



***Final Evaluation of the project
"Enhancing Montenegro's Capacity to Integrate
Climate Change Risks into Planning"***

National Adaptation Plan (NAP) project

EVALUATION REPORT

June 2024

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Project information			
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Disclaimer

This report, "Enhancing Montenegro's Capacity to Integrate Climate Change Risks into Planning (NAP Project)", was prepared by independent consultants Mr. Tomislav Novović and Ms. Ana Simonović. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Government of Montenegro, or any other affiliated organizations.

The information provided in this report is intended solely to evaluate the NAP Project. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented, the authors make no representations or warranties of any kind regarding the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the report or the information, products, services, or related graphics contained in the report for any purpose.

The recommendations provided in this report are based on the analysed data available during the evaluation and discussions with the stakeholders. They intend to guide future actions.

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Our deepest respect and commendation go to all those involved in implementing the project. Through the efforts of numerous unnamed contributors, the foundational structures for the project's governance, procedures, and technical implementations were solidified, aligning with the emerging transparency requirements under the Paris Agreement.

List of abbreviations

CA	Contribution Analysis
CPD	Country Programme Document
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
EC	Evaluation Consultant
ER	Evaluation Report
ET	Evaluation team
ETS	Emission trading system
EU	European Union
FE	Final Evaluation
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GoM	Government of Montenegro
GRES	Gender Results Effectiveness Framework
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IR	Inception report
KII	Key Informants Interviews
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
MTESDNRD	Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development, and North Region Development
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NCCS	National Climate Change Strategy
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PB	Project Board
PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
PM	Project Manager
PMF	Performance Measurement Framework
Prodoc	Project document
PT	Project Team
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART	Specific Measurable Accepted Realistic Timely
SOP	Standard operating procedures
SoV	Sources of Verification
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

Executive summary

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Montenegro is actively addressing the risks posed by climate change, but still faces significant challenges in meeting EU standards in legislative compliance, administrative capacity, and policy implementation. The 2019 Law on Protection Against Adverse Impacts of Climate Change and the National Climate Change Strategy by 2030 are pivotal to Montenegro's environmental policies, aligning them with the EU's Emissions Trading System (ETS) and setting detailed targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Despite these efforts, there is a critical need for enhanced planning for climate change adaptation.

Montenegro has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 35% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, as outlined in its enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution (eNDC). The country is also working to integrate gender considerations into its climate policies, developing a comprehensive Gender Action Plan and incorporating gender-focused analyses into its climate strategies.

Overview of the NAP Project

The "Enhancing Montenegro's Capacity to Integrate Climate Change Risks into Planning" (NAP Project) aims to bolster Montenegro's institutional resilience against climate change impacts. Funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and implemented by UNDP, the project focuses on improving institutional coordination, enhancing technical capacities, enriching climate-related information, and developing financial mechanisms to support adaptation initiatives.

The project's core objectives include:

- **Strengthening Adaptation Planning Governance:** Enhancing governance structures and technical capacities for effective climate change management.
- **Enhancing Evidence-Based, Gender-Sensitive Adaptation Solutions:** Gathering and applying data to create inclusive adaptation strategies.
- **Developing an Adaptation Finance Mobilization Strategy:** Securing financial resources for implementing adaptation actions across sectors.

EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation provided a comprehensive understanding of the project's implementation, impact, and sustainability. Objectives include assessing how well the project addressed initially identified adaptation challenges, evaluating the project's contributions to capacity development, and providing actionable recommendations for future iterations of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

A theory-based evaluation using the Theory of Change (ToC) and contribution analysis was employed, integrating human rights and gender-responsive principles. The evaluation used a mixed methods approach combining qualitative interviews and quantitative data from national reports, with data triangulation ensuring accuracy. The ET used MAXQDA software for qualitative data analysis.

Data analysis involved cross-validation from various sources to ensure accuracy. The ET used triangulation to confirm major trends and establish correlations and causations between project strategies and outcomes. Stakeholders were engaged to validate conclusions and refine recommendations. These recommendations were prioritised based on impact, feasibility, and urgency, ensuring they were evidence-based and actionable. Feedback loops with key stakeholders refined and validated these recommendations. Overall, the evaluation provided strategic insights and lessons learned to guide future climate adaptation efforts in Montenegro, emphasising the importance of enhancing legislative and institutional capacities, improving coordination frameworks, and ensuring sustainability and inclusivity in adaptation planning.

FINDINGS

Relevance and coherence

The NAP Project effectively integrated policy influence, capacity building, gender sensitivity, and stakeholder engagement, aligning closely with Montenegro's national climate priorities and broader international climate action agenda. The Project's design and implementation were closely aligned with national CCA priorities, enhancing institutional coordination, increasing institutional capabilities, expanding the climate information database, and identifying financial resources for adaptation investments. It supported Montenegro's climate action commitments expressed in the National Climate Change Strategy by 2030 and the National Strategy of Sustainable Development (NSSD) 2030, contributing to a "resource-efficient and circular economy". Activities such as strengthening the Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development and addressing gender-sensitive adaptation strategies highlighted the Project's responsiveness to national needs.

The NAP Project aligned with the UNSDCF (2023–2027) and the UNDP CPD for Montenegro. It supported inclusive economic development and environmental sustainability and integrated climate change goals into national policies. The Project also captured the essence of the GCF's programming, contributing to systemic change by improving adaptation governance, building institutional capacity, and addressing critical climate risks in priority sectors.

The Project's theory of change was clearly and precisely crafted with robust involvement from key national stakeholders. The intervention logic ensured internal coherence, with activities, outputs, and outcomes logically connected to the overall objective of strengthening Montenegro's climate resilience. Despite challenges such as the ambitious scope, limited timeframe, and complex coordination needs, the Project maintained strategic relevance, aligning with national strategies and enhancing institutional capacities for climate adaptation. The detailed problem analysis and focus on priority sectors like water, agriculture, health, and tourism facilitated targeted adaptation measures, ensuring a comprehensive approach to climate resilience.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness was evaluated in enhancing national government capacity and institutional strengthening, advancing climate change adaptation (CCA) planning, and influencing national CCA policies.

The Project generally met its primary objectives, aligning with the designated activities, outputs, and performance indicators. Despite challenges, the NAP Project successfully executed the planned activities, achieving the intended outputs and generating some critical non-planned results. This demonstrated a strong alignment between the Project's strategic execution and its outputs and outcomes.

Overview of Progress under Outcome 1: A key achievement was revitalizing the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) under the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro (GS-GoM) and its working groups. This support included developing formal guidelines and procedures to integrate climate adaptation measures into national and sectoral policies. The Project also prioritized stakeholder engagement, ensuring involvement from government entities, CSOs, and the private sector, and provided capacity-building initiatives to enhance stakeholders' skills and knowledge in adaptation planning. Additionally, the Project contributed to the legal and technical realms, notably through expert input to the Draft Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change.

Under **Output 1.1**, the Project focused on strengthening institutional capacities for CCA planning. This included comprehensive assessments of existing skills, resources, and institutional frameworks, followed by tailored capacity development programs. Training programs and workshops equipped stakeholders with the necessary expertise in climate risk assessment, policy formulation, and implementing adaptation strategies. Progress under this output was validated through indicators showing the number of institutions assessed, capacity-building measures identified, new training modules created, and personnel trained in relevant skills.

Output 1.2 addressed institutional coordination for CCA planning. Key advancements included developing the draft Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change and updating the mission and mandate for the Working Group on Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change. This work established a robust legal basis for adaptation efforts and strengthened the institutional framework for effective adaptation planning and implementation.

Overview of Progress under Outcome 2: The Project completed gender-focused climate impact analyses across critical sectors, updated climate change scenarios to reflect new data, and documented past adaptation projects to inform future strategies. Outreach initiatives and media articles raised public awareness of gender issues in climate adaptation.

Under **Output 2.1**, the Project completed four gender-focused climate impact analyses and updated climate change scenarios. Documentation of past adaptation projects provided valuable insights for developing inclusive future measures. Various outreach products and high stakeholder engagement in workshops and events demonstrated effective dissemination of knowledge and commitment to gender-sensitive adaptation efforts. Under **Output 2.2**, the draft National Adaptation Plan (NAP) was crafted as a strategic document guiding Montenegro through climate adaptation complexities. It included an in-depth analysis of current and projected climate conditions, sector-specific vulnerabilities, and tailored adaptation measures supported by robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and financial frameworks.

Overview of Progress under Outcome 3: The draft financial strategy streamlined the process of identifying, securing, and managing financial resources for implementing adaptation measures. This included stakeholder consultations, capacity development, and creating detailed financing guidelines. The strategy thoroughly analysed existing and potential funding sources, aligning with Montenegro's adaptation needs. Under **Output 3.1**, the Project prepared preliminary cost-benefit analyses for prioritized CCA investment options and identified various funding sources. Several concept notes were developed to address each sector's principal risks and adaptation options. Achievements included successful endorsements and the initiation of significant projects, demonstrating a proactive approach to securing financial backing for Montenegro's adaptation efforts.

The NAP Project achieved results beyond the planned, including enhancing the role of the NCS and the GS, increasing stakeholder and institutional capacity, promoting innovative practices, and diversifying funding opportunities. The reorganization of the NCS and its Secretariat under the GS provided strategic benefits for sustainable development and climate adaptation actions in Montenegro. The Project's role in augmenting climate change knowledge and awareness significantly boosted stakeholder participation, exemplified by the "Dialogue for Development" platform. Additionally, the Project's efforts in drafting a financial strategy resulted in pivotal agreements and proposals, showcasing a strategic approach to funding.

Several external factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, a cyberattack on Montenegro's government, and political instability, created significant obstacles to the NAP Project's implementation. These challenges led to slower decision-making, diverted focus and resources, and necessitated a recalibration of strategies and timelines. Despite these challenges, positive factors such as regular consultations, awareness-raising activities, and strong communication efforts contributed to the Project's effectiveness. The Project's proactive engagement with stakeholders and transparent approach to NAP preparation facilitated long-term implementation commitment and adaptability. Incorporating lessons from past initiatives also informed the development of adaptation strategies and policies, strengthening the overall NAP process.

Efficiency:

The evaluation of the NAP Project's efficiency considered key factors including budget delivery, timeliness, and the effectiveness of management practices. The assessment revealed that the Project faced significant implementation delays due to external challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, a cyber-attack, and local capacity issues. Despite these setbacks, the Project adapted by shifting to online platforms and introducing flexible implementation modalities. By the end of 2023, the Project had expended approximately 62% of its total budget of USD 1,868,296.00. Despite delays, the Project is expected to utilize around 90% of the approved budget by the closure date. Regular consultations with a Regional Technical Advisor and an International Consultant on CCA provided essential support, and the engagement of a full-time Project Coordinator in 2023 significantly boosted project efficiency.

The Project's M&E system, aligned with standard UNDP procedures, faced deficiencies such as the absence of a robust Results Framework (RF) and poorly defined output indicators. Despite these issues, the Project effectively monitored progress and adapted strategies accordingly. The Project's communication efforts included workshops, training sessions, and outreach activities that enhanced stakeholder participation and visibility. However, a more robust communication and visibility strategy could enhance public understanding

of climate change adaptation (CCA). The NAP Project prioritized building a comprehensive knowledge base and effectively engaging stakeholders. Structured efforts in capacity development and disseminating knowledge products established a solid foundation for ongoing and future climate adaptation initiatives. The Project demonstrated adaptability and resilience in the face of significant challenges. While delays and external factors impacted efficiency, strategic management practices, effective stakeholder engagement, and a focus on capacity building contributed to achieving the Project's primary objectives.

Sustainability

The evaluation of the NAP Project's sustainability focused on socio-political, governance, financial, and environmental factors crucial for maintaining results post-completion. The findings indicate that, despite challenges, the Project's focus on fostering national ownership and enhancing institutional and policy frameworks for climate change adaptation (CCA) exhibits a commitment to sustainability. The Montenegrin government intends to improve institutional capacities and coordination, climate-related information for adaptation strategies, and financial mechanisms for implementation, laying a solid foundation for long-term sustainability.

Socio-political factors present significant risks to the sustainability of project achievements, mainly influenced by Montenegro's political stability and security environment. Frequent changes in government and corresponding shifts in ministries have diverted attention away from environmental issues. Despite these risks, the NAP Project has implemented measures to enhance sustainability, such as extensive consultations, inclusive policy processes, and increased awareness and understanding of CCA. Governance and institutional factors showed progress through establishing a comprehensive strategic framework for CCA, mandating continuous follow-up on adaptation measures across all sectors. The Project's influence in revitalizing the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSO) and developing the Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change has been instrumental in embedding CCA within national policies.

Financial sustainability is crucial for the ongoing implementation of adaptation strategies. The NAP Project has made strides in securing sustainable financial resources, including a draft financial strategy and agreements with key financial institutions. The Project's adeptness in resource mobilization is evident in securing various funding sources and developing innovative financing mechanisms. Environmental sustainability was addressed through risk assessments and identifying sector vulnerabilities, laying the groundwork for effective adaptation measures. Institutional capacity development was a central focus, enhancing the competencies of public administration professionals and other stakeholders involved in climate-related endeavors. Despite challenges such as high staff turnover, the Project's capacity-building initiatives have established a foundation for self-sufficiency. National ownership and leadership varied, with strong commitment from the NCSO and active participation from the Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development, and North Region Development, although other government departments showed more reactive engagement. Ensuring dynamic and inclusive engagement with CSOs and the private sector remains a priority for comprehensive and representative climate action.

Impact

The NAP Project enhanced Montenegro's climate change sector and institutional capacity through comprehensive policy changes, systemic improvements, and normative modifications. The project focused on policy and legal changes in climate change adaptation (CCA), supporting sectoral assessments to understand climate risks and vulnerabilities, particularly from a gender-sensitive perspective. This approach facilitated agenda setting, policy development, and the formulation of the draft Climate Change Adaptation Financing Guidelines, contributing to broader sustainable development goals.

The project notably transformed the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSO) by strengthening its internal capacities and elevating its role in climate governance. The project's support helped NCSO streamline processes, increase efficiency, and reduce bureaucratic inertia, ensuring its pivotal role in climate adaptation efforts. Additionally, the NAP Project facilitated NCSO's integration with global networks and supported peer-to-peer exchanges, fostering continued institutional improvement and international collaboration.

Despite challenges such as political instability and capacity issues, the NAP Project's strategic management, stakeholder engagement, and capacity-building initiatives have laid a robust foundation for sustained climate adaptation efforts in Montenegro. Future priorities include enhancing communication strategies, engaging CSOs and the private sector more dynamically, and improving monitoring and evaluation systems to optimize resource use and sustain the project's impacts.

Cross-cutting

The NAP Project integrated cross-cutting issues, focusing on gender considerations and human rights-based approaches. The project emphasized gender equality and women's empowerment, aligning with the Green Climate Fund's gender policy and implementing strategies to collect gender-disaggregated data, raise awareness, and promote women's active involvement. Key achievements included gender-sensitive assessments, comprehensive training programs, and the development of gender action plans and communication strategies. The project ensured substantial female participation in all activities.

Adopting a human rights-based approach, the NAP Project focused on vulnerable groups, emphasizing the rights of women and communities affected by climate change. The project promoted participatory and transparent processes, enhancing the capacity of individuals and communities to advocate for their rights within the context of climate change adaptation. The evaluation indicated that the project effectively integrated capacity development, human rights, and the rights of vulnerable groups, aligning with the SDGs. The Project also integrated Social and Environmental Standards (SES) to ensure alignment with international best practices. The project began with a comprehensive risk screening process, engaging various stakeholders to foster inclusive climate adaptation approaches. The monitoring and evaluation framework aligned with SES guidelines, ensuring adherence to SES throughout the project lifecycle. The project team followed ethical data collection and reporting standards, maintaining transparent practices and building the capacity of local institutions and stakeholders to manage environmental and social risks.

CONCLUSIONS:

The ET concluded that the NAP Project has significantly aligned with Montenegro's climate change commitments, supporting the country's environmental goals and EU climate acquis compliance. The Project has enhanced institutional capacities and legislative frameworks, notably through the NCSD, promoting national strategies like the NCCS and NSSD for a resource-efficient economy. The Project also mirrored the UN's Sustainable Development Framework, strengthening national institutional structures and advancing Montenegro's climate governance and sustainability. Despite internal and external challenges, the Project maintained strategic alignment and flexibility, contributing to Montenegro's climate resilience and sustainability.

The Project demonstrated robust effectiveness, achieving intended outputs and producing significant unplanned results. It revitalized the NCSD, enhancing institutional capacities for climate adaptation and developing formal guidelines for integrating adaptation measures into policies. The Project prioritized inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches, aligning national adaptation goals with sectoral priorities. Despite obstacles like the COVID-19 pandemic, cyber-attacks, and political instability, the Project adapted strategies and timelines to ensure progress. Approval and implementation of the NAP are crucial, emphasizing the need for stakeholders' commitment and effective use of the MRV system to track and demonstrate adaptation investments' value.

The Project exhibited efficiency through resilient and flexible management, strategic resource use, and high stakeholder engagement. The NAP Project adapted to changing circumstances, including transitioning to virtual platforms during the pandemic and navigating political changes. Financial management was effective despite rigid funding constraints, ensuring judicious use of resources. The Project's extension allowed for the completion of deliverables, particularly the NAP finalization and NCSD's institutional capacity enhancement. While the Project set the stage for sustained CCA efforts, political stability, financial security, and institutional resilience are essential for enduring success. Strategic partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms are crucial for financial sustainability, and continued support from UNDP and potential donors is necessary for implementing the NAP. The Project's focus on gender and human rights enriched adaptation

strategies, ensuring they are sustainable and inclusive, supporting Montenegro's environmental and social objectives amidst climate challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1: Completing the Endorsement of the NAP The ET recommends intensifying efforts in finalizing public consultations for the draft NAP and its finalisation. This involves organizing detailed presentations to showcase the NAP to various institutional stakeholders and soliciting their feedback to ensure the plan reflects a comprehensive understanding of specific needs and priorities. Following these consultations, it is crucial for MTESDNRD and the NCS D to collaborate closely, supported by the UNDP, to finalize approval and endorsement of the NAP, providing technical and logistical support as needed.

R2: Expand the focus of the next phase and consider longer time The ET recommends crafting a comprehensive follow-up project for the NAP, prioritizing securing and diversifying funding sources. The next phase should be strategically planned for a longer duration to align with the extensive timeline of the NAP, ensuring sustained support for the NCS D and the GS. This phase should include a focused governance component aimed at capacity development and institutional strengthening of key agencies involved in environmental stewardship and governance, particularly enhancing the operational and strategic capacities of the NCS D and the General Secretariat.

R3: Climate Adaptation Finance The ET recommends prioritizing securing sustainable financing for climate adaptation efforts in Montenegro. This involves establishing a robust financing strategy that integrates state budgets with funds from international development partners and the private sector. The strategy should include mechanisms for regular updates and revisions to adapt to changing needs and ensure alignment with national priorities. The role of the private sector should be carefully evaluated to determine its potential contributions and the feasibility of generating returns on investments in adaptation projects.

R4: Enhance awareness and capacities concerning the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and climate change The ET recommends focusing on educating stakeholders, particularly civil servants and public administration professionals within the environmental and climate change sectors, to strengthen their understanding of the NAP's priorities and innovative approaches. Future projects should implement comprehensive communication strategies to ensure all stakeholders are well-informed about the NAP's goals, progress, and successes. Innovative capacity development, education, and awareness-raising tools should leverage new technologies to make information accessible and engaging.

R5: Strengthen Monitoring Framework and Improve Indicators For future projects, stakeholders should prioritise the development of meaningful and SMART indicators, particularly at the outcome level. These indicators should be clearly defined with precise baselines and targets to track and measure project progress effectively. Emphasising the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data will ensure well-informed and monitored interventions, enhancing the project's ability to address gender-specific impacts and outcomes effectively. This strategic approach to data management will strengthen the project's capacity to adapt and respond to emerging challenges and disparities identified during implementation.

Introduction

This document presents the final evaluation report for the "Enhancing Montenegro's Capacity to Integrate Climate Change Risks into Planning" (NAP) project. This comprehensive evaluation assesses the project's progress and outcomes against its original objectives and goals, as specified in the Terms of Reference (TOR).

The report is structured to offer an in-depth analysis of the project's strategic alignment, progress towards results, implementation dynamics, adaptive management practices, and sustainability, focusing on how these elements support Montenegro's broader development and environmental goals. It includes a detailed description of the data collection methods and analysis techniques used, ensuring alignment with the evaluation criteria and questions outlined in the TOR. The report also discusses potential limitations encountered during the evaluation process and the strategies to mitigate them.

Key elements of the evaluation include an evaluation matrix (found in Annex 3) that correlates all aspects of the evaluation and tailored interview guides for various stakeholders, which are structured around specific evaluation criteria as per the TOR and the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Evaluations.

The report is organised into several interconnected sections:

- The first section provides a contextual background of Montenegro's efforts in environmental stewardship and climate change adaptation, detailing the strategic importance of the NAP project within this framework.
- Section 2 clarifies the purpose, objectives, and scope of the final evaluation, identifying the target groups and beneficiaries and ensuring that the evaluation objectives align with the Terms of Reference.
- Section 3 outlines the evaluation criteria, including consideration of cross-cutting issues like human rights and gender equality, and presents the key evaluation questions alongside an evaluability analysis to ascertain the feasibility of the evaluation approach.
- Section 4 describes the specific methodologies employed in this evaluation, including the reconstruction of the Theory of Change, detailing data collection methods and instruments, the process of data analysis, and addressing ethical considerations. It also assesses underlying assumptions and potential risks with proposed mitigation strategies.
- Section 5, the findings are categorised into Project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation and adaptive management, and sustainability. Each category addresses pertinent evaluation questions concerning the project's relevance, alignment with national priorities, efficiency, and gender equality considerations.
- Section 6, Conclusions and Lessons Learned, synthesises key findings from the evaluation, highlighting significant insights and lessons regarding the project's strategy, progress, implementation, and sustainability.
- Based on these insights, Section 7 offers actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing the project's future effectiveness, efficiency, and impact.

Annexes to the report include the Terms of Reference, the Evaluation Matrix, Interview Guides, and additional supporting documentation such as lists of interviewed stakeholders and consulted documents, which provide comprehensive support to the evaluation findings.

1 Context and background

1.1 *Political and Socioeconomic Context*

Climate change poses serious, wide-ranging risks to economies, societies, and ecosystems across the globe. Tackling these risks demands urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions sharply (mitigation) and measures to increase resilience against the unavoidable impacts of climate change (adaptation). The Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) creates opportunities to

ensure a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future for all, offering a blueprint for harmonising climate action with broader socio-economic goals.

Montenegro has been proactively addressing climate change and enhancing its environmental stewardship. Despite these efforts, the country still struggles to meet EU standards in legislative compliance, administrative capacity, and the implementation of essential policies and regulations. Overcoming these challenges is vital for the country to further its environmental objectives and contribute effectively to global sustainability initiatives.

Institutional and legislative framework: Montenegro is actively developing its institutional and legislative structures to better address climate change, as highlighted by the 2019 Law on Protection Against Adverse Impacts of Climate Change¹. This pivotal legislation aligns Montenegro's environmental policies with the EU's Emissions Trading System² (ETS), demonstrating a firm commitment to international climate change mitigation standards. This critical alignment not only integrates Montenegro more fully into the European environmental policy sphere but also underscores its willingness to embrace market-based approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions effectively.

Building on this legal foundation, Montenegro has put forth the National Climate Change Strategy by 2030³, which sets forth a detailed roadmap for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This Strategy specifies targets, outlines sector-specific strategies, and establishes mechanisms for monitoring progress, reaffirming Montenegro's resolve to address the root causes of climate change. Despite its comprehensive nature, the Strategy also exposes a shortfall in detailed planning for climate change adaptation, underscoring an urgent need for targeted strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change across various societal dimensions—environmental, social, economic, and health. To address these complex challenges, the Strategy calls for an integrated planning approach that necessitates a collaborative effort among diverse sectors and stakeholders to foster effective adaptation measures and bolster community and national resilience. In alignment with ongoing EU integration efforts, the Strategy aims to ensure consistency with the EU's 2030 climate and energy framework, including key components such as the ETS, Effort Sharing Regulation, and Governance Regulation. Enhancing the administrative capacity to implement and enforce these comprehensive policies is a continuing priority.

To support these goals, the National Council for Sustainable Development⁴ established a permanent working group, with support from UNDP, to support mitigation and adaptation to climate change. This group's mandate includes developing a robust monitoring and reporting system for greenhouse gas emissions and crafting policies that align with EU standards for climate change mitigation and adaptation⁵.

The Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development, and North Region Development⁶ (MTESDNRD) has promoted environmentally friendly practices, including adopting low fuel consumption and low CO₂-emission vehicles. Moreover, the MTESDNRD is spearheading the development of a national climate change adaptation plan in collaboration with the UNDP. Despite these advancements, the National Energy and Climate Plan, which aims to achieve decarbonisation by 2050, faces delays, with its scheduled completion pushed to 2024. Montenegro is also challenged to establish an effective carbon pricing mechanism in line with the EU ETS to better prepare for the recently implemented EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism⁷, and to ensure full compliance with EU environmental directives. These steps are crucial as Montenegro continues to align its climate action strategies with broader European and global standards, aiming to enhance its legislative and institutional capabilities to tackle the multifaceted challenges of climate change.

¹ Official Gazette of Montenegro- Nr: 01-2251/2 Podgorica, 25. December 2019.

² https://www.dnv.com/maritime/insights/topics/eu-emissions-trading-system/index.html?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA98WrBhAYEiwA2WvhOqTT2Ws8b1h6qvv8SjEpQLpTJ_tCJoSELhfkpR5R638hkMme71R2CB0Cj_oQAvD_BwE

³ https://www.preventionweb.net/files/60580_montenegroclimatechange.pdf

⁴ This was done through the NAP Project support, in February 2023. NSCD of Montenegro was established in 2002. The Council has 23 representatives: representatives of Government (5), local authorities (3), academia (2), business sectors (4), NGOs (4) and independent persons/experts (4) and Secretary - Head of the Division for the support to the NCSD.

⁵ Montenegro's legislative alignment with the EU acquis in areas such as water management, waste management, and nature protection is still a work in progress. While there is some level of preparedness, significant efforts are required to implement and enforce regulations in these sectors. The country needs to adopt and start implementing the Waste Management Law, the national waste management plan, and the Strategy on air quality management for 2020-2029 to advance its green transition ambitions.

⁶ Established 31 October 2023, previously it was the MESPU) <https://www.gov.me/vlada-crne-gore/sastav-vlade>

⁷ EU Progress report on Montenegro, 2023

Montenegro initially pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30% through its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution⁸ submitted to the UNFCCC, a target it has successfully met. Building on this, in June 2021, the Government of Montenegro adopted an enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution⁹. (eNDC), aiming for a 35% reduction by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. To effectively monitor progress toward these eNDC goals, there is an acknowledged need to establish a comprehensive Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV-E) system. Enhancements in the accuracy of emission calculations, including more reliable economic projections and integrating data from forestry and agriculture into the MRV system, could enable Montenegro to consider even higher emission reduction targets. Preparatory work to revise the NDC is underway. Additionally, in December 2022, the Energy Community's Council of Ministers set a new reduction target of 55% by 2030¹⁰ relative to 1990. The forthcoming NDC revision must outline scenarios to meet this heightened target, reflecting Montenegro's escalating commitments to climate action.

Gender mainstreaming in climate action: Montenegro progressively incorporates gender considerations into its climate change policies, marking a significant shift towards inclusive environmental governance. The country has developed a comprehensive Gender Action Plan¹¹ that explicitly addresses gender goals within climate action. This plan emphasises the integration of gender perspectives across various facets of climate policy, including mainstreaming gender into the climate change transparency framework and including gender representation in the Working Group for Climate Change under the National Council for Sustainable Development. Additionally, the plan focuses on enhancing the collection and utilisation of sex- and gender-disaggregated data for MRV-E purposes, as outlined in a UNDP report from 2020.

Building on this foundation, Montenegro has included a detailed gender analysis in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Background Report, examining mitigation measures through a gender lens and making recommendations for enhanced data collection and gender-sensitive decision-making. Gender-related indicators have also been incorporated into Montenegro's NDC Roadmap¹², as noted in a 2021 UNDP report, highlighting a systematic approach to integrating gender considerations into national climate strategies.

