• The CIWP target for training and implementation of CSA has been exceeded	3						
 A: Government and private sector organizations have the capacity to provide CSA training and local farmers in pilot communities are willing to participate in programs to introduce CSA 	• The CIWP has facilitated the implementation of a model implemented collaboratively by government and the private sector that is trusted and adopted by local farmers	3						
	Component 3							
Engagement of local communities in wetland man	Engagement of local communities in wetland management is enhanced through community mobilization and public awareness							
Output 3.1: Establishing and functionalizing CEPA centers								
<i>ID:</i> Establishing and operationalizing CEPA centres to engage local communities in wetland management	• The CIWP target to establish and operationalize CEPA centres has been achieved.	3						

Table 3-2: Impact Assessment of the Theory of Change

Theory of Change Components and Outputs	Qualitative Analysis	Rating ¹¹
 With the establishment of CEPA centres, local communities will be mobilized to participate in wetland management and public awareness of wetland management issues will increase 	• CEPA centres have engaged local communities in wetland management activities that contribute to wetland health, increase awareness of wetland management issues and facilitate public advocacy for sustainable wetland basin management	3
Output 3.2: Implementing wetland management initiative by the loca	l community	
<i>ID:</i> Encourage local community engagement in wetland management initiatives	 The target for engagement of local communities in wetland management initiatives has been achieved 	3
 A: Local communities are willing to participate in wetland management initiatives and this participation leads to increased awareness and advocacy for improved wetland management 	 There has been good participation of local communities in wetland management initiatives and this has led to increased awareness and advocacy for improved wetland management 	3
 Overall project summary findings: The CIWP has developed a model to achieve improved management government, collaboration with the private sector and successful erwithin the pilot communities where CIWP was implemented. To achieve the long term goal of the ToC there is a need for upscaline. In the CIWP successful implementation of the model has relied on C which provided critical coordination and facilitation functions (partial and coordinated and used Government of Japan funds to engage the climate smart AIG. The capacity of DOE, as the Responsible Party for the CIWP, to coordinated due to competing priorities of DOE and MoJA and du In addition, there is a need to develop a comprehensive water balar resources, the quantity of water diverted to human uses and the quantieve the ToC long term goal which is <i>Effective application of the wellbeing of local communities and conserves wetlands</i>. 	It of wetland basins. The model has demonstrated intersectoral cooperation within ingagement of local communities leading to reduced water and agrochemical usage ing to introduce key components of the model within the larger wetland basin area. Government of Japan funding to support the National Project Management team icularly among participating government sectors nationally, provincially and locally) he private sector in the facilitation and training of local communities in CSA and rdinate and fund scaling up of the CIWP with the main implementing partner, MoJA, e to a lack of available government funds. Ince for wetland basins, that includes data on the available surface and groundwater uantity of water required to sustain wetlands. The water balance also needs to mation it will be possible to determine if basin-wide adoption of the CIWP model can <i>Ecosystem Approach in wetland basins enhances the economic situation and</i>	2

Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) Handbook (2009) rating scale used in Table-3-2

Not achieved (0) - the ToC component was not explicitly or implicitly identified by the project, and/or very little progress has been made towards achieving the interim target of the ToC component, and the conditions for future progress are not in place.

Poorly achieved (1) very little progress has been made towards achieving the interim target of ToC component, but the conditions are in place for future progress should support be provided to complete this component.

Partially achieved (2) the ToC component is explicitly recognized and the mechanisms set out to achieve it are appropriate but insufficient to ensure successful completion and sustainability upon project closure and meaningful progress towards achievement of the long-term goal.

Fully achieved (3) the ToC component is explicitly recognized and appropriate activities are underway with interim targets achieved. Mechanisms are in place that show progress towards achievement of the ToC component and there is assurance of substantial contribution towards achievement of the long-term goal.

