**Terms of Reference**

Mid-term Evaluation of the UNDP/GEF Project **“*In situ* Conservation of Kazakhstan’s Mountain Agro-biodiversity”**

**PIMS Project number:** 1278

**Short project title:** Kazakhstan Agrobio project

**Project Atlas number:** 00049805

# 1. Introduction

## Standard UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation requirements

This Mid Term Evaluation is initiated by the UNDP Kazakhstan as the Implementation Agency for this project and it aims to provide managers (at the Project Implementation Unit, UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office and UNDP/GEF levels) with strategy and policy options for more effectively and efficiently achieving the project’s expected results and for replicating the results. It also provides the basis for learning and accountability for managers and stakeholders.

This evaluation is to be undertaken taking into consideration the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policy:

<http://thegef.org/MonitoringandEvaluation/MEPoliciesProcedures/mepoliciesprocedures.html>

and the UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy: <http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html>

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP/GEF has four objectives:

1. to monitor and evaluate results and impacts;
2. to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements;
3. to promote accountability for resource use; and
4. to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

A combination of tools should be used to ensure effective project M&E. These might be applied continuously throughout the lifetime of the project – e.g. periodic monitoring of indicators, PIRs, or as specific time-bound exercises such as mid-term review, audit reports and independent evaluations.

In accordance with the UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Procedures the mid-term evaluation is recommended for all the projects with a long term of implementation (e.g. exceeding 5-6 years) or those at critical stage of implementation. In addition to the fact that said evaluation enables to gain an independent deep view of the progress attained, such assessment meets GEF Council decisions in respect of transparency and improvement of access to information at the stage of implementation. Mid-term evaluations are intended to identify potential project design problems, assess progress towards the achievement of objective, identify and document lessons learned (including lessons that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP/GEF projects), and to make recommendations regarding specific actions that might be taken to improve the project. Such evaluation is expected to serve a tool to recognize or bridge the gaps in the primary assessment of relevance, effectiveness and cost-efficiency as gained from the monitoring exercise. The mid-term evaluation enables to assess the primary signs of the project success or failure and identify the necessary changes to be made. The mid-term evaluation shall be performed by an independent expert unrelated to the project development or implementation.

The evaluation will play a critical role in the future implementation of the project by providing advice on: (i) how to strengthen the adaptive management and monitoring function of the project; (ii) how to ensure accountability for the achievement of the GEF objective; (iii) how to enhance organizational and development learning; and (iv) how to enable informed decision – making.

The evaluation will have to provide to the GEF Secretariat complete and convincing evidence to support its findings/ratings. The consultant should prepare specific ratings on seven aspects of the project, as described in the 'Reporting' section of this Terms of Reference. Particular emphasis should be put on the current project results and the possibility of achieving the objective and outcomes in the established timeframe, taking into consideration the speed, at which the project is proceeding.

## Project Goal, Objective and Outcomes

The project goal is the conservation conserve *in-situ,* restoration and sustainable use of wild apple and apricot forests (the main forest-formation species are apple *Malus siversii* and common apricot) as well as their concomitant species of vegetative mountain agrobiodiversity (hereinafter referred to as MABD) including progenitors and wild relatives of the crops significant for agriculture.

The project objective is: Stakeholders conserve agro-biodiversity in two priority sites within Kazakhstan’s Tien Shan Mountains by developing and applying new methods and tools for conservation, including partnerships among conservation and land-use agencies, local governments, SPAs, local communities and the private sector.

The proposed project will enable to build the basis for the development and testing of integrated and participatory approach to the conservation and sustainable use of MABD within the two project sites of Zailiysky and Jungarsky Alatau, Almaty Oblast.

The GEF Alternative was developed to ensure the policy and regulatory frameworks in support of MABD conservation and sustainable use, primarily for the actions to be taken on the local level, and is focused on the integration of the biodiversity conservation and sustainable development of SPA’s and the relevant adjacent zones. The problem of Kazakhstan’s MABD conservation which basis is the mountain fruit forests of the south and south-east of Kazakhstan, is rather significant on the national, regional and global levels. The conservation of such forests, representing the unique natural depot of the world genetic fund, is the country’s priority objective which follows from the commitments of Kazakhstan being a party to the UN Convention on Biodiversity.

GEF support will ensure the global benefits from the conservation of mountain agrobiodiversity having the actual and potential significance for the food industry and agriculture. At the end of the project the stakeholders shall develop progressive and adaptive ways of conservation as well as the ecosystem-based management methods in order to mitigate and prevent the threats to the areals of apple and other vegetative MABD species by building the new partnership relationships, implementing the effective conservation tools, public awareness and sustainable alternative livelihoods.

The Main Project Expected Outcomes are as Follows:

1) Establishment of specially protected area (SPA), genetic refugiums/seed-plots for the conservation of the genetic diversity associated with wild fruit forests;

2) Development and pilot implementation of the management plans with involvement of various related parties;

3) Building the enabling conditions to develop the legislative, institutional base and capacities for the purposes of the management plans;

4) Facilitation of the development of rational land use and building favorable social-economic conditions for *in-situ* MABD conservation within the productive natural territories adjacent to SPA;

5) Raising the awareness of all related groups to ensure the adequate understanding, support and implementation of the practical activities of agrobiodiversity conservation and its sustainable use.