Looking forward, Montenegro is committed to deepening its gender mainstreaming efforts in developing its Fourth National Communication and First Biennial Transparency Report. Planned initiatives include targeted training for the employees of its statistics agency on collecting and analysing gender-disaggregated data and applying gender mainstreaming methodologies. Additionally, the country aims to assess and address the specific needs of women in adapting to climate impacts in key sectors such as health, education, and agriculture, ensuring that climate adaptation strategies are equitable and effective. These efforts demonstrate Montenegro's ongoing dedication to ensuring that gender considerations are at the forefront of its climate action plans, enhancing the resilience and inclusivity of its responses to climate challenges.

Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability: Montenegro is actively working to balance economic development with environmental sustainability, particularly in pivotal sectors such as energy, tourism, and agriculture. In the energy sector, Montenegro is making strides toward greater efficiency and increased use of renewable resources, which are essential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fostering a transition to a low-carbon economy. The tourism and agriculture sectors also present significant opportunities for adopting sustainable practices. Eco-tourism and sustainable agriculture help conserve the environment and promote economic growth. However, effectively integrating climate action within these sectors poses substantial challenges. While the shift toward renewable energy is commendable, it requires careful consideration to ensure it remains economically viable and sustainable. Similarly, while tourism is a major contributor to Montenegro's economy, there is a pressing need to implement sustainable tourism practices that minimize environmental impacts. In agriculture, the challenge is to embrace environmentally friendly and economically sustainable practices. There is a need for strategic planning, investment, and

⁸ Government of Montenegro Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) of Montenegro following decision 1/CP.19 and decision 1/CP.20 Podgorica, September 2015

⁹ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Updated%20NDC%20for%20Montenegro.pdf>

¹⁰ [https://www.energy-](https://www.energy-community.org/implementation/packae.html#:~:text=At%20its%20meeting%20in%20Vienna,2050%20on%2015%20December%202022.)

[community.org/implementation/packae.html#:~:text=At%20its%20meeting%20in%20Vienna,2050%20on%2015%20December%202022.](https://www.energy-community.org/implementation/packae.html#:~:text=At%20its%20meeting%20in%20Vienna,2050%20on%2015%20December%202022.)

¹¹ National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2025 with Action Plan 2021-2022, June 2021- <https://wapi.gov.me/download/33985332-d431-4c25-9643-e9a15d76e548?version=1.0> and Gender Analysis within the Third Biennial Update Report (TBUR) by Olgica Apostolova <https://www.undp.org/montenegro/publications/gender-and-climate-change-analysis/gender-capacity-assessment-ngos-within-climate-promise>

¹² [https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/where-we-](https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/montenegro#:~:text=Key%20highlights%20from%20the%20NDC,Adaptation%20Plan%20is%20currently%20underway.)

[work/montenegro#:~:text=Key%20highlights%20from%20the%20NDC,Adaptation%20Plan%20is%20currently%20underway.](https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/montenegro#:~:text=Key%20highlights%20from%20the%20NDC,Adaptation%20Plan%20is%20currently%20underway.) And

<https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Montenegro%20First/Updated%20NDC%20for%20Montenegro.pdf>

innovative solutions to align economic growth with environmental stewardship. It involves a comprehensive approach that includes engaging stakeholders across all sectors, encouraging policymakers to foster environments conducive to sustainable practices, incentivising green investments, and promoting technologies supporting economic development and environmental health. To achieve this delicate balance, Montenegro must prioritise environmental sustainability within its economic development strategies, ensuring that growth is aligned with the conservation and enhancement of natural resources. This approach should also involve widespread education and engagement of both the public and private sectors to embrace and advocate for sustainable practices, paving the way for a sustainable future for Montenegro.

Despite some progress, the adaptation planning process within Montenegro's policy and institutional frameworks faces significant challenges and barriers. Key issues include inadequately developed coordination frameworks for adaptation planning and action, which lack clear role definitions, sufficient technical capacity, and robust institutional arrangements for integrating climate change into sectoral programs. There is a critical need to enhance national and sectoral capacities to utilise climate information for adaptation measures effectively. The absence of comprehensive data complicates the evaluation of climate impacts and adaptation options, hindering informed decision-making for long-term planning. Additionally, a limited understanding among the decision-makers of the financial costs associated with adaptation measures impedes the effective allocation and optimization of national and alternative financial resources necessary for funding these priorities and activities.

1.2 Overview of the Project "Enhancing Montenegro's Capacity to Integrate Climate Change Risks into Planning" (NAP)

In response to the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change, Montenegro has embarked on a strategic initiative titled "Enhancing Montenegro's Capacity to Integrate Climate Change Risks into Planning" (NAP Project or the Project). This Project, approved for funding under The Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme (GCF), aims to bolster Montenegro's institutional resilience against climate change impacts. A comprehensive stocktaking exercise in collaboration with national stakeholders and the Government of Montenegro identified water, agriculture, tourism, and health as the initial sectors prioritised for intervention. The GCF has approved financing for this Project to augment Montenegro's capabilities for sustained adaptation planning.

The Project's activities were designed to support Montenegro in improving the institutional coordination framework, bolstering institutional capabilities, enriching climate-related information, delineating potential adaptation strategies, and outlining the financial mechanisms necessary for supporting these adaptation initiatives. The Project has contributed to an environment conducive to adaptation at the national and sectoral levels, facilitating Montenegro's efforts to discern climate-induced vulnerabilities and risks, thereby enabling the design and execution of targeted adaptation measures aligned with the nation's priorities.

The initiative's core objectives include:

Outcome 1: Adaptation planning governance, institutional coordination, and technical capacity strengthened: This entails fortifying the governance structures underpinning adaptation planning and enhancing Montenegro's coordination and technical acumen to manage and mitigate climate impacts effectively.

Outcome 2: An enhanced evidence base for designing gender-sensitive adaptation solutions: A focus on gathering and applying evidence to create adaptation strategies that acknowledge and address gender disparities, ensuring inclusivity in adaptation efforts.

Outcome 3: An adaptation finance mobilisation strategy developed: Formulating a comprehensive strategy to secure the financial resources necessary for implementing adaptation actions across various sectors.

The Project's planned and supported activities have created a robust adaptation framework. Emphasising capacity-building to fill existing gaps and fostering a skilled workforce adept at navigating the complexities of adaptation planning, the initiative worked to mobilise finance for adaptation measures, ensuring a sustainable approach to climate resilience. Notable outputs included detailed assessments to strengthen institutional adaptation planning, targeted capacity-building to address identified gaps, and strategies for effectively mobilising adaptation finance.

initiatives. Addressing these gaps is essential to improve the effectiveness and resilience of the adaptation planning process against the adverse effects of climate change

2 Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

2.1 Purpose and objectives of the final evaluation

The **purpose** of the final evaluation of the project developing the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intervention's various aspects, including the time frame, implementation phase, geographic area, and target groups involved.

The **objective** was to assess how well the project addressed initially identified adaptation challenges and contributed to the overall process of improvement. The ET reflected on the capacity development component, summarising findings and presenting data-driven facts from their comprehensive analysis. In the conclusions section, the ET provide substantiated, balanced statements that address the Project's strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes, ensuring a logical link to the findings and reflecting on issues crucial to the beneficiaries.

The ET prepared recommendations that are actionable, practical, and tailored to guide the evaluation's users. They stem directly from evidence and are linked to the evaluation's key questions. These recommendations are tailored to empower key partners engaged in project implementation and those contributing to the design and implementation of the NAP process, ensuring a sustainable and effective approach to adaptation planning in Montenegro's foreseeable future.

The report also enhanced future iterations of the NAPs, with a strategic focus on the Government of Montenegro's partnership with the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

2.2 Scope of the final evaluation

The scope of the final Project's evaluation spans its entire duration and all its components, ensuring a comprehensive perspective on its various components.

The ET implemented an exhaustive review of its programming process and deliverables, thus, enabling a thorough analysis of the Project against established evaluation criteria.

2.3 Target groups and beneficiaries

The NAP project in Montenegro involved various stakeholders, each playing a critical role in its implementation and achieving results. These stakeholders include government institutions, development partners, private sector entities, and civil society organisations.

Key government stakeholders include the Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Development, the National Council for Sustainable Development. These institutions ensured the Project aligned with national climate policies and strategies, facilitated coordination among different sectors, and integrated adaptation plans into national development plans. The Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology also provided essential technical data and expertise for climate adaptation planning.

Private sector entities, including financial institutions and businesses, explored investment opportunities in climate adaptation projects, mobilising additional resources and integrating climate risks into business operations. Civil society organisations and academic institutions raised awareness, conducted research, and ensured community participation in the adaptation planning process, ensuring adaptation measures were inclusive and addressed the needs of vulnerable populations.

UNDP served as the primary development partner, offering technical and operational support. UNDP ensured the Project met international standards and leveraged global best practices in climate adaptation. Other international organisations and donors, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), provided resources and technical assistance to support the various aspects of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

The collaborative efforts of these stakeholders have been critical for implementing and sustaining the NAP project in Montenegro, fostering a resilient and adaptive environment to combat climate change. Through an inclusive approach, the Project prioritised public consultations, stakeholder engagement, establishing a Working Group for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change, expert reviews, and gender action planning to ensure a comprehensive integration of gender mainstreaming in the NAP's design and implementation.

3 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The ET focused on ToR's criteria, namely, relevance (including coherence as required by OECD DAC criteria), efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability criteria. The ET also considered gender mainstreaming and leaving no one behind cross-cuttingly.

3.1 Evaluation Criteria

The ET assessed the Project's **relevance and coherence** by examining its alignment with government and agency priorities, the appropriateness of the NAP method of delivery within the development context, the relevance and suitability of the theory of change as the foundation for the project's initiatives, and the project's congruence with the UNDP Strategic Plan, Country Programme Document (CPD), United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Green Climate Fund (GCF) strategic programming. This analysis aimed to determine how well the project integrated with and supported overarching development and climate adaptation objectives at both national and international levels.

The ET evaluated the **effectiveness** of Montenegro's NAP Project in enhancing national government capacity, particularly in institutional strengthening, and its efficacy in advancing climate change adaptation (CCA) planning. This process included assessing the alignment of Project outputs with the Theory of Change (TOC) and whether these were delivered to support the project's pathways. Additionally, the ET examined the NAP Project's role in influencing national CCA policies, assessed partners' contributions, and the collaborations' effectiveness. It also explored the positive and negative changes prompted by the project, identified factors that facilitated or hindered its performance and considered the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic affected project implementation. This consolidated assessment provided strategic insights and lessons learned to guide future climate adaptation efforts in Montenegro.

The **efficiency** of the NAP Project was scrutinised by evaluating the applicability of its approaches, resources, models, and conceptual framework in attaining the planned outcomes. This involved assessing whether there was an economical utilisation of financial and human resources alongside strategic resource allocation, encompassing funds, time, expertise, and other critical assets. Additionally, the effectiveness of the project's monitoring and evaluation systems in facilitating efficient management of activities and outputs was examined. The evaluation also considered the project's design, questioning whether it facilitated or impeded the achievement of project goals and whether alternative approaches were explored during the project's inception. This streamlined assessment aimed to capture the NAP Project's ability to use its resources judiciously and achieve its objectives efficiently.

The **sustainability** of the NAP Project's outcomes and outputs was crucial. The ET assessed how these achievements would likely persist beyond the project's lifespan, including the mechanisms established to support the Government of Montenegro in maintaining improvements. It examined the development and implementation of a sustainability strategy, focusing on capacity building among key national stakeholders. The ET explored partners' commitment to ongoing support and opportunities for financial sustainability. Indications of how the project built institutional capacity that would endure in the aftermath of this initiative through systems, structures, staff, and expertise were also scrutinised.

The ET assessed the tangible and intangible changes—**impact**—resulting from the NAP Project, focusing on the difference made to beneficiaries, including quantifiable effects on individuals (men and women). Contributions to policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks were evaluated, noting any capacity enhancements and changes within governance structures. The project's influence on socio-economic status, including improvements in income, health, and well-being, was discussed, alongside any unintended effects, both positive and negative. The evaluation identified barriers and risks to long-term impact, evaluating any

significant shifts in gender equality, such as in resource access and control, decision-making power, and labor division.

The evaluation included a comprehensive assessment of how the Project's design, implementation, and monitoring had integrated critical cross-cutting issues. Specifically, the ET implemented a multifaceted approach to undertake a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of cross-cutting issues throughout the evaluation, ensuring a deep integration of gender considerations and incorporating diverse stakeholder perspectives at every evaluation phase. Specifically, the ET examined the extent to which human rights considerations have been embedded in the Project's activities, also focusing on the benefits to people experiencing poverty, women, and other disadvantaged groups. For gender equality, the evaluation assessed how the Project addressed gender issues throughout its lifecycle, analysing transformative changes in promoting gender equality.

The EC used the UNDP Gender Results Effectiveness Framework (GRES)¹³ to capture variation in the type of gender results.

3.2 Key Evaluation Questions

The TOR provided the basis for the evaluation questions the ET analyzed and proposed, ensuring that all areas indicated under the TOR are considered and covered.

The FE report answered these questions using specific, objectively verifiable indicators (OVI) generated for each EQ to assess the situation, delivery of outputs and progress towards the intended outcomes.

4 Evaluation approach and methodology

4.1 Specific approach to this evaluation

The framework for this ex-post evaluation was set in the Terms of Reference (ToR), and following its provisions, the Evaluation Team (ET) developed a tailor-made methodology. The main references for the evaluation methodology were the Green Climate Fund's Evaluation operational procedures and guidelines for Accredited Entity-led evaluations¹⁴ and OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria¹⁵. The ET adhered to the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards¹⁶ and UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation¹⁷.

Expanding on this basis, the ET applied a theory-based evaluation¹⁸ using the Theory of Change; furthermore, the evaluation included contribution analysis, reflected gender-responsive principles, and followed a human-rights-based approach. The following paragraphs outline how a unique methodology combining these approaches emerged for the Project's evaluation.

Theory-based evaluation provided a comprehensive and structured framework, looking at the ToC as a roadmap that outlined the intended sequence of events and causal pathways leading to the desired outcomes and the NAP Project objective. The clear articulation of assumptions and risks, through barriers to expected outcomes and the main objective, allowed the ET to systematically assess whether and how the NAP Project organized this process.

This approach facilitated the identification of critical components and variables within the chain of results, providing the basis for measurement and analysis. This was especially important in the NAP Project, as multiple interrelated factors contributed to the outcomes.

¹³ http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/gender/GRES_English.pdf

¹⁴ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/evaluation-operational-procedures-and-guidelines-accredited-entity-led-evaluations>

¹⁵ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), Network on Development Evaluation, Better Criteria for Better Evaluation Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use, 2019, available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

¹⁶ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>

¹⁷ <http://www.uneval.org/document/download/1294>

¹⁸ Centre of Excellence for Evaluation (2012). Theory-Based Approaches to Evaluation: Concepts and Practices. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

The ET promoted the theory-based evaluation for adaptability and learning. The ET compared the actual achievement of outputs and outcomes with those presented in the ToC. This comparison revealed discrepancies, showing aspects of the Project that may not have worked as expected. Furthermore, this iterative process of testing the ToC fostered a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that influenced the delivery of outputs and progress towards outcomes.

Contribution analysis: The ET proposed complementing this theory-based approach with contribution analysis. At its core, this method focused on disentangling and examining the plausible connections between the Project's initiatives and the observed outcomes, striving to comprehend the mechanisms and reasons behind the changes observed. The ET established a causal chain within the ToC, detailing the expected sequence of events from the Project's activities to its ultimate achievements at the overall objective level. It revealed how the ToC envisioned the intervention's success and involved gathering meticulous evidence to validate each step within the logic/ToC/chain. For the NAP Project evaluation, this meant verifying whether the planned activities were executed, whether they achieved immediate outputs and progressed towards outcomes, and so on, culminating in the Project's overall objective.

The strength of contribution analysis lay in its thorough consideration of alternate explanations for the observed outcomes. Evaluating the Project involved scrutinizing external influences or other interventions that might have impacted it. By excluding or integrating these other factors, the ET could more convincingly attribute the observed changes to the Project. Additionally, contribution analysis acknowledged the critical role of context, especially relevant for the NAP Project in Montenegro, where the political, economic, and social landscape and the EU accession process significantly shaped the country's situation.

4.2 *Analysing the Theory of Change*

The ET analysed the Theory of Change (ToC) for Montenegro's NAP Project and delved deeper into the dynamics between assumptions, objectives, and anticipated outcomes, reinforcing the structured pathway toward achieving climate resilience.

In the Theory of Change for Montenegro's NAP, the pathway to enhancing the nation's climate resilience was articulated logically, contingent upon certain foundational assumptions and effective risk management. This structured approach posited that if the GoM remained committed to the process—actively engaging in securing NAP funding, ensuring the provision of adequate staffing, securing the procurement of qualified consultants, guaranteeing timely disbursement of funds by the Global Climate Fund (GCF), and sustaining support for adaptation planning—and if it successfully mitigated risks related to implementation delays, inadequate institutional coordination, data collection constraints, lack of political will, human resource limitations, stakeholder inclusion challenges, consultant contracting difficulties, private sector engagement, and COVID-19 pandemic impacts, then Montenegro could remove the barriers impeding effective adaptation planning and action.

The ToC recognised that addressing these barriers involved enhancing the coordination frameworks for adaptation planning and action, which were currently underperforming, significantly improving institutional and technical capacity at national and sectoral levels, and augmenting the availability of information required for informed and effective adaptation planning and investments. The ToC expressed the need to optimise financial resources to fund adaptation investments, a task currently hampered by an incomplete understanding of the total costs of adaptation.

Removing these barriers was expected to lead to outcomes that collectively contributed to achieving the Project's overarching goal. These outcomes included strengthened adaptation planning governance, enhanced institutional coordination and technical capacity, an improved evidence base for designing gender-sensitive adaptation solutions, and the development of a strategy for mobilising adaptation finance.

Ultimately, this progression from foundational assumptions through the effective management of risks, addressing problems and realising outcomes culminated in achieving the Project's goal. This goal envisioned Montenegro building an enabling institutional, planning, and programming environment for adaptation at the national and sectoral levels, thus equipping the country to identify and address climate-induced risks. The GoM, working with the Project and other stakeholders, achieved this objective by designing and implementing adaptation investments aligned with national priorities. The ToC stated that generating and sharing knowledge on critical risks and vulnerabilities underpinned this process and facilitated effective

coordination mechanisms and investment plans for resilience. This comprehensive approach outlined a clear and structured pathway towards building a resilient Montenegro capable of navigating the challenges of climate change.

The ET assessed the validity and credibility of the ToC by analysing the intervention logic, including the hierarchy of objectives, potential gaps in the logic, and the sufficiency of preconditions to reach specific and overall objectives.

The ET analysed whether the ToC is realistic and achievable, assessing if the NAP Project could achieve its outputs and progress towards outcome targets (hence, contribute to progress towards planned changes). The ET analysed whether the partners, primarily the Government of Montenegro through its relevant ministries (and despite political changes) and critical national institutions, the UN partners and other stakeholders, have enough capacity and resources to implement the planned activities and continue using established capacities or require additional support. Furthermore, the evaluation assessed whether the scope, expectations, and timeline of the ToC needed any adjustment.

4.3 Data collection methods and instruments and data analysis

The NAP Project's final evaluation encompassed both summative and formative methodologies. The summative component encapsulated and critically evaluated the lessons learned, analysing the realisation of visible results at both output and outcome levels. The formative facet looked ahead, pondering the adaptability of these results for future phases and possible expansions of the NAP Project. In this context, the evaluation used several information sources and benefited from different data-gathering tools to fully comprehend the Project's roll-out and influence.

The ET proposed a comprehensive- ToC-based methodology, employing a mixed-methods paradigm that synergised qualitative and quantitative data collection and interpretative techniques.

While qualitative data methods dominated the landscape—featuring tools like key informant interviews, group discussions, and reflective sessions—quantitative data, derived from entities such as the NAP, the GoM and the Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region Development, and other institutions, complemented the findings. Participatory data-gathering methods have been the cornerstone, validating the authority and prowess of the Project's affiliates, especially those hailing from diverse sectors of Montenegrin society. The ET, fully aware of the inherent biases in research, pledged complete immersion and ongoing self-reflection on potential power disparities vis-a-vis the evaluation subjects. Therefore, the ET ensured data triangulation and harvested insights from various sources, authenticating findings and spotlighting consensus and variance points.

To assess Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), the ET analysed women's participation in project activities through qualitative methods such as key informant interviews and focus group discussions. These methods ensured that women's voices were heard and their experiences were documented. The ET sought to understand the extent of women's involvement in decision-making processes, their representation in project governance structures, and their engagement in on-the-ground project activities.

Project indicators were tracked and disaggregated to monitor and evaluate the impact on different gender groups. Data collection tools were designed to capture gender-specific information, allowing the ET to analyze participation rates, benefits received, and any disparities between male and female beneficiaries. This disaggregated data clearly showed how the project impacted men and women differently and highlighted areas where additional support or adjustments were needed.

The evaluation assessed the project's gender effect by examining changes in gender dynamics, women's access to resources, and their socio-economic status as a result of the project. This included analyzing whether the project had contributed to women's empowerment, increased their opportunities, or improved their overall well-being. The ET et al. looked at unintended consequences to ensure that no negative gender impacts were overlooked.

This evaluation methodology and its well-elaborated approach based on the ET experience from similar settings enabled the NAP Project evaluation to stand robust in its relevance, applicability, and integrity within the context of Montenegro's environmental stewardship.

4.3.1 Analysis of Project records and secondary literature

The evaluative process began with a comprehensive examination of the NAP Project, focusing on its inputs and deliverables. This initial phase involved a thorough review of national and sector-specific strategic documents and project-level inputs, including national regulations, environmental and energy sector reports, EU Progress Reports, and overarching strategic directives aligned with the Project's objectives. These documents provided crucial insights into Montenegro's environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and developmental context during the Project's implementation. The ET also considered external variables influencing the environmental sector and ongoing reforms, situating the NAP Project within the broader national framework and operational realities.

The ET's desk audit also incorporated insights from various national reports, which were instrumental in refining the evaluation queries to ensure they aligned with the evaluation mission's objectives. This meticulous methodology created a cohesive narrative, integrating the Project's goals, evaluative questions, and data collection methods. During subsequent stages of the evaluation process, the ET enriched the findings by revisiting documents and strengthening collaborations with critical and participating institutions, ensuring a robust and comprehensive analysis.

Project monitoring data played an important role in the evaluation process, serving as the backbone for verifying the Project's progress and assessing its effectiveness. The ET systematically utilised this data through several key steps:

Data Collection and Integration: The ET gathered comprehensive project monitoring data, including progress reports, financial statements, and performance metrics. This data provided a detailed account of the Project's activities, outputs, and outcomes over its implementation period. The ET integrated this information with other sources such as national regulations, sector-specific documents, and EU Progress Reports to create a holistic view of the Project's context and performance.

Verification Against Objectives and Deliverables: The collected data was meticulously compared against the Project's original objectives and planned deliverables. The ET checked whether the reported activities and outcomes matched the expected targets outlined in the project plan. This involved verifying milestones, completion dates, and the quality of deliverables to ensure they met the specified standards and timelines.

Cross-Referencing with Primary and Secondary Sources: To ensure the accuracy and reliability of the monitoring data, the ET cross-referenced it with primary sources such as interviews with key stakeholders, including government officials, project managers, and beneficiaries. Secondary sources, like national and sectoral reports and independent assessments, were also used to corroborate the information. This triangulation process helped to identify any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the data.

Use of Analytical Tools: The ET employed standardised analytical tools and frameworks aligned with the evaluative matrix. These tools facilitated the systematic data analysis, enabling the ET to track progress, identify trends, and assess the impact of the Project's activities. Using these tools, the ET ensured a structured and objective analysis of the monitoring data.

Continuous Feedback and Adjustment: The ET maintained a dynamic approach throughout the evaluation, continually revisiting and adjusting their analysis based on new data and insights. Regular feedback loops with project stakeholders allowed for real-time verification and adjustment of findings, ensuring that the evaluation remained relevant and accurate.

Documentation and Reporting: The ET documented all findings, providing a clear audit trail of how the monitoring data was used and verified. This documentation was required to ensure the transparency and credibility of the evaluation process and that the final report was based on robust and verified evidence.

The ET effectively used and accurately verified the project monitoring data through these steps, providing a solid foundation for evaluating the NAP Project's performance and effects. This rigorous approach allowed the ET to deliver a comprehensive and credible evaluation, highlighting the Project's achievements and areas for improvement.

4.3.2 Primary data collection

This evaluation followed a human rights-based approach (HRBA), combined with gender-sensitive and feminist methods that ensure stakeholders' participation in interviews and group interviews, including men

and women from the national institutions (e.g., the NAP Project, the GoM/ Ministries, governmental entities, local authorities, CSOs, etc). The HRBA ensured that the principles of transparency, equality, and non-discrimination were integrated. For evaluating the NAP Project, the ET employed a purposive sampling technique- focusing on the key informants' selection influenced by their level and nature of engagement (“purpose”), encompassing various critical areas, such as formulation, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and benefiting.

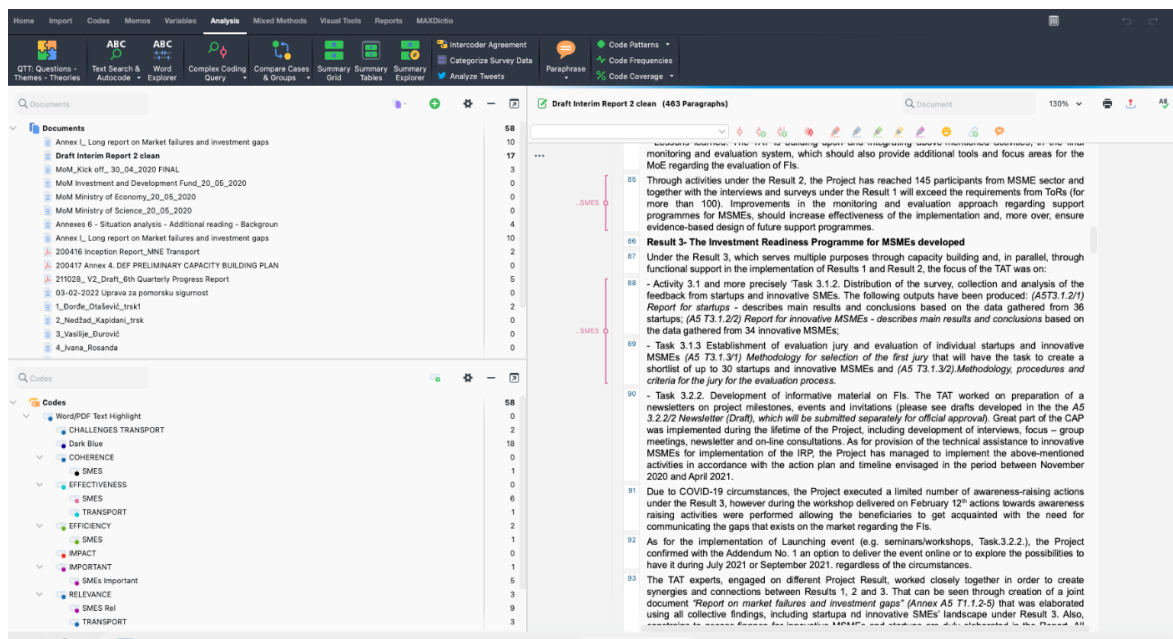
The ET organised in-person and online semi-structured interviews (Annex 2 Interview Guides) with them to extract in-depth insights from stakeholders integrally involved in varying stages of the NAP Project, ensuring a multi-faceted perspective on its accomplishments and challenges.

Semi-structured interviews and group discussions are the most practical methods, considering the NAP Project’s scope and the evaluation's time limits. The semi-structured interview approach ensured consistent data collection on predetermined themes and offered the latitude to delve into spontaneously emerging insights, challenges, and success narratives.

4.4 Data analysis

The ET analysed data to facilitate the preparation of the evaluation report, using the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA to upload completed data collection instruments¹⁹.

Figure 1 Overview of the MAXQDA interface



The ET prepared codes and classifications based on the evaluation matrix and its elements - the sub-questions, judgment criteria, and indicators. In parallel, the MTRT added classifications or other attributes (such as duty bearer, rightsholder, and implementation strategy) to facilitate data analysis that was tailored to the evaluation purpose.

The ET applied a **cross-validation approach**²⁰ for information from various sources and collection methods to ensure the accuracy of findings. In parallel, the ET examined multiple sources to confirm the internal

¹⁹ Such instruments include document review templates, semi-structured interview guides (individual and group), and discussion or reflection guides.

