

Terms of Reference has been approved by
Jyldyz Moldokulov, National PUM Manager
UNDP in Kyrgyzstan

Signature _____

Terms of Reference has been approved by
Kumar Kylychev, SD Dimension Chief,
Signature _____



UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the medium-sized project titled Improving the Coverage and Management Effectiveness of PAs in the Central Tian Shan Mountains (PIMS#4934) implemented by the UNDP in close partnership with the State Agency for Environment Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (SAEPF), which is to be undertaken at a mid term of its life span. The project started on the 17 June 2013 and is in its second year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects (http://www.undp.org/content/dam/mongolia/Procurement/proc-notices/ProcurementAnnouncement2014/EbA/20140827/Guidance%20for%20Conducting%20Midterm%20Reviews%20of%20UNDP-Supported%20GEF-Financed%20Projects_Final_June%202014.pdf).

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

“Improving the coverage and effectiveness of protected areas (PAs) in the Central Tian Shan Mountains” Project has objective to conserve the globally significant biodiversity in Central Tian-Shan mountain ecosystems through strengthening the protected area system.

The Project will be implemented within 2013-2017 by the UNDP in close partnership with the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of the Kyrgyz Republic Government with GEF financial support.

The project stands for establishing a new Protected Area in Central Tian-Shan – the State Nature Park “Khan-Tengri” area spanning more than 300,000 hectares. The total area of the country’s PA coverage will be increased up to 7%.

The Project will for the first time define wildlife corridors connecting the new State Park “Khan-Tengri” with Sarychat-Eertash State Reserve, providing migration routes and enlarging habitat under state special protection.

After establishing the “Khan-Tengri” State Nature Park and the ecological corridors between above mentioned PAs the core and buffer zones of the Issyk-Kel Biosphere territory will be enlarged and management will be strengthened.

The horse-mounted ranger groups will be established to conserve and monitor the wildlife. They will be properly equipped for monitoring and patrolling of the territory.

One more important task is the enhancement of legal framework for Protected Areas management, ecological corridors with land-users’ interests. The amendments will clarify the procedure of establishment of wildlife corridors and responsibility of all groups of interest.

The particular attention will be paid to local communities’ involvement in biodiversity conservation through development of sustainable development plans within the Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic on Sustainable Development for 2013-2017. Local communities will be provided with technical and financial assistance in alternative livelihoods programs, in particular, aimed at scientifically, environmentally and biodiversity friendly activities.

According to ecological and economic assessment for establishing the State Nature Park “Khan-Tengri” (Khan-Tengri Park) the outer and zones borders of the Khan-Tengri Park were identified. However, 1 village that have pasturelands in the territory of the future park do not support the establishment of the new protected area because of their fear to lose access to grazing areas and change

of land use rights. Currently, the Project has been supporting the efforts of the SAEPF in conducting advocacy and awareness raising campaigns on the plans of the Government towards biodiversity conservation and protected areas regimes by negotiating with them.

Additional information:

Grant resources allocated:

• GEF	\$950,000;
• UNDP	\$1,600,000;
• SAEPF	\$2,866,000;
• World Wildlife Fund (WWF)	\$250,000;
USAID	\$250,000.

Implementation period: 2013-2017

Place of implementation: Issyk-Kul region

Partners: The State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, local governments and communities in the Issyk-Kul region, scientific community, private sector, civil society and NGOs.

Institutional arrangements of the project and any other relevant partners and stakeholders

- SAEPF - main implementation partner assuring improvement of national policy and legislation on biodiversity conservation; organization of new PA; as well as managerial and financial sustainability of the national PA system; all Reserves and parks (except one) are accountable to SAEPF.
- General Directorate of Biosphere Territory Issyk Kel - the entire Issyk Kul province forms the Biosphere Territory Issyk Kel, and the planned PA Khan Tengri is located within the Biosphere Territory. Therefore, the project will build close collaboration with the administration of the Biosphere Reserve on all activities related to establishing and monitoring of PA in the region.
- State Registration Service of the Kyrgyz Republic - coordinates and control the registration of land property rights. The Project will coordinate their activities in identification of the land owners (primary and secondary) within new PA and ecological corridors.
- Province and District administrations – primary decision and policy makers on establishing the PAs after Local Self Governance Bodies, mainstreaming the biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management issues into local development plans and their further implementation.
- Local Self Governance Bodies – policy and decision makers in the local level. They are responsible for the elaboration and implementation of local communities' development strategies including local environment issues. They will be among the main project implementing partners at the local level.
- Communities around and in ecological corridors of the PA - active users of ecosystem services and to be involved in PA management and sustainable use practices to be promoted by the project.
- National Science Academy of the Kyrgyz Republic: Biology and Soils Institute; Forest Research Institute: Based on their experience and expertise, these institutes will play a role in elaboration of the scientific grounds for biodiversity monitoring, improving participation in biodiversity inventory, development of biodiversity sustainable use norms, identification of the areas under strong pressure, PA management effectiveness assessment.
- Kyrgyz community based tourism association (KCBTA): To be involved in training of local communities to develop ecological tourism facilities and infrastructure as well as marketing of such community-based tours.