Annex 9. SMART Review of Project Indicators

Table 5.1 SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) Review of Project Indicators

Project Output Indicators End of Project target			TE Review			w		TE Boviour Commonto
Project Output Indicators	End of Project target		M	А	F	\ []	Г	TE Review Comments
Component 1 Fragile wetland ecosyst	ems of Iran are well-managed using an inn	ovat	tive	fran	new	vork	to in	tegrated basin management
Output 1.1 Developing and implementing wetla	nd management action plans							
 # of customized wetland management action plan with allocated budget plans developed/revised and are under implementation 	 3 MPs action plan developed/revised and are under implementation (1 action plan for each site) 						•	indicator meets most SMART criteria the indicator does not specify the level of implementation required which may vary from partial to full implementation
Output 1.2 Increasing Hectarage of fragile ecos	systems							
 Hectarage of fragile wetland ecosystems under the coverage of customized management plans (under implementation) 	 At least 400,000 ha of fragile wetland ecosystems under the coverage of customized management plans (under implementation) (250,000 ha LU, 100,000 ha Shadegan, 50,000 ha Bakhtegan) 						•	indicatory meets SMART criteria wetlands covered by customized management plan will only benefit if there is capacity and willingness to implement and adopt the planned actions
Output 1.3 Equipping and operationalizing the	monitoring stations				•			
 # of monitoring stations equipped and operational 	 3 monitoring stations equipped and operational (1 in each wetland) 						•	indicator meets most SMART criteria the indicator does not specify the type of monitoring while monitoring is important, actions taken in response to monitoring information are needed to use monitoring as an effective adaptive management tool for wetland management

Design Contract Indiantees		TE Review			TE Daview Commente		
Project Output indicators	S		Μ	Α	R	Т	TE Review Comments
Component 2 Livelihood options of	of local communities are enhanced through	mo	re s	usta	inab	le an	d 'climate-smart' practices
Output 2.1 Increasing the number of local com	munities benefiting from livelihood initiatives		_				
 # of local communities benefiting from livelihood initiatives (gender-based) 	 2,400 local communities benefited from livelihood initiatives (1600 persons in Lake Umia basin and 400 persons in each of the Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetlands, out of which 50% of them are women) 						 the indicator does not specify what "benefit" would be measured without more information it is not possible to assess if the target can be achieved and is timely livelihood initiatives, especially those which are gender responsive, are relevant
Output 2.2 Decreasing water and agrochemica	l usage						
 % of decrease in water and agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites 	 30% of decrease in water and agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites 						 indicator meets some SMART criteria indicator does not specify baseline or requirement to establish baseline, as such may not be "measurable" indicator includes more than one measure, i.e., water use and agrochemical use which may include a variety of different pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers
Output 2.3 Implementing climate-smart practices in new pilot sites							
 # of new pilot villages in which climate smart practices have been implemented 	 140 new pilot villages in which climate smart practices have been implemented (80 pilots in LU basin and 30 for each of Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetlands) 						 indicator meets most SMART criteria indicator could be improved by specifying what "climate smart practices" being implemented qualify for achievement of indicator
Component 3 Engagement of local commu	inities in wetland management is enhanced	thr	oug	h co	mmı	inity	mobilization and public awareness
Output 3.1: Establishing and functionalizing CE	Output 3.1: Establishing and functionalizing CEPA centers						

Project Output Indicators		End of Project target	TE Review					TE Boview Commente
	Project Output indicators	End of Project target		Μ	Α	R	Т	TE Review Comments
7.	:# of Communication, Education, Participation, and Awareness-raising (CEPA) centers which are established and functional	 3 CEPA centers which are established and functional (one center in each of LU, Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetlands) 						 indicator meets SMART criteria
Ou	tput: 3.2 Implementing wetland managemer	nt initiative by the local community						
8.	# of wetland management initiatives being implemented by the local community	 18 wetland management initiatives (biodiversity conservation, community mobilization, festivals, campaigns, fairs, etc.) being implemented by the local community (12 in LU basin and 3 in each of Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetland 						 indicator meets SMART criteria it is assumed that the sample initiatives provided must have a link to improved wetland management, e.g., the festivals, campaigns and fairs target improved wetland management