²⁰ Morras-Imas and Rist define triangulation of methods as “Collection of the same information using different methods in order to increase the accuracy of data”, p. 300. Morra Imas, L. G., & Rist, R. C. (2009). The Road to Results: Designing and Conducting Effective Development Evaluations. Washington, D.C., World Bank.

validity of the findings. This **triangulation**, involving various sources, ensured the confirmation and cross-check of major trends while establishing a pattern through the convergence of data.²¹

The ET established correlations and causations between the NAP Project's strategies and outcomes, including identifying direct effects and unintended consequences and comparing findings against the initial objectives, goals and best practices from similar programs. Key stakeholders were engaged to validate these conclusions, providing nuanced insights and grounding the conclusions in the findings and realities.

The conclusions and findings served for formulate recommendations, and ET prioritised recommendations based on possible impact, feasibility, and urgency, articulated clearly, specifically, and actionable. The ET actively engaged with stakeholders, including the CBIT's participants and beneficiaries, to refine and validate recommendations, ensuring relevance and achievability. Recommendations were future-oriented, addressing past challenges and guiding the fine-tuning of future interventions in this field.

Finally, feedback loops were established by sharing draft recommendations with key stakeholders for feedback. The ET remained flexible, revising recommendations based on new insights or feedback to ensure relevancy and actionability. This systematic and participative approach in drawing recommendations from the evaluation findings guaranteed that the advice was evidence-based and refined through collaborative input, ensuring its relevancy and practicality.

4.5 Risks and Assumptions

Assumptions

The ET made several assumptions to ensure the smooth conduct of the final evaluation of the NAP Project. These included the timely availability of data and information, the provision of documentary sources by the NAP Project Team/ UNDP CO team, and the availability and willingness of critical informants to participate in interviews and group discussions. Furthermore, the ET assumed no unforeseen setbacks during the evaluation process.

Risk, Limitations, and Mitigation Measures:

While comprehensive, the final evaluation encountered inherent limitations, such as the reliance on available data, which may not wholly represent the Project's long-term impacts and outcomes. This limitation was addressed by triangulation data from multiple sources, including project documents, stakeholder interviews, and field observations, to ensure an all-encompassing understanding of the NAP Project's progress and effectiveness.

To mitigate the potential for response bias in stakeholder interviews, the ET applied various techniques like cross-referencing interview data with project records and observations. Additionally, the ET faced challenges in contacting some former key personnel who were unreachable for feedback. Despite these hurdles, the ET strove within the available timeframe to conduct a deep and nuanced analysis of the Project's substantial elements, placing an emphasis on critical evaluation criteria and questions.

Remarkably, no significant risks impeded the evaluation's implementation due to thorough planning and methodological precision applied by the ET. Before commencing, the team proactively prepared for risks such as data unavailability, stakeholder non-cooperation, and logistical obstacles by engaging in comprehensive planning and engagement strategies.

The absence of notable risks could reflect solid stakeholder commitment, which aided the ET's access to necessary information and resources. The ET upheld a transparent and communicative stance throughout the evaluation, further lessening any risks that might have emerged.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

The ET adhered to the OECD DAC ethical considerations for development evaluations and the United Nations Ethical Guidelines²². The ET respected personal and institutional rights when selecting interviewees and

²¹Morras- Imas and Rist, p. 376.

²² United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation- UNEG/CoC, 2020. Ref to <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>

conducting interviews. Informed consent was sought from stakeholders, with a brief explanation of the evaluation's goals and the scope of questions provided. Stakeholders were informed of their right to decline participation or withdraw at any time.

The ET guaranteed the respondents' privacy and confidentiality, recognising that breaching confidentiality could significantly compromise the evaluation's efficiency and integrity. Informants' rights to provide information in confidence were honoured, and sensitive data could not be traced back to its source to safeguard the informants from any potential repercussions.

Throughout the evaluation, the ET remained fully independent and disclosed no conflicts of interest, abiding by the tenets of impartiality, credibility, and accountability, as evidenced by the signed Code of Conduct found in Annex 7

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5 Findings

This section of the report offers an overview of the findings gathered by the ET from primary sources, including interviews with key informants and comprehensive desk analysis utilising various sources.

5.1 Relevance/Coherence

To evaluate the relevance and coherence of the NAP Project, the ET systematically assessed its alignment with national and international priorities, its integration with strategic frameworks, and its theory of change appropriateness. Specifically, the ET reviewed how well the Project's objectives and activities responded to the national priorities concerning CCA and environmental stewardship, ensuring alignment with government and agency priorities. The ET examined the Project's consistency with international standards such as the UNDP Strategic Plan, the Country Programme Document, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, Sustainable Development Goals, and Green Climate Fund programming. Furthermore, the ET analysed the Project's theory of change for logical coherence, assessing whether the objectives were clear, realistic, and likely to be achieved within the established schedule. This comprehensive approach helped ascertain the extent to which the Project was positioned to meet its intended goals effectively and sustainably.

- **EQ1.1. To what extent has the design and implementation of the Project responded to the national priorities concerning climate change and adaptation (and broader, environmental stewardship)?**

F1. The NAP Project effectively integrated policy influence, capacity building, gender sensitivity, and stakeholder engagement to align closely with Montenegro's national climate priorities, key environmental stewardship goals, and broader international climate action agenda. This approach facilitated robust adaptation planning and preparation of the draft NAP that identified implementation priorities.

The design and implementation of the NAP Project in Montenegro have been closely aligned with CCA priorities to improve capacity for long-term adaptation planning and managing climate-induced risks and vulnerabilities. The ET finds that the Project's overall goal to strengthen Montenegro's institutional capacity for enduring adaptation planning responded to these needs. Operationally, the Project considered several strategies, such as enhancing the institutional coordination framework, increasing institutional capabilities, expanding the climate information database, ensuring this data informs potential adaptation responses, and identifying the financial requirements and resources needed to fund adaptation investments.

The Project aligned with Montenegro's commitment to climate action expressed in the National Climate Change Strategy (NCCS) by 2030²³ and other legal enactments and policy directives determining the country's national environmental priorities and broader EU accession objectives. The Project designed and executed targeted adaptation measures aligned with the priorities of the NCCS and the National Strategy of Sustainable Development (NSSD) 2030²⁴ by strengthening the environment conducive to adaptation at the national and sectoral levels and facilitating efforts to discern climate-induced vulnerabilities and risks. Additionally, the Project contributed to the NSSD's vision of transitioning to a "resource-efficient and circular economy", institutionalising climate change considerations into developmental planning.

The Project contributed to Montenegro's accession to the EU, aligning with the climate and environmental acquis and addressing priorities under the Emissions Trading System (ETS). It supported Montenegro's commitment to meeting and integrating European standards into its domestic climate policy. Particularly relevant have been activities on increasing stakeholder ownership, ensuring gender equity, and building awareness and knowledge of the risks of climate change on the country's long-term development. These activities and achievements highlighted the NAP's critical role in addressing climate change vulnerabilities.

The NAP Project effectively addressed Montenegro's specific climate adaptation needs as outlined in the Second Biennial Update Report²⁵ (SBUR), the Third National Communication²⁶ (TNC), and the Nationally

²³ <https://wapi.gov.me/download-preview/cd1130f8-668b-4fbd-a094-20a04af536aa?version=1.0> and <https://wapi.gov.me/download-preview/57944aff-dc8d-4afb-8396-6a88a88034ce?version=1.0>

²⁴ <https://wapi.gov.me/download-preview/67dc487e-097d-41d2-8fd5-7827a19a1f5a?version=1.0>

²⁵

https://unfccc.int/documents/453020?gad_source=1&gclid=CjoKCQjwir2xBhC_ARIsAMTXk863wo28lOnogzBLzZ4TbjeUvvHZbZr29hCvpyRWPO96HObo-h1VbTgaAsa_EALw_wcB

²⁶ https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/NationalReports/Documents/8596012_Montenegro-NC3-1-TNC%20-%20MNE.pdf

Determined Contributions²⁷ (NDC). Specifically, the Project's activities responded to the need to strengthen national institutions, including coordination capacities. For example, the NAP Project focused on strengthening the capacities and positioning of the **Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCS)**, which was pivotal for operationalising its working groups (the Working Group for Monitoring and Adapting to Climate Change -WGMACC and the Working Group for Environmental Financing-WGEF). It also addressed a lack of a robust evidence base that could support the creation of gender-sensitive adaptation strategies. Significantly, under the draft NAP Strategy, the Project responded to one of the main challenges to "systematically consider and secure funding for adaptation initiatives" as a prerequisite for a sustainable approach to climate resilience". These efforts set the basis for preparing potential adaptation strategies.

- **EQ1.2. To what extent was the project in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan, Country Programme Document (CPD), United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Green Climate Fund (GCF) strategic programming?**

F2. The NAP Project aligns with the main directions set by the United Nations and UNDP as part of their strategic engagement in Montenegro.

The NAP Project supported the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework for Montenegro (2023–2027)²⁸, advancing Strategic Priority 1, which focuses on inclusive economic development and environmental sustainability. Its efforts to define the national strategic framework, including predictable finance and improve the institutional capacities and coordination mechanisms contributed to “the development that is inclusive and gender-responsive, climate-resilient and low-carbon” (Outcome 1).

The coherent nature of the NAP Project also illustrates its alignment with the UNDP Country Programme Document for Montenegro²⁹ (CPD) 2017-2021 (extended until 2022) and its Output 2.1³⁰, as it supported interweaving climate change goals and environmental safeguarding measures into national policies and planning. The ET finds that the Project remained relevant for the subsequent CPD for 2023-2027³¹. The NAP Project aligned with Outputs 1.1 and 1.2 by developing and enhancing policy, regulatory environments, and financial mechanisms essential for climate change mitigation and adaptation. For Output 1.1, the Project focused on establishing a robust framework that supported green and inclusive transformation by formulating and refining policies that fostered immediate and long-term adaptation actions. This included integrating sustainable practices into national regulations and creating innovative financing solutions that ensured the necessary resources were available for implementing these adaptations. Regarding Output 1.2, the Project contributed to developing policies and financial strategies to value and sustainably manage natural resources. The Project assisted in crafting financial mechanisms that prioritised and funded the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of resources, ensuring that natural assets were protected and efficiently utilised to support Montenegro's environmental and economic objectives. These coordinated efforts enhanced the country's capacity to manage its natural resources sustainably while aligning with global environmental goals.

F3. Montenegro's NAP Project captured the essence of the GCF's programming and contributed to its goal of initiating systemic change.

The Project exemplified the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) vision for transformative change toward low-emission and climate-resilient development. For example, the Project supported national stakeholders in efforts to improve adaptation governance and bolster institutional and technical capacity. These efforts aligned with the GCF's emphasis on knowledge sharing and enhancing stakeholder capability as pillars for long-term development shifts.

In priority sectors (water, agriculture, tourism, and health), the NAP Project addressed critical climate risks and built resilience in vulnerable areas, reflecting the GCF's objectives to support urgent adaptation needs and ensure benefit to the most susceptible and climate-risk-prone population. The Project's commitment to gender-sensitive solutions aligns with GCF's focus on delivering social co-benefits and elevating the resilience

²⁷ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/BUR3_Montenegro%20-%202024.%20Jan%20-%20FINAL.pdf

²⁸ <https://montenegro.un.org/en/188526-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-montenegro-2023-2027>

²⁹

<https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/me/c4986ab85c602c358a498f076420e9b31726ca7042a5b9e03b4800713097807d.pdf>

³⁰ Output 2.1: Climate change and environment targets integrated into national policies, strategies and planning

³¹ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3982625?ln=en&v=pdf>

of the most vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the NAP Project's adaptation finance strategy directly corresponded with the GCF's efforts to catalyze investment, demonstrating a commitment to fund adaptation endeavours and yield economic and social advantages. Lastly, the Project's methodologies—thorough assessments and targeted capacity development—adhere to GCF guidance for informed, evidence-based projects.

F4. The NAP Project is closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, emphasising sustainability and resilience as critical components of climate action.

The Project has bolstered Montenegro's progress toward achieving SDG 13, focusing on Climate Action. It has enhanced policy-making, institutional, and technical capacities (Target 13.1), strengthening the country's adaptive capacity and resilience against climate-related threats. Central to this progress, the Project has contributed to robust adaptation planning and practices, which are foundational to the national policies, strategies, and planning framework (Target 13.2). Moreover, it has advanced policy-making capabilities, boosted awareness-raising efforts, and facilitated capacity-building initiatives aimed at CCA and impact mitigation, supporting Montenegro's active and informed approach to environmental challenges (Target 13.3).

The NAP Project recognised the critical nexus between climate action and gender equality, which is relevant to SDG5. The Project has endeavoured to include gender-responsive strategies within climate governance, ensuring that the needs and perspectives of women have been recognised and integrated within environmental decision-making processes (Target 5.5) and climate policies (Target 5c).

In the context of SDG 16, which promotes Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, the NAP Project has been critical in bolstering institutional frameworks, facilitating transparent governance (Target 16.6) and multi-stakeholder engagement in Montenegro's climate change policies and strategy development (Target 16.7). In addition, the Project has contributed to SDG 17, encouraging cooperation between Montenegro and global experts, thus developing global partnerships in science and technology (Target 17.6) while ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development (Target 17.14).

- **EQ1.3. To what extent was the theory of change presented in the outcome model a relevant and appropriate vision on which to base the initiatives?**

F5. The NAP Project was clearly and precisely crafted with robust involvement from key national stakeholders, highlighting a targeted approach to addressing Montenegro's climate challenges and developing adaptive strategies.

Initially spearheaded by the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism—now known as the Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development, and Northern Region Development—this initiative played a crucial role in aligning the Project with national priorities and international obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In collaboration with UNDP, the Ministry thoroughly assessed the existing policy landscape, identifying critical gaps and defining areas of intervention in line with the national agenda for sustainable development, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation. This groundwork guided the formulation of a detailed project proposal. The stakeholders highlighted that the formulation process, although lengthy and done in 2017, fostered an inclusive dialogue among diverse stakeholders, ensuring the Project's responses were well-suited to various environmental and climate issues.

The ET finds that the proposal underwent a rigorous refinement process with the GCF, benefiting from the UNDP Project Manager's technical expertise and a series of internal and external reviews. This iterative process enhanced the proposal's relevance, feasibility, and potential for success, resulting in a comprehensive document that outlined the Project's activities, outputs and expected outcomes, including financial commitments. This process and stakeholder engagement underscored the commitment of UNDP and the GoM to develop well-conceived initiative that bolster the capacity to manage climate vulnerabilities. In addition, aligning these efforts with the national strategies and other initiatives in this sector (the stakeholders highlighted projects like the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency and other capacity building initiatives) underscored a synergistic approach to environmental governance and climate change responsiveness in Montenegro.

F6. The NAP Project ensured internal coherence, with its activities, outputs, and outcomes logically connected and consistent with its overall objective.

The ET thoroughly assessed the NAP Project's intervention logic and the hierarchy of objectives, which were carefully established during the design phase. This analysis explored how well the Project maintained internal coherence by linking its activities, outputs, and anticipated outcomes to its overarching goal of strengthening Montenegro's resilience against climate change impacts.

The Project aimed to enhance the country's capacities for climate action in alignment with the Paris Agreement, focusing on creating an enabling environment for adaptation at national and sectoral levels. This approach facilitated Montenegro's capability to effectively identify, respond to, and manage climate-induced risks and vulnerabilities with strategically targeted adaptation measures tailored to meet identified (national and sectoral) needs.

The Project was structured around three primary outcomes: robust adaptation planning governance, enhanced institutional coordination, and developing a comprehensive financial strategy for adaptation. These outcomes were supported by concerted efforts to strengthen the governance structures essential for adaptation planning, integrate gender considerations into the adaptation process, and leverage detailed institutional assessments and capacity-building initiatives to address existing skills gaps. Furthermore, the Project emphasised the strategic deployment of financial mechanisms to support the enduring goal of climate resilience and adaptation.

The ET identified areas of the particular Project's strength. It supported a detailed analysis of national strategies, underpinned by an extensive problem analysis that identified four priority sectors: water, agriculture, health, and tourism. The Project addressed capacity building across multiple administrative levels, effectively mainstreaming adaptation planning into the activities of various governmental and non-governmental organisations in Montenegro. Additionally, it supported improvements in frameworks for risk and vulnerability analyses and produced actionable, policy-relevant risk assessments. These assessments strengthened the GoM's evidence base for decision-making, enhancing its ability to use available information to assess and prioritise adaptation options. The Project also focused on developing technical and methodological tools to aid government and non-government entities identify and prioritise sector-specific adaptation measures. This effort drove the demand for additional adaptation investments and enabled the formulation of climate-responsive financing strategies, which are crucial for scaling up adaptation initiatives and fulfilling international climate agreements.

Conceived primarily as a "preparatory" project using Green Climate Fund (GCF) support, the NAP Project was dedicated to policy design and capacity development. It established key parameters for the CCA process, ensuring a consultative process that included comprehensive "risk and vulnerability" assessments that provided a solid base of evidence for the NAP development. This Project approach ensured that the planning process was inclusive and evidence-driven.

F7. While ambitious, the NAP Project's design encountered several challenges identified by comprehensive stakeholder discussions and desk-based findings.

The ET provided an expanded analysis of these challenges:

- The **ambitious scope** of the Project initially exceeded the capacity of national institutions and their understanding of climate change issues and adaptation priorities. Stakeholders stated that the sectors targeted were broad and complex, making it difficult for the Project to cover them adequately under the NAP framework. To address these complexities, stakeholders focused on vulnerability and risk assessments and adaptation planning for specific sub-sectors, defining more focused and targeted measures. The ET found that this issue of broad areas and the structure of the NAP needed to be considered in the design stage; hence, this required the PM/ PT to consider and implement creative adjustments within the rigid GFC implementation framework.
- The **limited time frame** for the Project was another significant challenge. The ET finds that the three years allocated for implementing all envisaged activities with an extension of nine months proved insufficient. Specifically, the frequent political changes required extensive periods to implement activities and project results - stakeholders noted that political changes and staff rotations in key institutions delayed the approval of many key policy instruments, including risk assessment and the draft NAP developed under the Project. Additionally, the COVID-19 crisis and a cyber-attack impacted the Project, causing severe disruptions in implementation. At the time of evaluation, the PT was still addressing a backlog of activities, illustrating the nascent stage of NAP processes in Montenegro and the novelty of the subject for many stakeholders, including policymakers.

- Regarding the **design of activities**, stakeholders stated that the Project involved many tasks requiring individual consultants' engagement, particularly for capacity development and training activities. This approach required an impressive number of recruitments that required extensive coordination and monitoring by the project manager and significant effort from the PM/ PT in preparing contracting documents and overseeing implementation. Although Project efforts were valuable, several evaluation participants noted the need for a service provider. They suggested a more significant focus on fewer sectors and types of activities to create greater efficiencies and deeper specialisation.
- The **consolidated NAP coordinated platform** was not initially concentrated but spread across various institutions responsible for different sector/ projec thematic areas. The ET finds that Project support to the Secretariat of the National Sustainable Development Council—and its positioning under the General Secretariat of the GoM—has been beneficial in establishing a centralised platform for coordinating all NAP-related activities.
- As previously noted in this report, the Project did not include an **"infrastructure" or "piloting" component**. This was due to its design as part of the GCF Readiness support program, which primarily focused on preparatory activities rather than implementation. However, several evaluation participants pointed out that integrating parallel financing from other sources in a separate but complementary initiative for practical infrastructure investments, as identified during the planning process, would have significantly enhanced the Project's added value. Such an additional intervention would have necessitated a longer implementation timeline and additional funding, particularly for conducting feasibility studies and developing technical specifications. These elements are crucial for translating planning into tangible, on-the-ground projects that directly mitigate climate impacts.

The Project displayed strong internal coherence and effective vertical and horizontal integration within its intervention logic; still, the ET has identified key issues with formulating outputs and outcomes and inadequately defined indicators (more details under the Efficiency part of this report).

F8. The NAP Project has consistently demonstrated its strategic relevance to Montenegro's climate action and environmental governance, aligning effectively with international standards and commitments. This alignment is actively supported through a comprehensive strategic plan to ensure the sustained relevance and impact of NAP-related activities. Key to this strategy are efforts to bolster institutional capacities and foster collaborative approaches with other initiatives. These efforts aim to establish a robust framework for adopting and implementing the NAP, including developing stable and predictable financing mechanisms.

The Project contributes to Montenegro's climate resilience and sustainable development framework by effectively integrating CCA measures into national and sectoral development strategies. It strongly emphasises stakeholder engagement and capacity building, ensuring that professionals and institutions are well-equipped to undertake climate adaptation efforts. Notably, the Project has strengthened the NCSD and other critical institutions, enhancing their ability to lead successful climate adaptation initiatives. This focus on building institutional capacity aligns with the needs highlighted in recent evaluations, such as the EU Progress Report for Montenegro, which calls for enhanced governmental capabilities to meet climate challenges and move towards EU integration standards.

The significance of a coherent adaptation planning and governance framework is exemplified in the NAP Project's development of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system for assessing the effectiveness of adaptation planning. In close cooperation with the project "Strengthening Montenegro's Nationally Determined Contribution and Adaptation Activities Transparency Framework" (CIBIT), the NAP Project focused on designing the Monitoring Reporting and Verification (MRV) system. The NAP project provided input to the design of the adaptation-related aspects of the system. The process resulted in the capacity assessment for the implementation of the system. Such framing is vital for tracking the adaptive measures' results and ensuring they align with the country's adaptation goals. This framework remains highly relevant to the country.

The Project aligns with national strategies like the National Circular Transition Strategy until 2030 and the National Climate Change Strategy; thus, it contributed to building a solid foundation that directly correlates with Montenegro's international commitments and legislative framework. Thus, the Project facilitated Montenegro's efforts to remain in step with national and international climate action mandates that remained relevant for the country. The stakeholders recognised that the Project maintained a well-thought-out approach to maintaining government ownership and interest, ensuring a supportive political

environment and advocating for the importance of adaptation initiatives among key decision-makers. This strategic political engagement remains highly relevant and required for the Project's long-term sustainability and transformative effects.

The Project's strategic approach is further enriched by its collaborative efforts, linking various initiatives to enhance the efficiency and impact of climate resilience measures. For instance, there is significant cooperation with GEF-funded initiatives. Additionally, the development of a Gender Action Plan and the formation of working groups focused on sector-specific needs underscore a commitment to inclusivity and comprehensive coverage in adaptation measures, priorities that remain prominent on the Government of Montenegro's agenda.

5.2 Effectiveness

The ET planned to assess the Project's effectiveness utilising standard performance indicators at both the output and outcome levels. While output-level indicators were consistently reported in the progress reports up to 2023, verifying baselines and targets proved challenging. This difficulty was exacerbated by a change in the reporting format for 2023, where different GFC-corporate indicators were introduced. Despite these changes, the ET continued to analyse progress against the initial set of indicators, connecting the achievements reported in the 2023 progress report with these original metrics.

Moreover, the ET encountered another significant hurdle: the absence of indicators under three specific outcomes. To address this gap, the ET employed a contribution analysis approach. This method involved identifying and establishing "contribution strings," which were logical links between the results achieved at the output level and the broader objectives under the respective outcomes. This approach helps map out how the Project's outputs contributed to its intended outcomes, even without direct indicators. This method is particularly useful in complex programs where direct causal links between activities and outcomes are difficult to demonstrate.

The contribution analysis enabled a nuanced understanding of how outputs contribute to their outcomes despite the challenges posed by changes in reporting formats and the lack of specific outcome indicators.

In addition to assessing the achievement of outputs and progress under outcomes, the ET analysed positive or negative, intended and unintended changes that the Project produced, also reflecting on factors that contributed to or impeded NAP performance and achievement of outputs.

EQ2.1. To what extent were the project's main objectives achieved in keeping with the original activities, outputs and performance indicators?

F9. The Project generally met its primary objectives, aligning with the designated activities, outputs, and performance indicators. Despite challenges, the NAP Project successfully executed the planned activities, achieving the intended outputs and generating some critical non-planned results. This demonstrated a strong alignment between the Project's strategic execution and its outputs and outcomes.

5.2.1 Overview of progress under Outcome 1

Outcome 1 Adaptation planning governance, institutional coordination, and technical capacity strengthened contributed to progress in strengthening institutional and operational capacities necessary for effective CCA planning and implementation in Montenegro.

A key achievement has been the revitalisation of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) under the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro (GS-GoM) under the leadership of the Prime Minister. The NCSD has focused on climate change and supported the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process. Montenegro recorded progress in developing and maintaining institutional frameworks to support adaptation planning through the NCSD and its working groups³² through the Project's support. This support

³² Six expert working groups were formed: WG for monitoring the implementation of sustainable development policy, WG for mitigation and adaptation to climate change, WG for integral management of the coastal area of Montenegro, WG for sustainable development at the local level, WG for financing for sustainable development and WG for just transition. The goal of this model of functioning of the National Council is to establish an open forum for professional supervision and guidance in creating and implementing development policies and projects based on the principles of sustainable development. More at <https://www.gov.me/clanak/odrzana-36-sjednica-nacionalnog-savjeta-za-odrzivi-razvoj>

included developing formal guidelines and procedures to integrate climate adaptation measures into national and sectoral policies.

Recognised as a pivotal platform for climate discussions, the NCSO has been appointed by the government as a Donor and Partnership Coordination Unit, enhancing the governance of climate adaptation initiatives.

The Project has also prioritised stakeholder engagement and collaboration, ensuring the involvement of diverse actors such as government entities, CSOs, and the private sector in the adaptation planning process. This inclusive approach has been instrumental in aligning national adaptation goals with sectoral and national priorities. It also provided a range of capacity-building initiatives to enhance the skills and knowledge of stakeholders involved in adaptation planning. These initiatives covered critical areas such as climate risk assessment, policy formulation, and implementing adaptation strategies and have been crucial in building a competent workforce. Further contributions have been made to the legal and technical realms, notably through expert input to the Draft Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change.

Additionally, the Project has made efforts to implement practical adaptation measures, which are vital for reducing vulnerability to climate impacts and enhancing resilience across various sectors. To ensure the effectiveness of these strategies, an MRV system (for monitoring and evaluating the adaptation measures) has been strengthened, ensuring feedback for the improvement and refinement of adaptation framework and activities.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Management, new technologies like drones have been integrated into monitoring frameworks, improving the assessment of climate impacts on agriculture

5.2.1.1 Overview of achievements under Output 1.1.

Under Output 1.1, the Project focused on strengthening institutional capacities for CCA planning. This process started with a comprehensive assessment of existing skills, resources, and institutional frameworks to identify gaps and design capacity development programs. It included numerous initiatives, such as training programs and workshops designed to enhance the expertise of stakeholders in climate risk assessment, adaptation policy formulation, and implementation strategies. The stakeholders stated that these training programs equipped them with the necessary skills to manage and implement climate adaptation measures. In parallel to these main programs, the Project also provided new “relevant and practical training modules tailored to the needs of different sectors involved in climate adaptation³³”.

Overall, the key informants and desk analysis indicate that progress under Output 1.1 has strengthened the institutional and personnel capacities necessary for successfully planning and implementing CCA measures in Montenegro.

VALIDATION OF PROGRESS UNDER INDICATORS- OUTPUT 1.1.

The ET has analysed progress under the respective indicators:

- **Number of institutions with technical capacity in CCA assessed – at least 10:**

The Project focused on assessing the existing technical capacity of various institutions involved in CCA, analysing their skills, resources, and readiness to implement effective adaptation measures. The kick-off workshop (2021) involved institutions from the four priority NAP sectors, such as the NCSO, the Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology, and the Institute of Public Health. Following the workshop, the Project continued efforts through a comprehensive survey using questionnaires commonly agreed upon during the (initial) workshop — generally, the Project organised assessments in 15 different institutions. The stakeholders stated that these assessments were foundational in identifying the gaps and planning subsequent capacity-building initiatives.

- **Number of capacity building measures identified as an input for training programs.**

The Project achieved progress under this indicator by identifying and implementing several capacity-building measures that reflected priorities and specific needs identified through the institutional assessments. The Project developed training modules and workshops to enhance stakeholders' understanding and skills in areas such as climate information management, vulnerability and risk analysis, and the integration of CCA

³³ KII notes

into planning and development processes. Training for Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology (IHSM) staff has been particularly important for effectively using their mobile climate data collection units. Also, the gap assessment served to produce programme on Flood Risk Management.

- **Number of new training modules created for CCA capacity development**

In addition to the sector-specific modules, the Project also developed complementary training modules to further support capacity development in CCA. These modules addressed broader aspects of CCA, including legal, financial, and policy frameworks. The intention was to ensure and follow a holistic approach to building adaptation capacity among the policy makers and implementers in the country.