- The branch of the public association “Nature Conservation Union of Germany” (NABU) in Kyrgyzstan has been implementing the Regional project "Biodiversity Conservation in the trans-boundary region of the Northern Tien Shan" which is aimed on PAs management in the State Nature Park “Chon-Kemin”. The similar activities will be harmonized (workshops, legal frameworks, electronic data base etc.).
- Fauna & Flora International (FFI) in the Kyrgyz Republic closely works with Sarychat-Eertash Reserve and local communities around this reserve to conserve threatened species and ecosystems which are the Project target places. The Project harmonizes the similar activities in PAs management, work with local communities etc.
- The Snow Leopard Trust (SLT) in Kyrgyzstan works closely with Sarychat-Eertash Reserve and local communities around this reserve to conserve threatened species and ecosystems which are the Project target places. The Project harmonizes the similar activities in PAs management, work with local communities etc.
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) works closely with Sarychat-Eertash Reserve and local communities around this reserve to conserve threatened species and ecosystems which are the Project target places. The Project harmonizes the similar activities in PAs management, work with local communities etc.
- “Aleine” ecological NGO which is aimed for harmonization of relationship between society and nature, improvement of environmental legislation, environmental projects and programs, environmental education. The Project will closely cooperate. Secretariat on Snow Leopard Conservation established for coordination efforts of all snow leopard range countries to conserve the snow leopard and its ecosystem. Snow Leopard is a keystone species in the project site.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project’s strategy, its risks to sustainability.

4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach¹ ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office, UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Adviser, and other key stakeholders.

¹ For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.² Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to *(list)*; executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to *the project area in Issyk-Kul region*, including the following project sites *(list)*.

1. Biosphere Territory “Issyk-Kel”, Balykchy, Issyk-Kul region,
2. Karakol, Issyk-Kul region,
3. Teplokluchenka, Ak-Suu Rayon, Issyk-Kul region.

Interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities:

#	Name	Institution	Contacts
1.	Mr. Sabir Atadjanov	State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry, Director	min-eco@elcat.kg envforest@elcat.kg +996 312 352727
2.	Mr. Emil Kaptagaev	Government administration of the Issyk-Kul oblast, Representative Plenipotentiary of the Kyrgyz Republic Government in the Issyk-Kul oblast	polpred.issykkul@mail.ru +996 3922 50001
3.	Mr. Adyl Ormonov	State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry, Department Director	adilkg73@mail.ru +996 312 548842
4.	Mr. Elchibek Dzhantaev	Ak-Suu rayon Administration, Deputy Head	Dzhantaev.elchibek@mail.ru +996 3948 91423
5.	Mr. Alymzhan Bektemirov	Project "Biodiversity Conservation in the transboundary region of the Northern Tien Shan", Project Coordinator	b.alymjan@rambler.ru +996 770 707031
6.	Mr. Mirslav Amankulov	Biosphere Territory “Issyk-Kel”, General Director	biosfera.ik@rambler.ru +996 777701515
7.	Mr. Askar Davletbakov	National Academy of Science, Researcher	askar_davl@rambler.ru +996 550965108
8.	Mr. Georgi Lazkov	National Academy of Science, Researcher	glazkov1963@mail.ru +996 551641457
9.	Mr. Emil. Shukurov	“Aleine” ecological NGO, Head	shukurovemil@mail.ru +996 555903687
10.	Ms. Jarkyn Samanchina	Fauna & Flora International (FFI) in the Kyrgyz Republic, Head	Jarkyn.Samanchina@fauna-flora.org +996 557557277
11.	Ms. Kyial Alygulova	Snow leopard conservation Secretariat	alygulova@akilbirs.com +996 779925555
12.	Ms. Farida Balbakova	National Coordinator of WWF in the Kyrgyz Republic	f_balbakova@mail.ru + 996 772527277

Field missions to *(location)*, including the following project sites *(list)*.