Annex 10. Terminal Evaluation of Risk Ratings

Table 10-1 TE Analysis of ProDoc Risk Ratings and Risk Treatment and Management Measures (ProDoc ratings are provided for impact / probability; TE ratings are based on ERM Risk Evaluation Matrix)

Risks Identified in ProDoc	Pro-Doc Impact / Probability	TE	ProDoc Risk Treatment and Management Measures	Terminal Evaluation Comments				
Risk Category: Organizational								
Risk 1: Sectoral approaches within related government entities may affect project progress and achievement of result	Medium / Medium	Low	Capacity development of stakeholders, bilateral and multilateral meetings with stakeholders	 Likelihood: (Not Likely – 1) The CIWP has demonstrated strong cooperation among government organization both vertically (national, provincial, county) and horizontally (among different government sectors) Impact: (Extensive – 4) A lack of cooperation among government stakeholders would have a large negative impact on project achievement Mitigation Measures: Continue to follow the CIWP approach of capacity development among government stakeholders 				
Risk Category: Operatio	nal							
Risk 2: Imposed Sanctions on Iran	Medium / High	Substantial	Planning and predicting countermeasures to reduce the impact of sanctions including innovative payment methods for international consultants	 Likelihood: (Highly Likely – 4) Sanctions are highly likely to continue to be imposed on Iran for the foreseeable future Impact: (Extensive - 4) Iran has technical experts familiar with modern and advanced technologies, but there limited financial resources for upscaling due to sanctions. Mitigation Measures: Use shared learning approaches 				
				to use the available technical resources within Iran.				

Terminal Evaluation of Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihood in Lake Urmia and other wetlands

Risks Identified in ProDoc	Pro-Doc Impact / Probability	TE	ProDoc Risk Treatment and Management Measures	Terminal Evaluation Comments
Risk 3: COVID-19 Pandemic in the country and project pilot sites	Medium / High	Гом	Compatibility countermeasures based on innovative models	Likelihood: (Not Likely – 1) Covid-19 vaccines are effective and available reducing the likelihood of restrictions that impact activities working with communities Impact: (Minor – 2) Innovative mechanisms now exist to continue development work when Covid-19 restrictions are imposed
				<i>Mitigation Measures:</i> Continue to promote vaccination against Covid-19 and have plans in place to implement innovative development mechanisms should restrictions be imposed
Risk Category: Financial				
Risk 4: Late provision of the budgets required for the implementation of the Program	High / Medium	Гом	Serious follow-ups for timely allocation of the budget, detailed action planning to compensate the delays in budget allocation	 Likelihood: (Not Likely – 1) CIWP financial management has developed considerable capacity and experience. Impact: (Extensive – 4) Timely provision of budgets is critical to ongoing implementation CIWP project activities. Mitigation Measures: Follow financial management procurement and reporting procedures adopted by the CIWP PMU.
Risk Category: Environn	nental/ Str	rategic		

Risks Identified in ProDoc	Pro-Doc Impact / Probability	TE	ProDoc Risk Treatment and Management Measures	Terminal Evaluation Comments
Risk 5 Climate Change or abnormal climatic conditions might			Provision of alternative management arrangements for unexpected situation	<i>Likelihood: (Expected – 5)</i> The climate is changing in response to human-caused increase in greenhouse gases.
influence management arrangements and the stakeholders' activities during the time of the project implementation.	Medium / Medium	High		<i>Impact: (Extensive – 4)</i> Climate change impact of reduced precipitation and increased evapo-transpiration impacts humans health and agriculture and natural wetlands.
				<i>Mitigation Measures:</i> Continued adoption of the most water conserving sustainable agricultural methods to adapt to climate change and to mitigate the impact of agricultural water use on wetlands

Annex 11. Terminal Evaluation of Strategic Results Framework Indicator Target Achievement

 Table 6.1. Terminal evaluation of Strategic Results Framework Indicator Target Achievement