- **Number of personnel newly trained in climate information and vulnerability/risk data analysis and dissemination, integration tools, appraisal and prioritisation of CCA options, CCA project development, MRV, and gender mainstreaming**

The Project involved over a hundred individuals from various stakeholder groups. Training programs covered a range of competencies necessary for effective adaptation planning, including climate data analysis, risk assessment, project development, Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV), and gender mainstreaming. The PT emphasised that the commitment to gender balance and women's participation has been ensured with more than 50% female participants.

However, the Project faced the challenge of high staff turnover in governance institutions—especially at the executive branch—which affected engagement in CCA training. Still, the Project has developed a strategy to institutionalise generated knowledge. Key NAP-related topics (such as goal setting, monitoring, vulnerability assessments, and financial planning) have been codified into comprehensive guidelines. These instruments are available through bylaws attached to the Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change (Climate Change Law), ensuring consistent application and dissemination.

Additionally, leveraging funds from the Montenegro SDG Acceleration Fund, the Project is developing a user-friendly online learning platform to be a central hub for NAP-related knowledge. It features online modules covering essential NAP capacity-building topics to bridge knowledge gaps and equip staff with needed skills.

- **Number of private and civil society sector representatives trained in CCA technical skills**

The Project assessed the private sector's needs for the green transition through a survey with several questions covering companies' understanding of CCA. The survey involved more than 300 companies as a representative sample. The survey revealed the level of knowledge and experience concerning climate change and facilitated the identification of companies for more profound analysis.

In parallel, the Project considered the needs of the CSOs- the informants from CSOs stated they communicated with the Project concerning their needs in the CCA and broader environmental stewardship.

Training programs for private sector and civil society representatives responded to the gap assessment, equipping these stakeholders with the technical skills necessary to contribute to the adaptation process.

In parallel, the Project helped the NCS establish and manage "Dialogue for Development" events to foster an inclusive platform for stakeholders to discuss CCA strategies (more details under unintended results).

5.2.1.2 Overview of achievements under Output 1.2.

Output 1.2 addressed institutional coordination to support CCA planning in Montenegro, focusing on operational and governance frameworks necessary for effective adaptation planning and implementation. At the policy level, key advancements included the development of the draft Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change, which established a robust legal basis for adaptation efforts through national legislation. This law clearly defined adaptation responsibilities and embedded Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems within the institutional framework.

Under this output, the Project supported updating the mission and mandate for the Working Group on Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change, ensuring it appropriately includes adaptation-related issues.

This foundational work is critical for operationalising climate adaptation strategies within the national framework, establishing a robust and responsive institutional framework that can effectively support the ongoing and future demands of CCA planning and implementation.

VALIDATION OF PROGRESS UNDER INDICATORS- OUTPUT 1.2.

The ET has analysed progress under the respective indicators:

- ***Number of barriers analysed and recommendations made for the framework for CCA planning at the national level***

The PT identified and analysed barriers to effective CCA planning within Montenegro's national framework, reviewing existing policies, institutional capacities, and coordination mechanisms. The review produced a set of recommendations to overcome identified barriers. The priority areas are enhancing institutional coordination, improving data availability, and streamlining decision-making processes. These recommendations aim to strengthen the overall framework for CCA planning, making it more robust and responsive to the challenges posed by climate change.

- ***Existence of a validated mandate and governing process for adaptation at the Working Group on mitigation and adaptation to climate change***

The target under this indicator has been achieved by validating the mandate for the Working Group on Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change. This process involved consultations with key stakeholders—government officials, experts, and representatives from civil society, to ensure that the group's mandate is comprehensive and aligned with national priorities.

The Project supported the working group's management, defining clear roles and responsibilities, establishing decision-making protocols, and setting up regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

The stakeholders stated that the Project's support ensured that the Working Group could operate effectively and lead the national CCA efforts.

- ***Developed and adopted standard operating procedures (SOP) for coordination of adaptation plans and activities between sectors and agencies as well as among working groups at national and municipal levels***

Developing and adopting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were key to improving coordination between various sectors and agencies involved in CCA.

These SOPs provide guidelines on how different entities should collaborate, share information, and jointly plan adaptation measures. They also include guidelines for coordination among different working groups, ensuring that adaptation efforts are synchronised. In addition, they provide a framework for a unified approach to managing climate risks.

5.2.2 Overview of progress under Outcome 2

Under Outcome 2 An enhanced evidence base for designing gender-sensitive adaptation solutions, the Project strived to integrate gender considerations into climate change adaptation. It completed four gender-focused climate impact analyses across critical sectors—agriculture, water, health, and tourism. These analyses provided essential insights into how climate change affects men and women differently, guiding the development of targeted adaptation strategies. The Project updated climate change scenarios to reflect new data and ensure gender sensitivity, aiding effective adaptation planning.

Additionally, the Project documented past adaptation projects, highlighting lessons learned and gender-specific vulnerabilities that informed the development of gender-sensitive adaptation measures and strategies. Various outreach initiatives enhanced public awareness of gender issues in climate adaptation, further supported by creating outreach products and media articles focused on gender-sensitive adaptation approaches. High attendance at related workshops and events demonstrated effective stakeholder engagement. The partners recognised the Project's commitment to fostering inclusive climate change adaptation strategies that address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of both women and men.

5.2.2.1 Overview of results under Output 2.1.

Under Output 2.1, the Project has addressed gender-specific climate change-driven risks and vulnerabilities across various priority sectors. This output has seen the completion of four gender-focused climate impact analyses, which serve as a critical foundation for understanding how climate change impacts men and women differently and informing targeted adaptation strategies. In addition, the Project has updated

several climate change scenarios to reflect new data and projections, ensuring these scenarios are sensitive to gender differences and can guide effective planning.

The documentation of past adaptation projects has been pivotal in reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of historical adaptation measures, especially those that address gender disparities. This review has led to the development of activities and action plans to ensure that future CCA measures are inclusive and meet the specific needs of different gender groups. Furthermore, creating various outreach products and publishing articles in media outlets have enhanced awareness (especially among decision-makers) and understanding of the necessity for gender-sensitive approaches to CCA.

The ET finds that these efforts have been complemented by high attendance at workshops and outreach events, indicating effective engagement and the successful dissemination of knowledge about the NAP and CCA strategies. The informants recognised that the progress under Output 2.1 is ensured through a national commitment to integrating effective and equitable gender considerations into climate adaptation efforts.

VALIDATION OF PROGRESS MEASURED BY INDICATORS- OUTPUT 2.1.

The detailed analysis of the progress under Outcome 2.1, focusing on gender-specific climate change-driven risks and vulnerabilities in priority sectors:

- **Number of compiled and synthesised gender climate impact analyses (expected 4):**

The ET finds that four climate impact analyses (agriculture, waters, health and tourism sectors) have been completed, reflecting gender focus. These analyses synthesise data across four sectors to highlight how climate change impacts genders differently, providing essential insights for targeted adaptation measures.

- **Number of newly updated climate change scenarios**

The ET finds that the Project reported updating several climate change scenarios to incorporate the latest scientific data and projections, ensuring that gender considerations are integrated into these forecasts. The update process is part of ongoing efforts to refine adaptation strategies.

- **Number of relevant past adaptation projects documented**

The ET finds that the NAP Project documented multiple past adaptation projects of the GoM and other development partners; these documents emphasised analysis and evaluation results of their effectiveness in addressing gender-specific vulnerabilities. The WG members stated that this documentation helps understand what measures have been effective and which areas require more attention.

- **Number of engagement and gender action plans developed for CCA**

The engagement and gender action plans for the priority sectors have been developed to ensure that adaptation measures are inclusive and address women's and men's specific needs and vulnerabilities. This is part of a broader strategy to integrate gender considerations into all CCA planning and implementation aspects.

- **Number of newly created outreach products on CCA and NAP**

Various outreach products, including pamphlets, videos, and online content, have been created to raise awareness about CCA and the National Adaptation Plan, focusing on gender aspects. These materials are designed to reach a broad audience and stimulate engagement on gender-specific issues in adaptation.

- **Number of published articles in media outlets:**

Several articles have been published in media outlets, discussing the gender-specific impacts of climate change and the importance of inclusive adaptation strategies. These articles help to raise public awareness and foster a deeper understanding of the necessity for gender-sensitive approaches.

- **Number of stakeholders attending workshops and outreach events on CCA and NAP process per annum (gender disaggregated)**

The document notes high attendance at workshops and events focused on CCA and the NAP process, with data disaggregated by gender. These events have successfully engaged stakeholders from various sectors, highlighting the Project's effective outreach and engagement strategy.

This comprehensive overview of progress under indicators illustrates the focused efforts on integrating gender considerations into CCA strategies, ensuring that adaptation measures are effective and inclusive.

5.2.2.2 Overview of achievements under Output 2.2.

The draft National Adaptation Plan (NAP) for Montenegro as a strategic document was crafted to guide the country through the complexities of climate adaptation with a comprehensive approach to institutional frameworks, policy integration, and legislative backing. It systematically outlines the responsibilities of various government bodies tasked with climate response initiatives and underscores the importance of gender equity and inclusivity in adaptation strategies.

The draft NAP clearly reflects on Montenegro's current climate conditions, historical climate data, and projections for future climate scenarios, emphasising the significance of these changes for the country's environmental and socio-economic landscapes. It provides an in-depth analysis of how rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events are expected to impact various regions and sectors. This analysis forms the backbone for identifying specific vulnerabilities in critical sectors such as agriculture, where changes in climate conditions are likely to affect crop yields and pest cycles; water resources, which are at risk due to altered hydrological cycles; health, with an anticipated increase in climate-related diseases; and tourism, which could face challenges from changing weather patterns affecting tourist activities.

The NAP delineates the risks for each sector and crafts tailored objectives to bolster resilience. Clearly defined adaptation measures support these objectives. These measures include implementing sustainable agricultural practices to combat soil degradation, enhancing water conservation techniques to manage water scarcity, promoting public health initiatives to prepare for climate-induced health risks, and diversifying tourism offerings to reduce climate vulnerability. The strategic approach ensured that the adaptation measures were practical and actionable, designed to address the unique challenges of climate change in Montenegro. This sector-specific focus has been complemented by overarching goals that promote resilience across all levels of society and governance, integrating climate adaptation into broader national development framework and ensuring a holistic response to emerging climate challenges.

The NAP included robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies and adapt them as necessary.

It also outlined the financial frameworks essential for supporting these adaptation initiatives, highlighting potential funding sources and financial strategies to sustain long-term resilience efforts (more details under Output 3.1.)

VALIDATION OF PROGRESS MEASURED BY INDICATORS- OUTPUT 2.2.

The NAP Strategy emphasised participatory development and stakeholder engagement, representing a critical step forward in Montenegro's commitment to climate change. The key informants recognised that the process for the NAP Strategy preparation was inclusive and aligned with national and international climate resilience goals.

5.2.3 Overview of progress under Outcome 3

The progress under Outcome 3, "An adaptation finance mobilisation strategy developed," is inevitably linked with the achievements under other outputs and outcomes.

The ET finds the NAP project progressed in crafting a strategic approach to funding CCA efforts in Montenegro. The draft financial strategy developed under this outcome has been presented as integral to the NAP Strategy, streamlining the process of identifying, securing, and managing required financial resources for implementing adaptation measures.

The components of the adaptation finance mobilisation strategy included extensive stakeholder consultations across various sectors to identify financial needs and ensure broader support, capacity development to enhance local expertise in financial management and international climate finance acquisition, the development of detailed Climate Change Adaptation Financing Guidelines to aid in investment prioritisation and financial strategy formulation, and the creation of targeted project proposals to align with national priorities and attract funding.

The ET finds that the draft financial strategy reflects a thorough analysis of existing and potential funding sources, both domestic and international, including public budgets, international climate funds, private sector investments, and bilateral and multilateral aid.

5.2.3.1 Overview of achievements under Output 3.1.

The ET finds that concerted efforts under this output were integral to establishing a feasible financial framework for NAP implementation, ensuring that financial aspects are well-funded and strategically planned to align with national priorities and the specific needs of different sectors.

The Project prepared preliminary cost-benefit analyses for prioritised CCA investment options and identified and reviewed various funding sources for NAP, which was planned to support the identified adaptation measures, enhancing the efficiency and impact of funding allocations. Moreover, several concept notes have been developed that address the principal risks and respond to the identified adaptation options for each sector.

The Finance Strategy is informed by extensive stakeholder consultations across critical sectors and national bodies, contributing to a nuanced understanding of financing needs, the climate finance landscape, and capacity-building requirements in Montenegro. Building on these achievements, the Project prepared the draft Climate Change Adaptation Financing Guidelines, providing methodologies for prioritising adaptation investments and financing.

VALIDATION OF PROGRESS MEASURED BY INDICATORS- OUTPUT 3.1.

The Output 3.1 indicators showed progress in establishing a comprehensive framework for funding CCA initiatives in Montenegro, guided by detailed analyses and strategic planning.

- **Number of preliminary cost-benefit analyses for prioritised CCA investment options**

The preliminary CBA provided a critical economic evaluation of potential investments, identifying adaptation measures that offer the best economic value to mitigate climate change's impacts.

- **Number of available sources of funds for CCA identified and reviewed and included in financing and investment strategy.**

The Project has progressed in cataloguing and assessing diverse financial sources to fund CCA measures in Montenegro, as presented in the Financing and Investment Strategy. This Strategy reflected various funding options, including governmental budgets, international climate finance mechanisms, private sector investments, and bilateral and multilateral donors. It integrated identified funding options into a coherent framework that aligns with Montenegro's adaptation needs and priorities.

The stakeholders highlighted extensive consultations with key sectors such as agriculture, water, tourism, and health, which helped the financing strategy link specific sectoral vulnerabilities to climate change with sector-specific opportunities for funding. The ET finds that the Working Group on Sustainable Finance played a crucial role in coordinating these consultative efforts and shaping this Strategy. According to the key informants, their insights have helped define a clear roadmap for mobilising financial resources, ensuring that the identified financial instruments and mechanisms are feasible and aligned with national development goals and climate adaptation objectives.

- **Number of Concept Notes developed that address the prioritised risks and respond to the identified adaptation options of each sector.**

The ET finds that several strategic concept notes were prepared, translating Montenegro's adaptation strategies into actionable projects that attract funding and support from various sources.

Notable achievements in this area included:

GEF 8 STAR Allocation: a successful endorsement was secured for a \$6.2 million allocation for a project titled "Management of Multiple Use Landscapes and Seascapes to Promote Biodiversity Conservation." This project is intricately designed to reflect NAP inputs and ensure adaptation and mainstreaming within its activities. The efforts continue to secure a project preparation grant to further this initiative.

Umbrella Programme for Biodiversity Finance Plans: an endorsement letter led to the approval of a project with a budget of approximately \$300,000 to support the development of biodiversity finance plans.

Scheduled for initiation in 2024, this Project marks a significant step towards integrating biodiversity conservation into climate adaptation planning.

Technology and Nature-Based Solutions: though a proposal titled "Technology and Nature-Based Integrated Early Warning Solutions for Fire and Flood Management – TIDE" faced funding challenges, the initiative underscores the creative approaches under this initiative. The Ministry of Interior and its disaster risk department intend to continue seeking funding, demonstrating resilience in funding strategy.

SDG Partnership Proposals: other concept notes were developed for submission to entities like the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre under the SDG Partnership on Sustainable Forestry. Although not all were approved, these efforts highlight ongoing attempts to secure diverse funding sources.

IFAD's GORA Project: contributions to this IFAD-led initiative resulted in the approval of a considerable \$10 million project, exemplifying successful international cooperation and funding acquisition for climate adaptation.

These concept notes and projects demonstrate a proactive approach to securing the necessary financial backing for Montenegro's adaptation efforts. By meticulously outlining the risks, strategies, and expected outcomes, these documents are essential tools for engaging with potential funders and stakeholders, ensuring a robust foundation for advancing Montenegro's NAP.

EQ2.2. What were the positive or negative, intended, or unintended, changes brought about by NAP's work?

F10. The NAP Project has achieved results beyond the planned, primarily related to the more prominent role of the NCS and the GS, enhanced capacity of the main stakeholders and institutions, spillover effects on innovative practices, and diversified funding opportunities. These results have demonstrated UNDP's ability to adapt and respond to emerging needs and priorities, ensuring the wider effects of its interventions on various dimensions of climate change (and generally, on sustainable development):

- ***While the NCS's reorganisation was unforeseen, it has proven advantageous, providing strategic benefits in the ongoing commitment to and execution of sustainable development and climate adaptation actions in Montenegro.***

Reestablishing the NCS and its Secretariat (Executive Office) and strengthening its working groups was a critical development that the Project did not initially plan but became central to its success. The NCS Secretariat's positioning under the General Secretariat (GS) of the Government of Montenegro has several implications that bolster the country's response to climate change and sustainable development.

Firstly, being under the highly committed and professional General Secretariat allows the NCS to play a pivotal role in mainstreaming climate change policy across all levels of government. Consequently, the NCS could influence policy and engage with key stakeholders, including international partners and civil society, creating a more inclusive dialogue on climate-related issues.

Beyond its role in policy coordination and donor alignment, the NCS's new position reflects a broader commitment by the government to institutionalise climate action. Recognising this commitment, the NCS was appointed as the Donor and Partnership Coordination Unit by a government decree, and this new role was included in the Law on Budget and Fiscal Responsibility, highlighting the legal recognition of the importance of NCS in the context of national climate change efforts.

Through these developments, the GS/ the NCS Secretariat becomes a nexus for sustainable development and CCA work within the government, amplifying its capacity to lead and manage these crucial areas. This institutional strengthening and the strategic focus on climate change can help pave the way for sustained progress in Montenegro's environmental and sustainability goals, even in the face of the challenges posed by political changes and the pervasive influence of global crises. Additionally, such restructuring could have far-reaching impacts beyond immediate CCA efforts by promoting a more resilient and forward-looking governance model that can withstand current and future challenges.

This approach aligns closely with the principles and objectives of international frameworks like the Green Climate Fund Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme and supports the broader agenda of

sustainable development, as highlighted by the President of Montenegro's participation in the 2023 SDG Summit.

- ***The Project's role in augmenting climate change knowledge and awareness has significantly boosted stakeholder participation. The ET finds that the notable example could be (already mentioned) the "Dialogue for Development" platform to facilitate stakeholders' involvement in CCA strategies.***

These events enabled two-way communication with and from NCSO, constituting efforts to enhance public awareness and stakeholder involvement in the NAP's development and implementation. The primary objective of these dialogues was to ensure that diverse perspectives and expert insights were incorporated into Montenegro's adaptation planning, thereby enriching the strategy with various viewpoints and expertise. They brought together various stakeholders—including government representatives, industry experts, community leaders, CSOs and international partners—to discuss and exchange ideas on climate adaptation.

These events served as critical venues for advancing the understanding of climate impacts and adaptation needs within key sectors such as water, agriculture, tourism, and health. These sessions facilitated a deeper engagement with the issues, helped mobilise support, and facilitated collaborative relationships among stakeholders. The NCSO structured discussions to be interactive, allowing participants to voice concerns, propose solutions, and directly contribute to shaping the NAP. These events continued to position the NCSO as a critical platform for climate change discussions and contributed to building a cohesive community ready to tackle climate challenges collectively. This approach underscored the importance of communication and collaboration in effective adaptation planning. It highlighted the NAP project's commitment to NCSO as creating an inclusive and action-oriented participatory process.

- ***The Project's focus on drafting a financial strategy materialised in a pivotal agreement with the Central Bank and insurance regulators, laying the groundwork for climate-responsive financing. This agreement positions these financial institutions as critical drivers of climate-smart investments.***

The Project's work on preparing concept notes and identifying funding avenues led to several endorsements and proposals for varied initiatives, showcasing a strategic approach to funding. While some proposals faced setbacks, the Project's resilient efforts have resulted in successful endorsements and the initiation of several programs with substantial financial backing. This includes efforts for biodiversity conservation, the second phase of NAP, an umbrella program for biodiversity finance, and the "Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience in the Montenegrin Mountain Areas-GORA" project, among others (more details are available under the overview of results under Output 3.1.)

- ***Spillover Effects on Innovation and Technology***

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Management, the Project integrated new and advanced technologies into monitoring systems, providing essential equipment and training to track and promote eco-friendly agricultural practices. This initiative has been dual-purpose, verifying sustainable practices and gathering crucial data for assessing climate change impacts on agriculture over time.

- **EQ2.3. What factors have contributed or impeded NAP performance and achievement of outputs**

F11. The confluence of external factors created significant obstacles and challenges to implementing the NAP Project, markedly affecting its progression, structural stability, timely delivery of activities and achievement of results. These factors included global challenges (the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine) and country-specific issues, such as a cyberattack on Montenegro's government's digital infrastructure and the country's constantly shifting political and institutional landscape.

The global COVID-19 pandemic demanded a shift to remote work and the institution of online training programs. This transition presented logistical hurdles and setbacks for the NAP Project's original schedule and implementation plan. Compounding these difficulties, the conflict in Ukraine has created additional economic and political disturbances, indirectly influencing the Project's stability and potentially diverting the attention and resources of stakeholders and decision-makers.

A severe cyber-attack in August 2022 on Montenegro's government digital institutions had far-reaching consequences. Government websites and emails became inaccessible, disrupting the continuity of operations. The aftermath persisted into 2023, causing continued disruptions and inaccessibility to data and

information, posing challenges to government functionality and security. This attack raised concerns regarding the functionality and security of governmental operations, which are integral to the NAP Project's implementation.

Since 2020, Montenegro has experienced political instability due to election cycles, government changes, delays in key appointments, ministry restructuring, and personnel changes, further complicating and challenging institutional stability. The Ministry of Climate Change, crucial for the Project, has undergone repeated restructuring and staff changes. These transitions have resulted in a lack of leadership and depleted personnel availability due to departures and leaves of absence (until the end of 2023)³⁴. Such volatility has hindered the establishment of reliable and consistent institutional machinery: the ET finds that the delays in appointing decision-making structures critical for the NAP formulation affected the implementation pace.

In response to these challenges, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) granted a no-cost extension, extending the NAP project timeline (until July 2024). However, challenges persisted, including the prolonged duration of establishing digital infrastructure for online training and the ongoing political instability. The Project encountered difficulties securing commitment and participation in training sessions, with participant turnover posing risks to effectiveness.

Challenges also arose during vulnerability assessment preparation, such as insufficient data, incompatible formats, lack of institutional cooperation, and limited understanding among professionals.

These adversities collectively have led to slower decision-making, diverting focus and resources from NAP preparation, and the need for reprioritisation among the Project's partners and stakeholders. The intersection of these factors has directly impaired the Project's momentum, calling for a recalibration of strategies and timelines to align with the evolving circumstances.

F12. The ET finds several positive factors that contributed to NAP Project's effectiveness.- key among these was the Project's approach to enhancing government ownership and engagement.

The key informants recognised that the Project was holding regular consultations and undertaking awareness-raising activities, thus effectively engaging primary decision-makers, which was vital in overcoming political inertia. This proactive approach contributed to a greater understanding of the NAP and created the basis for long-term implementation commitment.

In parallel, the NAP's PT communication efforts were important in rallying the professional community and pertinent institutions. The Project utilised a mix of workshops, events, and online strategies to ensure stakeholders were informed and actively involved, thus establishing a solid informational and participatory framework. These strategies expanded reach and fostered a collaborative knowledge exchange and consensus-building environment.

Recognising the importance of adaptability and continuous improvement, the Project also laid out a clear strategy for the NAP's ongoing evolution. By publishing a comprehensive NAP preparation plan and its various versions online, the Project ensured transparency and made stakeholder engagement an integral part of the process. This open approach provided clarity and allowed for feedback, ensuring that the NAP remains relevant and responsive to emerging needs.

Finally, the Project's ability to incorporate lessons from past initiatives and to build upon them significantly informed the development of its adaptation strategies, policies, and the initial cost-benefit analysis for CCA investments. It strengthened the Ministry's and other stakeholders' capacity, which is essential for a productive NAP process.

5.3 Efficiency

This ET assessed the NAP Project efficiency by assessing various parameters associated with effective project management. Specific efficiency criteria under consideration include whether the Project delivered

³⁴ The Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanisation with Dr Ratko Mitrovic as the Minister was established on 04 December 2020 and dismissed 04 February 2022; the new Minister, Ms. Ana Novakovic Djurovic was appointed on 20 April 2022, and the GoM lost support on 20 August 2022, remaining in the technical mandate until the appointment of the new Government, on 31 October 2023. The new Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development, and Northern Development was established, and Mr. Vladimir Martinovic was appointed as the Minister.

anticipated outputs within the budget (budget delivery rate) and on time as outlined in the work plan and implementation schedule. The ET analysed the effectiveness of management and administrative arrangements and the appropriateness of the project management structure in generating expected results. This included examining the soundness of management practices and the role of monitoring systems in supporting efficient project execution.

F13 *The PT maintained regular consultations with a Regional Technical Advisor, who provided timely and effective feedback on project queries. Furthermore, an International Consultant on CCA was involved throughout the project planning and implementation phases, offering expert assessment and support, which was pivotal for successfully preparing the National Adaptation Plan.*

SQ3.1. *Were the anticipated outputs generated on time and within the budget, as specified in the workplan and implementation schedule?*

F14. *The NAP Project faced significant implementation delays due to COVID-19, political instability, a cyber-attack, and local capacity challenges, but it adapted by shifting to online platforms and introducing flexible implementation modalities, with the Project Manager/ PT intensive engagement in technical and operational topics to ensure timely delivery.*

The NAP Project was planned from October 2020 until October 2023- a thirty-six-month implementation period. However, the complexity of this initiative and its multi-dimensional institutional development and policy-making scope, together with the external challenges, posed limitations and challenges to completing all activities within this timeframe. The ET has analysed these challenges and provided an overview of their combination that have affected the timing of the Project's activities:

COVID-19 Pandemic: The global health crisis led to numerous cancellations and postponements of key trainings, seminars, and workshops that were crucial for stakeholder participation. Travel restrictions and lockdown COVID-19 measures necessitated a pivot to virtual platforms which, while maintaining progress, altered engagement dynamics and led to unintended budgetary savings under travel allocations. The PT managed these disruptions by transitioning to online events and maintaining engagement through continuous virtual consultations with government representatives.

Political Instability: The Project's timeline coincided with considerable political upheaval in Montenegro, including four changes in ministerial leadership, affecting the Ministry responsible for climate adaptation. This instability led to frequent shifts in institutional priorities and delayed the appointment of essential personnel, critically slowing down decision-making processes related to the National Adaptation Plan (NAP). The Project Management team spent considerable effort in briefing new officials, highlighting the need for dedicated training for newly appointed leaders to enhance their understanding of the Project's goals and requirements.

Capacity and Technical Challenges: The local market's limited expertise in CCA led to frequent delays in the procurement process, as several calls for tenders needed re-issuing due to the lack of qualified respondents. Moreover, the project outcomes often required extensive reviews and feedback loops with consultants to ensure quality, thereby extending timelines.

Cyber-attack: A significant cyber-attack in August 2022 disrupted government digital services, impeding access to critical data and communication channels for extended periods going into 2023. This event further delayed project activities as efforts were diverted to restore functionalities and secure data integrity.

Thus, the response to the NAP Project's request through the Project Board to pursue a non-cots extension was adequate and well-justified. The amendment to the agreement extended implementation until 26 July 2024. This additional time for implementation allowed the UNDP/ NAP PT, the GOM- MTESDNRD/ NCSD and its partners to complete all activities and processes and wrap up the Project. The extended timeframe and available funds ensured that this initiative focused on the finalisation of the (draft) NAP and considered institutional development and capacity improvement of the NCSD³⁵

A notable practice within the NAP project was its ability to identify and integrate activities with other ongoing UNDP projects. This strategic approach allowed for the completion of essential deliverables, such

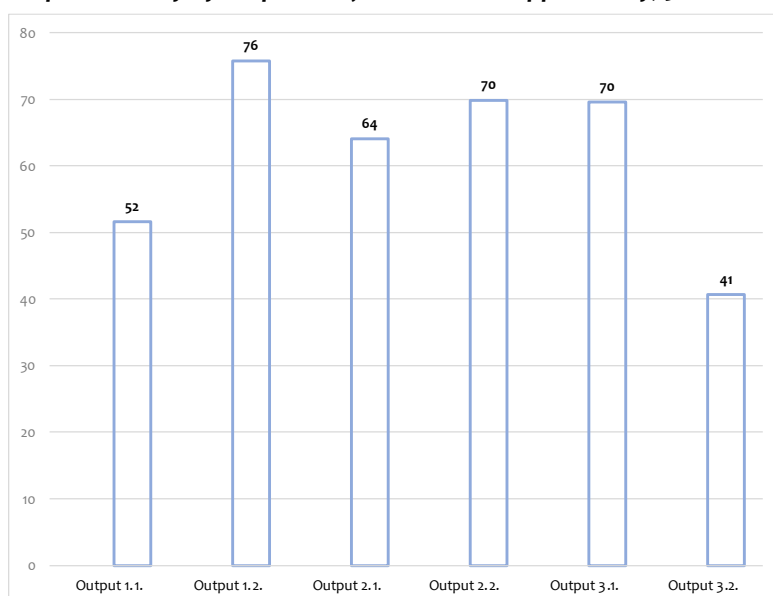
³⁵ This also prevented from getting into a "delivery trap" where undue pressure falls primarily on the execution of activities and the disbursement of funds

as preparing the Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system and various capacity-building initiatives. , showcasing an effective use of resources and enhanced project cohesion.

