

Terms of Reference

Terminal Evaluation of the Project - Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System (June 2008 - June 2012)

1. BACKGROUND:

The project 'Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System' (NCSA) is a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Project implemented through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The project is implemented by the National Environment Commission Secretariat of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

In order to better understand the dynamics behind the threats to Bhutan's environment vis-à-vis global environment management, the RGoB, with support from UNDP-GEF, undertook a capacity self-assessment to implement the Rio Conventions. Through a broad-based consultative and participatory process, the Bhutan NCSA first identified priority capacity development needs in the biodiversity, climate change and land degradation thematic areas. It then identified 22 capacity development needs, either common to or cutting across these three thematic areas. Based on this analysis, the RGoB prepared an Action Plan based on seven specific outputs to address the prioritized capacity needs to fulfill Bhutan's responsibilities and commitments having ratified the 3 Rio Conventions. Further to subsequent consultations with concerned stakeholders, and based on in-country opportunities, the RGoB packaged the seven action plan outputs into three priority project concepts for immediate action. One of the 3 project concepts included the currently implemented project titled – "Enhancing Environmental Management in Local Governance System."

Over the last decade, Bhutan has increasingly become an active player in the global environmental management arena. The country has become Party to all the three Rio Conventions – along with other international environment and sustainable development conventions and agreements. Together, the three Rio Conventions and their instruments collectively set the overall context for Bhutan's global environmental management. The Royal Government of Bhutan has steadily been trying to decentralize power away from the capital, moving parts of its administration to the 20 dzongkhags (districts) and 205 geogs (blocks of villages) with the objective to promote local socio-economic development strategies and initiatives by empowering the people to participate in and make decisions on their own plans and programmes. The Project supports the ongoing decentralization process through mainstreaming cross-cutting environmental management concerns into ongoing planning and capacity development initiatives.

The Project Objective is to enhance global environmental management by mainstreaming the provisions of the Rio Conventions into enhanced decentralized environmental management.

The project objective is being achieved through the following outcomes and outputs:

Outcome1: Enabled central-level framework to enhance decentralized capacity for environmental management and implementation of the provisions of the 3 Rio Conventions

- **Output 1.1:** A functional and sustainable District Environmental Committee (DEC) Focal Point Secretariat established within the NECS with the capacity to manage and coordinate the DEC environmental management tasks and responsibilities
 - **Output 1.2:** Training-of-trainers learning materials for environmental management awareness and training workshops for DEC members developed
 - **Output 1.3:** Enhanced capacity of key staff from NECS and concerned line ministries¹ to conduct/lead Training-of Trainers initiatives as part of their regular activities related to decentralized development planning, implementation and monitoring
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Outcome 2: Enabled decentralized institutional framework and personnel to enhance local environmental management, which include implementation of the Rio Conventions' provisions.

- **Output 2.1:** Supportive institutional structure of DECs established in all Districts
- **Output 2.2:** Technical environmental management manpower capacity in DECs in all Districts established
- **Output 2.3:** Increased capacity and knowledge base amongst the DEC members to carry out decentralized environmental management and compliance in line with global environmental requirements
- **Output 2.4:** Increased capacity of the DECs to fund decentralized environmental management activities addressing Bhutan's commitments to implement the 3 Rio Convention

Outcome 3: Existing Environmental Information Management System enhanced to backstop national policy and decision making in response to global environmental management needs as per the provisions of the Rio Conventions.

- **Output 3.1:** Set of uniform indicators and guidance for application are established for measuring the contribution of decentralized environmental management towards meeting global environmental objectives
- **Output 3.2:** The Rio Convention Focal Points are enabled to take into account the decentralized environmental management activities in their reporting on Bhutan's commitments to implement the 3 Rio Conventions

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures, all projects must undergo terminal evaluation at the end of the project. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP/GEF has four objectives: i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts, ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvement; iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

Terminal Evaluations (TE) are intended to provide an objective and independent assessment of project implementation and impact, including achievement of global environmental benefits and lessons learned to guide future conservation efforts including the design and implementation of other UNDP and GEF projects. Specifically, the TE will assess the extent to which planned project outcomes and outputs have been achieved, as well assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project as defined in the GEF Evaluation Office guidelines for Terminal Evaluations. The evaluation will also evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of project design, implementation, monitoring and adaptive management and sustainability of project outcomes, including the project exit strategy. The evaluation covers the entire project including non-GEF financed components.

3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The Terminal Evaluation should cover the following areas:

- a. Appropriateness of the project concept and design
- b. Project relevance and consistency with country priorities
- c. Ownership of the project at the national and local levels
- d. Stakeholder participation at national and local levels.
- e. Effectiveness in realizing project immediate objectives, planned outcomes and outputs, and the extent to which these have contributed towards strengthening the institutional, organizational and technical capability of the Government in achieving its long-term sustainable development objectives (including environmental management goals).
- f. Sustainability of project achievements and impacts, including financial and institutional sustainability, and an assessment of planned replication and exit strategies
- g. Review management arrangements and the Project Monitoring and Evaluation System, including the quality and timeliness of inputs, activities, responsiveness of project management to changes in the project environment and other monitoring feedback. Evaluate whether project design allowed for flexibility in responding to changes in the project environment.
- h. Financial planning and sustainability, including the timely delivery and use of committed co-financing.

- i. Implementing Agency's Supervision and Backstopping
- j. Cost-effectiveness: were project outputs and outcomes achieved in the most cost-effective manner? Were there any delays that affected efficiency?
- k. Monitoring and evaluation and the application of adaptive management principles (including effective use of logframe, UNDP risk management system, the annual Project Implementation Reviews, and other monitoring tools and mechanisms as appropriate)

Special Issues to be considered:

1. Review the achievements of the project and assess their effectiveness in solving/mitigating problems associated with meeting obligations under the 3 Rio Conventions ;
2. Determine the effect of the project on target groups or institutions (The national level stakeholders, dzongkhags and gewog functionaries etc.)
3. Determine the degree of support given by the government in integrating the project objectives and goals into the national development programme and other related projects. Also how well the project fits into the national development policy;
4. The GEF, UNDP and other donors are paying particular attention to risk analysis and management. UNDP has developed a risk management system within ATLAS and guidance on using this system, which is also now incorporated in the annual PIR. The evaluation should determine how effectively the risk management system is being used as an adaptive management tool. Risks may be of a financial, socio-political, institutional, operational, environmental (or other) type.
5. Considering that UNDP is concerned about local governance and promotion of gender equity, the review will be required to look at these cross cutting issues.
 - Governance: How has the project supported the decentralization process and involvement of the government stakeholders from the 20 districts in the decision making process?
 - Promotion of gender equity: Has the project considered gender sensitivity or equal participation of men and women in decision making processes?
6. Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of:
 - strengthening country ownership;
 - strengthening stakeholder participation;
 - application of adaptive management strategies;
 - efforts to secure sustainability;
 - knowledge transfer; and
 - role of M & E in project implementation and its effectiveness.
7. Capacity Development: Assess the extent to which national project implementers have been adequately trained and enhanced capacity to take over technical and professional responsibilities as envisaged in the project design.

Ratings of Key Review Criteria

In accordance with GEF Guidelines for Terminal Evaluations, the evaluation will provide ratings for the following as indicated broadly below:

1. Rate the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of different Project Outcomes as:

HS:	Highly Satisfactory
S:	Satisfactory
MS:	Moderately Satisfactory
MU:	Moderately Unsatisfactory
US:	Unsatisfactory
HS:	Highly Unsatisfactory
2. Rate the sustainability of project outcomes along 4 key dimensions, **Financial Resources, Socio-political, Institutional framework & governance and Environmental** using the following scale:
 - Likely (L)
 - Moderately Likely (ML)
 - Moderately Unlikely (MU)
 - Unlikely (U)

3. Rate the Project's M&E system as follows:

- HS: Highly Satisfactory
- S: Satisfactory
- MS: Moderately Satisfactory
- MU: Moderately Unsatisfactory
- US: Unsatisfactory
- HS: Highly Unsatisfactory

Additionally, the evaluation will examine the following questions:

1. Did this project contribute to the establishment of a long term monitoring system? If it did not, should the project have included such a component?
2. If it did, what were the accomplishments and short comings in establishment of this system?
3. Is the system sustainable, i.e. is it embedded in a proper institutional structure and has financing?
4. Is the information generated by this M&E system being used as originally intended?

4. PRODUCTS EXPECTD FROM THE EVALUATION:

The main products expected from the evaluation are:

1. presentation(s) on findings of the evaluation to key stakeholders;
2. an interim draft report;
3. a final comprehensive terminal evaluation report;
4. Reporting: The main final output of the evaluation will be an independent and comprehensive Terminal Evaluation report with annexes as needed. The minimum requirements for the content of the final TE report are given below:

Summary:

- a. Brief description of project
- b. Context and purpose of the evaluation
- c. Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

Introduction:

- a. Purpose of evaluation
- b. Key issues addressed
- c. Methodology of the evaluation
- d. Structure of the evaluation

The project and its development context:

- a. Project start and its duration
- b. Problems that the project seek to address
- c. Immediate and development objectives of the project=
- d. Planned outputs and sub-outputs
- e. Main stakeholders
- f. Results expected

Findings and Conclusions:

- a. Project formulation
- b. Implementation approach
- c. Country ownership/Driveness
- d. Stakeholder participation
- e. Replication approach
- f. Cost-effectiveness
- g. UNDP comparative advantage
- h. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- i. Indicators
- j. Management arrangements

Implementation:

- a. Financial planning
- b. Monitoring and evaluation
- c. Execution and implementation modalities
- d. Management by UNDP country office
- e. Coordination and operational issues

Results:

- a. Attainment of planned objectives & outcomes
- b. Sustainability of impacts (including policy impact and evidence of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation approaches into sustainable development strategies and programmes)
- c. Contribution to national capacity development

Recommendations:

- a. Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
- b. Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
- c. Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

Lessons learned:

- a. Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success

Annexes:

- a. TOR
- b. Itinerary
- c. List of persons interviewed
- d. Summary of field visits
- e. List of documents reviewed
- f. Questionnaires used and summary of results
- g. Co-financing and Leverages Resources (see Table 1 attached)

5. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Terminal Evaluation will be conducted by a local consultant, who will have in depth understanding of UNDP and GEF projects including evaluation experience. The local consultant will be responsible for developing the evaluation methodology, conducting the evaluation and delivering the key products expected from the evaluation, including coordinating the inputs from national and district level stakeholders.

Under the guidance and close consultations with NEC Secretariat and UNDP, the consultant will be responsible for conducting desk research of existing documentation, surveys/research/evaluation reports and database, as well as consult all partners and institutions and gather information and opinions on implementation processes like management and coordination; fund release mechanism and project management capacity and see whether each of them has been supportive to the project delivery. If necessary, the consultant will visit the Dzongkhag administrations and consult with local government functionaries and communities and directly record issues, benefits and gaps and relate them to the project achievements. Finally, the consultant will prepare a report highlighting both constraints and opportunities suggesting recommendations and lessons learnt for future directions of both the donor and implementer.

The consultant will sign an agreement with UNDP Bhutan and will be bound by the terms and conditions set in the agreement.

6. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology will be determined by the consultant, guided by the requirements of GEF and UNDP as articulated in various guidelines, policies and manuals on the conduct of evaluations for GEF projects as well as key project documents such as the the final UNDP project document, the inception workshop report, the project log-frame and annual budgets and work plans, the annual Project Implementation Review, PB, and PMT meeting

minutes as available, and other technical reports and documents as relevant. A list of key documents is given in Annex 1.

The evaluation methodology should be clearly documented in the final evaluation report including comprehensive details of the following:

- Documents reviewed
- Interviews conducted
- Consultations held with all key stakeholders
- Project sites visited
- Techniques and approaches used for data gathering, verification and analysis

7. CONDUCT OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation consultant will work independently but will liaise closely with UNDP CO, and NEC Secretariat. The consultant will visit national and local level partners to ensure adequate consultation with all key stakeholders. Towards the end of the evaluation, presentation will be made to all key stakeholders in Thimphu. After the presentation the consultant will take note of verbal and/or written responses to the presentation and consider these in preparing an interim draft evaluation report that will be provided to NEC/UNDP CO. NEC/UNDP CO will circulate the draft report to all stakeholders requesting written feedback which would in turn be sent to the consultant within 7 days of receipt of the draft. The TE report including all annexes should be finalized within another 7 days of the deadline for receiving comments on the first draft.

While the evaluation team is free to determine the actual layout of the final evaluation report, this must include the minimum content requirements mentioned earlier. The consultant will forward the final report by e-mail to UNDP CO and the NEC for onward distribution to all stakeholders. The evaluation consultant will be responsible for the contents, quality and veracity of the report.

8. QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS:

- Bachelors in Environment, Natural Resources Management, and related fields with a minimum of 8 years of relevant experience (applicants with Masters degree will be given preference).
- Experience in monitoring and evaluations and preparing reports
- Experience in working with organizations like the UN and National Environment commission
- Excellent interpersonal skills, team oriented work style
- Good written and oral communication skills
- Strong organizational skills
- Self-motivated, ability to work with minimum supervision
- Fluency in English
- Proficiency in using computer applications (word processing, spreadsheet, e-mail etc)

9. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR THE EVALUATION:

The consultant's input will be required for 2 weeks with the terminal evaluation tentatively scheduled to begin from 2 July – 15 July. The tentative program is given below.

Dates	Program	Remarks
2 July	Meet with UNDP team and discuss on the programme –desk review	
3-4 July	Meeting with NEC and stakeholders	NEC, GNHC,MOA,BTF etc
5 July	Filed visit- to Punakha or Wangdue	(consultation meeting with dzongkhag and sector staff)
6 July	Return to Thimphu	
9 July	Submission and presentation of draft report to UNDP, NEC and stakeholders	
12 July	Revise and share report based on comments from stakeholders	

15 July	Submit final report	
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