## Project Beneficiaries:

* Forestry and Hunting Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Environmental Protection;
* SPA: Ile-Alatau National Park and Almaty State Reserve;
* Forestry management divisions: Sarkandand and Lepsinsk State Forestry Management Divisions;
* Almaty Oblast Akimat;
* Local communities living near the project sites;
* Private sector engaged in agriculture, fruit-processing industry and rural tourism within theproject sites;
* World community.

# 2. Objective of the Mid-Term Evaluation

The evaluation is focused on a comprehensive project assessment and enables to make a critical evaluation of administrative and technical strategies, problems and restrictions associated with the large-scale international and multilateral initiatives. The evaluation shall also provide the recommendations in relation to the strategies, approaches and/or activities in order to enhance the project capacities of achieving the expected outcomes. The evaluation results will be incorporated in the recommendations to improve the implementation of a given project stage in the forthcoming years.

Purpose:

1. To evaluate the overall project activities in relation to the objectives and expected outcomes as stated in the project document and the other related documents
2. To evaluate the project effectiveness and cost-efficiency
3. To critically analyze the arrangements of project management and implementation
4. To evaluate the progress attained so far in relation to the project outcomes
5. To investigate the strategies and plans intended for the timely achievement of the overall project goal
6. To list and document the first lessons learned in respect of the project design, its implementation and management
7. To assess the sustainability of project interventions;
8. To assess the relevance in relation to the national priorities
9. To provide the recommendations for the future project activities and, where necessary, for the project implementation and management arrangements.

In particular, the mid-term evaluation exercise will assess the progress of creating the basic information, alleviation of threats and identification of any constraints to the project implementation and their causes. It intends also to provide the recommendations for corrective measures to be undertaken. An effective measure to correct the problem areas identified, constraining the project implementation, will be required before the decision to be made in relation to the project continuation.

The project performance will be measured based on the indicators of the project’s logical framework (see Annex 2). Many of these indicators relate to the impact/implementation that will be applied in the impact assessment. The success and failure will partially be determined through the monitoring of the relative changes within the baseline conditions developed within one year of the project implementation. Where possible, the indicator species, sensitive to the changes of habitat and pressure increase, will need to be identified and monitored. In case of an identified shrinkage of the population of rare and endangered species the measures will be undertaken to identify the causes of such shrinkage and the alternative strategies will be developed to ensure the long-term welfare of the populations that will further be incorporated in the overall project site management.

The mid-term evaluation report shall be a separate document which will contain the recommendations and conclusions.

The report will be intended to meet the needs of all the related parties (GEF, UNDP, FHC of MoA, MEP, the project’s National Steering Committee, local communities and other related parties in Kazakhstan and foreign countries).

# 3. Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation exercise will embrace the project elements as follows:

Project concept and design: The evaluator will assess the project concept and design. He/she should review the problem addressed by the project and the project strategy, encompassing an assessment of the appropriateness of the objectives, planned outputs, activities and inputs as compared to cost-effective alternatives. The executing modality and managerial arrangements should also be judged. The evaluator will assess the achievement of indicators and review the work plan, planned duration and budget of the project.

Implementation: The evaluation will assess the implementation of the project in terms of quality and timeliness of inputs and efficiency and effectiveness of activities carried out. Also, the effectiveness of management as well as the quality and timeliness of monitoring and backstopping by all parties to the project should be evaluated. In particular, the evaluation is to assess the project team’s use of adaptive management in project implementation. The evaluation exercise will measure the level of achievement of the project’s objective. It will also identify which interim results have been achieved and how they have contributed to meeting the ultimate project outcomes. This section ill be focused on the priority areas as follows:

Project outputs, outcomes and impact: The evaluation will assess the outputs, outcomes and impact achieved by the project as well as the likely sustainability of project results. This should encompass an assessment of the achievement of the outcomes and the contribution to attaining the overall objective of the project. The evaluation should also assess the extent to which the implementation of the project has been inclusive of relevant stakeholders and to which it has been able to create collaboration between different partners. The evaluation will also examine if the project has had significant unexpected effects, whether of beneficial or detrimental character.

## Project Management and Administration: The evaluation should collect, document and assess the relevant elements and processes including: (i) Administrative procedures related to the project; (ii) Key decisions and interim results; and (iii) The main project implementation documents specifying how useful have the documents and reports been

#### Project Execution: The evaluation should assess the quality of services provided by FHC of MoA acting as the Implementing Agency (within the national UNDP execution) and PIU (project management cost-efficiency including the achievement of interim results in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness; and the monitoring system)

The Mid-term Evaluation will also cover the following aspects:

**3.1. Progress towards Results**

Changes in development conditions*.* Address the following questions, with a focus on the perception of change among stakeholders:

1. Have the globally significant mountain agrobiodiversity of Kazakhstan been properly and adequately protected within the protected areas targeted by the project?
2. Have there been changes in local stakeholder behaviour (i.e. reduction of threats) that have contributed to improved conservation? If not, why not?
3. Is there distinct improvement in biodiversity information turnover and use in decision making among stakeholders?
4. Has awareness on biodiversity conservation and subsequent public participation in biodiversity monitoring and management increased as a result of the project?
5. Is there adequate territorial planning in place, or in progress, ensuring long-term conservation of agro-biodiversity and cultural values?

Measurement of change*:* Progress towards results should be based on a comparison of indicators before and after (so far) the project intervention. Progress can also be assessed by comparing conditions in the project site to conditions in similar unmanaged sites.

Project strategy: how and why outcomes and strategies contribute to the achievement of the expected results. Examine their relevance and whether they provide the most effective route towards results.

Sustainability: to which extent the benefits of the project will continue, within or outside the project domain, after it has come to an end. Relevant factors include for example: development of a sustainability strategy, establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms, mainstreaming project objectives into the local economy, etc.

**3.2. Adaptive management framework of the project**

Monitoring Systems.

* + 1. Assess the monitoring tools currently being used:
       - Do they provide the necessary information?
       - Do they involve key partners?
       - Are they efficient?
       - Are additional tools required?

1. Reconstruct baseline data if necessary[[1]](#footnote-1). Reconstruction should follow participatory processes and could be achieved in conjunction with a learning exercise[[2]](#footnote-2);
2. Ensure that the monitoring system, including performance indicators, at least meets GEF minimum requirements[[3]](#footnote-3). Apply SMART indicators as necessary;
3. Apply the GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool and provide a description of comparison with the baseline values.

Risk Management

1. Validate whether the risks identified in the project document, PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate. If not, explain why. Describe any additional risks identified and suggest risk ratings and possible risk management strategies to be adopted;
2. Assess the project’s risk identification and management systems:
   * Is the UNDP/GEF Risk Management System[[4]](#footnote-4) appropriately applied?
   * How can the UNDP/GEF Risk Management System be used to strengthen project management?

Work Planning

1. Assess the use of the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to it:

* Ensure the logical framework meets UNDP/GEF requirements in terms of format and content;
* What impact did the retro-fitting of impact indicators have on project management?

1. Assess the use of routinely updated work plans;
2. Assess the use of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities;
3. Are work planning processes result-based[[5]](#footnote-5)? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning;
4. Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions. Any irregularities must be noted.

Reporting

1. Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management;
2. Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

**3.3. Underlying Factors**

1. Assess the underlying factors beyond the project’s immediate control that influence outcomes and results. Consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of the project’s management strategies for these factors;
2. Re-test the assumptions made by the project management and identify new assumptions that should be made;
3. Assess the effect of any incorrect assumptions made by the project.

**3.4. UNDP Contribution**

1. Assess the role of UNDP against the requirements set out in the UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results. Consider: field visits; Steering Committee/TOR follow-up and analysis; PIR preparation and follow-up; GEF guidance;
2. Consider the new UNDP requirements outlined in the UNDP User Guide[[6]](#footnote-6), especially the Project Assurance role, and ensure they are incorporated into the project’s adaptive management framework;
3. Assess the contribution to the project from UNDP “soft” assistance (i.e. policy advice & dialogue, advocacy, and coordination). Suggest measures to strengthen UNDP’s soft assistance to the project management.

**3.5. Partnership Strategy**

1. Assess how partners are involved in the project’s adaptive management framework:

* Involving partners and stakeholders in the selection of indicators and other measures of performance;
* Using already existing data and statistics;
* Analyzing progress towards results and determining project strategies.

1. Identify opportunities for stronger substantive partnerships;
2. Assess how local stakeholders participate in project management and decision-making. Include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project and suggestions for improvement if necessary;
3. Consider the dissemination of project information to partners and stakeholders and if necessary suggest more appropriate mechanisms;
4. Assess collaboration between governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;
5. Assess collaboration between implementation units of other related projects;
6. Assess local partnerships;
7. Assess transfer of capacity to the national institutions.

**3.6. Project Finance**

1. Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and provide an opinion on the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions, taking into account the project activity timeframe;
2. Review the effectiveness of financial coordinating mechanisms.

***4. Products expected from the evaluation***

The key product expected from this mid-term evaluation is:

## The Mid-term Evaluation Report

The mid-term evaluation report will include:

* The facts and conclusions identified in respect of the issues to be reviewed in accordance with The Scope of Evaluation section

Evaluation of project impact on:

* + The institution assisted and its staff;
  + The final beneficiaries including specific groups;
* Project sustainability on the basis of:
  + The commitments of the governmental agencies in relation to the project objectives
  + Involvement of local organizations (participatory process)
  + Management and organizational factors
  + Financing
  + Staff development
* Recommendations for the future implementation of the project activities
* Lessons learned

The draft and final report will be prepared in the format as provided in Annex 1 hereto. The draft report will be presented to UNDP/GEF not later than 3 January 2009. The final report will be prepared on the basis of the comments to be obtained from the parties related. The deadline for the final report is 10 November 2008.

The report will be presented electronically and in hard copy, in Russian and English.

# 5. Evaluation Approach

The Mid-Term Evaluation will be done through a combination of processes including a desk study, site visits, questionnaires and interviews, with involvement of all the parties related but not limited by: FHC of MoA, UNDP, NCC, representatives of the governmental agencies of various levels, local authorities, local NGO’s, communities etc.