F15. Budget delivery indicates varied expenditure rates across different outputs and reveals effects of external issues on efficiency and budgetary expenditures and the challenges of financial management under rigid funding rules.

Budget delivery rates are critical indicators of a project's efficiency. In projects characterised by inefficiencies, there are typically delays in expenditure that necessitate increased spending as the project nears its conclusion. This often results in rushed decisions and rapid execution, which can compromise the quality and efficiency of the project outcomes. The graphic below, derived from data provided by the PT as of 31 December 2023, illustrates the expenditure rates compared to the planned budget outlined in the Project Document.

Graph 1 Delivery by output in % from the total approved by, 31 December 2023



Source: UNDP- NAP Project Team

According to the data, out of a total planned expenditure of US\$1,868,296.00, the project had expended US\$1,159,449.16 (approximately 62%) by the end of 2023. The table summarising budget execution rates by output area shows significant variation across different project components, reflecting the diverse pace of activities under each area.

Table 1 Project budget in USD delivery by outputs- by 31 December 2023

Output	Approved Budget (USD)	Total Expenditure(USD)	Delivery in % (31.12.2023)
Output 1.1 Institutional capacity for adaptation planning assessed and enhanced.	330.957,00	170.725,87	51,59
Output 1.2 Institutional coordination to support adaptation planning strengthened.	167.700,00	127.085,50	75,78
Output 2.1 Climate change-driven risks and vulnerability in priority sectors identified, broad goals and potential adaptation measures developed.	373.377,00	239.218,30	64,07
Output 2.2 National Adaptation Planning processes established.	302.677,00	211.430,87	69,85
Output 3.1 Mechanisms for funding adaptation investments identified.	255.247,00	177.713,58	69,62
Output 3.2 Private sector engagement in adaptation strengthened.	183.871,00	74.697,11	40,62

Project Management Cost	108.103,00	70.421,49	65,14
Delivery Partner Fee (Refer to 'Guidance' tab on use of DP Fee)	146.364,00	88.156,44	60,23
Project total	1.868.296,00	1.159.449,16	62,06

Source: UNDP- NAP Project Team

Despite the challenges documented in this report, the PT anticipates utilising the remaining funds by the project closure date of 31 July 2024. The Evaluation Team's analysis of outstanding commitments and pending payments, including salaries, suggests that approximately 90% of the approved budget will likely be expended. A notable underspend has occurred within the international travel budget line, primarily due to travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the rigidity of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) has been a constraint, as it has not permitted budgetary revisions or reallocation of these unspent funds to other budget lines, highlighting an area for improvement in financial flexibility and responsiveness.

The ET assessed the appropriateness of the Project's delivery methods and whether the chosen approaches, resources, and conceptual frameworks were utilised to achieve the anticipated outputs within the set budget and timeline. The ET examined management and administrative arrangements to determine their effectiveness. Additionally, the Project's management structure was reviewed to see if it facilitated the expected results through sound management practices, including robust reporting, communication, and efficient monitoring mechanisms. Finally, this comprehensive assessment aimed to identify inefficiencies and provide insights into optimising resources in future projects.

SQ3.2. To what extent was the project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?

F16. The NAP Project faced delays in establishing a full-fledged management and operational team; however, the Project Manager's skills and technical capacities (characterised also by a long-term involvement in the sector) contributed to delivering results. Still, the engagement of the full-time Project Coordinator in 2023 contributed to Project's efficiency and boosted the delivery of results.

The ET acknowledges that the NAP Project was a complex and demanding initiative, involving numerous components that required substantial institutional development and transformation of the NCS D. The project's scope included planned and new activities, necessitating specialized expertise for crafting the NAP, significantly increasing the PT's workload. This extensive operational demand underscored the need for robust management and coordination, effectively handled by UNDP. The ET notes that engaging a skilled Project Manager (PM) with specific expertise in climate adaptation in Montenegro was crucial for successfully implementing the Project. Stakeholders have credited the PM with significantly enhancing the progress in NAP preparation and strengthening the national adaptation mechanism.

The Project Document (Prodoc) was originally planned for a full-time Project Assistant (PA) on the team- the decision was to reduce costs and engage PA from the UNDP Inclusive and Green Growth Portfolio. This decision was initially made to enhance cost efficiency and reduce staff costs. Despite its positive financial implications, this decision caused the PA could not dedicate full time to this demanding initiative due to other commitments within this UNDP portfolio. The ET finds that the subsequent decision to hire a full-time Project Coordinator in the third year proved beneficial, allowing the PM to focus more on strategic issues. These changes did not affect the initially approved budget,

The PT adopted results-oriented annual and monthly work plans, providing a solid foundation for scheduling, resource allocation, budget control, and achieving desired objectives. These comprehensive work plans facilitated activities' planning, implementation, and synchronisation, ensuring coherence and responsiveness to identified NAP priorities and needs while considering the Ministry/ NCS D and other partner institutions in Montenegro. The ET finds that the preparation of work plans reflected a comprehensive, gender-sensitive approach involving the joint efforts of the PT and the NCS D/ the Ministry in planning inputs and scheduling activities. The NCS D representatives highlighted the benefits of this approach, as it facilitated collaboration and synergy with other initiatives in the sectors, helped align with the national policies and reform priorities, and promoted progress in critical sectors.

In addition, the PT has effectively monitored various critical aspects of the NAP Project, encompassing the overall country context, environmental factors, and the direct implementation process. This comprehensive

monitoring included tracking and analyzing potential risks, promptly reporting findings to the Project Board, national authorities, and the UNDP Country Office. Additionally, the PT ensured the collection of sex-disaggregated data at all project events, aligning with one of the project's key objectives to gather gender-disaggregated data for sectoral CCA risk assessments. The PT held weekly meetings to review ongoing and upcoming activities, track the progress of experts, and discuss event logistics. Alongside these internal meetings, the Project Manager participated in weekly cluster meetings with the UNDP Country Office to ensure alignment and coordination. Regular monitoring and analysis of project activities were conducted using the UNDP Atlas system initially and later through the UNDP Quantum system, which allowed the PT to keep track of critical risks and adapt strategies accordingly. The implementation of adaptive measures, detailed earlier in this report, was based on robust monitoring frameworks established by the project stakeholders, ensuring responsive and informed project management.

Project Board

The steering structure and coordination mechanisms for the NAP Project were established in a timely manner, significantly enhancing strategic and operational decision-making. The Project Board (PB) played a pivotal role in ensuring planned and transparent coordination of the project's implementation and monitoring. It provided strategic guidance, monitored performance, and maintained accountability, continuing to deliver its tasks effectively despite changes in its composition due to political shifts and organizational changes within the Government and national institutions. The PM promptly briefed new PB members on project progress and emerging priorities.

The PB diligently executed its oversight functions, taking major decisions as necessary and convening annually to evaluate project developments. Communication between the PT and the PB was consistently efficient, with PB members receiving timely updates on project implementation issues. To date, three PB meetings have been held, and the final session is planned to coincide with the Project's conclusion, ensuring continuous oversight and strategic alignment throughout its lifecycle.

- ***The NAP Project has established a monitoring system that contributed to measuring and reporting on progress; however, the ET finds some weaknesses.***

The NAP project incorporated a comprehensive and clearly outlined monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, aligned with standard UNDP procedures as described in the Project Document, which clearly delineated M&E responsibilities.

However, the ET identified some deficiencies. The GCF format when the proposal was developed did not request a robust Results Framework (RF); hence, the NAP Project Document did not include it (an unusual oversight compared to other similar projects implemented by UNDP). Despite this, the ET reconstructed the RF using the Project's intervention logic and the half-yearly progress reports. However, this reconstruction revealed several challenges:

The intervention logic defined three outcomes, which is overly ambitious for a single project, considering that outcomes typically reflect changes in development conditions influenced by the collective interventions of multiple partners, rather than the result of a single entity's efforts. Furthermore, the wording of these outcomes seems more suited to outputs, which are direct results of project activities and are within the project managers' control. A major issue is the absence of outcome indicators, which obscures the actual assessment of the Project's progress under respective outcomes. This gap may stem from inadequate guidance from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) during the Project's formulation, particularly concerning "readiness" projects. Nonetheless, UNDP initiated the development of a Theory of Change that effectively outlined the expected impacts of the Project.

In addition, the Project detailed six outputs and associated 21 indicators corresponding to 21 expected deliverables. For a project of this size, having such a large number of indicators complicates measuring project effectiveness, especially when designed to match deliverables rather than reflect broader outputs or outcomes. However, the Project suffers from poorly defined output indicators, leading to ambiguity and unclear project directives. Most indicators are described in terms of specific activities or deliverables expected from the PT, with the completion of each activity marked as achieving the respective output indicator. Lastly, there is confusion in the formulation of baselines and targets. While the targets provided

are quantitative, the qualitative targets lack precise definitions, leaving them open to interpretation. This lack of clarity could lead to inconsistent project success and impact evaluations³⁶.

On a broader scale, the NAP Project has effectively contributed to establishing a national monitoring system for the overall sector by collaborating closely with the Strengthening Montenegro's Nationally Determined Contribution and Adaptation Activities Transparency Framework (CIBIT) team to develop the Monitoring Reporting and Verification (MRV) system, focusing particularly on the adaptation-related components. This collaboration led to a capacity assessment for implementing the system and initial recommendations for the standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Communication efforts

The NAP Project made efforts to disseminate key messages through various channels and tailored approaches, although a more robust communication and visibility strategy could further enhance its transformative impact on public understanding of CCA. The PT developed a customised outreach and awareness-raising strategy to engage various stakeholders effectively. This included organising workshops and training sessions and documenting these events to ensure effective engagement tracking and inclusivity.

During the initial years, these communication efforts were crucial in establishing and nurturing key relationships, setting a strong foundation for stakeholders' informed and competent participation in CCA planning. Additionally, the Project considered a targeted communication strategy that utilised various tools, such as knowledge products, pre- and post-training participant surveys, and support for event organisation, to maximise outreach and impact. These concerted efforts enhanced the visibility of the NAP Project among the main partners and national institutions. It contributed to the key stakeholders becoming more informed about Montenegro's adaptation priorities. **However, there is a need for a more comprehensive communication and visibility strategy to spotlight the project's transformative influence on developing a broader understanding of climate change and adaptation protocols.**

- ***The ET finds that the NAP's knowledge management strategy focuses on building a comprehensive knowledge base and effectively engaging stakeholders.***

The Project prioritised identifying data sources/ in the priority sectors (water, agriculture, tourism and health) and establishing a robust foundation that supported data-driven climate action and policy. In parallel, the NAP PT supplemented these efforts by establishing open channels for information exchange with relevant partners (which is crucial for ongoing knowledge management processes).

The workshops addressing key issues like climate change and gender in critical sectors further enhanced the knowledge base, facilitated the dissemination of crucial information, and spurred the creation of various outreach materials. The Project's activities to translate complex topics into accessible content for diverse stakeholders supported these efforts. Additionally, a feedback loop involving pre- and post-training appraisals was incorporated, enabling continuous refinement of knowledge products to align closely with the NAP's objectives. Moreover, the Project employed a dissemination strategy that combined in-person events and a solid online presence, optimising knowledge transfer. The ET finds that these structured efforts to capacity development set the knowledge basis within the NSDC Secretariat and other stakeholders to recognise and address the emerging challenges of climate adaptation.

The key informants recognised that this approach highlighted the Project's commitment to stakeholder engagement as a critical element of knowledge management, successfully establishing productive relationships and laying the groundwork for the follow-up phase that should focus on the NAP implementation (particularly by introducing sound climate finance approaches).

³⁶ For example, under Output 3.1, the targets are formulated: GoM will have a good estimate of the required budget to execute multi-sector adaptation investments over the mid-to-long term. GoM will have an in-depth understanding of the financial resources available from international/external sources. Similarly, under Output 1.1, the target is formulated as Capacity gaps have been identified and addressed through capacity building programmes resulting in a cadre and network of skilled and capable of driving and managing a NAP process, building national and sectoral resilience and addressing adaptation issues

5.4 Sustainability

The ET assessed the sustainability of the NAP Project by examining socio-political, governance, financial, and environmental factors crucial for maintaining the results post-completion. This analysis included a review of the developed institutional capacities such as systems, structures, staff competencies, and expertise to ensure self-sufficiency. Also, the ET evaluated the extent of country ownership and the commitment of partners to continue the Project's initiatives, which are crucial for enduring success. These assessments aimed to determine the Project's ability to sustain its achievements independently, integrating them into national strategies and ensuring ongoing financial and political support.

SQ4.1. What is the prospect that the project's activities and achievements will be sustained following NAP Project's support?

F17. While the NAP Project faced various challenges, its focus on fostering national ownership and enhancing institutional and policy frameworks for CCA exhibit an explicit commitment to sustainability.

The ET finds that the prospect for the sustainability of the NAP Project's results post-completion is cautiously optimistic. The Montenegrin government and its respective ministries intend to improve the institutional capacities and coordination framework, improve climate-related information for adaptation strategies, and strengthen the financial mechanisms for implementing these adaptation initiatives. These efforts have set the basis for the long-term sustainability of advancements in CCA.

Socio-political factors to sustainability

These factors present significant risks to the sustainability of project achievements, mainly influenced by the country's political stability and security environment. Montenegro has experienced heightened political tensions, including four changes in government and corresponding shifts in ministries, which have diverted attention away from environmental issues, diminishing their priority on the public agenda. These frequent changes in critical institutions due to political turnover have introduced instability that impacts the sustainability of CCA outcomes. These risks are beyond the control of projects like the NAP or UNDP and are likely to persist.

However, the NAP project has implemented measures that enhance the sustainability of its results from a socio-political perspective. The Project has improved understanding and engagement with CCA across Montenegro through extensive consultations. Additionally, it has made the policy process within the adaptation sector more open and inclusive, particularly involving the environmental community. This inclusivity is crucial for the long-term sustainability of these efforts, as it fosters a more constructive and stable process with the environmental movement actively engaged and informed about ongoing activities. Furthermore, the substantial body of knowledge generated by the Project has significantly raised awareness and deepened understanding of the importance of adaptation, contributing further to the sustainability of the Project's achievements.

Governance and institutional factors to sustainability

A comprehensive strategic framework for CCA was established, mandating continuous follow-up on adaptation measures across all areas and sectors. This framework compels all government institutions to incorporate adaptation considerations into their duties, ensuring sustained government engagement with CCA issues.

Sector-specific measures developed under the NAP for sectors such as water, agriculture, tourism, and health not only mandate actions toward adaptation objectives but also serve as models for other sectors. The completion of public consultations and the expected government approval of the NAP by the Project's end highlight this progress. Subsequent projects like the GEF-funded CBIT project, which will support the NCS in beginning the NAP's implementation, assure the continuity of these efforts.

The Government of Montenegro's (GoM) commitment to aligning with international and EU-accession requirements suggests a positive trajectory for sustained momentum in CCA and environmental governance. Notably, the NAP Project's role in developing and institutionalising robust frameworks for adaptation has been instrumental, with such frameworks increasingly becoming embedded within national policies. For example, the Project's influence was pivotal in revitalising the NCS under the Prime Minister's leadership, which now robustly supports the NAP and has established dedicated National Working Groups. The Project

also aided these groups in drafting the Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change, further embedding the NCS D's role within the broader climate change framework and enhancing sustainability.

Furthermore, the Project's products—such as strategic recommendations and enhanced institutional capacities—have provided authorities with a solid framework to effectively support and sustain climate adaptation measures. Stakeholder feedback indicates that the Project fostered a sense of national ownership and commitment to the NAP, which is essential for the long-term sustainability of these climate change initiatives.

However, to ensure the ongoing sustainability of CCA processes in Montenegro, several areas require additional focus and strategic intervention:

- **Rapid finalisation and adoption of the NAP:** The immediate challenge lies in obtaining governmental approval for the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and initiating its full-scale implementation. Delays in these processes could hinder the momentum gained and impact the effectiveness of the existing adaptation measures.
- **Alignment with EU standards and strategies:** Recent EU Progress Reports have emphasised the urgency for Montenegro to align its national legislation with EU standards and formulate a robust national strategy for CCA. This alignment accelerates the drafting and adopting relevant plans that meet the EU's 2030 climate and energy targets. Additionally, there is a pressing need to enhance the administrative capacity to implement these norms effectively and establish robust systems for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Enhanced monitoring and evaluation:** Effective monitoring of the implementation of adaptation plans is crucial. The NCS D under the General Secretariat has the overarching responsibility for this task; however, specific roles and responsibilities within various governmental and non-governmental entities need a clearer definition. A comprehensive set of indicators for monitoring progress must be finalised and agreed upon to ensure consistent tracking and assessment of adaptation efforts.
- **Centralised coordination platform:** The NCS D should act as a centralised platform to coordinate all NAP-related activities. This role includes tracking Montenegro's progress with NAP policies and their implementation. While international partners support adaptation activities, Montenegro needs a systematic inventory of adaptation projects, studies, or actions. Future project phases need to support the NCS D in establishing a coordination concept that integrates various ongoing projects, enhancing the systematic approach to climate adaptation.
- **Iterative planning and continuous improvement:** It is vital that NAP stakeholders, especially key decision-makers within the Government of Montenegro, treat adaptation planning as an iterative process. A dynamic system that continuously updates and improves adaptation documents is crucial. Such a system should facilitate the integration of climate change-related risks and adaptation strategies into ongoing development planning and budgeting processes. It should also include mechanisms for regularly monitoring adaptation actions and fine-tuning plans based on accumulated lessons learned.
- **Establishment of partnerships and community engagement:** Establishing and maintaining robust partnerships across multiple sectors—including government, academia, civil society organisations, and the private sector—is essential for the sustained success of adaptation strategies. These partnerships should foster an inclusive approach to adaptation planning, ensuring that all stakeholders are engaged and that adaptation measures are widely supported and implemented.

By addressing these areas, Montenegro can enhance the resilience and effectiveness of its climate adaptation efforts, ensuring that they remain robust and responsive to evolving environmental and socio-economic challenges.

Financial sustainability:

Ensuring adequate funding for implementing adaptation strategies is critical. This includes identifying and securing sustainable financial resources, both domestic and international, to support ongoing and future adaptation initiatives.

The ET finds that the NAP Project in Montenegro has invested efforts to secure sustainable financial resources (for NAP implementation) to enhance the ongoing and effective implementation of climate action initiatives.

Beyond the foundational support from the Government of Montenegro, the NAP PT has developed a draft financial strategy to engage with key financial institutions. The agreement with the Central Bank of Montenegro and the insurance regulatory authority has been a critical milestone in establishing a roadmap for climate-responsive financing. This roadmap is poised to initiate a transformative wave of climate-smart investments within the country's financial sectors.

The Project has also demonstrated adeptness in resource mobilisation, preparing a suite of concept notes to tap into various funding sources. These actions have produced concrete results, such as securing a GEF 8 STAR allocation for biodiversity conservation that integrated NAP's adaptation objectives and endorsed the Project's second phase. The forward momentum continues with the IFAD-led "Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience in the Montenegrin Mountain Areas-GORA" initiative and the Montenegro SDG Acceleration Fund projects focusing on development coordination and sustainable development office upscaling. Even in the face of challenges, such as unapproved funding proposals, the team's resilience is evident in their strategic pivot to adapt proposals to alternative funding avenues, as seen with the TIDE project's reorientation towards different donors. Developing innovative financing mechanisms, such as green bonds or climate funds, could provide necessary resources for long-term sustainability.

The key informants stated that this comprehensive and adaptive financial planning could contribute to the lasting effects and sustainability of climate adaptation efforts in Montenegro. At the same time, they recognised that innovation remains a critical factor in sustainability, with ongoing activities to enhance early warning systems and to develop climate-smart agriculture. These examples could be replicated at the sector level to address the challenges of climate change.

Environmental Sustainability

The Project has significantly contributed to the national objectives of strengthening the country's resilience to climate change effects. As such, the Project has directly addressed key environmental risks related to climate change at the highest level.

Through a series of crucial risk assessments – which, for the most part, have taken place for the first time in the country – the NAP Project has identified the main vulnerabilities of sectors through a gender-sensitive lens, identifying gaps in the available statistical and other climate-related data, current legislation and awareness levels among the main stakeholders

SQ4.2. To what extent has the Project developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) to be self-sufficient upon its completion?

F18. The Project aimed to enhance national capacities by designing several programs that align with the intentions to bolster a professional development system with a forward-looking, sustainable approach. The incremental progress of the NAP Project efforts has been documented and assessed, reflecting a discernible advancement in enhancing the competencies of public administration professionals and other stakeholders involved in climate-related endeavours, with an optimistic view concerning sustainability.

The ET finds that designing and advancing a comprehensive capacity development plan has been a central piece in these efforts. This plan was targeted principally at aiding the NCS in utilising NAP outcomes for better implementation and support. The execution of this plan witnessed interactive training programs tailored to different stakeholders.

Despite the progress, the Project faced hurdles, mainly in maintaining committed and consistent participation in the instituted training sessions, exacerbated by a notable turnover of involved personnel, which posed a risk to the efficacy of the capacity-building objectives under the NAP project. Its particular attention has been dedicated to equipping staff from institutions with the necessary skills for driving a successful NAP process and building national resilience for climate change. This focus on practical knowledge and skill development is evidenced by the continuous identification and closure of capacity gaps, targeting a wide array of personnel for training in critical areas such as climate information analysis, risk assessment, and integrating CCA into existing frameworks. Moreover, the Project's capacity development strategy encompassed immediate training needs and addressed the institutions' overarching issue of high staff turnover, which leads to a dilution of institutional knowledge. The NAP Project proposed professional

development policies to stabilise the workforce and incentivise expertise retention, thereby safeguarding the Project's longevity and influence on climate service continuity.

The deliverables and goals of the NAP project's capacity-building initiatives reflect a consistent effort to ensure that capacity development is part of an integrated, sustainable strategy for enriching institutional and individual competencies in climate adaptation and resilience.

Pronounced ownership remains a prerequisite and critical for the NAP's sustainability and confirms that national partners' leadership in tailoring the NAP reflected priorities and needs concerning climate action.

The NAP PT has been working on national participation, ownership and partnerships, which are crucial for the sustainability of the results and, broadly, the NAP achievements. Despite frequent shifts in governance and the challenges posed by changing management in key institutions, the Project has fostered partnerships and aligned its initiatives with Montenegro's national climate strategies. The role of the PM in building and maintaining partnerships has been critical. These efforts have contributed to generating commitment and promoting stakeholder engagement in the NAP. The Project's approach underscored the necessity of maintaining an inclusive, well-informed platform for ongoing climate action and adaptation efforts in Montenegro.

At the same time, the ET finds that national ownership and leadership of the NAP project have varied during implementation, with moderate overall engagement from respective governmental institutions. The proximity of institutions to the climate change agenda, as well as their leadership, influenced their engagement.

The NCSO has demonstrated strong commitment, particularly through its working groups, although it has faced challenges due to limited operational and human resources. The Project bolstered its role to become a central figure in climate action; for example, the Project assisted NCSO in influencing the drafting of crucial legislation such as the Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change. This involvement has institutionalised the NAP process and also integrated the NCSO's role into the broader climate governance framework, enhancing the sustainability of the Project's achievements.

The MTESDNRD (until 2023- Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism) has played a crucial role throughout the Project's lifecycle. Despite structural and portfolio changes within the ministry responsible for climate adaptation, it has actively participated in and facilitated the necessary conditions for the Project's existence and operation. A significant challenge for the Project has been the high turnover of key officials, including ministers and senior ministry staff responsible for climate change. This frequent change has complicated the onboarding process for new officials, necessitating considerable effort from the PM/ PT to bring them up to speed. Interviews for this evaluation highlighted the challenges of familiarising new officials with the Project's dynamics. There is a noted need to formalise initial training for newly appointed officials who also serve on the Project Board to enhance their understanding of the Project. This training could be beneficial for UNDP initiatives to ensure that all members of the PBs have common and well-established foundational project knowledge.

Apart from the MTESDNRD, other relevant government departments have mainly engaged reactively. Their participation has generally been limited to activities organised by the PT, contributing primarily through organisational support in planning and discussing project results. Some institutions showed little initiative in the consultative process, often relying on external support to support processes.

This report mentions that the NAP project has begun engaging with CSOs and the private sector. However, this engagement needs to become more dynamic and inclusive, providing ample opportunities for non-governmental organisations to participate in the policy-making process related to CCA. This would ensure a more comprehensive and representative approach to addressing climate challenges.

5.5 Impact

The ET analysed the potential impact of the NAP Project, linking it with its sustainability. The ET explored the extent to which the Project has engendered changes within the climate change sector and facilitated improvement in its institutions in Montenegro. This involved examining the Project's influence on the national landscape and ascertaining the transformative shifts that likely would not have materialised without the Project's support. By assessing various dimensions, such as policy changes, systemic improvements, and

normative modifications within climate change (and environmental stewardship), the ET predicted the potential long-lasting impact of these changes.

In addition, the ET focused on how significantly the NAP Project has fostered organisational development and transformation among project stakeholders and beneficiaries. This involved gauging how the Project's activities, training programs, capacity-building initiatives, and collaborative efforts have bolstered the stakeholders' abilities to carry out their roles more effectively. It also entailed assessing the influence of the Project on beneficiaries' awareness, attitudes, and capabilities in the context of climate change.

EQ5.1. What evidence is there that the Project has contributed towards an improvement in national government capacity (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information?

F19. The NAP Project has supported policy and legal changes in CCA, thus contributing to Montenegro's broader sustainable development discourse.

The ET meticulously gauged the Project's accomplishments, examining their influence on systems and policies and the potential ripple effects the Programme's outcomes could ignite. The team applied policy cycle model 26 as an analytical tool to illustrate the correlation between the Project's accomplishments and changes at the systemic level, which resulted in a more robust engagement between stakeholders and authorities. Thus, the ET delved into how the Project and its various activities that the partners implemented have honed policies (strategies and laws) related to CCA.

a) Policy decisions (problem identification and agenda setting) and policy development

The Project provided materials for defining issues and agenda setting as closely allied elements of policy decisions³⁷. Thus, the ET finds the Project's effects at this stage: it carried out comprehensive sectoral assessments to understand and articulate the risks and vulnerabilities that the water, tourism, agriculture, and health sectors faced in the context of climate change, particularly through a gender-sensitive lens. This multi-sectoral approach highlighted the benefits of producing a consolidated and analytical report with a combined overview of the existing climate risk assessments of the four priority sectors with prioritised risks according to their impact on various social groups- especially women and girls, highlighting their correlation with sustainable development goals and sectoral priorities.

For example, the agriculture sector, an important component of Montenegro's economy and particularly vital in rural areas, was identified as highly vulnerable due to its dependence on specific climatic conditions and water availability. Climate hazards such as droughts or floods posed threats, necessitating a detailed analysis to inform proactive adaptations in agricultural practices. The water sector was another critical area due to its intrinsic link to all aspects of socio-economic development and its susceptibility to climate variability and change. The health sector's assessment concentrated on public health risks exacerbated by climate change, which could influence disease patterns and health outcomes. Tourism, an essential part of the country's economic development, was reviewed for climate change-driven vulnerabilities that might affect ecological integrity, cultural heritage, and sustainable tourism practices. These sectoral assessments strategically aligned with the overall goals of the NAP Project. Part of the process included reviewing and analysing sectoral development plans and policies to identify climate adaptation entry points within each sector. Additionally, these documents revealed knowledge gaps and justified additional efforts to address them.