Project Output Indicators	Baseline (2019)	End of Project target	TE Assessment	Rating	TE Comments					
Component 1 Fragile wetland ecosystems of Iran are well-managed using an innovative framework to integrated basin-management										
Output 1.1 Developing and implementing wetland management action plans										
1. # of customized	 3 Management 	 3 MPs action plan 	• 2021 – 7 MPs		Activities reported being conducted include:					
wetland management	Plans (MPs)	developed/revised and are	• 2022 – 4 MPs		 providing water need of wetlands; 					
action plan with	developed but action	under implementation (1	• 2023 – 2 MPs		 habitat and species conservation; 					
allocated budget	plans with allocated	action plan for each site)	• Total MPS – 13		 wise use of wetlands' ecosystem 					
plans	budget needs to be				services such as ecotourism;					
developed/revised	developed				 climate smart alternative livelihoods; 					
and are under					 wetland friendly agriculture activities 					
implementation					Funding for activities is from:					
					 national government 					
					private sector industrial companies					
Output 1.2 Increasing Hect	arage of fragile ecosysten	ns	I							
2. Hectarage of fragile	• 60,000 ha	• At least 400,000 ha of	• 2021 – 554,632 ha		Implementation activities include:					
wetland ecosystems		fragile wetland ecosystems	• 2022 – 172,400 ha		Water allocation to wetlands from dams					
under the coverage of		under the coverage of	• 2023 – 1,006 ha		by MoE;					
customized		customized management	• Total Ha – 728,038		Prevention of the expansion of					
management plans		plans under implementation			agricultural lands by MOJA;					
(under implementation)		(250,000 ha Lake Umia			 Prevention of unauthorized use of water 					
		basin, 100,000 ha			by MoE;					
		Shadegan wetland, and			 Habitat conservation by DoE 					
		50,000 ha Bakhtegan			<i>Note</i> : implementation activities may not yet					
		wetland)			started within all areas covered by MPs					
Output 1.3 Equipping and o	operationalizing the monitor	oring stations								
3. # of monitoring	2 monitoring	3 monitoring stations	• 2021 – 3		Monitoring data collected includes: water					
stations equipped and	stations but not fully	equipped and operational	• 2022 – 17		connectivity, temperature, turbidity					
operational	equipped and	(1 in each wetland)	• 2023 – 0		Ouarterly analytic reports are presented to					
	functional		• Total - 20		wetland management committees					
					The quarterly reports are utilized as a					
					Decision Support System (DSS).					

Terminal Evaluation of Promoting Environmental Management and Sustainable Livelihood in Lake Urmia and other wetlands

Project Output Indicators	Baseline (2019)	End of Project target	TE Assessment	Rating	TE Comments	
Component 2 Livelihood options of local communities are enhanced through more sustainable and 'climate-smart' practices						
Output 2.1: Increasing the	number of local communit	ties benefiting from livelihood initia	tives			
4. # of local	 12,000 local 	 2,400 local communities 	 2021 – 1,098 (33%) 		Climate smart AIG livelihood activities	
communities	farmers trained in	benefited from livelihood	women; LU=738;		conducted in 44 pilot villages:	
benefiting from	previous pilot sites	initiatives (1600 persons in	SD=170; BK=190)		 Poultry farming 	
livelihood initiatives	in Lake Umia (LU)	Lake Umia basin and 400	 2022 – 830 (46%) 		 Processing of agricultural products 	
(gender-based)	basin	persons in each of the	women; LU=440;		Mushroom farming	
		Shadegan (SD) and	SD=195; BK=195)		 Cultivation of medicinal plants 	
		Bakhtegan (BK) wetlands,	• 2023 – 1,902 (53%		Beekeeping	
		out of which 50% of them	women; LU=471;		Handicrafts	
		are women)	SD=471; BK=399)		Ecotourism	
			• Total 3,830 (49%		Benefits of climate smart AIG include:	
			women)		 Attention and focus on low-income 	
					groups of rural women;	
					 Increasing facilities for rural women; 	
					 Improving the personal and social skills 	
					of rural women:	
					 Enhancing the savings of rural 	
					households:	
					Implementation of projects compatible	
					with regional conditions;	
					 Environmental awareness raising; 	
					Empowering the local community through savings	
					Examples of CSA include:	
					 70 pilot villages and 1 202 formars 	
					 r s pilot villages and 1,302 families participated in CSA training 	
					 4 pilot villages and 80 farmers 	
					participated and were trained in Decision	
					Support System	
					 13 nilot villages and 26 farmers 	
					To pilot villages and 20 familiers participated in Farmers Field School	
					participated in Familers Field School	

Project Output Indicators	Baseline (2019)	End of Project target	TE Assessment	Rating	TE Comments
Output 2.2 Decreasing wat	er and agrochemical usag	je			
5. % of decrease in water and agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites	 Average 30% decrease in previous pilot sites 	 30% of decrease in water and agrochemical usage in selected pilot sites 	 2021 – 27.1% decrease in water usage; no reporting on decrease in agrochemical usage 2022 – 29.4% decrease in water usage; 25-30% decrease in agrochemical usage 2023 – 26% decrease in water usage, 25-30% decrease in agrochemical usage 		 Reference farms have been used as a baseline to determine % reduction Agrochemicals – pesticides, herbicides and inorganic fertilizer – are not reported on individually It has been reported that some farmers use the water and/or agrochemicals saved to expand their existing farmlands resulting in not net saving for wetland improvement
Output 2.3 Implementing climate-smart practices in new pilot sites					
6. <i>#</i> of new pilot villages in which climate smart practices have been implemented	191 villages as previous pilot villages	 140 new pilot villages in which climate smart practices have been implemented (80 pilots in Lake Umia basin and 30 for each of Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetlands) 	 2021 - 98 (LU=77; SD=10; BK=11) 2022 - 62 (LU=32; SD=15; BK=15) 2023 - 75 (LU=45; SD=15; BK=15) Total 235 (LU=154; SD=40; BK=41) 		 climate smart practices may include agriculture, diversified livelihoods and environmental awareness raising events within each participating pilot village approximately 5% - 20% of the households participated in the implementation of climate smart practices

Project Output Indicators	Baseline (2019)	End of Project target	TE Assessment	Rating	TE Comments
Component 3 Engagement of local communities in wetland management is enhanced through community mobilization and public awareness					
Output 3.1: Establishing an	nd functionalizing CEPA co	enters			
7. :# of CEPA centers which are established and functional	 There are 3 wetlands information centres but no CEPA centres 	 3 CEPA centers which are established and functional (one center in each of Lake Umia, Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetlands) 	3 CEPA centres		 in 2021 equipment for operating procured, in 2022 and 2023 ongoing support provided to CEPA center operations data on participation in CEPA meetings and awareness raising events is XX indicative measures of community mobilization and awareness raising include programs organized at CEPA centres by local associations
Output 3.2 Implementing wetland management initiative by the local community					
8. # of wetland management initiative being implemented by the local community	There have been some local initiatives in the pilot sites but new initiatives will be supported in this project	 18 wetland management initiatives (biodiversity conservation, community mobilization, festivals, campaigns, fairs, etc) being implemented by local community (12 in Lake Umia basin and 3 in each of the Shadegan and Bakhtegan wetlands) 	 2021 – 2 wetland management initiatives 2022 – 11 wetland management initiatives 2023 – 5 wetland management initiatives Total – 18 wetland management initiatives 		 wetland management initiatives have focused on awareness raising, workshops, training and development of training materials engaging local teachers and students Local ecosystem approach secretariats have also participated in training workshops and been provided with training materials

Annex 12. Terminal Evaluation Clearance Form

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Terminal Evaluation Report for (Project Title & UNDP PIMS ID) Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date:	

Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)

Name:

Signature: _____

Date: _____