The evaluation team will be governed by the materials that available at: [www.undp.org/gef](http://www.undp.org/gef) as follows:

* UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results
* UNDP/GEF M&E Resource Kit
* Measuring Results of the GEF Biodiversity Program

The evaluation methodology is assumed to cover the aspects as follows:

* Desk study of all project documentation
* Consultations with FHC of MoA, UNDP, NCC
* Field visits (Astana, Almaty, Taldykorgan, Talgar, Lepsinsk, Sarkand)
* Interviews with related parties
  + FHC of MoA, its territorial departments and SPA’s
  + NCC
  + Local authorities
  + Local communities
  + NGO’s

# 6. Evaluation team

The Mid-term Evaluation will be carried out by team of two external consultants:

* International consultant - expert in areas of international projects’ monitoring and evaluation with the focus on biodiversity conservation, agrobiodiversity, agriculture, forestry and hunting economies, sustainable livelihoods, participatory approaches;
* National consultant – expert in areas of environmental management, agrobiodiversity management and conservation, additional knowledge on NGO/indigenous community would be an asset

The evaluation team is responsible for the successful completion of the evaluation and finalizing the Mid-term Evaluation report. The team is expected to be familiar with the region and have basic knowledge of the project area (such as region’s biodiversity, socio-economic and legislative context, threats to biodiversity)

Team Qualities:

* Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
* Experience applying participatory monitoring approaches;
* Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
* Recent knowledge of the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy;
* Recent knowledge of UNDP’s results-based evaluation policies and procedures
* Competence in Adaptive Management, as applied to conservation or natural resource management projects;
* Recognized expertise in the management and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in temperate ecosystems;
* Familiarity with protected area policies and management structures in Kazakhstan;
* Demonstrable analytical skills;
* Work experience in relevant areas for at least 10 years;
* Experience with multilateral or bilateral supported conservation projects;
* Project evaluation experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
* Excellent English/Russian communication skills.

Specifically, the international expert (team leader) will perform the following tasks:

* Lead and manage the evaluation mission;
* Design the detailed evaluation scope and methodology (including the methods for data collection and analysis);
* Assist in drafting terms of reference of the national consultant(s)
* Decide the division of labor within the evaluation team;
* Conduct an analysis of the outcome, outputs and partnership strategy (as per the scope of the evaluation described above);
* Draft related parts of the evaluation report; and
* Finalize the whole evaluation report.

The National Consultant will provide input in reviewing all project documentation and will provide the International Consultant with a compilation of information prior to the evaluation mission. Specifically, the national expert will perform tasks with a focus on:

* Review documents;
* Prepare a list of the outputs achieved under project;
* Organize the mission programme and provide translation/interpretation when necessary;
* Participate in the design of the evaluation methodology;
* Conduct an analysis of the outcome, outputs and partnership strategy (as per the scope of the evaluation described above);
* Draft related parts of the evaluation report;
* Assist Team leader in finalizing document through incorporating suggestions received on draft related to his/her assigned sections;
* Proof reading of the Russian version.

Individual consultants are invited to submit applications together with their CV for a position. Applications are welcome from anyone who feels they can contribute to the team because they possess three or more of the listed qualities. Obviously the more qualities that can be demonstrated, the better the chance of selection.

Joint proposals from two independent evaluators are welcome. Or alternatively, proposals will be accepted from recognized consulting firms to field a complete team with the required expertise within the evaluation budget.

The evaluation will be undertaken in-line with GEF principles:

* Independence
* Impartiality
* Transparency
* Disclosure
* Ethical
* Partnership
* Competencies and Capacities
* Credibility
* Utility

The evaluators must be independent from both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of assistance. Therefore applications will not be considered from evaluators who have had any direct involvement with the design or implementation of the project. This may apply equally to evaluators who are associated with organizations, universities or entities that are, or have been, involved in the Agrobio project policy-making process and/or its implementation. Any previous association with the project, FHC and its affiliates in three project sites, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, UNDP-Kazakhstan or other partners/stakeholders must be disclosed in the application. This applies equally to firms submitting proposals as it does to individual evaluators.

If selected, failure to make the above disclosures will be considered just grounds for immediate contract termination, without recompense. In such circumstances, all notes, reports and other documentation produced by the evaluator will be retained by UNDP.

If individual evaluators are selected, UNDP will appoint one Team Leader. The Team Leader will have overall responsibility for the delivery and quality of the evaluation products. Team roles and responsibilities will be reflected in the individual contracts. If a proposal is accepted from a consulting firm, the firm will be held responsible for the delivery and quality of the evaluation products and therefore has responsibility for team management arrangements.

# 7. Implementation Arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation lies with UNDP Kazakhstan. It is the main operational point responsible for liaising with the project team to set up interviews with stakeholder, arrange field visits and co-ordinate with the Executing Agency and other counterparts. UNDP Kazakhstan will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team.

The timeframe for submission of the first draft of the report: 7 weeks upon signing the Contract. The report will be submitted both electronically and in printed version, in Russian and English.

The report should be submitted to UNDP Country Office in Kazakhstan (to the attention of Ms. Victoria Baigazina, mailing address: 26 Bokeikhan St., Astana; Tel.: +7(7172) 59-25-50)

Prior to approval of the final report, a draft version shall be circulated for comments to government counterparts and the members of the project steering group: UNDP, National Project Coordinator, NCC members, members representing various organizations.

If any discrepancies have emerged between impressions and findings of the evaluation team and the aforementioned parties, these should be explained in an annex attached to the final report.

The activities and timeframe are broken down as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timeframes and responsibilities** |
| Desk review | 3 days – international expert, 3 days – national expert |
| Field visits, interviews, questionnaire, debriefing  Briefing of evaluation consultants | 12 days – international expert, 7 days – national expert |
| Validation of preliminary findings with stakeholders through circulation of initial reports for comments, meetings, and other types of feedback mechanisms | 5 days – Evaluation team |
| Preparation of final evaluation report (including comments) | 7 days – international expert, 7 days – national expert |

*Working days:*

Team Leader (international expert) – 27 working days

National expert – 20 working days

The process should commence no later than 1 October 2008.

## **APPLICATION: The applications and brief conceptual summaries (the volume shall not exceed 5 pages and shall contain the brief description of approach and methodology to be used) shall be sent to the attention of Ms. Victoria Baigazina, Program Coordinator, mailing address: 26 Bokeikhan St., Astana, Kazakhstan; e-mail:** [**victoria.baigazina@undp.org**](mailto:victoria.baigazina@undp.org)**. The submission deadline is 10 September 2008.**

### Progress towards achieving project objectives (Log Frame)

| **Project Objective and Outcomes** | **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Target Level[[7]](#footnote-7)** | **Level at 30 June 2008** | **Source of Verification** | **Assumptions** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective**: Stakeholders conserve agro-biodiversity in two priority sites within Kazakhstan’s Tien Shan Mountains by developing and applying new methods and tools for conservation, including partnerships among conservation and land-use agencies, local governments, SPAs, local communities and the private sector. | Expansion of the territory of Specially Protected Areas for conservation of mountain agrobiodiversity   * + Dzhungar Alatau   + Zailiskiy Alatau | - 0 ha  - 236,000 ha | - 356,000 ha  - 271,000 ha | - 0 ha  - 236,000 ha | Formal legal decrees on establishment/expansion of SPA within the project site | Government priorities for biodiversity protection including MABD will remain.  Socio-economic situation will not significantly worsen  Climate change will not occur or have significant physical and socio-economic impacts  Frequent changes of key GoK personnel will not impact project implementation  The Government/ FFC will support the establishment/expansion of SPA's within the project sites as well as the works addressing the problem of cutting of endangered species/ plantation works |
| Sustainability of wild fruit forests is maintained due to elimination/ localization of the centers of genetic erosion (orchards, domesticated apple plantations etc.) | 0 | Environmental cutting/ reconstruction cutting in the centers of genetic erosion:  By year 4 – up to 10 ha;  By year 6 – up to 20 ha | 0 | Official reports, project monitoring data |
| Outcome 1: Ecosystem-based conservation and management of wild crop relatives at two project sites | Number of hectares of globally important apple and apricot forests under fully managed legal protection (within SPA)   * + Dzhungar Alatau   + Zailiskiy Aletau | - 0 ha  - 2,824 ha | - 3,725 ha  - 7,225 ha | - 0 ha  - 2,824 ha | Official documents and forest field surveys | The Government will support the proposals to strengthen MABD protection  Consensus and cooperation between the various key stakeholders can be adequately achieved |
| Local Consultative Committees enabling the participation of local communities in management of SPAs   * + Zailiskiy Alatau   + Dzhungar Alatau | * + 0   + 0 | * + 1 end of yr 3   + 1 end of yr 6 | - 0  - 0 | Official documents and operation plans of LCC |
| Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional, technical, and financial framework for ABD conservation | Institutional responsibility and coordination on agro-biodiversity | Responsibility for MABD is not assigned | ABD depts within SPAs by year 3 (Ile Alatau), year 5 (Dzhungar, upon establishment of SPA) | Responsibility for MABD is not assigned | Official documents on administrative reorganizations | Government/ FHC is still committed to the establishment of agrobiodiversity departments.  Provided that FHC will provide and adequate input for the purposes of capacity improvement  GoK will not change the priorities and its financial abilities will be enhanced |
| Improved capacity for managing mountain agro-biodiversity within SPAs (METT scores)   * + Ile Aletau National Park   + Almaty State Nature Reserve | - 46  - 51 | - 67  - 70 | - 46  - 51 | Mid-Term and Final METT score data sheets as per the WWF-WB Alliance procedures |
| Annual GoK funding levels for protected areas that encompass wild fruit forests:   * Ile-Alatau National Park & Almaty State Reserve * Dzhungar National Park | US$1,953,333  US$316,938 (Budgets of two existing Forest Reserves) | 20% increase\*  5 times increase (budget of new Dzhungar National Park) | US$2,691,000  US$371,565 | Official government budget allocations |
| Outcome 3: An effective legislative framework for the conservation and rational use of agro-biodiversity resources | Legislation, by-laws and regulations for conservation and sustainable management of agrobiodiversity   * + Law on Protected Areas (covering all PAs in two project sites)   + Regulations for control of tourism development and visitor activities   + By-laws for land leases within SPAs   + By-laws to set aside land for establishment of SPAs | - Draft law at Parliament  - Existing regulations are either not in place or have become old  - Existing by-laws have become old  - Existing by-laws have become old | - Law by the end of yr 1  - Regulations by end of yr 2  - By-law by end of yr 1  - By-law by end of yr 1 | * + Law adopted in 2006   + Regulations adopted in 2006 and 2007   + By-law adopted in 2006   + By-law adopted in 2006 | Official Mass media of Kazakhstan  Published text of the law and by-laws | The approval process for critical legal instruments will occur in a timely manner |
| Outcome 4: Alternative livelihoods benefiting local communities in project sites, reducing natural resource use pressure on mountain agro-biodiversity | # of households participating in sustainable alternative livelihood activities at two project sites:  Ecotourism   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Medicinal Plant Cultivation   * Dzhungar Alatau   Improved Beekeeping (existing producers)   * Dzhungar Alatau * Zailiskiy Alatau   Improved Beekeeping (new producers)   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Cheese Production   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Crafts Production   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Flower Production (home-based greenhouses)   * Zailiskiy Alatau | 4  2  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  3  0  2 | 10  11  12  3  8  3  7  2  2  5  2  4 | 0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0 | Field interviews with participants | These activities will be supported on the local level  Certain stakeholders do not overly dominate and monopolize private sector development  Local communities are willing and will use loan funds |
| # of farms adopting sustainable grazing practices (rotation of grazing lands; production of fodder)   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau | 0  0 | 6  4 | 0  0 | Field interviews with participants |
| # of stakeholders participating in alternative livelihoods activities at two project sites receiving micro-credit funds | 0 | 7 by project mid-term; 18 more by project end | 0 | Official reports of the loan organization |
| Outcome 5: Awareness and support at all levels regarding the values and need to conserve Kazakhstan’s mountain agro-biodiversity increased | % of inhabitants within protected areas and neighboring buffer zones meeting minimum awareness levels about cultural, economic and ecological values of agrobiodiversity resources  - Zailiskiy Alatau  - Dzhungar Alatau | 30  40 | 70  75 | 30  40 | Specialized surveys measuring the awareness on agrobiodiversity | Baseline reporting figures from the relevant SPA authorities might be understated (figures will be updated with fieldwork in year 1)  Local authorities will support the awareness campaign |
| No. of schools with curriculums on specially protected areas and mountain agro-biodiversity | 0 | 8 | 0 | Interviews | Implementation of such curriculums is supported by education bodies |
| No. of NGOs focused on mountain agrobiodiversity conservation at the project sites (established with support and guidance of the project) | 2 | 4 | 2 | Official data | These activities will be supported by NGO's and local communities |

\* Increase in PA funding is net of inflation and exchange rate fluctuations

# Annex 1: The Structure of Mid-term Evaluation Report

Executive Summary

1. Brief description of the project
2. Context and purpose of the evaluation
3. Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

Introduction

1. Project background
2. Purpose of the evaluation
3. Key issues addressed
4. The outputs of the evaluation and how they will be used
5. Methodology of the evaluation
6. Structure of the evaluation

The Project and its Development Context

1. Project start and its duration
2. Implementation status
3. Problems that the project seeks to address
4. Immediate and development objectives of the project
5. Main stakeholders
6. Results expected

Findings and Conclusions

1. Project Formulation
   * + Implementation approach
     + Country ownership
     + Stakeholder participation
     + Replication approach
     + Cost-effectiveness
     + UNDP comparative advantage
     + Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
     + Management arrangements
2. Implementation
3. Supervision of the project implementation
4. Project execution
5. Project implementation
6. Project Administration
7. Planning
8. Monitoring and evaluation
9. Risk management
10. Coordination and operational issues

* Project Financial Management
  + Financial planning
  + Budgetary procedures
  + Expenditures
  + Efficiency of financing mechanism
  + Risks

1. Results
2. Attainment of objectives
3. Prospects of sustainability

Recommendations

1. Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
2. Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

Lessons Learned (at least 5 pages of very clear analysis of lessons learned)

1. Best and worst practices in addressing the issues relating to effectiveness, efficiency and relevance.

Annexes

1. ToR
2. Evaluation Program
3. The list of people interviewed
4. Summary of site visit
5. The list of documents reviewed
6. The questionnaire used and brief summary of results

## Other Materials

***Annex 2. List of documents to be reviewed by the Evaluators***

Following documents can be used as a basis for evaluation of the project (titles underlined are available in Russian with an English annotation):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Document** | **Description** |
| Project document | The Project Document and Revisions |
| Project reports | Project Inception Report  Annual Progress Reports |
| Annual Project Report to GEF | Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs) |
| Minutes | Steering group meetings  Meetings with experts, team staff etc. |
| Other relevant materials: | Financial Audit Reports for 2006, 2007 |
| Information materials produced by the project activities | Management Plans  In 2008 was finished popular science film about mountain-fruit in Zailiyskiy and Dzungarian Alatau  Monitoring Program for PA staff  Visitor Center Concept, Ile-Alatau National Park  The handbook in Russian and Kazakh languages « Plants requiring in protection of Dzhungarian and Zailiskiy Alatau».  Field determinant of «The Plant of Southeast Kazakhstan ». |

ANNEX 3. Rate tables.

Table 1 Status of objective / outcome delivery as per measurable indicators

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **OBJECTIVE** | **MEASURABLE INDICATORS FROM PROJECT LOGFRAME** | **END-OF-PROJECT TARGET** | **STATUS OF DELIVERY\*** | **RATING\*\*** |
| **Objective** :  Stakeholders conserve agro-biodiversity in two priority sites within Kazakhstan’s Tien Shan Mountains by developing and applying new methods and tools for conservation, including partnerships among conservation and land-use agencies, local governments, SPAs, local communities and the private sector. | 1. Expansion of the territory of Specially Protected Areas for conservation of mountain agrobiodiversity  Dzhungar Alatau  Zailiskiy Alatau | - 356,000 ha  - 271,000 ha |  |  |
| 2. Sustainability of wild fruit forests is maintained due to elimination/ localization of the centers of genetic erosion (orchards, domesticated apple plantations etc.) | Environmental cutting/ reconstruction cutting in the centers of genetic erosion:  By year 4 – up to 10 ha;  By year 6 – up to 20 ha |  |  |
| **OUTCOMES** | **MEASURABLE INDICATORS FROM PROJECT LOGFRAME** | **END-OF-PROJECT TARGET** | **STATUS OF DELIVERY** | **RATING** |
| **Outcome 1:** : Ecosystem-based conservation and management of wild crop relatives at two project sites | Number of hectares of globally important apple and apricot forests under fully managed legal protection (within SPA)   * + Dzhungar Alatau   + Zailiskiy Aletau | - 3,725 ha  - 7,225 ha |  |  |
| Local Consultative Committees enabling the participation of local communities in management of SPAs   * + Zailiskiy Alatau   + Dzhungar Alatau | * + 1 end of yr 3   + 1 end of yr 6 |  |  |
| **Outcome 2:** Strengthened institutional, technical, and financial framework for ABD conservation | Institutional responsibility and coordination on agro-biodiversity | ABD depts within SPAs by year 3 (Ile Alatau), year 5 (Dzhungar, upon establishment of SPA) |  |  |
| Improved capacity for managing mountain agro-biodiversity within SPAs (METT scores)   * + Ile Aletau National Park   + Almaty State Nature Reserve | - 67  - 70 |  |  |
| Annual GoK funding levels for protected areas that encompass wild fruit forests:   * Ile-Alatau National Park & Almaty State Reserve * Dzhungar National Park | 20% increase\*  5 times increase (budget of new Dzhungar National Park) |  |  |
| **Outcome 3:** An effective legislative framework for the conservation and rational use of agro-biodiversity resources | Legislation, by-laws and regulations for conservation and sustainable management of agrobiodiversity   * + Law on Protected Areas (covering all PAs in two project sites)   + Regulations for control of tourism development and visitor activities   + By-laws for land leases within SPAs   By-laws to set aside land for establishment of SPAs | - Law by the end of yr 1  - Regulations by end of yr 2  - By-law by end of yr 1  - By-law by end of yr 1 |  |  |
| **Outcome 4:** Alternative livelihoods benefiting local communities in project sites, reducing natural resource use pressure on mountain agro-biodiversity | # of households participating in sustainable alternative livelihood activities at two project sites:  Ecotourism   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Medicinal Plant Cultivation   * Dzhungar Alatau   Improved Beekeeping (existing producers)   * Dzhungar Alatau * Zailiskiy Alatau   Improved Beekeeping (new producers)   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Cheese Production   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Crafts Production   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau   Flower Production (home-based greenhouses)   * Zailiskiy Alatau | 10  11  12  3  8  3  7  2  2  5  2  4 |  |  |
| # of farms adopting sustainable grazing practices (rotation of grazing lands; production of fodder)   * Zailiskiy Alatau * Dzhungar Alatau | 6  4 |  |  |
| # of stakeholders participating in alternative livelihoods activities at two project sites receiving micro-credit funds | 7 by project mid-term; 18 more by project end |  |  |
| **Outcome 5:** Awareness and support at all levels regarding the values and need to conserve Kazakhstan’s mountain agro-biodiversity increased | % of inhabitants within protected areas and neighboring buffer zones meeting minimum awareness levels about cultural, economic and ecological values of agrobiodiversity resources  - Zailiskiy Alatau  - Dzhungar Alatau | 70  75 |  |  |
| No. of schools with curriculums on specially protected areas and mountain agro-biodiversity | 8 |  |  |
| No. of NGOs focused on mountain agrobiodiversity conservation at the project sites (established with support and guidance of the project) | 4 |  |  |

###### *\* Status of delivery colouring codes:*

Green / completed – indicator shows successful achievement

Yellow – indicator shows expected completion by the end of the project

Red – Indicator show poor achievement - unlikely to be complete by end of Project

**\*\* Ratings:**

HS – highly satisfactory

S – satisfactory

MS – marginally satisfactory

U - unsatisfactory

**Table 2 Project ratings**

Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Marginally Satisfactory (MS), and Unsatisfactory (U)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROJECT COMPONENT OR OBJECTIVE** | **Rating scale** | | | | **RATING** |
|  | **U** | **MS** | **S** | **HS** |  |
| **Project Formulation** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Conceptualization/Design** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Stakeholder participation** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Project Implementation** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Implementation Approach** |  |  |  |  |  |
| The use of the logical framework |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adaptive management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use/establishment of information technologies |  |  |  |  |  |
| Operational relationships between the institutions involved |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technical capacities |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Monitoring and evaluation** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Stakeholder participation** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Production and dissemination of information |  |  |  |  |  |
| Local resource users and NGOs participation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Establishment of partnerships |  |  |  |  |  |
| Involvement and support of governmental institutions |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Project Results** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Attainment of Outcomes/ Achievement of objective** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Achievement of objective |  |  |  |  |  |
| Outcome 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Outcome 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Outcome 3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Outcome 4 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Outcome 5 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL PROJECT ACHIEVEMENT & IMPACT** |  |  |  |  |  |