In addition, the ET finds that the critical NAP Project aspect has focused on the financial implications of adaptation measures, identifying financing needs through prioritisation and analysing climate finance to pinpoint primary sources and gaps in domestic finance for adaptation priorities. This crucial work defined the problem and propelled it into policy discourse as instruments in setting the policy agenda and suggesting financing approaches. Practically, the Project inputs served to develop adaptation finance guidelines in Montenegro, encapsulated in the draft Climate Change Adaptation Financing Guidelines. This document

³⁷ Priority setting and issue definition are almost inherently complex and involve choosing what issues are essential and inescapable (while many others with greater long-term significance may be straightforward to ignore or define incorrectly). After the identified issues, the next step in setting an agenda is to address them through the actions of the Government, its sub-ordinated units or other stakeholders. The "framing" of issues involves defining particular problems under terms that can help to mobilize political support for their adoption. Ref to Guy Peters "Policy Making Cycle- steps and approaches" and Jon Pierre, B. Guy Peters "Governance, Politics and the State," Macmillan, USA, 2016

outlined methods for prioritising adaptation investments, formulating financing strategies, and assessing the effectiveness of these strategies. The main objective of these guidelines is to assist policymakers in Montenegro in securing resources for adaptation priorities and ensuring the sustainability and efficacy of financing strategies well beyond the immediate NAP cycle.

The ET finds that these proposed policy solutions have been instrumental in addressing various and interlinked aspects of climate change and adaptation. These results and efforts influenced "problem definition and agenda setting" within the policy cycle. Subsequently, it has recommended apt responses to these issues and provided strategic direction for the NAP's first implementation cycle, thereby contributing to policy development³⁸.

II) Policy drafting, including policy Instruments and Implementation mechanisms

The key informants recognised that the Project has designed tools and instruments that resulted in new policies and facilitated policy implementation. They stated that iterative consultation with different governing structures and various governance tiers, partner CSOs, and other stakeholders³⁹. has been critical in shaping the policies, strategies, and laws relevant to CCA in Montenegro.

The ET finds that this participatory and multi-pronged approach served various aspects of policy formulation and implementation⁴⁰. Namely, the Project's focus was to support the preparation of the NAP⁴¹ by identifying and mitigating risks from climate change while acquiring information on key risks and vulnerabilities and integrating these insights into effective coordination mechanisms and resilience plans. Operationally, the Project employed scientific research to assess vulnerabilities and risks posed by climate change, formulating effective mitigation measures. For example, the draft NAP recognised the varied impacts of climate change on different social groups, ensuring a tailored approach to their specific vulnerabilities and adaptation capacities. An important element included developing a database for gender-sensitive adaptation solutions and strategies to secure financing for adaptation needs: the Project supported NCS D in formulating gender-sensitive adaptation goals, targets, and indicators, showing a commitment to inclusive and equitable CCA planning

In addition, the NAP Project contributed to improving the legal framework for CCA through national legislation supporting the National Working Group in providing inputs to the Draft Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change. This legislation aimed to institutionalise the NAP preparation process, incorporating considerations for Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV), and defined the NCS D's position in climate change. Another example is that the Project advocated and influenced the GoM's Law on Budget and Fiscal Responsibility. These efforts resulted that the Law recognised the NCS D's critical role in climate change, appointing it as a Donor and Partnership Coordination Unit.

The ET finds that the Project tested and implemented tools and mechanisms that could result in policy changes and improved policy implementation.

The Project partners have developed an analytical framework for vulnerability studies to enhance adaptation planning focused on a comprehensive review and consolidation of existing climate risk assessments across priority sectors. These studies assessed the impacts on assets and systems within the public and private sectors. They conducted gender-sensitive climate risk assessments to address these areas' vulnerabilities and adaptation needs. With support from the Project, the partners codified this knowledge and experience and prepared tools for future identification of needs, prioritisation and responses.

F20. While the Project's tangible contributions have already begun to reshape the national institutions involved in CCA, the accurate measure of its impact—an enhancement of NSDC internal capabilities and elevation of its role within climate change and strengthening of other national institutions involved in CCA and broader, sustainable—will likely become more pronounced in the coming years. This momentum is anticipated to serve the immediate needs of Montenegro's administration and lay the groundwork for lasting improvements in climate change mitigation and environmental management.

³⁸ Ibidem, Jon Pierre, B. Guy Peters "Governance, Politics and the State," Macmillan, USA, 2016

³⁹ Annual Report for 2021, 2022 and 2023. Also, different reports produced during this period.

⁴⁰ For examples, in meeting with the representatives of the national institutions and the CSO stakeholders. Analysis of meeting minutes and workshop reports that have been available to the ET.

⁴¹ . The NAP is a document and a process to guide comprehensive medium- and long-term CCA efforts

The NAP Project has contributed to the organisational development of the NCSO Secretariat and its relevant working groups. The NCSO Secretariat, through effective advocacy and lobbying, has been rightly upgraded from the departmental level of the relevant ministry to the body under the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro. This decision has been highly important in raising its visibility and, at the same time, increasing awareness of NAP and climate change priorities. The Project emphasised these changes, facilitating its organisational development, supporting legal and fiscal acknowledgement of the Council's role, and advancing strategic planning for CCA. The integration of gender considerations and a conscious approach to synergies with other initiatives and coordination further highlight the Project's impactful approach to organisational development in CCA.

The Project has effectively supported the NCSO for operational improvements and institutional functioning, setting a robust foundation to "firmly grasp its mandate, deliver quality services and support climate change and adaptation processes in various sectors⁴²". The ET finds that the Project's activities and results have contributed to NCSO positioning and its organisational development, with anticipated long-term impacts that align with Montenegro's reform goals. In this context, the twin-track approach the Project adopted—enhancing the capacities and role of the NCSO's Secretariat and concurrently redesigning and repositioning the NCSO itself—has been highly effective. Improving NCSO's internal capacities (including strengthening working groups) has already demonstrated the potential for streamlining processes, increasing efficiency, and reducing bureaucratic inertia. However, the longevity of these improvements depends on sustained leadership commitment and consistent government backing.

In capacity building, the Project has, among others, enhanced NCSO's capacities in core areas. For example, the Project assisted with the organisation of the NCSO's first constitutive session, which was successfully convened (at the 36th meeting in December 2022 during the Regional Conference on Sustainable Development in the Western Balkans.) Leading up to this session, the Project provided extensive support to the secretariat, including preparatory assistance for the July 2022 presentation of the Second Voluntary National Report at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York, help in drafting the National Circular Transition Strategy up to 2030, and ongoing support for the International Fund for Agricultural Development in designing the project "Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience in the Montenegrin Mountain Areas." This latter project aims to secure approximately 10 million USD from the Adaptation Fund, with the NCSO as one of its principal beneficiaries. In addition, the Project supported NCSO's connectivity and peer-to-peer exchange of best practices, ensuring the organisation remains integrated with global NAP-related networks, enhancing the institution's technical capacities and international presence. Maintaining and expanding international partnerships remains critical for NCSO's continued institutional improvement and sustainability of these achievements.

Another example of the NAP's project impact on NCSO's organisational development has already been mentioned: GoM's decision to delegate the NCSO Secretariat as the development/donor coordination.

These achievements mark milestones in the evolution and empowerment of the NCSO, reinforcing its pivotal role in addressing pressing environmental challenges and facilitating sustainable development.

5.6 Cross-cutting considerations

The ET assessed the NAP Project's integration of cross-cutting issues by examining gender considerations and human rights-based approaches. The ET evaluated how the Project addressed the needs of vulnerable groups, including women and girls, and the disadvantaged, ensuring their active participation and benefit from climate adaptation initiatives. This assessment included a review of gender mainstreaming activities, such as collecting gender-disaggregated data and implementing gender-sensitive adaptation strategies. Additionally, the ET considered how the Project upheld human rights principles by facilitating equitable access to resources and ensuring that adaptation measures did not exacerbate existing inequalities but promoted inclusivity and empowerment.

EQ6.1. To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the NAP Project?

⁴² KII notes

F21. Gender inclusiveness has been a foundational aspect of the NAP process, emphasising the importance of integrating gender considerations into CCA planning and budgeting. Recognising that successful adaptation requires the active involvement of all societal groups, especially women, the Project strongly emphasised gender equality and women's empowerment from the outset.

The Project's gender marker was rated GEN 2, indicating that while gender equality was not the sole focus, the Project significantly and consistently promoted gender equality. This was reflected in the Project's design and implementation, which incorporated a gender perspective by recognising the unique ways women experience climate-related challenges (in their lives). In addition, the NAP project aligned with the Green Climate Fund's gender policy, which specifies six priority areas: governance and institutional structure; operational guidelines; capacity building; monitoring, reporting, and evaluation frameworks; resource allocation and budgeting; and knowledge generation and communication. Throughout its implementation, the NAP project addressed these priorities comprehensively, emphasising the reduction of gender disparities.

The Project effectively advanced gender inclusivity by systematically incorporating gender-specific concerns throughout its operations. Key strategies included collecting and utilising gender-specific socio-economic data to tailor interventions and raising awareness about the critical role of women in the adaptation process, promoting their active involvement at every stage. Women decision-makers were integrated across all project capacities, from training sessions to strategic forums, allowing their perspectives to influence outcomes. The Project also mainstreamed gender sensitivity into its methodologies, incorporating women into climate change impact assessments and identifying adaptation options at the community level. Furthermore, initiatives and project concepts being developed for future implementation were rigorously analysed for their gender impact, ensuring the continuation and enhancement of gender-responsive strategies.

These efforts highlighted the Project's commitment to gender inclusivity and set a precedent for future climate change initiatives, demonstrating the integral role of gender considerations in achieving effective and sustainable adaptation outcomes.

Key Gender Achievements of the NAP Project

The NAP Project has made notable progress in advancing gender equality at policy and institutional levels. Crucially, the Project has institutionalised gender approaches, principles, and actions within the framework of developing national and sectoral adaptation policies and plans. This foundational work ensured that gender considerations became integral to the adaptation policy-making process.

The Project initiated its gender-focused achievements by integrating gender-sensitive assessments into the risk analysis of priority sectors, setting a precedent for subsequent adaptation measures under the NAP. As part of the NAP preparation process, a comprehensive training program on gender and climate change adaptation was developed and delivered. Additionally, the Project utilised the Dialogue for Development platform to discuss and refine strategies for comprehensively embedding gender considerations into adaptation policies and activities. Furthermore, the NAP team showcased its commitment to gender issues at a national workshop on Climate Change and Gender, facilitated by UNDP and involving civil society contributions (under the National Communication Project). Here, the PT presented findings on gender-related climate vulnerabilities and adaptation solutions across key sectors, such as water, agriculture, tourism, and health. The presentation was designed to elevate participants' understanding of the nexus between climate change and gender. It emphasised the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and revealed the critical need for women's involvement in climate decision-making processes.

The Project's efforts have identified gender-sensitive climate risks, vulnerabilities, and adaptation priorities across the four priority sectors. It has meticulously reviewed and prioritised adaptation investment options, resulting in a detailed list of actionable and gender-inclusive adaptation strategies. Additionally, a draft Gender Action Plan and a Communications Plan for the NAP were developed to solidify the Project's commitment to gender mainstreaming.

Operational achievements include systematically collecting sex-disaggregated data at most project events, enhancing the understanding of gender dynamics within the Project's scope. The Project also ensured substantial female participation, with women making up over 50% of experts engaged and over 60% of event participants. This robust participation underscores the Project's effectiveness in integrating gender considerations into its operational and strategic frameworks.

Overall, the evidence collected for this evaluation indicates that women have been involved in all Project stages, from planning to implementation and monitoring. They have participated in significant numbers in working groups, trainings, baseline studies, formulation of NAPs, and other project activities.

EQ6.2. To what extent has the Project followed a human rights-based approach and ensured that poor, minorities, women, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from NAP's interventions?

F22. The NAP Project adopted a human rights approach, focusing particularly on the most vulnerable groups and emphasising the rights of women and communities susceptible to climate change impacts. This approach has facilitated contributions towards ensuring the fundamental right to a safe and ecologically balanced environment. The Project has enhanced resilience and supported environmental rights through targeted adaptation activities in vulnerable sectors.

Moreover, the Project has championed participatory and transparent processes, both in its own activities and within governmental operations through its support of participatory development planning. This initiative has helped make central and local government organizations more open, transparent, and accountable to the public. Consequently, institutions, individuals, and communities engaged through the Project have gained a better awareness of their rights within the context of CCA, strengthening their capacity to advocate for and exercise these rights effectively.

The evaluation revealed that the Project effectively integrated cross-cutting programming principles, including capacity development, human rights, and the rights of vulnerable groups, as well as alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

EQ6.3. To what extent did the Project address and integrate Social and Environmental Standards?

F23. The ET finds that the NAP Project integrated Social and Environmental Standards (SES) to ensure alignment with international best practices in environmental and social governance. The Project incorporated SES to mitigate potential risks and maximise positive effects across various domains, including biodiversity, community health, cultural heritage, and communities and citizens rights.

The Project began with a comprehensive risk screening process, utilising a detailed checklist to identify and assess potential environmental and social risks. This screening included questions tailored to various risk areas. For example, the ET finds that the question of whether the Project could potentially involve or lead to adverse impacts on the development priorities of local people and communities has been relevant. This process ensured that all potential risks were identified early and mitigation strategies applied.

The NAP Project engaged a broad range of stakeholders- government institutions, CSOs, local communities, and academia- to foster inclusive and equitable climate adaptation approaches. The involvement of these stakeholders has been instrumental in enhancing national ownership and aligning planning and implementation with national priorities. At the same time, they highlighted that their involvement in the Project ensured that diverse perspectives and needs, especially those of marginalised groups, were considered and addressed.

The ET finds that the Project monitoring and evaluation framework aligned with the SES guidelines. It monitored and assessed the Project's effect on environmental and social conditions, ensuring adherence to SES throughout the project lifecycle. The NAP Project also focused on building the capacity of local institutions and stakeholders to understand and apply SES, including training sessions and workshops with topics on monitoring and managing environmental and social risks. These capacities are expected to remain in place.

The Project Team and the main partners followed ethical data collection and reporting standards. The project team ensured that data collection methods were sensitive to the local context and minimised any potential harm to participants. Transparent reporting practices were maintained to keep all stakeholders informed about the Project's progress and its adherence to SES.

The NAP integrated SES and demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainable and socially responsible development. This approach ensured the Project's immediate success and contributed to long-term positive environmental and social outcomes, setting a standard for future initiatives in the region.

6 Conclusions and lessons learned

6.1 Conclusions

The ET analysed collected findings and prepared the following main conclusions

6.1.1 Conclusions on relevance and coherence

C1. The NAP Project's design has been deeply embedded in Montenegro's commitment to confronting climate change challenges. Its developmental blueprint closely mirrors the country's environmental ambitions and international climate commitments. These endeavours have supported Montenegro's alignment with the EU's climate acquis and furthered environmental and climate governance progress. This alignment is demonstrated through leveraging stakeholder involvement and educational initiatives that promote gender equity and amplify awareness of climate risks.

Institutional and legislative efforts underpinning the NAP have provided a robust framework for Montenegro's environmental actions. The NAP's strategic measures have complemented national strategies like the NCCS and the NSSD, facilitating the country's transition towards a more resource-efficient, circular economy. In connection to these, the national coordination and capacities (that the Project bolstered), particularly through the NCSD, underscore concentrated efforts to organise, prioritise, and future-proof Montenegro against forthcoming climatic challenges (F1).

C2. The Project epitomised strategic alignment with the overarching Sustainable Development Framework of the UN and UNDP's Country Programme in Montenegro reinforcing a synchronised advancement towards environmental sustainability within Montenegro's developmental agenda (F2). By mirroring the GCF's strategic programming, the Project fortified the national institutional fabric and established Montenegro as an active participant in global environmental governance (F3). Advocating for sustainable climate action, the NAP Project has positioned itself parallel to the 2030 Agenda, emboldening institutional mechanisms and policy architectures that are pivotal for achieving the SDGs (F4).

C3. Despite being ambitious in scope, the Project displayed the necessary flexibility to respond to internal challenges and external constraints, reflecting an agile methodology fit for Montenegro's dynamic climate action terrain (F5, F6). The Project maintained a strategic viewpoint, rationalising its efforts with Montenegro's environmental commitments. The Project's collaborative nature and alignment with national strategies have solidified a pathway to upholding Montenegro's climate resilience and sustainability (F7, F8).

6.1.2 Conclusions on effectiveness

C4. Despite facing challenges, the Project achieved intended outputs and produced significant unplanned results, demonstrating robust execution and strategic alignment with its goals. A major achievement was revitalising the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), enhancing institutional and operational capacities for climate change adaptation in Montenegro (F9). The reorganisation of NCSD, although unforeseen, proved advantageous, providing strategic benefits in the ongoing commitment to and execution of sustainable development and climate adaptation actions in Montenegro. Under the General Secretariat, the NCSD's role in policy coordination and donor alignment has helped institutionalise climate action and enhance the country's response to climate change (F11). Part of institutional development efforts included developing formal guidelines and procedures to integrate climate adaptation measures into national and sectoral policies and strengthening governance frameworks.

The Project prioritised inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches through risk assessments in the priority sectors, aligning national adaptation goals with sectoral priorities and enhancing competencies necessary for effective planning through targeted training programs and capacity-building initiatives. The draft NAP Strategy was prepared, and additionally, inputs to the Draft Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change provided (F9).

The financing opinions for the NAP have been considered and elaborated through an initial financial strategy that aligns with national priorities and addresses the specific needs of different sectors (F9).

Despite these successes, external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, a severe cyber-attack, and political instability created significant obstacles, affecting the progression and the timely delivery of activities. These

challenges necessitated a recalibration of strategies and timelines to align with evolving circumstances, highlighting the need for adaptability in project implementation (F10).

C5. Securing approval for the NAP developed with the Project's support is crucial. Once approved, the focus must shift to implementing these planned priorities and activities. Stakeholders will need to commit to implementing priorities and demonstrate the tangible benefits, highlighting specific projects that emerge and the advantages they offer. Therefore, using the MRV system competently to track and monitor progress is a priority to enable stakeholders to effectively showcase the value of adaptation investments, ensuring transparency and accountability in utilising resources.

6.1.3 Conclusions on efficiency

C6. The Project's management effectively adapted to rapidly changing circumstances, demonstrating resilience and flexibility. The strategic use of resources, combined with the project team's ability to maintain high data quality standards and stakeholder engagement, contributed significantly to the Project's overall efficiency. These factors collectively ensured that the NAP Project met its immediate goals and laid a robust foundation for sustained climate adaptation efforts in Montenegro.

The NAP Project's implementation was efficient and management practices were sound (F13). Despite external development limitations, the Project demonstrated commendable resourcefulness by transitioning to alternative options and modifying implementation strategies to ensure continuity and minimal disruption to the Project's objectives (F14). The Project's flexible response to challenges, including the adept use of virtual platforms during the pandemic and the strategic handling of political changes in Montenegro, ensured that despite delays, the project outcomes remained on track and within the adjusted budgets and schedules.

The Project's extension reflects a strategic approach to ensuring the completion of deliverables, particularly the finalisation of the NAP and the enhancement of NCS D's institutional capacities (F15).

From a financial perspective, the Project managed its budget under fluctuating conditions, with a significant part allocated appropriately across various outputs despite the constraints imposed by rigid funding rules (F15). The Project's management structure effectively navigated these complexities, ensuring financial resources were utilised judiciously to achieve the desired outputs.

6.1.4 Conclusions on sustainability

C7. While the NAP Project has effectively set the stage for sustained CCA efforts in Montenegro, continuous attention to political stability, financial security, and institutional resilience is essential. Strengthening these areas will ensure the enduring effects of the Project's achievements and support Montenegro's ongoing adaptation to climate change challenges.

The sustainability of the NAP Project's achievements hinges on several strategic pillars, demonstrating a mixed but generally optimistic outlook. The commitment from Montenegro's Government to continue enhancing institutional capacities and coordination for CCA is a strong foundation for long-term sustainability. Incorporating CCA into national policies and robust engagement with EU accession processes further solidifies this outlook, aligning Montenegro with international environmental standards and practices. Despite these positive indicators, sustainability faces notable challenges, primarily from socio-political instability. Frequent government changes and political volatility risk undermining the prioritisation and continuity of environmental initiatives. However, the project has strategically countered these risks by fostering broad stakeholder engagement and enhancing public and governmental understanding of CCA. From an institutional perspective, establishing a comprehensive strategic framework for CCA with the GS's NCS D, which mandates ongoing adaptation actions across all sectors, underpins the sustainability of the Project's outcomes (F17).

C8. Although challenged by the need for consistent and adequate funding, financial sustainability is addressed through strategic partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms being explored with various stakeholders. (F18)

C9. Implementing the NAP is a complex and long-term process as critical as its initial formulation. UNDP is ideally situated to support the NAP's implementation phase in Montenegro. Given this, there is a clear need for continued assistance during this stage, and discussions with potential donors are essential. While

Montenegro has access to GCF resources, additional support will be necessary. The European Union emerges as a viable alternative, drawing on Montenegro's experience with Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) funds. UNDP and the NCS D need to develop a concept for a follow-up NAP project. This initiative is a significant step toward advancing climate change adaptation in Montenegro. Additionally, UNDP and the Ministry should intensify efforts to identify funding opportunities, considering government cost-sharing for infrastructure projects under the adaptation plan as a potential strategy (F17-F18).

6.1.5 Conclusions on impact

C10. The NAP Project's structured approach to enhancing governmental and institutional capacities has laid a robust foundation for ongoing and future adaptation efforts. The success of these efforts will rely on continued support and commitment at the governmental level to maintain momentum and build upon the foundational improvements.

The NAP Project effectively enhanced Montenegro's climate change adaptation (CCA) capabilities, particularly in government capacity and governance architecture, aligning with NAP strategic objectives (F19). The country has improved policy development and implementation across various sectors by integrating climate risks, and adaptation needs into national strategies and frameworks. This strategic input facilitated immediate improvements and set the stage for sustainable development practices within the country. The improvements of the NCS D have been transformative, elevating its role within the government structure to enhance its effectiveness in climate governance (F20). This strategic elevation has positioned the NCS D to play a pivotal role in advancing CCA efforts, ensuring the long-term integration of adaptation strategies into national policies and enhancing the overall resilience of Montenegro's institutional frameworks against climate impacts (F20).

6.1.6 Conclusions on cross-cutting issues

C11. The NAP Project's focus on gender and human rights has enriched the quality of the adaptation strategies developed and ensured that these strategies are sustainable, resilient, and capable of supporting Montenegro's environmental and social objectives in the face of ongoing climate challenges.

The NAP Project integrated gender inclusivity and a human rights-based perspective, strategically advancing climate change adaptation and governance in Montenegro. This thorough integration of gender responsiveness has set a robust precedent for ensuring that adaptation strategies are effective, equitable, and inclusive of all societal groups, particularly women (F21). By making government processes more transparent and participatory, the Project has strengthened public accountability and empowered communities, ensuring that adaptation measures are both socially inclusive and aligned with broader sustainable development goals (F22).

The ET has ranked the NAP Project as follows:

Assessment	Rating	Score
A: Assessment of Project Outcomes		
1. Project Effectiveness of achieving results	Highly satisfactory (6) to Highly Unsatisfactory (1)	5
2. Project Efficiency in achieving results	Highly satisfactory (6) to Highly Unsatisfactory (1)	4
3. Project Relevance	Relevant or not relevant	6 (R)
Output rating	Averaged from above	24,9% (out of 30%)
B: Sustainability		
4. Sustainability of Results	Likely (4) to Unlikely (1)	4
5. Sustainability within the Socio-Political setting	Likely (4) to Unlikely (1)	3
6. Sustainability of Institutional framework and governance	Likely (4) to Unlikely (1)	4
Overall Likelihood of sustainability	Averaged from above	18,2% (out of 20%)
C: Monitoring and evaluation		
7. Project M&E design at entry	Highly satisfactory (6) to Highly Unsatisfactory (1)	4
8. M&E plan implementation	Highly satisfactory (6) to Highly Unsatisfactory (1)	6
M&E overall rating	Averaged from above	16,6% (out of 20%)
D: Implementation		
9. Quality of UNDP project implementation	Highly satisfactory (6) to Highly Unsatisfactory (1)	6
10. Inclusion of relevant crosscutting issues (gender, human rights etc.	Highly satisfactory (6) to Highly Unsatisfactory (1)	6
Overall Implementation rating		30 (out of 30%)
Overall project quality	Based on weightings of above scores. Highly satisfactory (6) to Highly Unsatisfactory (1)	5 (90,3%) Satisfactory

6.2 Lessons learned

The ET has identified lessons that underscore the importance of adaptive project management that accommodates extended timelines, engages stakeholders broadly and strategically, and leverages institutional structures for enhanced coordination and impact. Such insights are invaluable for designing projects addressing complex global climate change adaptation challenges.

Extended time for implementation: The project highlighted that the time initially allocated was insufficient to address all planned activities effectively. Numerous unforeseen challenges, including the complexity of policy development and stakeholder alignment, necessitated extended timelines. Despite a nine-month no-cost extension, significant activities remained incomplete at the Project's closure, and the approval of the NAP was still pending. This experience underscores the necessity for planning longer project durations that allow for comprehensive stakeholder consultation and detailed policy formulation. In this context, adaptation processes, especially in emerging areas like climate change, require robust engagement and capacity building across various governmental and non-governmental sectors.

Value of strategic partnerships: Effective partnerships with key institutions such as the NCSA, the General Secretariat (GS), and various ministries proved crucial. These alliances not only extended the project's reach and impact but also facilitated the embedding of adaptation processes within national operations, enhancing sustainability. Maintaining and nurturing these strategic partnerships is essential, as they provide a dynamic platform for continuous learning and adaptation, leveraging the wide influence and convening power of central institutions to foster program continuity and institutional learning.

Crucial Role of the General Secretariat: Integrating the NCSA under the General Secretariat and ensuring the GS's involvement in all project activities were key to the project's effectiveness. This structural alignment facilitated better coordination and oversight, proving vital for successfully implementing project activities. Continued engagement of the GS in future activities is recommended to maintain this effective governance structure, which has significantly contributed to the project's successes.

Importance of strengthening good governance in the country: The NAP Project's contributions to climate change adaptation have also contributed to good governance in the country, involving national institutions to assess vulnerabilities and formulate adaptation plans. It has shaped the country's governance framework in climate change adaptation by strengthening crucial institutional structures such as the NCSA under the GS and its various technical working groups. Looking ahead, it will be critical to broaden the focus to the sub-national level, where effective coordination among a diverse array of stakeholders with varying responsibilities will be essential.

The emphasis on governance in the context of climate change adaptation enhances the sustainability and efficiency of these initiatives. In hindsight, the NAP project could have been designed more explicitly to focus on improving governance, incorporating a more robust integration of capacity development for governance.

Broad-Based Consultative Approach: the Project's success was bolstered by adopting an inclusive consultation strategy that involved a wide array of stakeholders from different sectors. This approach ensured that the adaptation planning process was comprehensive, reflecting various stakeholders' diverse perspectives and priorities, which is critical for mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) into national development planning and policy formulation. Such a landscape consultation approach facilitated consensus on adaptation priorities and streamlined the integration of these priorities into the national adaptation plan, promoting ownership and easing implementation across different sectors.

Proactive Project Management: The proactive management approach, particularly the technical expertise and advocacy of the Project Manager in pushing for key institutional reforms like the revitalization of the NCSA, was instrumental. The Project Manager's direct involvement in supporting the adaptation planning process and engaging with key stakeholders at all levels ensured that the project stayed aligned with its goals, maximizing its impact and relevance to the country's needs.

7 Recommendations

The analysis of primary and secondary data served to define findings and form conclusions. Considering these inputs, the MTRT recommendations have been defined as a framework for further analysis and follow-up actions.