² For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

1. Project office, Koenkozov str. 14, Karakol, Issyk-Kul region,
2. Issyk-Kul Oblast Administration, Abdrahmanova str., 105, Karakol, Issyk-Kul region,
3. Ak-Suu Rayon Administration, Lenin str., Teplokluchenska, Issyk-Kul region,
4. Biosphere Territory “Issyk-Kel”, Naryn av. 10, Balykchy, Issyk-Kul region.

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

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

i. Project Strategy

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART ‘development’ indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

ii. Progress Towards Results

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved” (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

Project Strategy	Indicator ³	Baseline Level ⁴	Level in 1 st PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target ⁵	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment ⁶	Achievement Rating ⁷	Justification for Rating
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³ Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards

⁴ Populate with data from the Project Document

⁵ If available

⁶ Colour code this column only

⁷ Use the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

<p>Objective: To improve the coverage and effectiveness of protected areas in the Central Tian Shan Mountains so as to expand threatened species representation in the national system</p>	<p>Indicator (if applicable): Territorial coverage of SPNAs in Central Tian Shan Mountains which provide habitat for the endangered snow leopard;</p> Population size of snow leopard (<i>Uncia Uncia</i>) in Central Tian Shan shows an increasing trend	<p>149,119.9 ha (Existing Sarychat Ertash reserve area);</p> Low numbers of snow leopard (unable to quantify)	<p>Researchers from Biology and Soil Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic have conducted the field study in the Project site.</p> <p>Based on the results of the literature review and obtained data from field survey Biology and Soil Institute provided the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on preliminary assessment of the flora, vertebrates (mammals, birds, cold-blooded animals), summary lists of flora and fauna, locations, biota, , large mammals migration routes; • Preliminary assessment of sacred natural sites and cultural landscapes of the Project site; • Soil types; • Recommendations for new establishing “Khan-Tengri” State Nature Park zoning and ecological corridors borders. <p>State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry staff has completed feasibility study for establishing new PA. The socio-economic impact of the establishing new PA was identified including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - localities' socioeconomic status, population growth, and land use composition measures; - Current use of the Project site land for agricultural and industry use and future prospect; - Water and mineral resources and their long-term perspective; - Modern use of forest and game species in the Project site and prospects; - Anthropogenic pressures and threats to landscape, nature resources. <p>Based on the results of feasibility study and ecological assessment the area of the new established park was identified on 309 151,6 ha, which has the potential to ensure the preservation of the mountain fragile ecosystems including flora and fauna along sustainable development for local people around the Park.</p> <p>The field survey was conducting on establishing state nature park among local people, whose land will be transferred to “Protected areas” category.</p> <p>The survey involved 1 383 households: 75% supports the establishment of the park, 17% against and 8% abstained.</p>					
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Outcome 1: Threatened species representation is improved by increasing coverage and management effectiveness of PAs in Central Tian Shan	Indicator 1: Enhanced management effectiveness of target PAs (as measured by METI)	Sarychat Ertash: 54% Khan Tengri: 3%	Management effectiveness of 19 Protected Areas (10 State Nature Reserves, 9 State Nature Parks) of Kyrgyzstan was assessed during the practical workshop conducted in collaboration with WWF. Staff members of these PAs are now up skilled to apply the methodology of WWF. Results of training needs assessment of PA staff were analyzed and submitted to SAEPF for further implementation.					
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	<p>Indicator 2:</p> <p>Reduction in poaching and illegal logging at target PAs (annual) per unit of patrolling effort, compared with year of initial patrolling</p>	<p>Illegal logging violations: 50</p> <p>Poaching violations: 70</p> <p>Total violations: 120</p>	<p>Local communities’ knowledge and awareness on biodiversity conservation, environmental legislation, types of environmental violations, penalties and sustainable use of wildlife was improved thru the public awareness campaign titled “importance of biodiversity conservation” conducted on 9 – 15 June 2014 in Djety-Oguz and Ak-Syy rayons of Issyk-Kyl region.</p> <p>Nine people from local communities were selected and awarded membership in the anti-poaching team / freelance inspectors to support the governmental officials in their nature conservation efforts.</p> <p>They have been actively involved in the wildlife census and biodiversity monitoring activities.</p> <p>Freelance inspectors’ capacity to implement anti-poaching activities is being enhanced through the trainings “Participation of local communities in anti-poaching activities”. In addition they have been equipped uniforms, binoculars, tents, GPS navigations etc. for effective perform respective work.</p> <p>As an in kind contribution to the project the Department on Hunting Regulation and Department on Forest Ecosystems and PA (SAEPF) developed the subject training modules and trained the freelance inspectors and rangers.</p>					
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Outcome 2: Habitat connectivity, sustainability and effectiveness of PAs in Central Tian Shan are enhanced by regulating land use in buffer zones, wildlife corridors and other intervening landscapes	Indicator 3: Law on SPNAs provides clear guidance on establishment, management, and responsible party for PA buffer zones and wildlife corridors	Current law is unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PA legislation and policies concerning the establishment of zones and wildlife corridors have been analyzed for potential gaps; Proposals were prepared for necessary changes in the PA legislation and policies concerning the establishment of wildlife corridors and submitted to SAEPPF for further endorsement; Regulation on Red Data Book of the Kyrgyz Republic, Regulations on land use in the state Nature Park developed by the Project support are under the Government consideration. Initiated by the Project the Regulation on PAs establishment was approved by Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (Decree #541 from 30.07.2015) Within the Project developed of Programme and Action Plans of Transition to Sustainable Development of the Ecological and Economic System of Issyk-Kul 2015-2017 with mainstreaming biodiversity conservation was integrated to the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Issyk-Kul region for 2015-2017 years and its Action Plan for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Issyk-Kul region for the years of 2015-2017, approved by order of the Plenipotentiary Representative of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in Issyk-Kul region dated February 9, 2015 #21.					
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	Indicator 4: Area over which territorial land use planning is fully aligned with requirements for regulated resource use stipulated in the management plans of PA buffer zones and corridors	0 ha	<p>Guidance on Developing Protected Area Management Plan in the Kyrgyz Republic was developed in collaboration with NABU and approved by SAEPF in 2014.</p> <p>The main Land owners and users in the Project site are identified. The establishing new PA land would consist largely of the Ak-Suu raion state land reserve – 223 044.10 ha, Otradnaya local self-government body (LSGB) – 25 097.39 ha, Tepiklyuchenka LSGB – 9834.5 ha, Kerege-Tash LSGB – 5 768.3 ha, Bory-Bash LSGB – 2 068.5 ha, Oktyabr LSGB – 1 785.0 ha, Ak-Bulun LSGB – 6 532.6 ha, Chelpek LSGB – 4 646.6 ha, Karakol forestry – 30 374.1ha.</p> <p>According to the legislation on land transformation of the Kyrgyz Republic the “bottom-up” approach is used.</p> <p>8 main land owners, LSGB have agreed the land transformation at local level. At present PA establishment documents have being prepared for getting approval on regional and oblast levels. Taking into account the National Academy of Science recommendations on establishing ecological corridors to connect new establishing Khan-Tengri Park existing Sarychat-Eertash Reserve on migration ways of mammal’s preliminary ecological corridors were mapped and land owners identified.</p> <p>The Project is continuing conducting communication and awareness raising campaigns with local governments, local self-government bodies and local communities to inform about establishing ecological corridors and its regimes.</p> <p>The establishment of the ecological corridors will be accomplished after approval of the amendments to Law on PAs of the Kyrgyz Republic and Regulation on Ecological Corridors, which is now under the consideration of the Kyrgyz Republic Parliament and Government consequently.</p> <p>11</p> <p>The developed Guidelines on development of PA management Plan was approved by the SAEPF</p>					
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	Indicator 5: Better management of hunting in buffers and corridors as reflected in percent of trophy hunting that is controlled and monitored	Only 30% of trophy hunting is legal because hunters are uncontrolled and unmonitored	<p>The Sourcebook/collection of national legislation and materials on addressing violations in the field of nature conservation was published and disseminated to relevant stakeholders - Hunting Department of State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry, forest rangers, local communities, anti-poaching team, and governmental officials. The Sourcebook will improve the skills and reference of relevant bodies in hunting management issues.</p> <p>Developed Rangers' handbook is under SAEPP approval. After receipt of the approval the Rangers' handbook will be published and distributed to rangers and freelance inspectors for improving their capacity in nature management.</p>					
	Indicator 6: Prosecution of illegal hunting in buffers and corridors	Only 10% of incidents of illegal hunting successfully prosecuted	N/A					
	Indicator 7: Increase in share of incomes of local communities from biodiversity-compatible alternative livelihood activities	More than 60% of income comes from hunting	Social and economic assessment of target communities and development of Alternative Livelihood Programme are initiated and progressing.					
	Indicator 8: Reduced hunting effort directly attributable to changes in livelihoods among hunters	500 persons hunting in the area	N/A					
Etc.								

Indicator Assessment Key

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements:

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

Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?

- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

Stakeholder Engagement:

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

Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications:

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

iv. Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the

various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

Conclusions & Recommendations

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.⁸

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

Ratings

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for (*Improving the coverage and management effectiveness of PAs in the Central Tian Shan Mountains*)

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	

⁸ Alternatively, MTR conclusions may be integrated into the body of the report.

	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be *20 days* over a time period of starting October 15, 2015 and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
<i>September 22, 2015</i>	Application closes
<i>October 8, 2015</i>	Select MTR Team
<i>October 16-20, 2015</i>	Prep the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents)
<i>October 21-24, 2015</i>	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
<i>October 25-28, 2015</i>	Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission
<i>October 28- November 4, 2015</i>	MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
<i>November 5, 2015</i>	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
<i>November 6-11, 2015</i>	Preparing draft report
<i>November 11-16, 2015</i>	Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report/Finalization of MTR report (note: accommodate time delay in dates for circulation and review of the draft report)
<i>November 17-21, 2015</i>	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
<i>TBI</i>	(optional) Concluding Stakeholder Workshop (not mandatory for MTR team)
<i>November 27, 2015</i>	Expected date of full MTR completion

Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

7. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	MTR Inception Report	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission: October 25, 2015	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
2	Presentation	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission: final day of the mission	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	Draft Final Report	Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 2 weeks of the MTR mission: November 11, 2015	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating

				Unit, GEF OFP
4	Final Report*	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft: November 21, 2015	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

8. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is *UNDP Country Office*.

The commissioning unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements *within the country* for the MTR team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

9. TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of *two independent consultants* will conduct the MTR - *one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally)* and *one team expert, usually from the country of the project*. The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

- A Master's degree in environment or social sciences or closely related field;
- At least ten years of working experience in the area of biodiversity conservation and protected areas management;
- At least two recent experiences with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- At least two experiences in applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Proven competence in adaptive management, as applied to biodiversity;
- At least two experiences working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations;
- Experience in working in Central Asian or CIS countries will be an asset;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

10. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

100% upon finalization of the MTR report

Or, as otherwise agreed between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team.

11. APPLICATION PROCESS⁹

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

- a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#)¹⁰ provided by UNDP;
- b) **CV and a Personal History Form (P11 form)**¹¹;
- c) **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted to the e-mail address (procurement@pmu.undp.kg) in a indicating the following reference “Consultant for UNDP-GEF Project Improving the Coverage and Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas in the Central Tian Shan Mountains Midterm Review” by **22 September 2015, 12.00 am local time (GMT+6)**. Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal: Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

ToR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team

1. PIF
2. UNDP Initiation Plan
3. UNDP Project Document
4. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
5. Project Inception Report
6. All Project Implementation Reports (PIR’s)
7. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
8. Products supported by the project

Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm GEF-5 Tracking Tool for Biodiversity Focal Area (*fill in specific TTs for this project’s focal area*)

9. Oversight mission reports
10. All monitoring reports prepared by the project
11. Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team

The following documents will also be available:

⁹ Engagement of the consultants should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP: <https://info.undp.org/global/popp/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

¹¹ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

12. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
13. UNDP country programme document(s) (UNDAF, CPAP, CPD, SP)
14. UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017
15. Minutes of the Project Board Meetings and other meetings
16. Project Appraisal Committee meetings (LPAC)
17. Project site location maps

ToR ANNEX B: Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report¹²

- i. Basic Report Information (*for opening page or title page*)
 - Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
 - UNDP PIMS# and GEF project ID#
 - MTR time frame and date of MTR report
 - Region and countries included in the project
 - GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program
 - Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and other project partners
 - MTR team members
 - Acknowledgements
- ii. Table of Contents
- iii. Acronyms and Abbreviations
1. Executive Summary (*3-5 pages*)
 - Project Information Table
 - Project Description (brief)
 - Project Progress Summary (between 200-500 words)
 - MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table
 - Concise summary of conclusions
 - Recommendation Summary Table
2. Introduction (*2-3 pages*)
 - Purpose of the MTR and objectives
 - Scope & Methodology: principles of design and execution of the MTR, MTR approach and data collection methods, limitations to the MTR
 - Structure of the MTR report
3. Project Description and Background Context (*3-5 pages*)
 - Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope
 - Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted
 - Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites (if any)
 - Project Implementation Arrangements: short description of the Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements, etc.
 - Project timing and milestones
 - Main stakeholders: summary list
4. Findings (*12-14 pages*)
 - 4.1 Project Strategy
 - Project Design
 - Results Framework/Logframe

¹² The Report length should not exceed 40 pages in total (not including annexes).

- 4.2 Progress Towards Results
 - Progress towards outcomes analysis
 - Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective
- 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
 - Management Arrangements
 - Work planning
 - Finance and co-finance
 - Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Reporting
 - Communications
- 4.4 Sustainability
 - Financial risks to sustainability
 - Socio-economic to sustainability
 - Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
 - Environmental risks to sustainability
- 5. Conclusions and Recommendations (4-6 pages)
 - 5.1 Conclusions
 - Comprehensive and balanced statements (that are evidence-based and connected to the MTR's findings) which highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project
 - 5.2 Recommendations
 - 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
- 6. Annexes
 - MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
 - MTR evaluative matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)
 - Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection
 - Ratings Scales
 - MTR mission itinerary
 - List of persons interviewed
 - List of documents reviewed
 - Co-financing table (if not previously included in the body of the report)
 - Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
 - Signed MTR final report clearance form
 - *Annexed in a separate file:* Audit trail from received comments on draft MTR report
 - *Annexed in a separate file:* Relevant midterm tracking tools (*METT, FSC, Capacity scorecard, etc.*)

ToR ANNEX C: Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix Template

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?			
(include evaluative question(s))	(i.e. relationships established, level of coherence between	(i.e. project documents, national policies or strategies, websites,	(i.e. document analysis, data analysis, interviews with project

	project design and implementation approach, specific activities conducted, quality of risk mitigation strategies, etc.)	project staff, project partners, data collected throughout the MTR mission, etc.)	staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.)
Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?			
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?			
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: _____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

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

Signed at _____ (*Place*) on _____ (*Date*)

Signature: _____

¹³ www.undp.org/unegcodeofconduct

ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings

Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form

(to be completed by the Commissioning Unit and UNDP-GEF RTA and included in the final document)

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

UNDP-GEF Midterm Review

Terms of Reference

Standard Template 2: Formatted information to be entered in [UNDP Jobs website](https://jobs.undp.org/)¹⁴

BASIC CONTRACT INFORMATION

Location: Kyrgyzstan

Application Deadline:

Category: Environment and Energy

Type of Contract: Individual Contract

Assignment Type: International Consultant

Languages Required: English, Russian is an advantage

Starting Date: 15 October, 2015

Duration of Initial Contract: October 15 – November 27, 2015

Expected Duration of Assignment: 20 days within October – November, 2015

BACKGROUND

A. Project Title: Improving the Coverage and Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas in the Central Tian Shan Mountains

B. Project Description

This is the Terms of Reference for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the medium-sized project titled Improving the Coverage and Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas in the Central Tian Shan Mountains (PIMS# 4934) implemented through the UNDP as an Executing Agency and Implementing Partner the State Agency for Environment Protection and Forestry of the Kyrgyz Republic Government, which is to be undertaken in 2015 year. The project started on the Project Document signature date June 17, 2013 and is in its second year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* (see Annex).

The project was designed to:

Kyrgyzstan is located in the southern part of the temperate zone creates favorable conditions for existence of all main types of natural ecosystems, ranging from deserts to high altitude mountainous tundra. There are 20 classes of ecosystems. The diversity of ecosystems, however, is unevenly distributed within the country, being more richly represented in the Western Tian Shan and Central Tian Shan bio-geographical regions, each having 16 out of 20 classes of ecosystems, or 72.7% of their whole diversity. High mountains are islands of biological diversity among monotonous plains.

The Central Tian Shan belongs to the Global 200 Ecoregions list. Forests cover just 5.62% of the country, with most of it in the Tian Shan Mountains. The relict Shrenk's spruce forests (*Picea schrenkiana*) have global significance as these are among the world's last massifs of virgin coniferous forests. Central Tian Shan's mountain forest catchments provide water resources for almost one third of the country and millions of hectares in neighboring countries and it is sometimes referred to as a natural water tower for Central Asia.

¹⁴ <https://jobs.undp.org/>

According to the preliminary ecological assessment of the project site the future PA provides ideal habitat for the rare and endangered species: 8 bird species and 6 mammals are included in the Red Data Book of Kyrgyzstan, 4 bird species and 4 mammals included in the Red List of the IUCN. There are 17 species included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (SITES) appendix.

By improving the coverage and management effectiveness of PAs in the Central Tian Shan Mountains, the Project is now expected to expand and strengthen the protection regime of threatened species, including the snow leopard. At present, less than 20% of the snow leopard range in the Central Tian Shan Mountains is under protection; the project will increase this coverage to 48% by establishing a new PA at Khan Tengri. It will also improve the connectivity between PAs Khan Tengri and Sarychat-Eertash in the Central Tian Shan through the designation and effective management of wildlife corridors. Local communities will be supported in biodiversity-friendly income generating activities that would enable them to observe the modified patterns of land use. The GEF investment will strengthen the national PA system in overall, and increase the overall national PA coverage from 6.03% to approximately 7%.

The Project is also expected to make a significant contribution to the National Strategy of Sustainable Development of the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017, Biodiversity Conservation Priorities of the Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2013, Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme, which were approved by both the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. Issues of biodiversity conservation were integrated into the “Programme and the Action Plan of the Government for Transition to Sustainable Development” which was approved by the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic. In addition, the implementation of the Project will contribute the Kyrgyz Republic to fulfil the obligations to International Laws on biodiversity conservation.

- If applicable, explain thoroughly the peculiarity of the setting of the project or the work required, if any (e.g., security risks involved in conducting the work in certain communities, certain cultures and practices unique to the stakeholders, etc.)

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

C. Scope of Work and Key Tasks

The MTR team will consist of two independent consultants that will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one team expert, usually from the country of the project.

The MTR team will first conduct a document review of project documents (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, Project Document, ESSP, Project Inception Report, PIRs, Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools, Project Appraisal Committee meeting minutes, Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team, project operational guidelines, manuals and systems, etc.) provided by the Project Team and Commissioning Unit. Then they will participate in a MTR inception workshop to clarify their understanding of the objectives and methods of the MTR, producing the MTR inception report thereafter. The MTR mission will then consist of interviews and site visits to (list preliminary sites).

1. The State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry, Toktogul str. 228, Bishkek,
2. Department on Forestry and Protected Areas, L. Tosltoy str., 3, Bishkek,
3. Department on Nature Resources Management, Isanov str. 87, Bishkek,

2. Project office, Koenkozov str. 14, Karakol, Issyk-Kul region,
3. Issyk-Kul administration, Abdrahmanova str., 105, Karakol, Issyk-Kul region,
4. Ak-Suu Rayon administration, Lenin str., 168, Teplokluchenka, Issyk-Kul region,
5. Biosphere Territory “Issyk-Kel”, Naryn av. 10, Balykchy, Issyk-Kul region

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress and produce a draft and final MTR report. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* (http://www.undp.org/content/dam/mongolia/Procurement/proc-notices/ProcurementAnnouncement2014/EbA/20140827/Guidance%20for%20Conducting%20Midterm%20Reviews%20of%20UNDP-Supported%20GEF-Financed%20Projects_Final_June%202014.pdf) for requirements on ratings. No overall rating is required.

1. Project Strategy

Project Design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results.
- Review how the project addresses country priorities
- Review decision-making processes

Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.

2. Progress Towards Results

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets; populate the Progress Towards Results Matrix, as described in the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for the project objective and each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “not on target to be achieved” (red).
- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Using the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; assess the following categories of project progress:

- Management Arrangements
- Work Planning
- Finance and co-finance
- Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Reporting
- Communications

4. Sustainability

Assess overall risks to sustainability factors of the project in terms of the following four categories:

- Financial risks to sustainability
- Socio-economic risks to sustainability
- Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
- Environmental risks to sustainability

The MTR consultant/team will include a section in the MTR report setting out the MTR's evidence-based **conclusions**, in light of the findings.

Additionally, the MTR consultant/team is expected to make **recommendations** to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. The MTR consultant/team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

D. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The MTR consultant/team shall prepare and submit:

- MTR Inception Report: MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of the Midterm Review no later than **2 weeks** before the MTR mission. To be sent to the Commissioning Unit and project management. Approximate due date: October 25, 2015
- Presentation: Initial Findings presented to project management and the Commissioning Unit at the end of the MTR mission. Approximate due date: End of MTR mission –November 5, 2015
- Draft Final Report: Full report with annexes **within 2 weeks** of the MTR mission. Approximate due date: November 14, 2015
- Final Report*: Revised report with annexed audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report. To be sent to the Commissioning Unit **within 1 week** of receiving UNDP comments on draft. Approximate due date: November 21, 2015

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

E. Institutional Arrangement

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is *the UNDP Country Office.*

The Commissioning Unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements **within the country** for the MTR team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

F. Duration of the Work

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately 20 days over a period of 4 (# of weeks) starting October 15, 2015 (date), and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
September 22, 2015	Application closes
October 8, 2015	Select MTR Team
October 16-20, 2015	Prep the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents)
October 21-24, 2015	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
October 25-28, 2015	Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission
October 28- November 4, 2015	MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
November 5, 2015	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
November 6-11, 2015	Preparing draft report
November 11-16, 2015	Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report/Finalization of MTR report (note: accommodate time delay in dates for circulation and review of the draft report)
November 17-21, 2015	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
TBI	(optional) Concluding Stakeholder Workshop (not mandatory for MTR team)
November 27, 2015	Expected date of full MTR completion

G. Duty Station

Identify the consultant's duty station/location for the contract duration, mentioning ALL possible locations of field works/duty travel in pursuit of other relevant activities, specially where traveling to locations at security Phase I or above will be required.

Travel:

- One week international travel will be required to Kyrgyzstan during the MTR mission;
- The Basic Security in the Field II and Advanced Security in the Field courses must be successfully completed prior to commencement of travel;
- Individual Consultant is responsible for ensuring to have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director.

- Consultants are required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under <https://dss.un.org/dssweb/>
- All related travel expenses should be considered while preparing the financial proposal.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

H. Qualifications of the Successful Applicants

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall “team” qualities in the following areas:

- A Master’s degree in environment/ or social sciences or closely related field;
- At least ten years of working experience in the area of biodiversity conservation and protected areas management;
- At least two recent experiences with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- At least two Experience experiences in applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Proven competence in adaptive management, as applied to biodiversity;
- At least two Experience experiences working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations;
- Experience in working in Central Asian or CIS countries will be an asset;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

Consultant Independence:

The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project’s related activities.

APPLICATION PROCESS

I. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

Financial Proposal:

- Financial proposals must be “all inclusive” and expressed in a lump-sum for the total duration of the contract. The term “all inclusive” implies all cost (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances etc.);
- For duty travels, the UN’s Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) rates are Bishkek, Issyk-Kul region (fill for all travel destinations), which should provide indication of the cost of living in a duty station/destination (*Note: Individuals on this contract are not UN staff and are therefore not entitled to DSAs. All living allowances required to perform the demands of the ToR must be incorporated in the financial proposal, whether the fees are expressed as daily fees or lump sum amount.*)
- The lump sum is fixed regardless of changes in the cost components.

Schedule of Payments:

100% upon finalization of the MTR Report

Or, as otherwise agreed between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team.

J. Recommended Presentation of Offer

- a) Completed **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#) provided by UNDP;
- b) **Personal CV or a P11 Personal History form**, indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references;
- c) **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template provided. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP. See Letter of Confirmation of Interest template for financial proposal template.

Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

K. Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer

The award of the contract will be made to the Individual Consultant who has obtained the highest Combined Score and has accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions. Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. The offers will be evaluated using the "Combined Scoring method" where:

- a) The educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted a max. of 70%;
- b) The price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring.

L. Annexes to the MTR ToR

Include *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* and other existing literature or documents that will help candidates gain a better understanding of the project situation and the work required.

Possible annexes include: (reference ToR Annexes in Annex 3 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*)

- List of documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team
- Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report
- UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants
- MTR Required Ratings Table and Ratings Scales
- MTR Report Clearance Form
- Sample MTR Evaluative Matrix
- Progress Towards Results Matrix and MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Tables (in Word)

