



DEVELOPING THE PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM OF ARMENIA

PIMS: 3986

TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

September 2014

PROJECT DATA

Project Title: DEVELOPING THE PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM OF ARMENIA

PIMS: 3986

Project ID: 00070966/00076187

Date of Evaluation Mission: 07 to 18 July 2014

Date of submission TE Report: 30 July 2014

Project Closing Date: September 2014

Country included in Project: Republic of Armenia

GEF SO: 1 Catalysing Sustainability of Protected Areas System

GEF SP: 3 Strengthening Terrestrial Protected Area Networks

Implementing Partners: Ministry of Nature Protection; WWF-Armenia

Designated Executing Agency: UNDP

Management Arrangement: NEX/NGO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Consultant would like to express his thanks and appreciation to all those who have contributed, in the offices or in the field, to the work of the Terminal Evaluation of the Project "Developing the Protected Area System in Armenia".

Special thanks go to the Staff of the Ministry of Nature Protection and the Ministry of Territorial Administration of the Republic of Armenia, at Central, Regional and Local levels for sharing their views on the Project and on its achievements.

At the UNDP CO, the Deputy Resident Representative, the Head of the Environment Governance Portfolio and his Programme Policy Advisor shared their latest insights on the sector and necessary future actions were discussed.

Special thanks go to the Staff of the PMU and to WWF Armenia for jointly organising, actively participating in the site visits to the two Regions with project field activities, and for sharing their insights on the implementation of the Project and on the sector.

Charles Vanpraet
Consultant
Protected Area Management

II. Executive Summary

II.1. Summary table

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE		
Project Title: Developing the Protected Area System of Armenia		
GEF Project ID:	3762	
UNDP Project ID:	3986	
Country:	Armenia	
Region:	Europe and Central Asia	
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	
Operational Program:	SPA	
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNDP	
National Implementing Partner:	Ministry of Nature Protection	
Other Partners involved:	WWF Armenian Branch	
Project Funds	<i>at endorsement in thousands of (US\$)</i>	<i>at completion in thousands of (US\$)</i>
GEF financing:	950	950
UNDP own funds:	0	0
Government of Armenia:	1,500	1,600
Other:	500	600
Total co-financing:	2,000	2,200
Total Project Cost:	2,950	3,150
Project duration		
Prodoc Signature (D.M.Y):	31.08.2009	
(Operational) Closing Date (D/M/Y):	Proposed: Jan. 2014	Actual: Sept. 2014

II.2. Project description

The large diversity of natural bio-geographical, altitudinal and climate zones in Armenia conditions the existence of a wide number of species in the country. Many of them are of global, regional, and local importance. There are a number of endangered and endemic species of really high value in various areas of the country. Important habitat types such as desert, semi-desert, wetlands, steppe, meadow, steppe meadow and high mountainous ecosystems important for most of Armenia's critically endangered flora/fauna are absent or under-represented within the current protected area system. The Ministry of Nature Protection (MoNP) is principally responsible for environment protection and biodiversity conservation in Armenia.

There are a number of threats to Armenia's biodiversity ultimately resulting in accelerated loss of vulnerable habitats and associated species, the reduction of ecological functionality and the growing insecurity of ecosystem services. Potential and existing threats to Armenia's biodiversity include overexploitation, unregulated tourism activity, habitat loss, uncontrolled expansion of existing and emergence of new (poly-metallic) mines, and climate change. The long-term solution sought by the RA Government is to alleviating habitat fragmentation in Armenia through a functional ecologically representative protected areas (PAs) network being well managed and sustainably financed.

Barriers to achieving these solutions appear to be: inadequate policy instruments (legislation, management plans), limited institutional capacities and experience with the creation and the management of complex protected areas (community based/participatory management, business management, tourism management, biodiversity monitoring, and law enforcement).

In order to contribute towards the gradual alleviation of these barriers, the **project's goal** is to **conserve globally significant biodiversity in Armenia**.

The **project objective** is to **catalyse the expansion of the nature reserves to provide better representation of ecosystems within Armenia's current protected area system and enable active conservation of biodiversity**.

This objective is expected to be achieved through two components:

1. Rationalization of the protected area system, (with 4 outputs) and
2. Institutional capacity building for protected area management (with 4 outputs)

The project started early 2010 with a duration of 4 years and a total budget of 3.15 Million US Dollars. The project was granted two extensions; the closing date is planned for September 2014.

The Ministry of Nature Protection (MoNP) is the government authority responsible for defining environment policy and management and serves as Execution Agency/Implementing Partner in a NEX modality.

The Environment Governance Portfolio Manager of the UNDP CO coordinates project activities and serves as financial authorising officer.

A Project Management Unit (PMU) was set up at the MoNP. The Project Manager

(PM), in consultation with the National Project Director (NPD), is responsible for project operations: daily planning, implementation quality, reporting, (quarterly and annual work plans, submission to Steering Committee etc..).

The Ministry extended all necessary support to the project team through its Environmental Programmes Implementation Unit (EPIU)

Some 9 months after project start up, the execution of the project was split into two entities, to some extent corresponding to the two project components. The first component (NEX) was entrusted to the EPIU, an SNCO of the MoNP, while the second component is carried out by WWF-Armenia.

A mid-term evaluation (MTE), carried out some 30 months after project start identified a number of project design problems, and assessed progress towards the achievement of objectives.

II.3. Evaluation Rating Table

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	rating	2. IA& EA Execution	rating
M&E design at entry	S	Quality of UNDP Implementation	S
M&E Plan Implementation	MS	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	S
Overall quality of M&E	MS	Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	S
3. Assessment of Outcomes	rating	4. Sustainability	rating
Relevance	R	Financial resources:	S
Effectiveness	S	Socio-political:	S
Efficiency	MS	Institutional framework and governance:	MS
Overall Project Outcome Rating	S		
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	S

For the different rating scores, see Annex 9.

II.4. Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

1. The project document was very well prepared: it clearly describes and analyses the general problem (threat to biodiversity), the causes (overexploitation, unregulated tourism, habitat loss, and climate change), the solutions, (alleviating habitat fragmentation, improvement of management), as well as the barriers: inadequate policy instruments, limited institutional capacities.
2. While the above cited barriers the project is expected to address are described in a few words, the tasks that are required, and the time needed, should not be underestimated. In the view of the Mission, achieving the proposed solutions

cited above is realistic when starting off with institutions that are effective and functional at all levels. In the case of the project, this was very unlikely. "Improved management" requires improved institutions.

3. On the project management design side, the Project has a PMU with a Project Manager and an assistant (both non-government staff). This PMU is expected to manage the project "with the support of the Ministry". In addition, the National Project Execution Agency has an EPIU (Environmental Programmes Implementing Unit). Such "twin" structures may hinder the necessary integration of the project into the host agency MoNP; they also lower the efficiency rate of the Project due to the increased management costs.
4. The start-up of the project went somewhat slowly and with difficulties (re: MTE Report), and the decision was taken to bring in an additional executing/implementing partner/donor. In order to clearly define the responsibilities and responsibilities and tasks of each of the two partners (EPIU and WWF, the new partner), a new inception workshop should have taken place to clearly define the responsibilities of each. This would have avoided discussions and problems referred to in the MTE Report.
5. There is no doubt that the Project has brought about very important developments, changes, innovations and improvements at the level of protected area management. The preparation of maps, management and business development plans, the installation of protected area interpretation infrastructure and the setting up of visitors' centres are all very necessary and useful achievements. The negotiations with the various communities to either manage themselves a PA, participate in the management or surrender some of their traditional land use rights and land to be annexed to existing government managed protected areas are important achievements. The setting up of additional PAs and the introduction of new management modalities and by-laws are very innovative steps and the results will require further monitoring and possibly adjustments.
6. A more delicate, difficult, sensitive but extremely important field is the overall institutional domain, its coherence, functionality, effectiveness and efficiency. The institutional organization, its efficiency and effectiveness on are far less visible, less accessible, less assessable and less adjustable. Also, the skills required for the improvement of these aspects are very different and the work often much more delicate. Whereas the Project brought about good achievements, the Mission feels that additional work is required to fully streamline the relevant institutions, and this at the various levels of the administration: central, regional, municipal, community, down to the protected areas themselves. Focus could be on the Syunik Region in view of its high number of recently added PAs with various levels of protection and modalities of management.

7. It is hoped that these matters can be part of a follow up activity that not only deals with these aspects, but where it is a prime and specific component.
This is by no means a hint that the achievements of the project are unsatisfactory, but rather that the Project was somewhat ambitious in its expected achievements, and that the institutional aspects may have needed more specific attention from the onset.
This project has already created a good ground for the further adjustment and enhancement of the institutional capabilities, and it is hoped that additional efforts can be pursued soon.

8. In order to keep up the achieved momentum at the level of the newly created PA's and more importantly among the communities involved, the Mission strongly suggests that little initiatives towards the creation of conservation based tourism, PA/community based education programmes, local agricultural production and education activities etc. be identified and supported. They will have a catalytic role in the social development of the communities, lead to an enhanced protection of the PAs and to the overall economic development of the region. The GEF's Small Grants Programme is an excellent tool to support such initiatives.

9. There is a considerable need to encourage education and research institutions to undertake field activities in the PAs. Such research can generate valuable information on habitat and animal populations and trends, as well as on management impacts. This would also widely contribute towards the building of a highly needed new generation of academics (scientists and teachers) and field workers that are better aware of the ecological situation and trends in the PAs, and in the Country as a whole.

III. Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMD	Armenian Dram (national currency)
APR	Annual Project Review
AWP	Annual Work Programme
BMA	Bioresources Management Agency
BSAP	Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Armenia
CBD	The Convention on Biological Diversity
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CPAF	Caucasus Protected Areas Fund
CPAF	Protected Area Trust Fund
EPIU SA	Environmental Projects Implementation Unit State Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
GA	Government of Armenia
HDI	Human Development Index
IBA	Important Bird Area
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
LFM	Logic Framework Matrix
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool for Protected Areas
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoTA	Ministry of Territorial Administration
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MoNP	Ministry for Nature Protection
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
NAS	National Academy of Sciences
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PA	Protected Area
PD	Project Document
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Project Management Unit
PoWPA	Programme of Work on Protected Areas
SC	Steering Committee
SNCO	State Non Commercial Organizations
SO	Strategic Objective
SP	Strategic Programme
SPNA	Strictly Protected Natural Area
SR	State Reserve
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TJS	Transboundary Joint Secretariat
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP-CO	UNDP Country Office
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) is to assess the achievement of project results, to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability and benefits of future projects, identify remaining issues, and contribute toward the planning of the environment sector for both the Government and for UNDP

1.2. Scope & Methodology

Besides the evaluation of the quality and level of the achievements of the Project (outputs/outcomes), the consultant assessed levels of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects.

The Terminal Evaluation provided evidence-based information that was as credible, reliable and useful as possible. The evaluator undertook the evaluation following a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with Government Agencies, UNDP Country Office, the Project Team, and key stakeholders at the various levels. The Mission, in company of the PMU staff, visited all key project sites: Gnishik Protected Landscape and its Support Zone in Vayots Dzor region, Zangezour and Khustup State Sanctuaries in Syunik region, as well as the adjacent protected areas. Interviews were held with the representatives of relevant organizations and communities (see Annex 3).

More specifically, the following activities were undertaken by the TE Mission:

- Review of project documents (see annex 4) to analyse the background and objectives of the project, the implementation status, and achievements so far, problems identified, managerial arrangements, etc..
- Desk research of strategy documents to assess the appropriateness of the project to national and global priorities and policies.
- Discussions with UNDP DRR, the UNDP Armenia Environmental Governance Portfolio Manager and Programme Policy Adviser during which the project design, the implementation approach and major achievements, shortcomings and remaining challenges were discussed.
- Discussions were held with relevant national institutions such as the MoNP, its BMA and EPIUSA, the MoTA, the Academy of Sciences, and other programmes and projects in the sector;
- Detailed discussions with WWF- Armenia, Co Executing Agency
- Site visits to each of three project target areas in Vayots Dzor and Syunik regions as well as to the local self-governance administrations of Areni, Khachik and Mozrov rural communities in Vayots Dzor Region (Gnishik Protected Landscape stakeholders) as well as to the Gnishik Intercommunity Environmental fund NGO - administrative body responsible for the management of Gnishik Protected Landscape

- Visit to the local self-governance administrations of Qajaran, Chakaten, Tsav, Geghanush, Bnunis, Dastakert, Dzorastan, Shenatagh, Tatev, Lernadzor, Nzhdeh, Geghi, Nor Astghaberd rural and Qajaran urban communities (Khustup and Zangezour project protected area stakeholders)

1.3. Structure of the evaluation report

The structure of the evaluation report follows the lay out spelled out in the TOR of the TE, (see annex 1), providing an executive summary, the purpose, scope, methodology adopted, the project description, the findings, the assessment of the overall results, the conclusions and recommendations, and the annexes.

2. Project description and development context

2.1. Project start and duration

The Project Document was signed on 31.08.2009 and implementation formally started in January 2010, for an initial duration of 4 years. An inception workshop was organized in February 2010. An inception report was prepared and approved, together with the Project's first work plan.

End September 2010, it was decided to subcontract part of the Project to an external entity. In October 2010 WWF signed an agreement with the UNDP under which it was to implement part of the project.

As a result of the delay that had been incurred, the project was extended in time until June 2014. At the time of the TE, the project was going through its second extension with the closing date scheduled for September 2014.

2.2. Problems that the project sought to address

At the time of the Project formulation, Armenia's system of PAs included 311,000 ha or approximately 10% of the territory (6% without Lake Sevan NP). Important habitat types such as desert-semi desert, wetlands, steppe, meadow, steppe meadow and high mountainous ecosystems represent approximately 80% of Armenia's total landmass. However, these ecosystems, important for most of Armenia's critically endangered flora/fauna, are absent or under-represented within the current protected area system.

The project document clearly describes and analyses the general problem (threat to biodiversity), the causes (overexploitation, unregulated tourism, habitat loss, climate change), as well as the solutions, (alleviating habitat fragmentation, improvement of management), together with the barriers: inadequate policy instruments, limited institutional capacities.

The long-term solution sought by the RA Government is to alleviate habitat fragmentation in Armenia through a functional ecologically representative PA network being well managed and sustainably financed. The PA network should enjoy the full support of local communities and government.

2.3. Development objectives (goal), immediate objectives of the project, and expected results of the Project.

In line with the threats formulated above, the Project sought to contribute (Project goal) towards the "*Conservation of globally significant biodiversity in Armenia*".

As a contribution towards this goal, the following project objective (what the Project is expected to achieve) was identified:

"To catalyse the expansion of the nature reserves to provide better representation of ecosystems within Armenia's current protected area system and enable active conservation of biodiversity".

The Project has 2 major components, each with 4 outputs:

Component 1. Rationalization of the protected area system, with following outputs:

- Output 1.1 Set of by-laws developed to operationalize the 2006 PA Law;
- Output 1.2 Institutional links re-configured to clarify roles and responsibilities for governance and management of sanctuaries.
- Output 1.3 Three new sanctuaries of Gnishik (Vayots Dzor Region), Khustup Mountain Area (Syunik Region), and Zangezur (Syunik Region) established at underrepresented habitats.
- Output 1.4. A new PA management model developed for sanctuaries and put into policy.

Component 2. Institutional capacity building for protected area management.

- Output 2.1. National and local training programs for sanctuary managers and local communities;
- Output 2.2 Management and business plans at three sanctuaries developed;
- Output 2.3 Management and business plan implementation supported on the ground;

Output 2.4 Lessons learned documented and experience set to replication.

2.4. Baseline Indicators established

Baseline, end-of-project indicators and METT Scores were included in the strategic framework of the Project and duly updated during the four project years.

2.5. Main stakeholders

The Ministry of Nature Protection (MoNP) is principally responsible for natural resource management and biodiversity conservation. The MNP houses the focal points for the UNCBD, UNFCC, and UNCCD and is oversees implementation of related issues. The MoNP's "Bio-resources Management Agency" (BMA) is charged with managing all State Reserves, National Parks, and Natural Monuments. Several "State Non Commercial Organizations" (SNCO) fulfill the role of protected area administrations and are responsible for on-the-ground protected area operations. An SNCO may manage a single protected area or a complex of several protected areas. Each SNCO reports to the BMA.

The table below summarises stakeholders in the sector.

Organization/Institution	Mandate
Ministry of Nature Protection	Overall coordination of SPNA management Develops policy on management of SPNA
<i>Bio-resources Management Agency (BMA)</i>	Responsible for 3 State Reserves, 2 National Parks, 13 State Sanctuaries
<i>SNCO (State Non Commercial Organisation)</i>	An SNCO is assigned to manage each PA under the Bio-resources Management Agency jurisdiction
<i>State Environmental Inspection</i>	Enforces implementation of environmental legislation
Ministry of Agriculture	
<i>Hayantar (Armenian Forestry)</i>	Responsible for 13 forest sanctuaries
Ministry of Education and Science (Institute of Physics)	Responsible for 1 sanctuary Oversees formal environmental education
Ministry of Territorial Administration	Responsible for 2 Sanctuaries; Responsible for the elaboration and monitoring of the implementation of the territorial policies of the Government
National Academy of Sciences (NAS)	Government institutes conducting scientific research in PA's
Ministry of Science and Education	Oversees formal environmental education
Marz (Regional Administration)	Participate in developing PA state programs and management plans; Support PA protection services.
Municipalities	Participate in development and implementation of state programs and management plans for PA's of international and National significance; Support protection regime of such PA's; Management of PA's of local significance.
WWF Armenia	NGO supporting biodiversity protection and community development; Implementing several conservation programs

Organization/Institution	Mandate
	in Caucasus and Armenia. Executing Agency for part of the Project Programme.
The Trans boundary Joint Secretariat for the Southern Caucasus (financed by BMZ/KfW)	Conservation project; Creating platform for biodiversity protection in Armenia; Developing national guidelines on PA management planning, awareness raising, information exchange and others; In the process of the creation of a biosphere reserve in southern Armenia (including Shikahogh State Reserve)
Caucasus Protected Areas Fund (Trust Fund)	Support to Khosrov Forest State Reserve SNCO (pilot project) and a string of other PA's.
“Ecotourism Association” NGO	Local NGO working to establish Arevik PA
“Khustup” NGO	Local NGO involved in the Zangezour PA
Donor Organizations	UNDP, USAID, World Bank, KfW , Norway, and others have active natural resource management projects.

3. Findings

3.1. Project Design / Formulation

3.1.1. Analysis of LFM/Results Framework (Project logic /strategy; Indicators)

The project document clearly describes and analyses the general problem (threat to biodiversity), the causes (overexploitation, unregulated tourism, habitat loss, climate change), as well as the solutions, (alleviating habitat fragmentation, improvement of management), together with the barriers: inadequate policy instruments, limited institutional capacities.

Generally speaking the logical framework matrix (LFM) is well prepared, at least for the practical/tangible outputs of the project. One of the outputs of component 1, and indeed of component 2 could have been better defined, as the topic is very complex, difficult and sensitive. While terms such as "rationalization" and "institutional inefficiencies" may be clear to most readers, the project document could have provided some more specific information on the activities that are required, in order to make the institutions "more capable". Training can be one of the necessary ingredients, however most of the time, more is needed to achieve that objective. Such clarification would have helped the project implementers in their work.

3.1.2. Assumptions and Risks

Assumptions and risks were clearly spelled out in the LFM and were found sound. The assumptions referred mainly to the continued Government's financial support and an improved enabling environment. In the view of the Mission, these assumptions were fulfilled throughout the project.

3.1.3. Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project design

The long experience of UNDP and its expertise in the sector and in the Region were undoubtedly enormous assets for the preparation of the Project Document, and for the overall management of the Project.

Likewise, WWF's expertise and experience in the Region were very valuable.

3.1.4. Planned stakeholder participation

Besides the agencies within the MoNP and the SNCO's, the Project has close working relations and cooperation with most of the stakeholders listed (page 17): Ministries, Academies, Regional Administrations, Municipalities, and the local communities. The Project also actively coordinates with other programmes in the Country, e.g. JSC, CPAF, WWF, CEPF, etc..

3.1.5. Replication approach

The general project approach can be considered suitable and replicable. When dealing with institutional "rationalisation", more analytical material, as well as required activities should be spelled out to guide the implementers.

3.1.6. UNDP comparative advantage

UNDP's corporate advantage for the GEF lies in the global network of country offices, its experience in integrated policy development, human resources development, institutional strengthening, and non government and community participation. UNDP assists countries in promoting, designing and implementing activities consistent with both the GEF mandate and national sustainable development plans. UNDP also has an extensive inter-country programming experience.

3.1.7. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

The Project has close links with a range of national agencies, as well as with projects and programmes operating in the sector (KfW, EU, WWF, World Bank, Norwegian bilateral aid, JSC, CPAF, CEPF, IUCN, TJS-Caucasus, etc.). WWF is a direct partner in the implementation of part of the project components.

3.1.8. Management arrangements

The Ministry of Nature Protection is the government authority responsible for environmental policy and management and serves as one of the two Executing Agency/Implementing Partners through the EPIU SA set up within the MoNM. WWF is the second Executing Agency/Implementing partner and joined the Project some 9 months after start up. Each is responsible for: (i) directly overseeing implementation of the component that was entrusted to them, (ii) attainment of the planned project Activities/Outputs as per the Project Results and Resources Framework, and recruitment of local staff.

The UNDP CO supports project implementation activities in accordance with UNDP rules and procedures. In addition, UNDP deals with Project supervision, monitoring and evaluation; financial oversight and management; drafting of terms of reference and specifications for equipment; procurement of goods, including approval of expenditures; procurement of services, etc. The UNDP Project Manager coordinates project activities and serves as the financial authorizing officer.

PMU responsibilities include: (i) preparation/updates of project work plans; (ii) record keeping, accounting, reporting; (iii) drafting of terms of reference, technical specifications and other documents as necessary; (iv) identification, pre-screening of consultants/sub-contractors; (v) coordination and supervision of consultants/sub-contractors/ suppliers; (vi) organization of duty travel, seminars, public outreach activities and other project events; and, (vii) working contacts with project partners at the central and local levels, (viii) recruitment of international consultants. The PM is supported by part-time local and international experts as well as by local support staff (assistant and driver).

The Project Steering Committee was set up and convened to review the work accomplished and to approve the new annual work programme.

The Ministry provided all necessary support to the project team.

Some 9 months after the start of the project, a second execution/implementation agency (WWF) was brought in to execute/implement a project component. The Ministry of Nature protection is the Executing Agency through its EPIU SA, implementing component 1 and part of component 2 (Training). WWF carries component 2 (except training) the mapping activities of component 1, as well as the negotiations with the stakeholder communities in the same component.

Discussion

With the existence of a PMU, (non government staff), and an EPIU SA as part of the MoNP (government staffing), it appears that the management/implementation design/structure of the project is complex, which may not serve efficiency and possibly effectiveness of the project.

Although the Project is nationally executed, a non government office (the PMU) is responsible for the daily planning, implementation quality, reporting etc...of the project activities, is sitting side by side with the EPIU SA, an office within the MoNP (government staffing) which is responsible for the implementation of environmental projects within the Ministry.

Furthermore, the project document states that "the Ministry will extend all necessary support to the Project Team". Given the fact that one Project component is executed under a NEX modality, it would have been more logical that the PMU assist the executing agency rather than the executing agency assisting the temporary PMU. While this project management modality may have advantages i.e. the recruitment of international consultants and external services and goods, the management/implementation modality used in the project may lead towards:

- an insufficient ownership of the project by the government;
- a low degree of sustainability;
- an inadequate transfer of knowhow to the staff expected to implement the project activities;
- lowering of the efficiency, due to its complexity and the necessary operating costs of both implementation/management bodies .

3.2. Project Implementation

3.2.1. Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)

Some 9 months after the start of the Project, WWF was entrusted a number of outputs of the project, some relating to Component 1, other to component 2. It is generally believed that this enlargement of the project implementation led to an acceleration of project delivery. On the other hand some of the activities entrusted to WWF, and practically completed at the time of the Mission, are dependant on the realisation of some of the outputs of Component 1.

3.2.2. Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region)

Besides the partnership arrangement with WWF (see 2.1.), the Project has close contacts with other players in the Country/Region, notably with the Caucasus Nature Fund, the Transboundary Joint Secretariat for the South Caucasus, a number of bilateral projects, as well as several NGO's.

3.2.3. Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management

The MTE report stated that at the onset of the project, progress was relatively slow. This may have been due in part to the complexity of the project. Some 9 months after the start of the project, a second executing agency (WWF) was subcontracted to handle part of the planned outputs. The Mission believes that this partnership was appropriate and timely.

3.2.4. Project Finance

According to the provisions laid down in the project document, the PMU prepared annual work plans and annual budget requirements that were submitted to the Steering Committee for approval. UNDP is a member of the SC. The UNDP Project Manager is the financial authorizing officer of the Project.

3.2.5. Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation

The necessary monitoring and evaluation measures were included in the project document. These activities were carried out by the PMU.

Output/outcome indicators were included in the LFM.

However, the LFM could have given some additional details on the more complex outputs, on the required activities and choose some more precise indicators.

The institutional aspects of PA management appear to remain an important challenge in the overall field of PA administration and management.

3.2.6. UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution (*) coordination, and operational issues

In the view of the Mission, UNDP provided the necessary support to the project implementation in accordance with its mandate, rules and procedures. It provided supervision, monitoring and evaluation oversight, and guidance as spelled out in the project document. UNDP's Environment Portfolio Officer is the UNDP Project Manager, coordinated the project activities and acted as financial authorizing officer.

OVERALL RATING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: SATISFACTORY

3.3. Project Results

3.3.1. Overall results

Over the last years, a lot of attention has gone towards the increase of the percentage of Armenian territory represented in the protected area system.

At the time of the preparation of the Project Document, 10,31 % of the national territory was classified area under one of the various IUCN PA classes. The donor community has given considerable attention to the sector, and the share of protected land is growing; so is the diversity of the PAs, i.e. the level of protection (IUCN Classification) Thanks to the efforts of the project, important steps have been taken to adjust the protected area legislation, and to introduce new forms of PA administration and management. This was an important and necessary step forward and the Project takes a great deal of the credit for this development.

On the institutional capacity side, i.e. the overall capacity of the institutions dealing with the range of administration and management issues of protected areas, the Mission is of the opinion that more work is required. While training can be an important ingredient, it is not necessarily an indicator *sensu stricto* of capacity building.

There is no doubt that the Project has brought about very important practical achievements since start up of the Project: to a slightly lesser extent to the institutional capacity and the development of the protected area based tourism development. The preparation of maps, management and business development plans, the installation of protected area interpretation infrastructure and the setting up of visitors' centres are all very necessary and useful achievements. The negotiations with the various communities either to manage themselves a PA or surrender some

of their communal land to be added to existing government managed protected areas are important achievements. The setting up of additional PAs and the introduction of new management modalities and necessary by-laws are very innovative and the results will require further monitoring and possibly adjustments. In this field, the Project made very sound achievements

The above outputs and outcomes should be seen as the easier (but not necessarily easy) achievements. And in writing this, the Mission in no way is hinting that the Project underperformed.

At the level of the management and business plan implementation, (output 2.3 of Component 2), issues like habitat monitoring will be very important. Here the Mission strongly recommends to encourage academic institutions (education and research) to become involved in monitoring activities, and this for habitat as much as for animal populations, poaching, number of visitors etc. (see Recommendations).

A more delicate, difficult, sensitive but extremely important field is the overall institutional domain, its coherence, functionality, effectiveness, efficiency, and this at every level: central, regional, local, PA. In the project document these aspects fall under Component 1, more specifically under Output 1.2.: "Institutional links reconfigured to clarify roles and responsibilities for governance and management of sanctuaries;..... eliminate sources of institutional inefficiencies by clarifying decision making, management and financing responsibilities." In Component 2 it is included under outputs, 2.2. i.e. development of management and business plans, and under 2.3. The implementation of these plans. While these few phrases constitute a apparent "minor" part of the expected outputs, these aspects, in many projects, remain insufficiently addressed, as the institutional capacity is often over estimated. Unlike the improvement of infrastructure, the setting up of visitors' centres, PA demarcation, the organisation of training programmes, etc.all very practical and visible, the institutional organization, efficiency and effectiveness are far less visible, accessible, assessable and adjustable. Very often the work and skills required for the improvement of these aspects is under estimated, and projects are sometimes too ambitious when it comes to the rationalisation of institutions.

In the view of the Mission, more attention and work will be required to streamline the institutions, and this at the various levels of the administration: central, regional, municipal, community, down to the protected area itself.

In conclusion, given the nature of the institutional environment in which the project operated, the project brought about remarkable changes in the capability of the staff concerned, in the legislative domain as well as in the management environment at PA level.

It is hoped that these matters can be part of a follow up activity that not necessarily only focuses on these aspects, but where it is a focus.

This is by no means a hint that the achievements of the project are unsatisfactory, but rather that the Project was somewhat ambitious in its expected achievements.

This project has already created a good basis for better PA administration and management, and it is hoped that additional efforts can be pursued soon.

OVERALL RATING OF THE RESULTS: SATISFACTORY

3.3.2. Relevance

Project *relevance* is defined as the extent to which the project contributes towards local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time.

In order to assess and evaluate the project relevance the appropriateness of the project goal to the national and global priorities and policies, project design and concept, stakeholders' involvement and participation, and other issues have been addressed.

The project's goal is to contribute towards the conservation of globally significant biodiversity in Armenia. Therefore it contributes towards the expansion of the number of PAs in the country, and in doing so, making sure that the various ecological zones are represented.

The project contributed considerably towards the implementation of attainment of national priorities and policies, to international conventions underwritten by the Country, as well as to UNDP GEF's and UNDAF's approaches and strategies in Armenia

For that reason, the overall relevance of the project is rated *high* by the Mission.

RELEVANCE RATING OF THE PROJECT: HIGHLY RELEVANT
--

For ratings scales see annex 9.

3.3.3. Effectiveness & Efficiency

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is defined as the extent to which the planned outputs of the project have been achieved, in other words: "did the Project do the right things?"

In this assessment the achievement of the overall results is rated.

While some of the outputs, such as the by laws that were prepared, still need endorsement by parliament, one can say that most of the planned results were handled to a certain degree. When it comes to visible achievements such as training, mapping, PA interpretation activities, the preparation of by laws, the creation of visitors' centres, the provision of hardware to the local communities, achievements are visible. However some of the planned achievements are far more difficult to rate at closure of the project. This is in particular the case for many factors pertaining to the capability, effectiveness, and efficiency of institutions. In addition, and as

explained under 3.3.1. Work related to institutions is often far more difficult, delicate and especially time consuming.

While considerable achievements have been made by the project, the fact that several new PA's have been created, and this under different management modalities; that more are in the making (e.g. Zangezur Biosphere Reserve) and under different management modalities, it is clear that more work is needed when it comes to the upgrading of the institutional capacity at Central, Regional Local and PA levels.

The Mission however feels that the goals of the Project were somewhat overambitious when it comes to capacity building.

EFFECTIVENESS RATING OF THE PROJECT: SATISFACTORY

Rating scale see Annex 9

Efficiency

Project efficiency is defined as the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.

The Mission found that the outputs of the Project were achieved in a fairly efficient way. This parameter however is defined in one way by the implementation rate, on the other side by the management set up.

On the project management side, the Project has a PMU with a Project Manager and an assistant (both non government staff). This PMU is expected to manage the project "with the support of the Ministry". In addition, the National Project Execution Agency has an EPIU (Environmental Programmes Implementing Unit), which is an additional body (SNCO) dealing with the implementation of the Project. Such twin structure may hinder the proper integration and ownership of the project in the host agency (MoNP, through the BMA SA).

This management modality undoubtedly also raises the cost of management, (hence lowering the efficiency) however this set up (PMU) was prescribed in the project document and is therefore beyond control of Project Management.

OVERALL EFFICIENCY RATING: MODERATELY SATISFACTORY
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3.3.4. Country ownership

The programme as such is very much in line with Armenia's development strategies and plans. The regions targeted by the project, as well as the PA's are equally targeted by the Country and therefore one can state that the Project is fully owed by the Country.

Regarding the general supervision of the Project, several senior government officials follow the project activities closely, on a day to day basis or through the SC meetings and other decision making mechanisms/meetings.

3.3.5. Mainstreaming

Several agencies are involved in the study/management of PAs, notably the Ministry of Nature Protection, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Territorial Administration, the National Academy of Sciences, the Ministry of Science and Education, Regional and Municipal Administrations, besides a string of regional and national projects and NGOs. These agencies are also members of the Project Steering Committee, which enhances the mainstreaming effect.

3.3.6. Sustainability

Project sustainability is defined as the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.

As the institutions involved in PA management existed well before the start of the Project, there is little doubt that the overall operation is sustainable. The Mission however feels that the temporary management structures under which the project operates reduce necessary integration into the relevant technical structures, and hence to a certain extent sustainability levels.

OVERALL SUSTAINABILITY RATING: MODERATELY LIKELY /LIKELY
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Rating scale see Annex 9

3.3.7. Impact

On the institutional side, the Project made a positive impact on the PA legislation side, on the introduction/support of innovative management practices, on enhancing the general awareness of the need to protect systems that are under threat, and on its activities and negotiations with the communities that are connected to the management of PAs.

At the level of the PAs, considerable impact has been achieved at the level of the demarcation of the 3 new PAs, on the interpretation of these PAs, the mapping, the preparation of management plans and other PA management requirements.

At the level of the overall management, planning and development capability of the relevant institutions at the various levels, the impact of the Project is probably less measurable.

OVERALL PROJECT IMPACT: MINIMAL/SIGNIFICANT

4. Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

General

1. The project document was very well prepared: it clearly describes and analyses the general problem (threat to biodiversity), the causes (overexploitation, unregulated tourism, habitat loss, climate change), as well as the solutions, (alleviating habitat fragmentation, improvement of management), together with the barriers: inadequate policy instruments, limited institutional capacities.

2. While the above cited barriers the project is expected to address are described in a few words, the tasks that are required, and the time needed, should not be underestimated. In the view of the Mission, achieving the proposed solutions cited above is realistic when starting off with institutions that are well developed, and that are effective and functional at all levels. In the case of the project, this was very unlikely.

3. The start-up of the project went somewhat slowly (re: MTE Report), and the decision was taken to bring in an additional executing/implementing Partner, WWF. In order to clearly define the responsibilities and tasks of each of the two partners (EPIU and WWF), a new inception workshop should have taken place. This would have avoided discussions and small problems referred to in the MTE.

4. There is no doubt that the Project has brought about very important developments, changes, innovations and improvements to the sector of protected area management, and to a slightly lesser extend to the development of the protected area based tourism development. The preparation of maps, management and business development plans, the installation of protected area interpretation infrastructure and the setting up of visitors' centres are all very necessary and useful achievements. The negotiations with the various communities to either manage themselves a PA, participate in the management or surrender some of their traditional land use rights and land to be annexed to existing government managed protected areas are important achievements. The setting up of additional PAs and the introduction of new management modalities and by-laws are very innovative steps and the results will require further monitoring and possibly adjustments.

5. A more delicate, difficult, sensitive but extremely important field is the overall institutional domain, its coherence, functionality, effectiveness, efficiency, at every level: central, regional, local, PA. In the project document these aspects fall under component 1: "Institutional links reconfigured to clarify roles and responsibilities for governance and management of sanctuaries; eliminate sources of institutional inefficiencies"...., under component 2.: "development of management and business plans, and under 2.3. the implementation of these plans.

Given the importance of the topic, it may have been more helpful for the Project Implementers had institutional capacity building been a specific component or at least output.

Unlike the improvement of infrastructure, the setting up of visitors' centres, PA demarcation, the organisation of training programmes, etc.all very practical and visible, the institutional organization, efficiency and effectiveness are far less visible, accessible, assessable and adjustable.

6. This project has already created a good ground for the further adjustment and enhancement of the institutional capabilities, and it is hoped that additional efforts can be pursued soon.

7. In conclusion, the Project brought about remarkable changes in the field of protected area management in the Country: in the capability of the staff concerned, in the legislative domain as well as in the management environment at PA level.

Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project

8. On the project management side, the Project has a PMU with a Project Manager. This PMU is expected to manage the project "with the support of the Ministry". In addition, the National Project Execution Agency has an EPIU (Environmental Programmes Implementing Unit), an additional body dealing with the actual implementation of the Project.

Such twin structures make management complex, hinder the necessary integration and ownership of the project into the host agency and lower the efficiency rate of the Project due to the increased management costs.

Actions to follow up

9. The newly created legislation pertaining to the new management modalities of PA's is expected to be promulgated by the end of 2014. As this is an important aspect of the Project, it is suggested that the matter be followed up.

10. In the view of the Mission, additional attention and work will be required to better streamline the relevant institutions, and this at the various levels of the administration: central, regional, municipal, community, down to the protected area itself.

11. It is hoped that these aspects can be part of a follow up activity that not only necessarily deals with these aspects, but where it is a focus activity.

12. In order to keep up the achieved momentum at the level of the newly created PA's and more importantly among the communities involved, the Mission suggests that little initiatives towards the creation of conservation based small businesses (cultural and PA's), towards local agricultural production as well as towards education and awareness building are identified and supported. The GEF's Small Grants Programme is an excellent tool to such end.

Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

13. As stated above, future attention in the sector should be geared towards the enhancement of the overall institutional capacity of the institutions concerned at all levels. Since the Syunik Region has a high percentage of its territory under some form of protection, special attention should go to that region.

14. There is a considerable need to encourage education and research institutions to undertake field activities in the PAs. Such research can generate valuable information on habitat and animal populations and trends, as well as on management impacts. This would also widely contribute towards the building of a highly needed new generation of academics (scientists and teachers) and field workers that are better aware of the ecological situation and trends in the PAs, and in the Country as a whole.

5. Annexes

Annex 1: ToR

Annex 2: Mission Itinerary

Annex 3; List of persons interviewed

Annex 4; List of documents consulted

Annex 5; Map Zangezur and Khustup

Annex 6; Map PAs in Southern Armenia

Annex 7; Map Gnishik PL

Annex 8; Map of PAs in Armenia (Courtesy WWF)

Annex 9; Rating scales

5. ANNEXES TO THE TE REPORT

- A1: ToR of the TE Mission
- A2: Travel Itinerary in Armenia
- A3: List of persons interviewed
- A4: List of documents consulted
- A5: Map Zangezur and Khustup
- A6: Map Protected Areas of Southern Armenia
- A7: Map of Gnishik
- A8: Map of PAs in Armenia (map courtesy of WWF)
- A9: Rating scales used in the Report



TERMS OF REFERENCE
TERMINAL EVALUATION OF THE
DEVELOPING THE PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM OF ARMENIA
UNDP-SUPPORTED GEF-FINANCED PROJECT (PIMS 3986)

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the project *Developing the Protected Area System of Armenia* (PIMS 3986).

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE		
Project Title: Adaptation to Climate Change Impacts in Mountain Forest Ecosystems of Armenia		
GEF Project ID:	3762	
UNDP Project ID:	3986	
Country:	Armenia	
Region:	Europe and Central Asia	
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	
Operational Program:	SPA	
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNDP	
National Implementing Partner:	Ministry of Nature Protection	
Other Partners involved:	WWF Armenian Branch	
Project Funds	<i>at endorsement in thousands of (US\$)</i>	<i>at completion in thousands of (US\$)</i>
GEF financing:	950	950
UNDP own funds:	0	0
Government of Armenia:	1,500	1,600
Other:	500	600

Total co-financing:	2,000	2,200
Total Project Cost:	2,950	3,150
Project duration		
Prodoc Signature (D.M.Y):	31.08.2009	
(Operational) Closing Date (D/M/Y):	Proposed:	Actual:
	30.09.2013	30.06.2014

I. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The project was designed to conserve globally significant biodiversity in Armenia. The project's objective is to catalyze the expansion of the nature reserves to provide better representation of ecosystems within Armenia's current protected area system (PAS) and enable active conservation of biodiversity. The project's two components will focus upon: (1) rationalization of the protected areas system through improving the regulatory and institutional framework relevant to Sanctuary establishment and operation; and (2) institutional capacity building by piloting a suite of Sanctuary management tools largely absent from Armenian's current protected area management regime.

This project's efforts aimed to result in a national protected area system better equipped to include and conserve currently under-represented ecosystems and associated species. Project worked in community areas to improve management of productive landscapes while helping to promote connectivity and alleviate poverty. These ecosystems outside the shelter of Armenia's protected areas are critical to the long-term conservation of several globally significant species, including many endemic agro-biodiversity resources. The project also worked to enhance the financial sustainability of Armenia's protected area system.

(The project document can be retrieved from: http://www.thegef.org/gef/project_detail?projID=3762)

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

II. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An overall approach and method¹ for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR (*Annex C*) The evaluator is expected to amend, complete

¹ For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163

and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission to Armenia including the following project sites: Gnishik Protected Landscape and its Support Zone in Vayots Dzor region, and Zangezur and Khustup State Sanctuaries in Syunik region of Armenia. Interviews will be held with the representatives of following organizations at a minimum:

- UNDP Armenia CO
- Ministry of Nature Protection and its
 - Biodiversity Management Agency and
 - Environmental Project Implementation Unit State Agency
- WWF Armenian Branch
- National Academy of Science of RA
- Regional Administration of Vayots Dzor Region
- Local self-governance administrations of Areni, Khachik and Mozrov rural communities in Vayots Dzor Region (Gnishik project protected area stakeholders)
- Gnishik Intercommunity Environmental fund NGO - administrative body responsible for management of community managed Gnishik Protected Landscape
- Administration of “Zangezur Biosphere Complex” State Non-commercial Organization and its
 - Zangezur and
 - Khustup state sanctuaries
- Regional Administration of Syunik Region
- Selected three local self-governance administrations of Qajaran, Chakaten, Tsav, Geghanush, Bnunis, Dastakert, Dzorastan, Shenatagh, Tatev, Lernadzor, Nzhdeh, Geghi, Nor Astghaberd rural and Qajaran urban communities (Khustup and Zangezur project protected area stakeholders)
- NGO “Khustup”

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, such as protected areas financial score cards (FSC), initial, mid-term and terminal management effectiveness tracking tools (METT), project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex B](#) of this Terms of Reference.

III. EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework ([Annex A](#)), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in TOR [Annex D](#).

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>rating</i>	2. IA& EA Execution	<i>rating</i>
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	<i>rating</i>	4. Sustainability	<i>rating</i>
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

IV. PROJECT FINANCE / COFINANCE

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
• In-kind support			1.5	1.6	0.5	0.65	2	2.25
• Other								
Totals	0		1.5	1.6	0.5	0.65	2	2.25

V. MAINSTREAMING

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

VI. IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.²

VII. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations and lessons**.

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in Armenia. The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

IX. EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be 16 days according to the following plan:

Activity	Timing	Completion Date
Preparation	<i>2 days</i>	<i>1 July 2014</i>
Evaluation Mission	<i>7 days</i>	<i>8-15 July 2014</i>
Draft Evaluation Report	<i>5 days</i>	<i>29 August 2014</i>
Final Report	<i>2 days</i>	<i>12 September</i>

X. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

²A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROtI Handbook 2009](#)

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	No later than 1 week before the evaluation mission.	Evaluator submits to UNDP CO
Presentation	Initial Findings	End of evaluation mission	To project management, UNDP CO
Draft Final Report	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within 4 weeks of the evaluation mission	Sent to CO, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFPs
Final Report*	Revised report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP ERC.

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

XI. EVALUATOR

The TE will be conducted by an international consultant. The consultant shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The selected evaluator should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The evaluator must present the following qualifications:

- Advanced university degree in Environmental and/or Natural Resource and/or Protected Areas Management or other related areas;
- Minimum 7 years of relevant professional experience
- Knowledge of UNDP and GEF M&E guidelines and procedures
- Previous experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies
- Technical knowledge in the targeted focal area(s)
- Experience in management of nature protected areas and/or in evaluation of nature protected areas
- Fluency in English – both spoken and written, knowledge of Armenian and/or Russian will be an asset.

XII. EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluator will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a Code of Conduct ([Annex E](#)) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'.

XIII. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

%	Milestone
100%	Following submission and approval (UNDP-CO and UNDP RTA) of the final terminal evaluation report

XIV. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants are requested to apply online (<http://jobs.undp.org> and <http://operations.undp.am/Recruitment/Default.aspx>). Individual consultants are invited to submit applications together with their CV for these positions. The application should contain a current and complete C.V. in English with indication of the e-mail and phone contact. Shortlisted candidates will be requested to submit a price offer indicating the total cost of the assignment (including daily fee, per diem and travel costs).

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

ANNEX A: PROJECT LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Project strategy	Indicators	Baseline	End of Project Target	Sources of verification	Risks and Assumptions
Objective: To catalyse the expansion of the nature reserves to provide better representation of ecosystems within Armenia's current protected area system and enable active conservation of biodiversity.	Coverage (ha) of sustainably operating sanctuaries	89,506 ha designated "on paper", app. 30,000 ha operational	137,000 ha sustainably operational	METT scorecards, government reports, project reports, site visits	Government support for protected area financing remains consistent and/or grows
	Representation levels of habitats in the PA estate: (a) low mountain dry steppe (b) mountain meadow steppes (c) high mountain subalpine ecosystems (d) high mountain alpine ecosystems	(a) –% (b) –% (c) 7.67% (d) 0.15%	At least: (a) 3% (b) 4% (c) 10% (d) 4%	Biodiversity monitoring reports	
	METT scores for sanctuaries	"Plane Grove": 17 "Ararat Vordan Karmir" 14 "Khor Virap" 16 "Gilan" 17 "Akhnabat Yew Grove" 14 "Juniper Woodlands of Sevan" 14 "Goravan Sands" 17 "Sev Lich" 13 "Boghakar" 9 "Goris" 9 "Gyulagarak Pine" 9 "Caucasian Rose-Bay" 9 "Arzakan and Meghradzor" 9 "Bank's Pine" 9 "Margahovit" 9 "Ijevan" 9 "Arjatkhlendi Hazel-Nut" 9 "Gandzakar – Upper Aghdan" 9 "Herher Open Woodland" 9 "Getik" 9 "Jermuk" 9 "Yeghegis" 9 "Aragats Alpine" 6 "Hankavan"	At least +10 points METT score improvement for each of the existing sanctuaries. Project pilot areas: Gnishik 40 Khustup 45 Zangezur 45	Annual METT reviews	

Project strategy	Indicators	Baseline	End of Project Target	Sources of verification	Risks and Assumptions
		Hydrological” 6 “Jermuk Hydrological” 6			
	% of habitat of (a) Caucasian leopard, (b) Armenian mouflon, and (c) Bezoar goat included in protected area system	(a) 70,947 ha; (b) 0 ha; (c) 70,000.	(a) 117,000 ha; (b) 30,000 ha; (c) 109,000 ha.	On-going species monitoring programs	
Component 1. Rationalization of protected area system	# of by laws rationalizing operation of sanctuaries	0	At least one (1) set of by-law s clarifying community participation, institutional responsibilities, financing mechanisms.	Project reports Government gazette	Government support for improved enabling environment remains consistent and/or grows.
	# of sanctuaries with Government-endorsed charters and management/business plans	8	11	Project reports	
	Number of sanctuaries with formally designated management bodies	22	25	Project reports	
Component 2. Institutional capacity building for protected area management	Capacity scores for three demonstration sanctuaries	Zangezur: Systemic: 10 out of 30 Institutional: 16 out of 45 Individual: 7 out of 21 Gnishik: Systemic: 8 out of 30 Institutional: 10 out of 45 Individual: 4 out of 21 Khustup: Systemic: 10 out of 30 Institutional: 15 out of 45 Individual: 7 out of 21	Zangezur: Systemic: 16 out of 30 Institutional: 25 out of 45 Individual: 13 out of 21 Gnishik: Systemic: 16 out of 30 Institutional: 25 of 45 Individual: 11 of 21 Khustup: Systemic: 17 out of 30 Institutional: 27 out of 45 Individual: 13 out of 21	Annual capacity review and scorecards	Project will be able to stimulate pan-protected area interest in replicating successful model programming.

Project strategy	Indicators	Baseline	End of Project Target	Sources of verification	Risks and Assumptions
	Number of sanctuaries with active community engagement	0	3	Project reports, MNP reports, sanctuary reports, site visits	
	Number of local entrepreneurs involved in businesses supporting sanctuaries	0	5	Project reports, MNP reports, sanctuary reports, site visits	

ANNEX B: LIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVIEWED BY THE EVALUATORS

1. Project document and its annexes;
2. Project Inception Report;
3. MTE report;
4. Annual work plans;
5. Project expenditure reports;
6. Annual/Quarter operational and progress reports;
7. 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 UNDP-GEF Project Implementation Reviews (PIR);
8. Minutes of the PSC meetings;
9. Minutes of the stakeholder meetings;
10. 2010, 2011 and 2012 Mission reports of the RTS on BD, UNDP RBEC;
11. Mission Report of International Expert;
12. Report of International Expert;
13. Media information;
14. Research results, Maps, Technical Reports;
15. Protected area legislation;
16. Initial, mid-term and terminal METT and Financial score cards for assessed PAs;
17. GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policies; Handbook on planning, monitoring and evaluating for development results;
18. GEF monitoring Tracking Tools (TTs - METT and FSC), comments on final stage of TTs is required from evaluator
19. Other upon request.

ANNEX D: RATING SCALES

<p>Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution</p> <p>6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings 5: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS) 3. Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings 2. Unsatisfactory (U): major problems 1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe problems</p>	<p>Sustainability ratings:</p> <p>4. Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability 3. Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks 2. Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks 1. Unlikely (U): severe risks</p>	<p>Relevance ratings</p> <p>2. Relevant (R) 1.. Not relevant (NR)</p> <p>Impact Ratings:</p> <p>3. Significant (S) 2. Minimal (M) 1. Negligible (N)</p>
<p><i>Additional ratings where relevant:</i> Not Applicable (N/A) Unable to Assess (U/A)</p>		

ANNEX F: EVALUATION REPORT OUTLINE³

- i.** Opening page:
 - Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
 - UNDP and GEF project ID#s.
 - Evaluation time frame and date of evaluation report
 - Region and countries included in the project
 - GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program
 - Implementing Partner and other project partners
 - Evaluation team members
 - Acknowledgements
- ii.** Executive Summary
 - Project Summary Table
 - Project Description (brief)
 - Evaluation Rating Table
 - Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons
- iii.** Acronyms and Abbreviations
(See: UNDP Editorial Manual⁴)
- 1.** Introduction
 - Purpose of the evaluation
 - Scope & Methodology
 - Structure of the evaluation report
- 2.** Project description and development context
 - Project start and duration
 - Problems that the project sought to address
 - Immediate and development objectives of the project
 - Baseline Indicators established
 - Main stakeholders
 - Expected Results
- 3.** Findings
(In addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (*) must be rated⁵)
- 3.1** Project Design / Formulation
 - Analysis of LFA/Results Framework (Project logic /strategy; Indicators)
 - Assumptions and Risks
 - Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project design
 - Planned stakeholder participation
 - Replication approach
 - UNDP comparative advantage
 - Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
 - Management arrangements
- 3.2** Project Implementation
 - Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during

³The Report preferable length is 25 pages in total, maximum 40 pages (excluding annexes).

⁴ UNDP Style Manual, Office of Communications, Partnerships Bureau, updated November 2008

⁵ Using a six-point rating scale: 6: Highly Satisfactory, 5: Satisfactory, 4: Marginally Satisfactory, 3: Marginally Unsatisfactory, 2: Unsatisfactory and 1: Highly Unsatisfactory, see section 3.5, page 37 for ratings explanations.

- implementation)
 - Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region)
 - Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management
 - Project Finance:
 - Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation (*)
 - UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution (*) coordination, and operational issues
- 3.3** Project Results
 - Overall results (attainment of objectives) (*)
 - Relevance(*)
 - Effectiveness & Efficiency (*)
 - Country ownership
 - Mainstreaming
 - Sustainability (*)
 - Impact
- 4.** Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons
 - Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
 - Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
 - Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives
 - Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success
- 5.** Annexes
 - ToR
 - Itinerary
 - List of persons interviewed
 - Summary of field visits
 - List of documents reviewed
 - Evaluation Question Matrix
 - Questionnaire used and summary of results
 - Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Annex 2: Mission Itinerary in Armenia

Day	Date	Place
1	7/07	Travel home Yerevan
2	8	Yerevan
3	9	Yerevan
4	10	Yerevan, Noravanq
5	11	Yeghegnadzor City, Vayots Dzor Regional Administration, Visitor Information Center, Gnishik Protected Landscape, Gnishik, Mozrov, Khachik, Areni
6	12	Vayk, Dastakert, Zangezur State Sanctuary (Northern slopes), Tatev
7	13	Shikahogh, Shishkert, Khustup State Sanctuary, Shikahogh State Reserve, Arevik National Park,
8	14	Zangezur State Sanctuary (Southern slopes), Kajaran Municipality, Lernadzor, Syunig Regional Administration
9	15	Khndzoresk, Yeghegnadzor, Shatin
10	16	Yeghegnadzor, Yerevan
11	17	Yerevan, UNDP wrap up
12	18	Travel Yerevan home

Annex 3: List of people met during Mission

List of People met during the Mission 8-17 July 2014

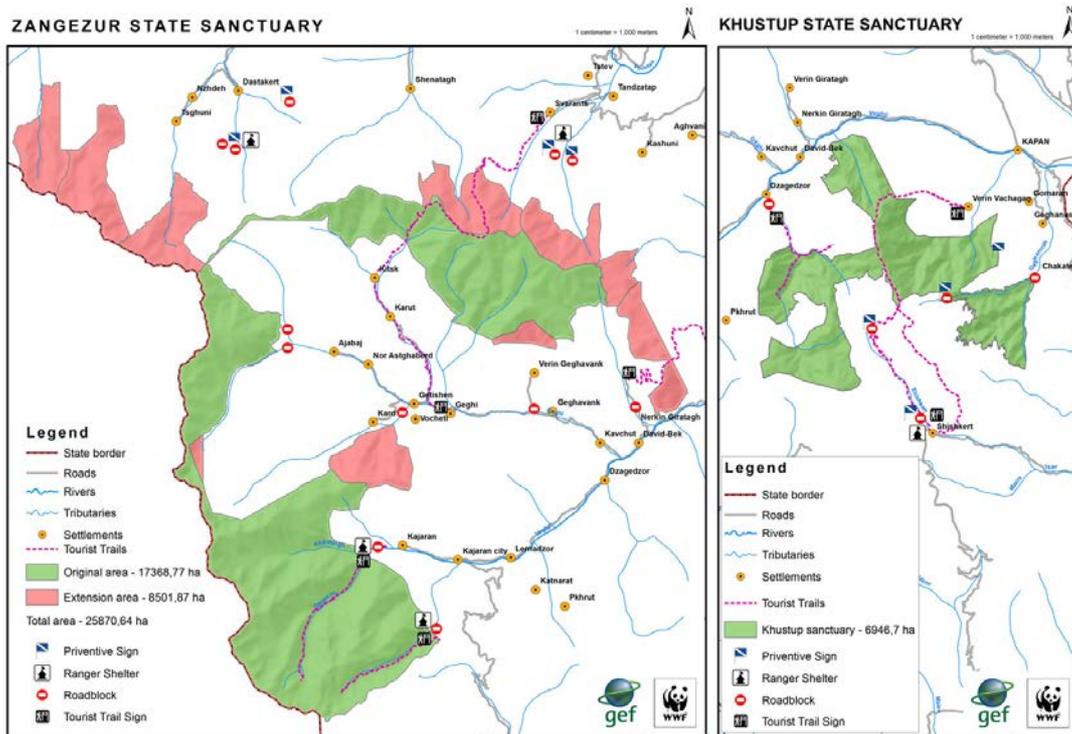
Date	Name Surname	Office / Position
08.07.2014	Karen Jenderedjian	UNDP-GEF Project “Developing the Protected Areas System in Armenia / Project Manager
	Gayane Navasardyan	UNDP-GEF Project “Developing the Protected Areas System in Armenia / Project Assistant
	Ashot Avalyan	Ministry of Nature Protection / Deputy head of the Staff/ Project National Coordinator
	Georgi Arzumanyan	UNDP Environmental Governance Portfolio / Programme Policy Adviser
	Armen Martirosyan	UNDP Environmental Governance Portfolio / Portfolio Analyst
	Samvel Baloyan	Environmental Projects implementation Unit State Agency / Deputy Director
09.07.2014	Vasil Ananyan	WWF Armenian Branch / Protected Areas Project Coordinator
	Karen Manvelyan	WWF Armenian Branch / Director
	George Fayvush	National Academy of Sciences (NAS), Institute of Botany/Head of Department of Geobotany
	Mark Qalashyan	NAS, Institute of Zoology, Scientific center of Zoology and Hydrology/Head of Laboratory of Entomology
	Ashot Giloyan	Ministry of Territorial Administration/ Head of the Department of Territorial Administration and Development
	Vache Terteryan	Ministry of Territorial Administration/First Deputy Minister
10.07.2014	Armen Gevorgyan	Transboundary Joint Secretariat for the Southern Caucasus / Representative of Armenia
11.07.2014	Marat Nersisyan	Vayots Dzor Regional Administration / Head of Department of Agriculture
	Arsen Matevosyan	President of Gnishik Inter-community Environmental Fund
	Mesrop Melkonyan	Mayor of Gnishik community
	Vardan Nersisyan	Mayor of Khachik community
	Seryozha Sukiasyan	Mayor of Areni community

12.07.2014	Smbat Hambarzumyan	“Zangezur” Biosphere Complex” SNCO/Director
	Armen Petrosyan	“Zangezur” Biosphere Complex” SNCO/Deputy Director for Protection
	Vladimir Hovhannisyan	Mayor of Bnunis community
	Nairi Filosyan	Mayor of Dastakert community
	Gegham Ohanyan	Mayor of Nzhdeh community
	Murad Simonyan	Mayor of Tatev community
13.07.2014	Vladik Martirosyan	“Khustup” NGO / President
	Ruben Mkrtychyan	“Shikahogh” State Reserve” Branch of “Zangezur” Biosphere Complex” SNCO / Director
	Surik Hovhannisyan	“Arevik” National Park” Branch of “Zangezur” Biosphere Complex” SNCO / Director
14.07.2014	Samvel Tangyan	Syuniq Regional Administration / Head of Department of Agriculture and Environment
	Rafik Atayan	Mayor of Qajaran Village community
	Stepan Petrosyan	Mayor of Lernadzor Village community
	Vardan Gevorgyan	Mayor of Qajaran Town community
	Garegin Gabrielyan	Qajaran Town municipality / Head of Department of Environment Protection
	Aram Aghasyan	Biodiversity Management Agency of the MNP / Head of Division of Protected Areas Management
15.07.2014	Meliq Matevosyan	Shatin Observation Point / Manager
16.07.2014	Simon Papyan	Ministry of Nature Protection / First Deputy Minister / UNDP Environmental Projects National Director
	Artashes Ziroyan	Biodiversity Management Agency of the MNP / Head
	Vardan Grigoryan	“Zangezur” Biosphere Complex” SNCO / Deputy Director for Recreation
17.07.2014	Claire Medina Armen Martirosyan	UNDP CO Armenia / DRR UNDO GEF Env. Portfolio Manager

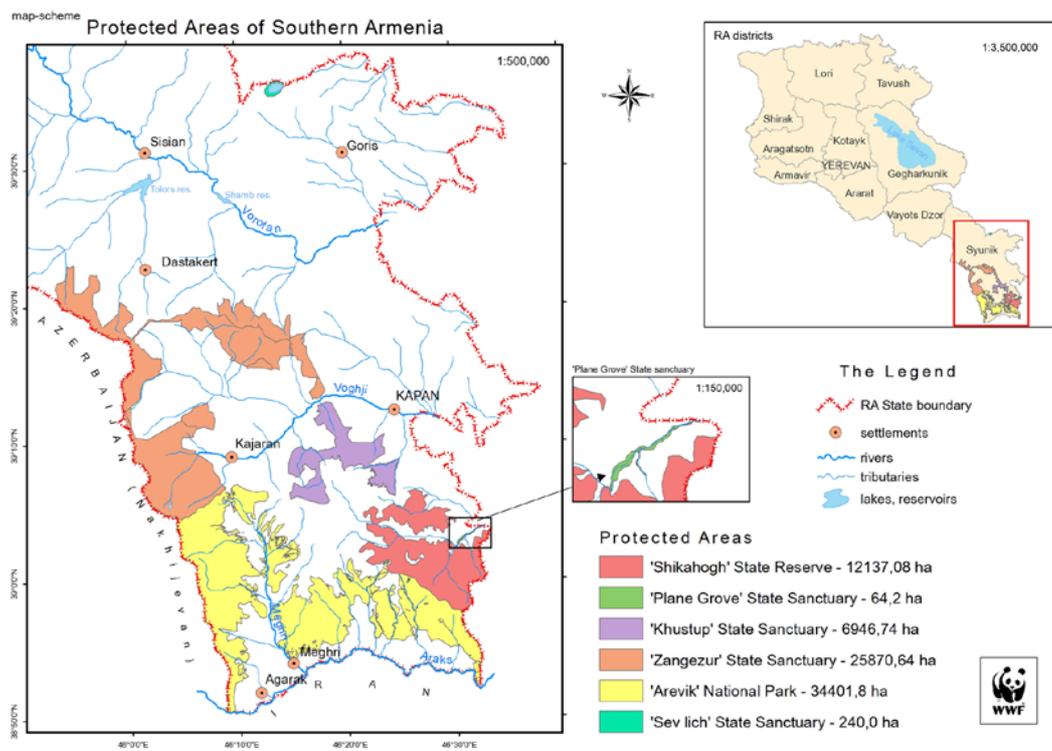
Annex 4: Documents consulted

7-27-09 - CEO endorsement ltr to agency - 3762.pdf
7-27-09 - Review Sheet - 3762.pdf
3986 BD Armenia PAS ProDoc amended for split project March 2011 Nada1(final)
eng
20100101 3986 AWP submitted ProDoc.pdf
20110419 3986 AWP revision ProDoc.pdf
FINAL 3986 UNDP GEF Terminal Evaluation
FINAL kj ga atz nl_JM_COArm NO final.docx
GEF BD Tracking Tool Guidelines.doc
INTEXP TechnicalReport_Sanct-Internat-Exp_fin_GL20101116.pdf
METT SCores 2010
METT SCores 2011
METT SCores 2012
METT SCores 2013
Inception Report
Progress Report_PA_2010.4Annual_eng.pdf
Progress Report_PA_2011.4_ANNUAL_FINAL-eng.pdf
Progress Report_PA_2012.4_ANNUAL_eng .pdf
Progress Report_PA_2013.4_ANNUAL_eng .pdf
UNDP-GEF Armenia, PIMS 3986 MTE Report, 07.17.2012.pdf
WWF Report Syunik (Khustup & Zangezur) Socio-economic baseline study, eng.pdf
WWF Report Syunik (Khustup & Zangezur) Stakeholder Analysis (3)_rev_eng.pdf
WWF Report Syunik (Khustup Zangezur) Tourism potential assessment, eng.pdf
WWF Report Vayots Dzor (Gnishik) Socio-economic baseline study, eng.pdf
WWF Report Vayots Dzor (Gnishik) Stakeholder Analysis (3)_rev_eng.pdf
WWF Report Vayots Dzor (Gnishik) Tourism potential assessment, eng.pdf
WWF Report Yerevan Stakeholder Analysis_rev-after comments eng.pdf

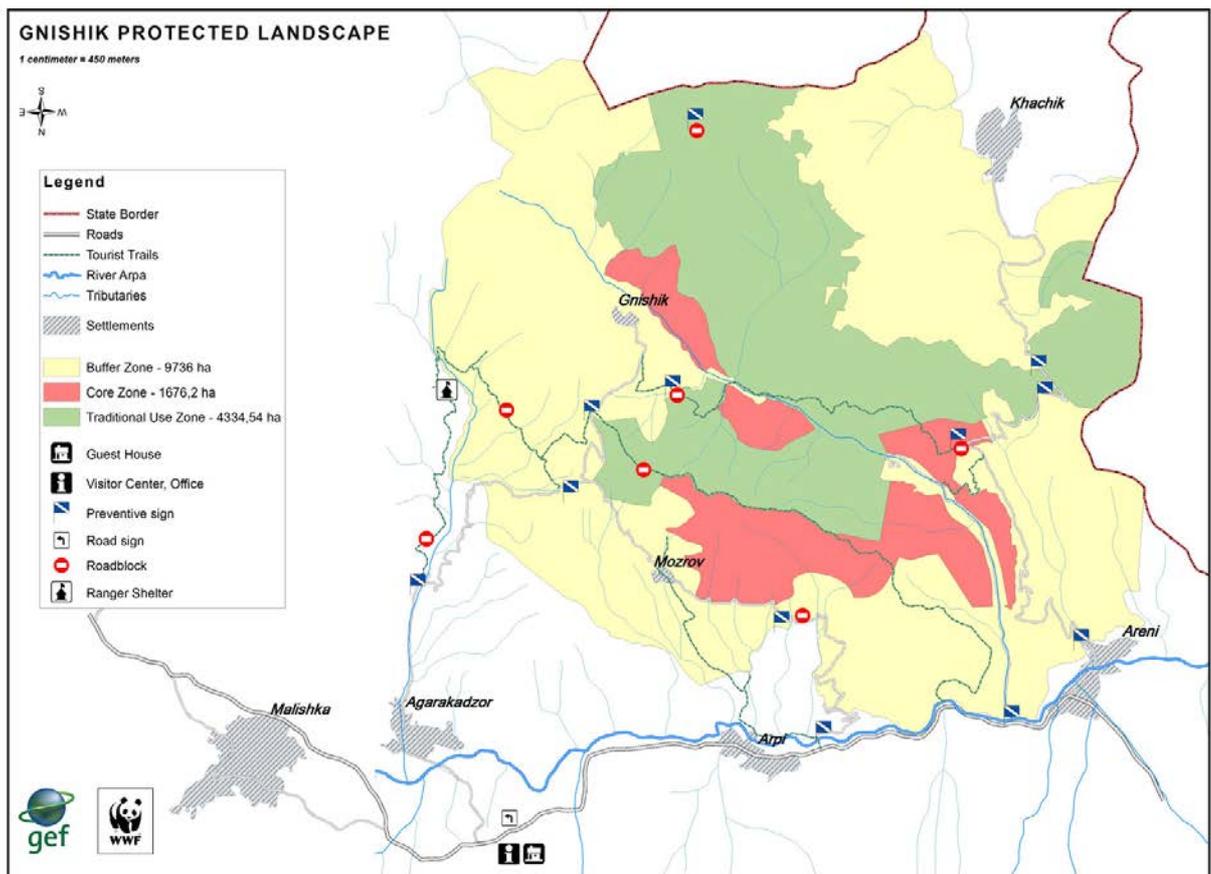
Annex 5: Map Zangezur SS and Khustup SS



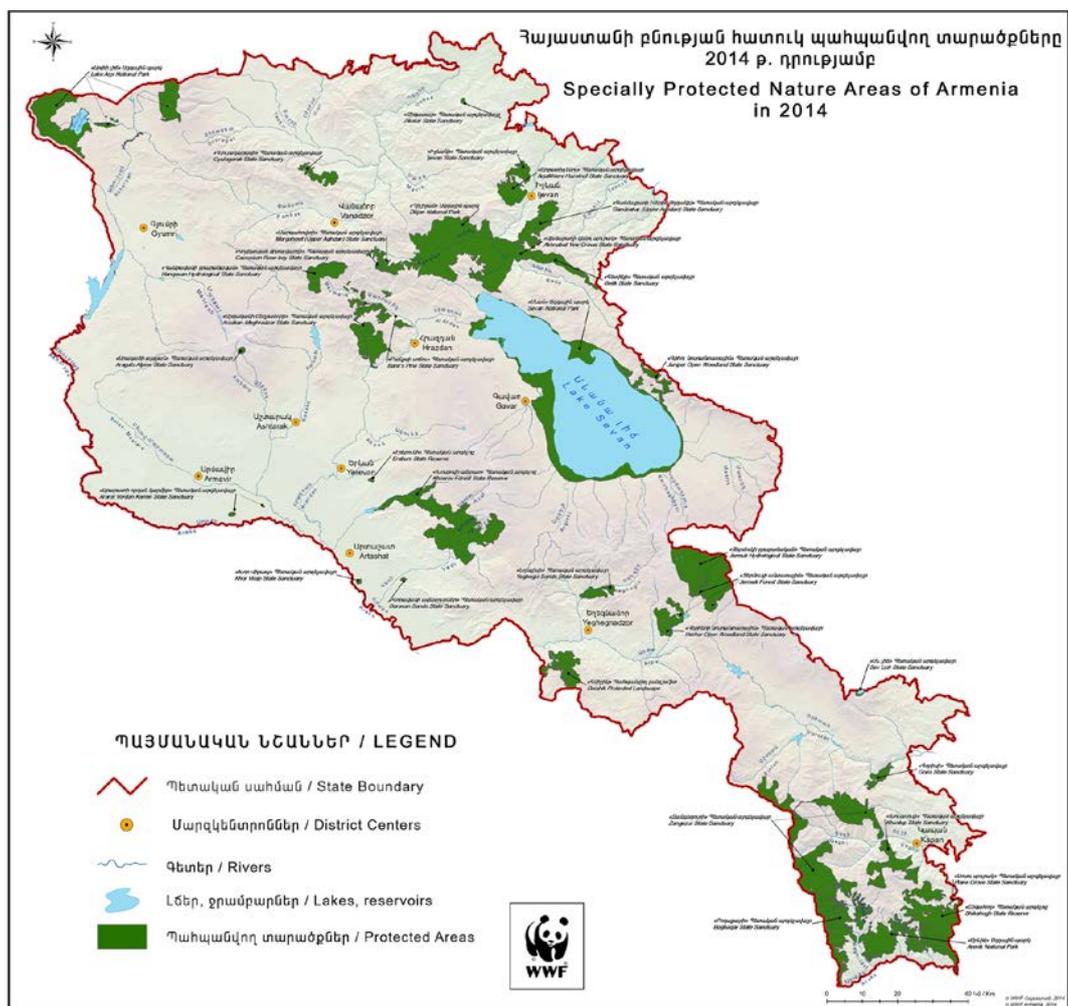
Annex 6: Protected Areas of Southern Armenia



Annex 7: Gnishik Protected Landscape



Annex 8 Protected areas in Armenia



Annex 9: Rating scales used in the Report

<p><i>Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution</i></p> <p>6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings 5: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS) 3. Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings 2. Unsatisfactory (U): major problems 1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe problems</p>	<p><i>Sustainability ratings:</i></p> <p>4. Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability 3. Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks 2. Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks 1. Unlikely (U): severe risks</p>	<p><i>Relevance ratings</i></p> <p>2. Relevant (R) 1. Not relevant (NR)</p> <p><i>Impact Ratings:</i></p> <p>3. Significant (S) 2. Minimal (M) 1. Negligible (N)</p>
<p><i>Additional ratings where relevant:</i> Not Applicable (N/A) Unable to Assess (U/A)</p>		