The evaluation consultant has formulated the following main recommendations:

<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>For: MTESDNRD- GoM NCS-D-GS UNDP NAP Project Team</p>	<p>Completing the Endorsement of the NAP</p> <p>The ET recommends that the MTESDND and the NCS-D with support from UNDP intensify efforts in finalizing public consultations for the draft NAP and its finalisation. This process will involve organizing detailed presentations to showcase the NAP to various institutional stakeholders and solicit their feedback, ensuring the plan reflects a comprehensive understanding of specific needs and priorities. These consultations will additionally engage participants, facilitating in-depth discussions that can yield actionable insights and enhance the NAP's overall effectiveness.</p> <p>Following these consultations, it is crucial for MTESDND and the NCS-D to collaborate closely, supported by the UNDP, to finalize approval and endorsement of the NAP. The Project should provide technical and logistical support as needed in navigating the bureaucratic processes to secure the formal approval needed for the NAP's</p> <p>Linked to Conclusions C5</p>
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>For: UNDP/ NCS-D- GS</p>	<p>Expand the focus of the next phase and consider longer time</p> <p>Given the UNDP's strategic position to assist Montenegro's long-term implementation of the NAP, a continued and robust support structure is essential. To this end, UNDP, in partnership with the NCS-D, should craft a comprehensive follow-up project for the NAP. The ET recommends that a comprehensive problem analysis is performed, and based on this- the Project's components defined.</p> <p>The ET recommends that the next phase must prioritise securing and diversifying funding sources to ensure the successful implementation of the plan (More details under Recommendation 3). While Green Climate Fund (GCF) resources provide foundational support, additional financing is necessary to cover the full scope of the follow up NAP Project and moreover the overall NAP. Drawing on Montenegro's previous successes with the European Union's Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) funds offers a viable pathway to supplement these efforts.</p> <p>The ET recommends that the upcoming phase of the NAP Project be strategically planned for a longer duration to align with the extensive timeline of the NAP itself. This approach will ensure sustained support for the NCS-D and the GS, enhancing their ability to coordinate, monitor, and report on NAP implementation comprehensively. Emphasizing long-term planning will facilitate a more robust adaptation process, allowing for the adjustment of strategies as environmental conditions and policy landscapes evolve.</p> <p>Additionally, the follow-up project should include a focused governance component aimed at capacity development and institutional strengthening of key agencies involved in environmental stewardship and governance.</p> <p>Special attention should be given to enhancing the operational and strategic capacities of the NCS-D and the General Secretariat. Strengthening these institutions is vital for them to effectively manage their core tasks related to the NAP and broader climate adaptation initiatives. By reinforcing their roles,</p>

	<p>the project will support these bodies in leading adaptation efforts, ensuring that NAP activities are well-coordinated, effectively implemented, and aligned with national and international environmental objectives. This strategic approach will support immediate adaptation needs and also build a foundation for sustainable environmental governance in Montenegro.</p> <p>Linked to Conclusions C5, C7, C8, C9 (relevant conclusions C1,,C2 and C3),</p>
<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>For: MTESDNRD (Implementing partner) Government of Montenegro/ UNDP NAP Project Team</p>	<p>Climate Adaptation Finance</p> <p>The ET recommends to focus on climate adaptation finance in the next period. Under the leadership of the MTESDND and the NCSD, there should be a prioritization of securing sustainable financing for climate adaptation efforts in Montenegro. It is crucial that financing for the NAP is secured and maintained over time as a continuous funding stream. This requires establishing a robust financing strategy that builds on one within the draft NAP and details how state budgets will integrate with funds from international development partners and the private sector to support ongoing adaptation initiatives.</p> <p>Moreover, the strategy should include mechanisms for regular updates and revisions to adapt to changing needs and ensure alignment with national priorities.</p> <p>In projects that involve investments from the public sector, it will be essential to have the commitment and involvement of the Ministry of Finance right from the start.</p> <p>The role of the private sector, in particular, demands careful evaluation to determine its potential contributions and the feasibility of generating returns on investments in adaptation projects. Such a comprehensive financing strategy will enable the effective implementation of the reforms and policy actions outlined in the NAP, ensuring that financial resources are available consistently and efficiently to support adaptation processes at both national and local levels.</p> <p>Linked to Conclusions C8, C9; other relevant conclusions C5, C10, C11</p>
<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>For: NCSD/ UNDP</p>	<p>Enhance awareness and capacities concerning the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) specifically and climate change broadly</p> <p>The ET recommends that communication and awareness-raising efforts focus on educating stakeholders, particularly civil servants and public administration professionals within the environmental and climate change sectors, to strengthen their understanding of the NAP’s priorities, operational practices, and innovative approaches. This heightened awareness will contribute to a more informed and skilled workforce capable of driving effective and efficient climate adaptation activities.</p> <p>Future projects should implement comprehensive communication strategies to ensure all stakeholders are well-informed about the NAP's goals, progress, and successes. Engaging and empowering stakeholders through modernized communication methods will enhance their ability to contribute effectively to the NAP's initiatives.</p> <p>Innovative and creative tools for capacity development, education, and awareness-raising should leverage new technologies and contemporary approaches to learning, making the information accessible and engaging.</p> <p>Linked to Conclusions C8, C9; C6, other relevant conclusions C5, C10, C11</p>

<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>For: UNDP Indirectly NCSD</p>	<p>Strengthen Monitoring Framework and Improve Indicators:</p> <p>For future projects akin to the NAP project, stakeholders should prioritize the development of meaningful and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) indicators, particularly at the outcome level, which was notably absent in the previous project. These indicators should be clearly defined with precise baselines and targets to enable effective tracking and measurement of project progress.</p> <p>Additionally, such projects should emphasize the importance of collecting and analyzing gender-disaggregated data. This focus will ensure that interventions are well-informed and monitored, thereby enhancing the project’s ability to address gender-specific impacts and outcomes effectively. This strategic approach to data management will strengthen the project’s capacity to adapt and respond to emerging challenges and disparities identified during implementation.</p> <p>Linked to Conclusions C6 and C5- relevant C7-C11.</p>
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8 Annexes

Annex 1 Institutions consulted during the evaluation

- Office for Sustainable Development, General Secretariat of the Government
- Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development, and North Region Development,
- Working Group for Climate Change Adaptation of the NCSD
- Statistical Office of Montenegro (MONSTAT)
- Hydrometeorology and Seismology Institute
- Institute for Public Health
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management
- UNDP representatives
- UNDP NAP Project Team

Annex 2 List of documents consulted

Project document:

UNDP NAP-Readiness Project document (version 20 Jan 2021)

UNDP NAP Budget

UNDP Request for Extensions, 2023

UNDP NAP Budget Status (January 2024)

Progress reports:

2020 Annual Montenegro Readiness Progress Report

2021 Annual Montenegro Readiness Progress Report

2022 Annual Montenegro Readiness Progress Report

2023 Annual Montenegro Readiness Progress Report

2021 07-12 Montenegro - 3rd Readiness and preparatory support

2022 07-12 Montenegro - 5th Readiness and preparatory support IPR.pdf

Other NAP Montenegro process reports

NAP Document

NAP Document- version from May 2024

NAP Planning Forum Meetings minutes

NAP Steering Committee Meetings

- First Steering Committee Meeting- May 2021
- Second Steering Committee Meeting- March 2022
- Third Steering Committee Meeting- September 2022
- Fourth Steering Committee Meeting- April 2023
- Fifth Steering Committee Meeting- December 2023

Other documents

EU Progress Reports for Montenegro 2021-2024

Second Voluntary National Review, 2022

Annex 3: Interview guides

UNDP Team

RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE

EQ1.1. To what extent has the design and implementation of the Project responded to the national priorities concerning climate change and adaptation (and broader, environmental stewardship)?

EQ1.3. To what extent was the theory of change presented in the outcome model a relevant and appropriate vision on which to base the initiatives? Has the project proven to be as relevant as originally envisaged?

SQ1.3.1. To what extent is the project design, including the inputs, activities, outputs, and their indicators, logically and coherently aligned with the objectives of the NAP Project and its theory of change?

SQ1.3.2. How clear, realistic, and achievable are the objectives of the NAP Project within the established time schedule?

SQ 1.3.3. To what extent do the project's flexibility and changes introduced during planning and implementation ensure the lasting relevance of the NAP Project and its activities?

EFFECTIVENESS -

SQ2.1.1. To what extent has the governance, institutional coordination, and technical capacity of adaptation planning been strengthened?

What evidence shows that institutional capacity for adaptation planning has been identified and enhanced?

What evidence is available that capacity gaps have been identified and addressed through capacity-building programs, including training materials and workshops?

Is there evidence of a network of national staff being established and capacitated to drive and manage a NAP process, build national and sectoral resilience, and address adaptation issues?

What evidence is available that confirms strengthened institutional coordination to support adaptation planning?

Is there evidence that the adaptation planning framework is in place?

Is there evidence that the Working Group on Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change has a codified document in place that articulates its mission, mandate, governing processes, defined multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism, and SOPs for adaptation investments?

SQ2.1.2. To what extent has the evidence base for designing gender-sensitive adaptation solutions been enhanced?

Is there evidence of gender-specific climate change-driven risks and vulnerabilities in priority sectors being identified?

What evidence is available of gender-sensitive climate risks, vulnerabilities, and adaptation priorities being identified within the four priority sectors?

Is there evidence of produced reports (consolidation and synthesis of available information of climate risks; gender-sensitive climate risks assessments of the four sectors; prioritised gender-sensitive adaptation goals for the four priority sectors) being available?

Is there evidence of produced reports identifying entry points and opportunities for integrating gender-sensitive adaptation measures into sector plans and policies?

Is there evidence of adaptation investment options for the NAP and other plans being prioritised through a participatory process and a comprehensive list of adaptation ideas for investments in the priority sectors being prepared?

SQ 2.1.3. What is the availability of the adaptation finance mobilization strategy?

What evidence is available that mechanisms for funding adaptation investments have been identified?

Is there evidence of a report being prepared that details the preliminary costs of each of the prioritised adaptation investments?

Is there evidence that a financing strategy document was prepared that presents suitable and best options for financing each of the prioritized adaptation goals and identifies and considers barriers to private sector investment?

What evidence and examples of private sector engagement in adaptation are available?

Is the strategy and roadmap report for engaging the private sector available, including identifying barriers and drivers to private investments in adaptation?

Is a report available that presents the initial opportunities for engaging the finance sector in adaptation?

SQ2.2.1. What were the positive or negative, intended, or unintended changes the NAP's work brought about?

SQ2.3.1. What were the external and internal factors contributed to or impeded the effectiveness of the NAP Project?

EFFICIENCY

SQ 3.1.1. To what extent was the NAP's selected delivery method appropriate?

SQ 3.1.2. To what extent were the NAP's approaches, resources, models, and conceptual framework efficient and effective in achieving the planned outcomes?

SQ 3.1.3. How effective were the management and administrative arrangements during the implementation of the NAP?

SQ 3.2.1. To what extent did the NAP Project introduce sound and effective management practices, including reporting and communication?

SQ 3.2.2.. To what extent did the management systems, including monitoring mechanisms, facilitate efficient implementation of the NAP Project?

SQ 3.2.3. To what extent were the NAP Project implementation strategy and execution efficient and cost-effective?

SUSTAINABILITY

SQ4.1.1. To what extent does the country have the capacity to maintain the achieved results, and how much was the overall sustainability strategy in place?

SQ4.1.2. Is there a sense of ownership from the country and its partners' commitment to continuing support the Project's sustainability efforts?

SQ4.2.1. To what extent were the stakeholders' capacities, including individual and institutional, developed to ensure the sustainability of the Project's efforts and benefits?

SQ4.2.2. To what extent does the Project employ effective financial sustainability strategies, such as donors outside the UN system, to ensure its sustainability beyond the support of the NAP Project?

IMPACT

EQ5.1. To what extent has the Project improved the national government's capacity, including awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and monitoring systems, and governance architecture, including access to and use of information?

EQ5.2. To what extent has the NAP Project influenced national policy/legal/regulatory frameworks on CCA?

EQ5.3. To what extent have the partners participated in the NAP-related activities and contributed to the outcomes?

CROSS-CUTTING

EQ7.1. To what extent have poor, minorities, women, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from NAP's interventions?

EQ7.2. To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the NAP Project?

Interview guide- national partners

RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE

EQ1.1. To what extent has the project's design and implementation responded to Montenegro's national priorities concerning climate change and adaptation (and broader environmental stewardship)?

SQ 1.1.1. How well did the NAP project respond to the priorities of the Montenegrin Government and relevant stakeholders concerning economic, health, personal, and community security, particularly those vulnerable to climate change impacts?

SQ 1.1.2. To what extent did the NAP project align with the priorities of the Montenegrin Government and relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, in addressing climate change and adaptation and broader environmental policies?

SQ 1.1.3. What evidence demonstrates that the objectives and outputs of the NAP project align with governmental and agency priorities in the respective sector and that the project has considered measures that address such priorities?

EFFECTIVENESS -

SQ2.1.1. To what extent has the governance, institutional coordination, and technical capacity of adaptation planning been strengthened?

What evidence shows that institutional capacity for adaptation planning has been identified and enhanced?

What evidence is available that capacity gaps have been identified and addressed through capacity-building programs, including training materials and workshops?

Is there evidence of a network of national staff being established and capacitated to drive and manage a NAP process, build national and sectoral resilience, and address adaptation issues?

What evidence is available that confirms strengthened institutional coordination to support adaptation planning?

Is there evidence that the adaptation planning framework is in place?

Is there evidence that the Working Group on Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change has a codified document in place that articulates its mission, mandate, governing processes, defined multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism, and SOPs for adaptation investments?

SQ2.1.2. To what extent has the evidence base for designing gender-sensitive adaptation solutions been enhanced?

Is there evidence of gender-specific climate change-driven risks and vulnerabilities in priority sectors being identified?

What evidence is available of gender-sensitive climate risks, vulnerabilities, and adaptation priorities being identified within the four priority sectors?

Is there evidence of produced reports (consolidation and synthesis of available information of climate risks; gender-sensitive climate risks assessments of the four sectors; prioritised gender-sensitive adaptation goals for the four priority sectors) being available?

Is there evidence of produced reports identifying entry points and opportunities for integrating gender-sensitive adaptation measures into sector plans and policies?

SQ 2.1.3. What is the availability of the adaptation finance mobilization strategy?

What evidence is available that mechanisms for funding adaptation investments have been identified?

Is there evidence of a report being prepared that details the preliminary costs of each of the prioritised adaptation investments?

Is there evidence that a financing strategy document was prepared that presents suitable and best options for financing each of the prioritized adaptation goals and identifies and considers barriers to private sector investment?

What evidence and examples are available of private sector engagement in adaptation?

SQ2.2.1. *What were the positive or negative, intended, or unintended changes the NAP's work brought about?*

SQ2.3.1. *What were the external and internal factors contributed to or impeded the effectiveness of the NAP Project?*

EFFICIENCY

EQ 3.1. Were the anticipated outputs generated on time and within the budget, as specified in the work plan and implementation schedule?

EQ 3.2. To what extent was the project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?

SUSTAINABILITY

SQ4.1.1. To what extent does the country have the capacity to maintain the achieved results, and how much was the overall sustainability strategy in place?

SQ4.1.2. Is there a sense of ownership from the country and its partners' commitment to continuing to support the Project's sustainability efforts?

SQ4.2.1. To what extent were the stakeholders' capacities, including individual and institutional, developed to ensure the sustainability of the Project's efforts and benefits?

SQ4.2.2. To what extent does the Project employ effective financial sustainability strategies, such as donors outside the UN system, to ensure its sustainability beyond the support of the NAP Project?

IMPACT

EQ5.1. To what extent has the Project improved the national government's capacity, including awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and monitoring systems, and governance architecture, including access to and use of information?

EQ5.2. To what extent has the NAP Project influenced national policy/legal/regulatory frameworks on CCA?

CROSS-CUTTING

EQ7.1. To what extent have poor, minorities, women, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from NAP's interventions?

EQ7.2. To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the NAP Project?

Annex 4: Evaluation matrix

The ET has improved the understanding of the Project's structure and available data sources through an initial document review and the creation of an evaluation matrix. This matrix, which includes the main evaluation questions from the Terms of Reference (ToR) and additional sub-questions, was reviewed to ensure that the questions are answerable, all Project's components are appropriately addressed, there is no duplication or undue overlap, the question formulation is precise, and that it allows for an exploratory approach to data collection. As a result of this review, the list of evaluation questions has been consolidated, as questions that were too similar have been combined and sub-questions have been re-framed to make them more focused.

Evaluation criteria and questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data analysis	Data Sources & collection tools
Relevant evaluation criteria: RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE				
EQ1.1. To what extent has the design and implementation of the Project responded to the national priorities concerning climate change and adaptation (and broader, environmental stewardship)?	<p>JC1.1.1. The extent to which the Project responded to the country's priorities concerning climate change and adaptation (and broader, environmental stewardship)</p> <p>JC1.1.2. The extent to which the Project aligned with government and agency priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence that the objectives and outputs of the Project are supporting priorities concerning climate change and adaptation (and broader environmental policies) in Montenegro ▪ The existence of measures that addressed governmental and agency priorities in the respective sector, 	<p>Desk based research</p> <p>Assessment of the strength of the ToC designed for the Project (explicit or implicit).</p> <p>Interviews and group interviews with identified stakeholders concerning the NAP Project</p>	<p>Programming documents: Project documents, Project Matrix, Progress Reports and other deliverables</p> <p>Stakeholders from the UNDP/ NAP Project, the GoM-the Ministry, other partners from the national and local levels, public and, other institutions, and development partners in the respective fields</p>
EQ1.2. To what extent was the project in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan, Country Programme Document (CPD), United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Green Climate Fund (GCF) strategic programming?	<p>JC1.2. The extent to which the NAP Project aligned with: i) UNDP Strategic Plan, Country Programme Document (CPD), ii) United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF),; iii) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and iv) Green Climate Fund (GCF) strategic programming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence that the NAP project aligned with the following critical documents:) UNDP Strategic Plan, Country Programme Document (CPD), ii) United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF),; iii) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and iv) Green Climate Fund (GCF) strategic programming 		
EQ1.3. To what extent was the theory of change presented in the outcome model a relevant and appropriate vision on which to base the initiatives? Has the project proven to be as relevant as originally envisaged?	<p>JC1.3.1. The extent to which the objectives of the project design (inputs, activities, outputs and their indicators) and its theory of change logical and coherent</p> <p>JC1.3.2. The extent to which the objectives of the project clear, realistic, and likely to be achieved within the established time schedule</p> <p>JC1.3.3. The degree of lasting relevance of the NAP Project and its activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of the ToC and the links between outputs and outcomes, assumptions and activities- logical connections and consistency ▪ Analysis of the indicators at various levels (including baselines and targets) ▪ Analysis the benchmarks and if the targets were realistic to be achieved within the given timeframe ▪ Evidences (including opinions) about the changes in the NAP Project environment and the need to adjust activities and implementation approach 		
Relevant evaluation criteria: EFFECTIVENESS -				
EQ2.1. To what extent were the project's main objectives	<p>JC2.1.1. The extent to which adaptation planning governance, institutional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence that institutional capacity for adaptation planning identified and enhanced 	<p>Desk-based research including national and</p>	<p>Project document, Progress Reports.</p>

<p>achieved in keeping with the original activities, outputs and performance indicators?</p>	<p>coordination, and technical capacity have been strengthened.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence that the capacity gaps have been identified (availability of capacity gaps report) and addressed through capacity building programs - Evidence that a network of national staff has been established and capacitated for driving and managing a NAP process, building national and sectoral resilience and addressing adaptation issues. - i) Evidence that eight 2-day capacity building workshops were delivered - ii) Evidence that eight 1-day capacity building workshops conducted - iii) Evidence that an one week long training program targeting IHSM was delivered ▪ Evidence including opinions and other sources that confirm strengthened institutional coordination to support adaptation planning 	<p>organizational statistics, and third-party reports</p> <p>National statistics and international performance indicators on the priority areas</p> <p>Interviews and group interviews with identified stakeholders from UNDP NAP Team and national institutions.</p> <p>The intention is on validating or refuting lines of inquiry - collecting perceptions about results (outputs) achieved with the reference to outputs and progress towards outcomes.</p>	<p>Other project deliverables</p> <p>Stakeholders from the UNDP- NAP Team, GoM, public institutions, policy-making bodies and other government institutions, and development partners in the respective fields</p>
	<p>JC2.1.2. The extent to which the evidence base for designing gender-sensitive adaptation solutions has been enhanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that gender-specific climate change-driven risks and vulnerabilities in priority sectors have been identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence that gender-sensitive climate risks, vulnerabilities and adaptation priorities have been identified within the 4 priority sectors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Evidence of a produced reports: i) one that presents a consolidation and synthesis of available information of climate risks; ii) gender-sensitive climate risks assessments of the four sectors. ii) Evidence of produced report presenting the prioritized gender- sensitive adaptation goals for the four priority sectors iii) Evidence of produced report identifying entry points and opportunities for integrating gender-sensitive adaptation measures into sector plans and policies - Evidence that adaptation investments options for the NAP and other plans have been prioritised. • Evidence (including statements of the participants) that the NAPning processes has been established. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of available work plan for implementing NAP process and M&E framework documents are available 		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence that a Gender Action Plan and a Communications Plan were produced - Evidence that public awareness campaign was designed and implemented 		
	JC2.1.3. Availability of the adaptation finance mobilization strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that mechanisms for funding adaptation investments were identified. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence that a report detailing the preliminary costs of each of the prioritized adaptation investments was prepared - Evidence that a financing strategy document was prepared that presents suitable and best options for financing each of the prioritized adaptation goals and identifies and considers barriers to investment by the private sector. • Evidence and examples of private sector engagement in adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of a strategy and roadmap report for engaging the private sector, including the identification of barriers and drivers to private investments in adaptation. - Availability of a report that presents the initial opportunities for engaging the finance sector 		
EQ2.2. What were the positive or negative, intended, or unintended, changes brought about by NAP's work?	<p>JC2.2.1. Existence of areas that the Project has shown greatest achievement (or underperformed).</p> <p>JC2.2.2. The extent to which external and internal factors to the NAP Project affected effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of external situation that have affected implementation of the Project • Opinions of stakeholders if the Project has achieved some unintended results and examples of these results 		
EQ2.3. What factors have contributed or impeded NAP performance and achievement of outputs?	<p>JC2.3.1. Existence of factors that positively or negatively affected the Project</p> <p>JC2.3.2. The extent to which external challenges affected the progress of the project-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence, including opinions and examples, that external challenges affected the Project's progress • Evidence, opinions and examples that external developments had an impact on progress under Project's outputs 		
Relevant evaluation criteria: EFFICIENCY				

<p>SQ3.1. Were the anticipated outputs generated on time and within the budget, as specified in the workplan and implementation schedule?</p>	<p>JC3.1.1. The extent to which NAP's selected method of delivery has been appropriate</p> <p>JC3.1.2. The extent to which the NAP's approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework have been efficient and effective to achieve the planned outcomes</p> <p>JC3.1.3. The extent to which the management and administrative arrangements were effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of planned vs implemented activities and delivery of outputs or delays and changes in the implementation of plans • Evidence and opinions about the appropriateness of the NAP's selected method of delivery • Evidence that resources have been available and used to achieve results • Evidence that the management and administrative arrangements were effective 	<p>Desk-based research including national and organizational statistics, and third parties' reports</p> <p>Analysis of the NAP Project budget and management/ organizational structure</p> <p>Analysis of the management and advisory mechanisms and coordination approaches from the meetings- to verify decision-making approaches</p> <p>Interviews with key informants –group interviews with beneficiaries and experts</p>	<p>Programming documents: The Project Document, and Reports. Other deliverables.</p> <p>Available meeting minutes</p> <p>Contractual arrangements including analysis of the approved budget</p> <p>Stakeholders from the implementing partners- UNDP and GoM, other ministries and governmental structures, local authorities</p>
<p>SQ3.2. To what extent was the project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?</p>	<p>JC3.2.1. The extent to which the Project has introduced sound and effective management practices (including reporting and communication)</p> <p>JC3.2.2. The extent to which management systems, including monitoring mechanisms, facilitated efficient implementation</p> <p>JC3.2.3. The extent to which the project implementation strategy and its execution have been efficient and cost-effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the Project's management structure has been optimized and cost-efficient to ensure timely delivery • Evidence that the monitoring data were objectively used for management of risks, actions and decision making • Evidence that the Project implementation strategy contributed to the efficiency 	<p>Interviews with key informants –group interviews with beneficiaries and experts</p>	<p>Stakeholders from the implementing partners- UNDP and GoM, other ministries and governmental structures, local authorities</p>
<p>Relevant evaluation criteria: SUSTAINABILITY</p>				
<p>SQ4.1. What is the prospect that the project's activities and achievements will be sustained following NAP Project's support?</p>	<p>JC4.1.1. Existence of mechanisms that the NAP Project supported to enable the Government of Montenegro to sustain improvements made through these interventions</p> <p>JV4.1.2. Existence of capacities in the country to maintain the results achieved (and the extent to which the overall sustainability strategy was in place)</p> <p>JC4.1.3. Existence of the country ownership and partners' commitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of national mechanisms/ structures to maintain the results achieved • Evidence that financial resources are assigned to the national institutions and stakeholders for the delivery of services • The extent to which partners are committed to providing continuing support • Evidence and examples of country ownership of results and partnerships 	<p>Desk-based research including national and organizational statistics, and third parties' reports</p> <p>Analysis of the project budget and management/ organizational structure</p> <p>Interviews with key informants -</p>	<p>Programming documents: The Project Document, and Reports. Other deliverables.</p> <p>Available meeting minutes</p> <p>Contractual arrangements including analysis of the approved budget</p>
<p>SQ4.2. To what extent has the Project developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise,</p>	<p>JC4.2.1. The extent to which stakeholders' capacities (individual and institutional) have been developed to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that institutional systems (legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes) and individual capacities are in place for sustaining benefits 	<p>Group interviews if possible (to discuss achievements and validate findings)</p>	<p>Stakeholders from the implementing partners- UNDP/ GoM, beneficiaries, other ministries and governmental</p>

etc.) to be self-sufficient upon its completion?	JC4.2.2. The extent to which donors and/or other effective strategies are employed to ensure financial sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that about ensured donor funding (outside of UN system) and other effective strategies to secure funding and financial sustainability 		structures, local authorities
Relevant evaluation criteria: IMPACT				
EQ5.1. What evidence is there that the Project has contributed towards an improvement in national government capacity (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information?	<p>JC5.1.1. The extent to which the Project has contributed towards an improvement in national government capacity (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.)</p> <p>JC5.1.2. The extent to which the Project has improved institutional performance and governance architecture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that the Project has contributed towards an improvement in national government capacity (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) Evidence that the Project has improved institutional performance and governance architecture, Evidence that the Project has contributed to improved access to and use of information 	<p>Desk based research including national and organizational statistics, and third parties' reports</p> <p>Interviews with key informants -</p> <p>Group interviews</p>	<p>Project document and deliverables</p> <p>Legal and policy documents concerning</p> <p>National and international statistics</p> <p>Stakeholders from the implementing partners, public institutions and other</p>
EQ5.2. Were there changes in policy/ legal/ regulatory frameworks concerning national policies on CCA?	JC5.2. The extent to which the NAP Project has influenced national policy/ legal/ regulatory frameworks on CCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence and analysis that the NAP project influenced national policies/ legal/ regulatory frameworks on CCA (using policy cycle model) 		
Relevant evaluation criteria: CROSS-CUTTING				
EQ6.1. To what extent have poor, minorities, women, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from NAP's interventions?	<p>JC6.1.1. The degree to which partners are capacitated to implement "leave no-one behind" and rights-based approach</p> <p>JC6.1.2. The extent to which the Project ensured benefits to poor, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of practices in the promotion and mainstreaming of human rights during its formulation and implementation Evidence- opinions that the Project contributed to the capacity development of the stakeholders to implement "leave no one behind" and human rights principles in its activities 	<p>Desk based research including national and organizational statistics, and third parties' reports</p> <p>Interviews with key informants -</p> <p>Group interviews (to discuss achievements and validate findings)</p>	<p>Project document, Progress Reports. Project deliverables.</p> <p>National and international statistics</p> <p>Stakeholders from the implementing partners, public institutions and other stakeholders</p>
EQ6.2. To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the NAP Project?	<p>JC6.2.1. The extent to which gender mainstreaming was considered and implemented under the NAP Project and existence of unintended effects?</p> <p>JC6.2.2. The extent to which NAP Project promoted positive changes in gender equality (including unintended results)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence and opinions that gender was considered and mainstreamed during the NAP Project implementation Evidences that partners enhanced capacities for gender mainstreaming in all activities 		

Annex 5: Evaluability checklist

CRITERIA	COMMENTS	Y	N
<p>1. Does the subject of the evaluation have a clearly defined ToC? Is there common understanding as to what initiatives will be subject to evaluation?</p>	<p>The Project document has included clearly established ToC, and the ET found a well-elaborated problem analysis that served as a credible tool for the Project's intervention logic. At its core, the theory posits that by building this supportive framework at both the national and sectoral levels, Montenegro will be equipped to identify and tackle climate-induced risks effectively. This will be achieved by designing and implementing adaptation investments that align with national priorities, underpinned by the generation and sharing of crucial knowledge on risks and vulnerabilities. This knowledge will feed into efficient coordination mechanisms and investment plans aimed at enhancing resilience.</p> <p>Project Objective: The primary aim is to bolster Montenegro's institutional capacity for enduring adaptation planning.</p> <p>Outcomes include strengthened adaptation planning governance, enhanced institutional coordination and technical capacity, an improved evidence base for crafting gender-sensitive adaptation solutions, and the development of a strategy for mobilizing adaptation finance.</p> <p>Barriers identified include the underperformance of existing coordination frameworks for adaptation planning, limited institutional and technical capacities for CCA at national and sectoral levels, a lack of necessary information for effective adaptation planning and investment, and unoptimized national and alternative finance sources due to unknown full costs of adaptation.</p> <p>Problems stem from the absence of a functioning and effective adaptation planning process.</p> <p>Assumptions underline the active engagement of the Government of Montenegro (GoM) in accessing NAP funding, provision of adequate staffing, the availability of qualified consultants, timely disbursement of funds by the GCF, and sustained GoM support for adaptation planning.</p>	Y	
<p>2. Is there a well-defined results framework for the initiative(s) that are subject to evaluation? Are goals, outcome statements, outputs, inputs and activities clearly defined? Are indicators SMART?⁴³</p>	<p>Yes, the NAP Project features a well-defined results framework as the initiative that is undergoing evaluation. The Project's goals, outcome statements, outputs, inputs, and activities are articulated, ensuring a systematic approach towards desired outcomes.</p> <p>However, the initial project document did not include monitoring framework; still, the ET finds that indicators in the regular reports are available and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound). These indicators in the progress reports</p>	Y	

⁴³ Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Relevant and Time-bound.