**Abstracts from UNDP/GEF M&E Guidance (not to be included in the report)**

**4. Findings and Conclusions**

In addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (R) should be rated using the following divisions: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory

* 1. **Project Formulation**

Conceptualization/Design (R). This should assess the approach used in design and an appreciation of the appropriateness of problem conceptualization and whether the selected intervention strategy addressed the root causes and principal threats in the project area. It should also include an assessment of the logical framework and whether the different project components and activities proposed to achieve the objective were appropriate, viable and responded to contextual institutional, legal and regulatory settings of the project. It should also assess the indicators defined for guiding implementation and measurement of achievement and whether lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) were incorporated into project design.

Country-ownership/Driveness. Assess the extent to which the project idea/conceptualization had its origin within national, sectoral and development plans and focuses on national environment and development interests.

Stakeholder participation (R) Assess information dissemination, consultation, and “stakeholder” participation in design stages.

Replication approach. Determine the ways in which lessons and experiences coming out of the project were/are to be replicated or scaled up in the design and implementation of other projects (this also related to actual practices undertaken during implementation).

Other aspects to assess in the review of Project formulation approaches would be UNDP comparative advantage as IA for this project; the consideration of linkages between projects and other interventions within the sector and the definition of clear and appropriate management arrangements at the design stage.

**4.2. Project Implementation**

Implementation Approach (R). This should include assessments of the following aspects:

1. The use of the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to this as a response to changing conditions and/or feedback from M and E activities if required.
2. Other elements that indicate adaptive management such as comprehensive and realistic work plans routinely developed that reflect adaptive management and/or; changes in management arrangements to enhance implementation.

(iii) The project's use/establishment of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities.

(iv) The general operational relationships between the institutions involved and others and how these relationships have contributed to effective implementation and achievement of project objectives.

(v) Technical capacities associated with the project and their role in project development, management and achievements.

Monitoring and evaluation (R). Including an assessment as to whether there has been adequate periodic oversight of activities during implementation to establish the extent to which inputs, work schedules, other required actions and outputs are proceeding according to plan; whether formal evaluations have been held and whether action has been taken on the results of this monitoring oversight and evaluation reports.

Stakeholder participation (R). This should include assessments of the mechanisms for information dissemination in project implementation and the extent of stakeholder participation in management, emphasizing the following:

(i) The production and dissemination of information generated by the project.

(ii)Local resource users and NGOs participation in project implementation and decision making and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project in this arena.

1. The establishment of partnerships and collaborative relationships developed by the project with local, national and international entities and the effects they have had on project implementation.

(iv) Involvement of governmental institutions in project implementation, the extent of governmental support of the project.

Financial Planning: Including an assessment of:

(i) The actual project cost by objectives, outputs, activities

(ii) The cost-effectiveness of achievements

(iii) Financial management (including disbursement issues)

(iv) Co-financing [[8]](#footnote-8)

Sustainability. Extent to which the benefits of the project will continue, within or outside the project domain, after it has come to an end. Relevant factors include for example: development of a sustainability strategy, establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms, mainstreaming project objectives into the economy or community production activities.

Execution and implementation modalities. This should consider the effectiveness of the UNDP counterpart and Project Co-ordination Unit participation in selection, recruitment, assignment of experts, consultants and national counterpart staff members and in the definition of tasks and responsibilities; quantity, quality and timeliness of inputs for the project with respect to execution responsibilities, enactment of necessary legislation and budgetary provisions and extent to which these may have affected implementation and sustainability of the Project; quality and timeliness of inputs by UNDP and GoC and other parties responsible for providing inputs to the project, and the extent to which this may have affected the smooth implementation of the project.

**4.3. Results**

Attainment of Outcomes/ Achievement of objectives (R*):* Including a description *and rating* of the extent to which the project's objectives (environmental and developmental ) were achieved using Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory ratings. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), the evaluators should seek to determine it through the use of special methodologies so that achievements, results and impacts can be properly established.

This section should also include reviews of the following:

* Sustainability*:* Including an appreciation of the extent to which benefits continue, within or outside the project domain after GEF assistance/external assistance in this phase has come to an end.
* Contribution to upgrading skills of the national staff

1. See p.67 of UNDP’s “Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results”, available at http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Annex C of “Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: approaches to sustainability”, available at http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See section 3.2 of the GEF’s “Monitoring and Evaluation Policies and Procedures”, available at http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. UNDP-GEF’s system is based on the Atlas Risk Module. See the UNDP-GEF Risk Management Strategy resource kit, available as Annex XI at http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. RBM Support documents are available at http://www.undp.org/eo/methodologies.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The UNDP User Guide is currently only available on UNDP’s intranet. However UNDP can provide the necessary section on roles and responsibility from http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/rmoverview/progprojorg/?src=print [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. All target levels are for end of project unless otherwise noted [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)