CRITERIA	COMMENTS	Y	N
	<p>are generally adequate particularly at the output level. The ET finds that the benchmarks are established under all indicators (baselines and targets). The existence of a sound intervention logic, with indicators will enable effective tracking and measuring progress, outputs, and assess contribution to outcomes. Still, the ET finds that the outcome level indicators have not been established, but rather narrative progress provided.</p> <p>Still, the EC finds this results framework will underpin a thorough and meaningful evaluation process, aligning closely with the Terms of Reference.</p>		
<p>3. Is there sufficient data for evaluation? This may include baseline data, data collected from monitoring against a set of targets, well-documented progress reports, field visit reports, reviews, and previous evaluations.</p>	<p>Yes, there is sufficient data available for a comprehensive final evaluation.</p> <p>The data encompasses a range of valuable resources, including baseline data, collected from monitoring against a set of targets, well-articulated progress report with set of deliverables. In addition, the ET received more general documents related to NAP, climate change and adaptation and the overall socio-economic and developmental situation in Montenegro.</p> <p>This data repository will facilitate a nuanced and in-depth assessment, allowing for a thorough analysis of the Project progress and results/ changes over time.</p>	Y	
<p>4. Is the planned evaluation still relevant, given the evolving context? Are the purpose and scope of the evaluation clearly defined and commonly shared among stakeholders? What evaluation questions are of interest to whom? Are these questions realistic, given the project design and likely data availability and resources available for the evaluation?</p>	<p>Yes, despite the evolving context, the planned evaluation maintains its relevance, serving as a pivotal tool in evaluating the NAP Project, as requested by the ToR.</p> <p>The purpose and scope of the evaluation have been clearly defined and are commonly shared among stakeholders, fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment for the evaluation process. (Ref to 2. Evaluation objective, purpose and scope- and 2.1. Objectives and purpose of the final evaluation and 2.2. The scope of the evaluation)</p> <p>The ToR provided set of evaluation questions, which ET analysed, revised and redefined to better resonate with the evaluation criteria. These refined questions are realistic given the NAP Project design but are also well-matched with the expectation from this evaluation (while considering data availability and resources allocated for the evaluation). (Ref to 3. Evaluation questions and 8. Evaluation matrix)</p>	Y	
<p>5. Will political, social and economic factors allow for effective implementation and use of the evaluation as envisaged?</p>	<p>Yes, the Project's evaluation is designed to effectively navigate and integrate political, social, and economic factors.</p> <p>The ET proposed a Theory based approach, further supported through the systemic study and contribution analysis methods. This comprehensive methodology will involve profound analysis and understanding of the existing and potential challenges in Montenegro. At the same time, the proposed methodology will enable the evaluation to mitigate possible negative effects and leverage opportunities for continuation of activities and planning in the NAP areas. The evaluation will analyse the interplay of various factors and dynamic conditions that affect Montenegro's</p>	Y	

CRITERIA	COMMENTS	Y	N
	<p>development scenery; the intention is to consider these factors and implement evaluations that will additionally contribute to sustainable and environmentally-focused development in the country.</p> <p>This methodology ensures that the evaluation's outcomes are relevant and conducive to informed decision-making for the Project's future direction. (ref to part 4 Methodology, and part 5 Data collection methods and instruments and data analysis)</p>		
<p>6. Are there sufficient resources (human and financial) allocated to the evaluation?</p>	<p>Yes, the evaluation is adequately resourced, both in terms of human and financial allocations.</p> <p>The ET brings a rich tapestry of expertise and skills necessary for a comprehensive final evaluation. The ET's sector experience from Montenegro- e.g., this same team has evaluated the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) project in Montenegro, under the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and proved understanding of the climate change and environmental issues promise a thorough and nuanced evaluation that meets the highest standards of quality and integrity.</p> <p>However, the timeline allocated for this evaluation is tight given the NAP Project's importance and also the evaluation objectives, scope and extensiveness.</p>	Y	

Annex 6: Terms of Reference

I. Background:

The climate change poses serious, wide-ranging risks to economies, societies and ecosystems. Reducing these risks requires action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) sharply, combined with measures to increase resilience to the impacts that occur (adaptation). Through the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) opportunities are created to ensure a more sustainable, equitable and prosperous future for all.

Despite the actions taken and progress made so far in prioritizing adaptation planning within policy and institutional frameworks, the prioritization and development processes identified several gaps and barriers limiting functioning and effective adaptation planning process. These barriers are: (i) the coordination framework for adaptation planning and action are partially established and underperforming with a need for improvement and more effective organizational design, clear roles and responsibilities, improved capacity (technical and functional) and institutional arrangements designated for mainstreaming climate change into work-programmed at the sector level (ii) limited institutional and technical capacity at the national and sectoral level to address climate change through adaptation with a need to improve the technical capacity to collect, generate, use and disseminate climate information and services (iii) adequate information required for conducting informed and effective adaptation planning and investments is unavailable. It is difficult to accurately gauge and estimate adaptation options at national and sectoral levels without relevant information on climate impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptive capacity in a medium to long-term perspective (iv) national and alternative sources of finance to fund adaptation investments are not optimized as the full costs of adaptation are not yet known.

In response to these challenges, the project proposal “Enhancing Montenegro’s capacity to integrate climate change risks into planning” was developed and approved for funding under the Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme. Relying on the cooperation with national stakeholders and in close cooperation with the Government of Montenegro, a stocktaking exercise to inform the development of an adaptation process concluded that water, agriculture, tourism and health sectors were the initial priority sectors for intervention.

The project's financing was approved by GCF with the overarching objective to improve Montenegro’s institutional capacity for long-term adaptation planning. To achieve this, the proposal is focused on (i) improving institutional coordination framework and increasing institutional capabilities, (ii) increasing climate information and identifying potential adaptation responses/measures, and (iii) identifying financial requirements and resources to fund adaptation investments.

The design and sequence of the project activities have been made in a manner to create efficiencies and be effective. By building enabling institutional, planning and programming environments for adaptation at the national and sectoral level, Montenegro will be able to identify climate-induced risks, and vulnerabilities, and use that information to inform adaptation planning process and to explore appropriate adaptation responses.

II. Duties and Responsibilities:

UNDP commissions programme evaluations to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of its contributions to development results at the country level as articulated in UNDP’s Country Programme Document (CPD). These are evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy. Project evaluation of the Project is planned to be started from 15 February 2024 and completed by 15 May 2024. The UNDP Office in Montenegro is commissioning this independent final evaluation on the NAP Readiness Project to capture evaluative evidence of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and incorporation of gender and other cross-cutting issues to assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved. The evaluation will ascertain how Montenegro has benefited from the project interventions and what lessons could be learned that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. Additionally, the evaluation will also assist in enhancing the subsequent iterations of the NAPs. Given that the Green Climate Fund (GCF) will continue to be a crucial partner for the Government of Montenegro in enhancing adaptation planning in the foreseeable future, the evaluation process will incorporate a capacity-building component. This component is specifically designed to target key partners engaged in project implementation, as well as those involved in the NAP process design and implementation. Considering this assignment, the

selected consultant will play a pivotal role in aiding key partners, including the line ministry, the directorate responsible for adaptation issues, and the team at the Secretariat of the NCS. The primary objective is to enhance their comprehension of GCF's expectations regarding project designs, monitoring, and evaluation processes. Consequently, these insights will seamlessly integrate into the ongoing preparation process for the second phase of the NAP, which is scheduled to be submitted to the GCF within the next 12 to 18 months. By fostering a better understanding of GCF expectations, this strategic initiative aims to fortify the collaboration between Montenegro and the GCF, ensuring the success and effectiveness of future adaptation process, through consideration that the evaluation serves an important accountability function, providing national stakeholders and partners in Montenegro with an impartial assessment of the results of NAP's intervention.

Evaluation Scope

The final evaluation of the project developing the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) is conducted with a purpose of providing a comprehensive understanding of the intervention's various aspects, including the time frame, implementation phase, geographic area, and target groups involved. As the project is in its final stage of implementation the process of evaluation is rooted in the need for a understanding how well the project addressed initially identified adaptation challenges and contributed to the overall process of improvement.

Moreover, it is positioned to play a crucial role in enhancing future iterations of the NAPs, with a strategic focus on the Government of Montenegro's partnership with the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Recognizing the GCF's continued importance in adaptation planning, the evaluation process incorporates a capacity-building component. This component is tailored to empower key partners engaged in project implementation and those contributing to the design and implementation of the NAP process, ensuring a sustainable and effective approach to adaptation planning in Montenegro's foreseeable future

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation seeks to answer the following questions, focused on the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability:

Relevance and coherence:

- How well has the Project aligned with government and agency priorities?
- To what extent has NAP's selected method of delivery been appropriate to the development context?
- To what extent was the theory of change presented in the outcome model a relevant and appropriate vision on which to base the initiatives?
- To what extent was the project in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan, Country Programme Document(CPD), United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Green Climate Fund (GCF) strategic programming?

Effectiveness

- What evidence is there that the Project has contributed towards an improvement in national government capacity, including institutional strengthening?
- Has the NAP Project been effective in helping improve CCA planning in Montenegro?
- To what extent have outcomes been achieved or has progress been made towards their achievement?
- Are the outputs being achieved in a timely manner? Is this achievement supportive of the TOC and pathways identified?
- Has NAP Project been effective in influencing national policies on CCA? What has been the contribution of partners and other organizations to the outcome, and how effective have the Project partnerships been in contributing to achieving the outcome?
- What were the positive or negative, intended, or unintended, changes brought about by NAP's work?
- What contributing factors and impediments enhance or impede NAP performance?
- To what extent has the project implementation been affected by COVID?

Efficiency

- Are NAP's approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcomes?
- Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources and strategic allocation of resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.)?
- Did the monitoring and evaluation systems in place for the NAP contribute to ensuring the efficient and effective management of activities and outputs?
- To what extent did the design of the project help or hinder achieving its own goals? Were alternative approaches considered in designing the Project?

Sustainability

- To what extent are the achieved outcomes and outputs sustainable?
- What mechanisms have been set in place by NAP to support the Government of Montenegro to sustain improvements made through these interventions?
- To what extent has a sustainability strategy, including capacity development of key national stakeholders, been developed, or implemented?
- To what extent have partners committed to providing continuing support?
- What indications are there that the outcomes will be sustained, e.g., through requisite capacities (systems, structures, staff, etc.)?
- What opportunities for financial sustainability exist?
- How has the project developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?

Impact

- What has happened as a result of the project?
- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?
- How many people (w/m) have been affected?
- Were there contributions to changes in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks, including observed changes in capacities (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information (laws, administrative bodies, trust building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc.)?
- Were there contributions to changes in socio-economic status (income, health, well-being, etc.)?
- Discuss any unintended impacts of the project (both positive and negative) and assess their overall scope and implications.
- Identify barriers and risks that may prevent further progress towards long term impact.
- Assess any real change in gender equality, for example, access to and control of resources, decision-making power, division of labor, etc.

The evaluation must also include an assessment of the extent to which project design, implementation and monitoring have taken the following cross cutting issues into consideration:

Human rights

- To what extent have poor, minorities, women, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from NAP's interventions?

Gender Equality

- To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the NAP Project?
- To what extent has NAP Project promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects?
- To what extent did the project contribute to gender equality, women empowerment, and/or a human-rights based approach?
- How did the Project promote gender equality, human rights, and human development in the delivery of outputs?

The selected international consultant will include a summary of the main findings of the evaluation report.

Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.

A section on conclusions will be written considering the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the evaluation findings.

They should highlight the project's strengths, weaknesses, and results, respond to key evaluation questions, and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP, and the GCF, including issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible, and targeted recommendations about what actions to take and decisions to make directed to the evaluation's intended users. The recommendations should be specifically supported by evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.

The evaluation report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GCF and UNDP interventions. When possible, the evaluation team should include examples of good practices that could be used in future project design and implementation.

It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned to include results related to gender equality and empowerment of women.

Methodology

The evaluation report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable, and useful.

The evaluation will be carried out by an external team of independent evaluators and will follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with a wide array of stakeholders and beneficiaries, including national and local government officials and staff, donors, beneficiaries from the interventions, and community members.

Evidence obtained and used to assess the results of NAP's interventions must 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. In the event where field mission is not possible due to the election-related restrictions on consultations, then remote interviews may be conducted through telephone or online (teams, zoom etc.). These formalities will be agreed upon during contract discussions and finalized in the inception meeting. The specific design and methodology for the evaluation should emerge from consultations between the evaluation team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the evaluation purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The evaluation team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the evaluation report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, site visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the evaluation Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders, and the evaluation team.

The final report must describe the full evaluation approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

The Team Lead will have overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of the draft and final evaluation report. Specifically, the Team Lead will perform the following tasks:

- Develop the evaluation inception report, including an evaluation matrix and a gender-responsive methodology, in line with the TOR, UNEG norms and standards, and ethical guidelines.
- Conduct the data collection and field visits in accordance with the ToR and the inception report and conduct project evaluation in accordance with the proposed objective and scope of the evaluation and UNDP evaluation guidelines.
- Produce a draft report and brief the evaluation manager, program/project managers, and stakeholders on the progress and key findings and recommendations.
- Manage the team during the evaluation mission and liaise with UNDP on travel and interview schedules.
- Draft and present the draft and final evaluation reports.
- Consider gender equality, women's empowerment, and other cross-cutting issues, checking if all respective evaluation questions are answered, and relevant data disaggregated by sex is presented, analysed, and interpreted.
- Finalize the evaluation report, incorporating comments and questions from the feedback/audit trail.
- Record own feedback in the audit trail.

The following steps in data collection are anticipated:

- Desk Review

A desk review should be carried out of the key strategies and documents underpinning the project's scope of work. This includes reviewing the project document, theory of change and results framework, annual workplans, different reports (quarterly, annual), country programme document, as well as any monitoring and other documents, to be provided by the project and Commissioning Unit.

- Field Data Collection

Following the desk review, the international evaluator (Consultant) will build on the documented evidence through an agreed set of field and interview methodologies, including:

- Interviews with key partners and stakeholders
- Field visits to project sites and partner institutions
- Survey questionnaires where appropriate
- Participatory observation, focus groups, and rapid appraisal techniques.

Deliverables

The following reports and deliverables are required for the evaluation:

- Evaluation Inception report (10-15 pages)
- Draft Evaluation Report (40-60 pages)
- Presentation at the validation workshop with key stakeholders (partners and beneficiaries)
- Final Evaluation report

One week after contract signing, the evaluation team will produce an inception report clarifying the objectives,

methodology and timing of the evaluation. The inception report must include an evaluation matrix presenting the evaluation questions, data sources, data collection, analysis tools and methods to be used. Annex 3 provides a simple matrix template. The inception report should detail the specific timing for evaluation activities and deliverables and propose specific site visits and stakeholders to be interviewed. Protocols for different stakeholders should be developed. The inception report will be discussed and agreed with the UNDP Country Office before the national evaluator proceeds with site visits.

The evaluation team will share the draft evaluation report with the UNDP Country Office, who will circulate the draft to stakeholders. The evaluation team will present the draft report in a validation workshop that the UNDP country office will organize. Feedback received from these sessions should be considered when preparing the final report. The evaluators will produce an ‘audit trail’ (Annex) indicating whether and how each comment received was addressed in revisions to the final evaluation report.

The suggested table of contents of the evaluation report is found in the Annex 2.

Evaluation Team Composition and Required Competencies

The evaluation will be undertaken by a two-member team (Team Lead-international consultant and an Associate Evaluator - national consultant). The Team Lead (international consultant) will oversee the entire evaluation process, ensure its successful execution and be responsible for the final product. As the Team Lead, s/he will manage the national consultant. In addition to the international consultant’s direct reporting line to the evaluation manager, he/she will rely on the support of the National Consultant, the project staff, partners, and stakeholders to prepare the ground for effective and efficient implementation of the evaluation. The evaluators cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the project document) and should not have a conflict of interest with the project’s related activities.

Duration of the Evaluation Process

The evaluation is expected to take 25 working days for Team lead over a period of nine weeks starting from 15 February 2024. The final draft evaluation report is due the 15 May 2024. The following table provides an indicative breakout for activities and delivery:

Activity	Deliverable	Workday allocation		Time period
		Team lead	Associate	
Review materials and develop work plan	Inception report and evaluation matrix	4	3	7 (February)
Participate in an Inception Meeting with UNDP Montenegro country office				
Draft inception report				
Review Documents and stakeholder consultations	Draft evaluation report Stakeholder workshop presentation	15	16	31 (March – April)
Interview stakeholders				
Conduct field visits				
Analyze data				
Develop draft evaluation and lessons report to Country Office				
Present Draft Evaluation Report at Validation Workshop	Final evaluation report	5	5	10 (May)

Finalize and submit evaluation report incorporating comments/ inputs provided by stakeholders.				
	Totals	25	25	9 weeks

III. Competencies:

Core competencies:

- - Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards;
- - Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
- - Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability
- - Treats all people fairly without favouritism;
- - Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment

Functional competencies:

- - Strong interpersonal skills, communication and diplomatic skills, ability to work in a team
- Openness to change and ability to receive/integrate feedback
- Ability to work under pressure and stressful situations
- Strong analytical, reporting and writing abilities
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills

IV. Qualifications and expertise:

- Minimum master's degree in natural resource management/ environmental management/ business/ public administration, natural and climate science, and other related disciplines.
- Minimum seven years of relevant professional experience.
- Knowledge of UNDP and GCF monitoring and evaluation policies and guidelines.
- Experience of conducting minimum of three terminal evaluation/ final evaluation of projects with at least one GCF readiness project final evaluation.
- Sound knowledge of results-based management systems and monitoring and evaluation methodologies; including experience in applying SMART (S-Specific; M-Measurable; A-Achievable; R-Relevant; T-Time bound) indicators.
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and CCA.
- Excellent reporting and communication skills.

Languages Requirements

- Excellent English writing skills are essential
- Fluency in Montenegrin would be considered as asset

Other Requirements

- Excellent computer skills (MS Office applications) and ability to use information technologies as a tool and resource

Implementation arrangements

- The principal responsibility for managing the evaluation resides with the Commissioning Unit. The

- Commissioning Unit for this Project's TE is UNDP Montenegro Country Office (CO). The Commissioning Unit will
- contract the Evaluator and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country.

The Team Lead will report to the Evaluation Manager appointed by UNDP, who will oversee and support the overall evaluation process. Senior management will be accountable for the quality and approval of the final TOR and the evaluation report. The evaluation manager is responsible for developing the evaluation terms of reference including gender equality and cross-cutting issues, facilitating communication between evaluators, the program unit, senior management, and key stakeholders for an inclusive and transparent evaluation process. Also the evaluation manager will be in charge for reviewing and approving inception reports and ensuring gender equality and cross-cutting issues are considered in inception and draft evaluation reports.

The evaluation manager also collects and consolidates feedback on draft reports to provide an audit trail for the evaluation team to finalize the evaluation report.

The evaluation partners, including donor, stakeholders and government partners, will participate in reviewing key evaluation deliverables, including the TOR, inception report, and successive versions of the draft evaluation report. Additionally, evaluation partners will ensure that data and documentation in general, and particularly related to gender equality, women's empowerment, and other relevant cross-cutting issues, are made available to the evaluation manager.

Annex 7: Overview of the NAP

Agriculture

Key Climate Vulnerabilities The agriculture sector faces multiple climate-related vulnerabilities. Increased temperatures are leading to earlier vegetation periods, which affect bee populations and fruit crop yields, and cause heat stress to livestock. There is a reduction in rainfall and issues with irrigation, leading to water scarcity, especially during summer months and in vulnerable regions like the coastal areas and the Zeta and Bjelopavlici valleys. Marine and riverine habitats are changing, impacting fisheries and resulting in river sedimentation. Extreme weather events such as hail, winds, and flooding are causing more damage to crops. Additionally, there is a lack of awareness about climate issues and a low capacity among farmers to adapt to these changes.

Gender Considerations Gender-related issues in the agriculture sector include restricted involvement of women in agricultural production and rural development, as well as their exclusion from climate policy planning. There are disparities in national programs concerning gender, and local budget limitations are affecting climate resilience. There is also a lack of recognition of how gender and climate change are interconnected, which is reflected in civil society efforts.

Key Sectoral Objectives To address these vulnerabilities, the sector has set objectives that include utilizing high-resolution expert data along with integrated local knowledge to improve intersectoral planning and create evidence-based prognoses. It aims to build capacity for CCA to secure a resilient food production system. Moreover, the sector seeks to design and implement adaptive agricultural practices to maintain yields, diversification, and the preservation of soil, water, and ecosystem services.

Priority Agriculture Measures The agriculture sector is prioritizing several measures to address the impact of climate change. These measures include raising capacities and awareness on combined production practices, enhancing the application of climate-smart agrotechnical measures, preserving hay meadows and pastures, promoting sustainable land use practices, and identifying and implementing measures to reduce the stress of climate change on livestock.

These strategic considerations underscore the necessity for a multi-faceted response to climate change in the agriculture sector, emphasizing the importance of both technical solutions and the inclusion of gender perspectives to build a more resilient and sustainable food production system.

Health

Key Climate Vulnerabilities The health sector is grappling with several climate-induced vulnerabilities. Rising temperatures lead to increased mortality rates, a higher incidence of disease among vulnerable populations, and a surge in food and vector-borne diseases due to the redistribution of vectors. The air quality is declining, partly due to wildfires and increased pollution, elevating health risks. There's a growing concern about the rising instances of coastal and inland flooding, poorer water quality, and the resultant health problems like drowning, illness, and mental health issues. There's a notable deficiency in healthcare professionals equipped to deal with climate-related risks, along with geographical disparities in healthcare access. Particularly affected are remote and socially deprived populations. Moreover, there's a call for improved health screening for vulnerable groups and legislation ensuring all citizens' health protection.

Gender Considerations From a gender perspective, the health sector's workforce is predominantly female, with most public physicians and specialist physicians being women. There are ongoing efforts like the Health System Adaptation Program, Health Care Act from 2021, and the Center for Health Promotion's work plan for 2022, which align with the National Strategy for Gender Equality. These initiatives strive to progress gender-inclusive policy and action within Montenegro's Health sector.

Key Sectoral Objectives The sector's objectives focus on enhancing both human and technical capacities to ensure timely and efficient planning and response to climate hazards, emphasizing the needs of marginalized groups. The sector aims for precise data collection and management to guide evidence-based planning and to

target vulnerabilities that require adaptation. Raising public awareness, especially among vulnerable groups, is another significant objective to mitigate health issues related to climate change.

Priority Health Measures In response to these challenges, several priority health measures have been proposed. These include improving the preparedness of healthcare staff, facilities, and systems to address climate hazards through tailored training and climate risk assessments. Integrating health sector's roles in hazard preparedness and response into national and local readiness plans is emphasized. There's a call for an innovative early warning system to prime the health sector for effective response to weather extremes. Additionally, the development and promotion of education, awareness, and general guidelines for the public on how to cope during extreme weather events are highlighted as essential measures.

This framework underscores the need for a proactive approach in the health sector to the escalating health risks posed by climate change, with a strategic focus on workforce capacity building, public awareness, and institutional preparedness, all the while considering the vital role of gender in shaping responsive health policies.

Water

Key Climate Vulnerabilities The water sector is confronted with various climate-related vulnerabilities including a shortage of data and a lack of inter-sectoral cooperation, which hampers effective management. There's also insufficient maintenance, planning, and protection of water zones. Water availability during summer months is a concern as it affects key sectors. Flooding, both coastal and inland, along with low water quality, detrimentally affects ecosystems, infrastructure, households, agriculture, and tourism. Activities like deforestation and agriculture are degrading water quality and availability, while also increasing sedimentation and erosion. The current water management systems are seen as deficient, especially in reducing risk. However, it is noted that the local population possesses valuable knowledge on ecosystem-based adaptation.

Gender Considerations In the context of gender, there is a noticeable mismatch between the educational and knowledge resources of women and their representation in the water sector labor market. While women are less represented in the general workforce of water supply, sewage, waste management, and remediation activities, they constitute a more significant portion of the specialists in water quality, use, and protection.

Key Sectoral Objectives Objectives within the water sector include enhancing the knowledge base of water resources to lay the groundwork for capacity building and coordinated intersectoral water management approaches. There is also a focus on improving the readiness and response to extreme hydrological weather events to reduce injuries, deaths, and damages to infrastructure. Enhancing the resilience of the water supply system to climate change is critical to ensure the availability of drinking water for all population groups.

Priority Water Measures To address these issues, the sector prioritizes upgrading flood risk mapping and interventions that focus on natural water retention. Enhancing the abilities of policymakers and bolstering research and management capacities to assess the impacts of climate change on freshwater systems is key. Developing new methodologies and designing watershed protection zone projects at all water sources that integrate climate change aspects are also essential. Strengthening the network of measuring stations and improving the monitoring of water-related data is a critical measure.

This framework underscores the urgency of addressing climate change in the water sector through improved data, management, and infrastructure, combined with a gender-sensitive approach that acknowledges the unique contributions and challenges faced by women in the sector.

Tourism

tourism impacted by climate change, providing a strategic framework for addressing these challenges.

Key Climate Vulnerabilities The tourism sector is currently facing several climate vulnerabilities including a dearth of climate change data, a high dependency on the coast due to a lack of product diversification, and an uneven distribution of tourist arrivals both seasonally and geographically. The sector lacks specific climate adaptation policy guidance and an effective sustainability framework. Tourism infrastructure, particularly in coastal and mountainous regions, is highly sensitive to climate-related hazard events, and there's a notable lack of preparedness for such events within the sector.

Gender Considerations In terms of gender considerations, the document notes that women make up a significant portion of the workforce in accommodation and restaurant businesses yet have a minimal

representation in business ownership within the sector. Policies currently in place are not gender-sensitive, and while there are projects and initiatives to assist women, they are limited.

Priority Tourism Measures To combat these challenges, priority measures include enhancing funding for research and innovation in sustainable tourism, offering support to tourism-based communities to improve resilience to climate change, upgrading early warning systems for businesses within the sector, and developing community-based tourism programs that promote rural, agro, and eco-tourism as high-value, low-impact alternatives.

Key Sectoral Objectives The sector aims to train and build capacity among stakeholders to better navigate the transformations required in the face of climate change. Understanding tourism's vulnerabilities to climate impacts is essential, as is the integration with data monitoring, research, and resilience-building. Establishing and strengthening coordinated multi-sector approaches is also crucial for enhancing preparedness and early warning mechanisms in anticipation of climate change.

This framework emphasizes the need for a concerted effort to address climate change's impacts on tourism, with a focus on sustainability, resilience, gender equity, and community involvement.

Annex 8: Signed Code of Conduct form

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.

Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of International Consultant:

Tomislav Novovic

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

Signed at Podgorica, Montenegro (Place) on 11 March 2024 (Date)

Signature:



Name of National Consultant: Ana Simonovic

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

Signed at Podgorica, Montenegro (Place) on 11 March 2024 (Date)

Signature:

