

# Terminal Evaluation Report

UNDP-GEF Project: Mongolia's Network of Managed Resource Protected Areas

GEF Project ID: 4562

UNDP Project ID: 4393

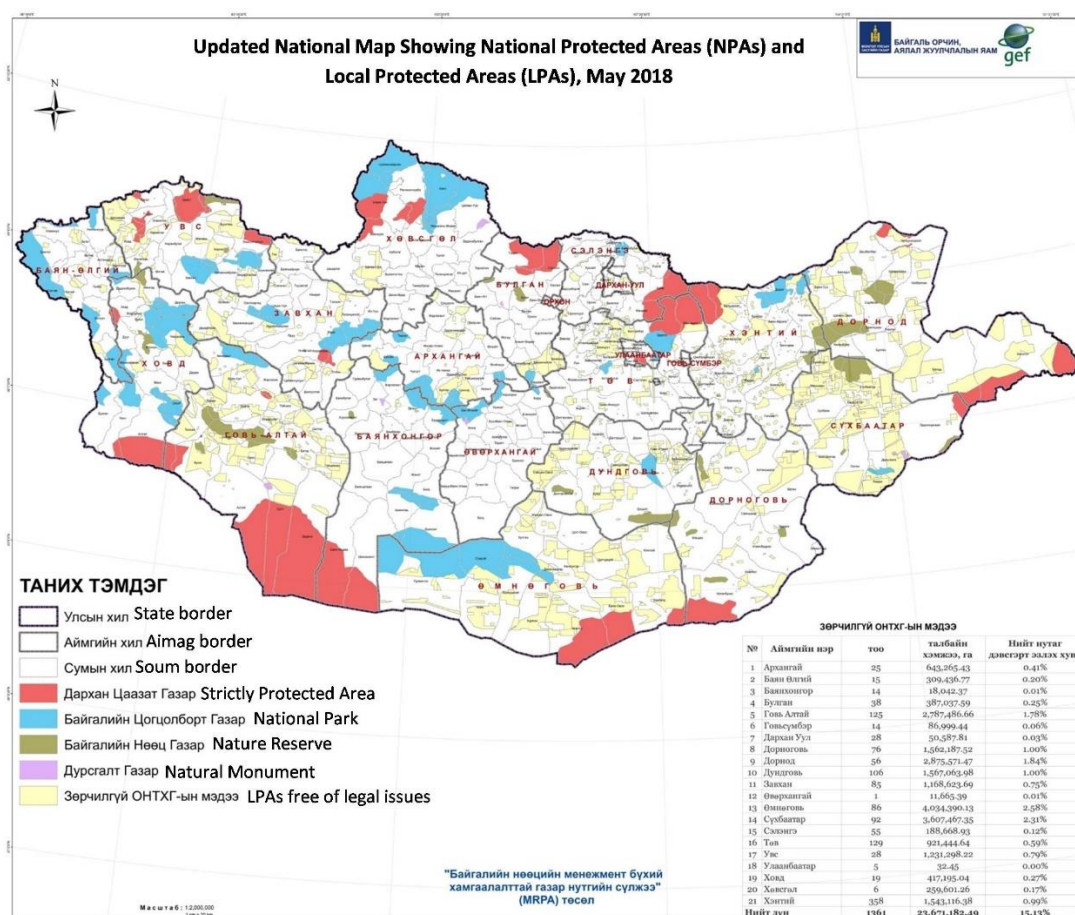
**Country:** Mongolia

**Region:** Asia and the Pacific

**Focal Area:** Biodiversity (GEF-5)

**GEF Agency:** United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

**Executing Agencies:** Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)



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# Opening Page

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## PROJECT DETAILS:

<b>Project Name:</b>	Network of Managed Resource Protected Areas	
<b>Project ID:</b>	GEF Project ID: 4562	UNDP PIMS ID: 4393
<b>Country:</b>	Mongolia	
<b>Region:</b>	Asia and the Pacific	
<b>Focal Area:</b>	Biodiversity	
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<b>Strategic Program:</b>	GEF-5 Biodiversity Strategy, Objective 1: Improve Sustainability of Protected Areas	
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	United Nations Development Programme	
<b>Implementation Modality:</b>	National Implementation Modality (NIM)	
<b>Executing Agency:</b>	Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)	
<b>Responsible Partners:</b>	Administration of Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography; Ministry of Finance	

## FINANCIALS:

<b>Project Preparation Grant:</b>	USD 54,545
<b>GEF Project Grant:</b>	USD 1,309,091
<b>Cofinancing Total:</b>	USD 4,944,000
<b>GEF Agency Fees:</b>	USD 130,909
<b>Total Cost:</b>	USD 6,307,636

## PROJECT TIMELINE:

<b>Received by GEF:</b>	17 June 2011
<b>Preparation Grant Approved:</b>	05 August 2011
<b>Concept Approved:</b>	01 November 2011
<b>Project Approved for Implementation:</b>	06 June 2013
<b>State Date:</b>	30 July 2013
<b>Project Closed (planned):</b>	29 July 2018

## TERMINAL EVALUATION DETAILS:

<b>TE Timeframe:</b>	February-April 2018
<b>TE Team:</b>	James Lenoci, International Consultant / Team Leader Orgiltuya Dashzevge, National Consultant
<b>Reporting Language:</b>	English

The terminal evaluation team would like to acknowledge the feedback provided by the interviewed stakeholders, including the State Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the Director of the Protected Area Administration Department, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, the UNDP Energy and Environment Team Leader, soum and aimag governors, other governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, the National Project Coordinator, current and former staff of the Project Implementation Unit, and herders who are members of the community-based organizations among the demonstration local protected areas.

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	i
Abbreviations and Acronyms .....	ix
1 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Purpose of Evaluation .....	1
1.2 Evaluation Scope and Methodology .....	1
1.3 Structure of the Evaluation Report .....	2
1.4 Ethics .....	3
1.5 Evaluation Ratings .....	3
1.6 Audit Trail .....	4
1.7 Limitations .....	4
2 Project Description and Development Context .....	4
2.1 Project start and duration .....	4
2.2 Problems that the project sought to address .....	4
2.3 Immediate and development objectives of the project .....	6
2.4 Baseline indicators established .....	7
2.5 Main stakeholders .....	7
2.6 Project theory of change .....	8
3 Assessment of Project Design .....	10
3.1 Analysis of project results framework .....	10
3.2 Assumptions and risks .....	12
3.3 Lessons learned and linkages with other projects .....	13
3.4 Planned stakeholder participation .....	14
3.5 Replication approach .....	14
3.6 UNDP comparative advantage .....	15
3.7 Management arrangements .....	15
4 Assessment of Project Results .....	16
4.1 Outputs .....	16
4.2 Outcomes .....	22
4.2.1 Effectiveness .....	22
4.2.2 Relevance .....	29
4.2.3 Efficiency .....	30
4.3 Sustainability .....	32
4.4 Progress towards impact .....	37
5 Assessment of Monitoring & Evaluation Systems .....	38
5.1 M&E Design .....	38
5.2 M&E implementation .....	38
6 Assessment of Implementation and Execution .....	40
6.1 Quality of implementation .....	40
6.2 Quality of execution .....	41
7 Other Assessments .....	42
7.1 Need for follow-up .....	42
7.2 Materialization of cofinancing .....	42
7.3 Environmental and social safeguards .....	42
7.4 Gender concerns .....	43
7.5 Stakeholder engagement .....	44
8 Lessons and Recommendations .....	45
Annex 1: TE Mission Itinerary	
Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix	
Annex 3: List of People Interviewed	
Annex 4: List of Information Reviewed	
Annex 5: Matrix of Rating Achievement of Project Objective and Outcomes	
Annex 6: Cofinancing Table	
Annex 7: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement Form	
Annex 8: Rating Scales	
Annex 9: Terms of Reference for Terminal Evaluation	
Annex 10: Signed TE Final Report Clearance Form	

### List of Tables:

<b>Table 1:</b> Project summary table .....	i
<b>Table 2:</b> Evaluation ratings .....	iii
<b>Table 3:</b> Recommendations table .....	vi
<b>Table 4:</b> Summary of legislative gaps regarding managed resource protected areas .....	5
<b>Table 5:</b> Project stakeholders.....	7
<b>Table 6:</b> SMART analysis of project results framework (project objective) .....	10
<b>Table 7:</b> SMART analysis of project results framework (Outcome 1).....	11
<b>Table 8:</b> SMART analysis of project results framework (Outcome 2).....	11
<b>Table 9:</b> Project risks .....	12
<b>Table 10:</b> Summary of landscape-level study on the conservation of key species .....	16
<b>Table 11:</b> Breakdown of expansions at demonstration LPAs .....	19
<b>Table 12:</b> Breakdown of types of natural resource CBOs registered and types of land covered.....	23
<b>Table 13:</b> Breakdown under-represented ecosystems in PA system: baseline and end targets .....	23
<b>Table 14:</b> SPA system expansion from 2008 to April 2018.....	23
<b>Table 15:</b> Actual expenditures broken down by project component, 2013-2018 .....	31
<b>Table 16:</b> Summary of Technology Needs Assessment on Reduction of Vulnerability of Biological Diversity .....	36
<b>Table 17:</b> Summary of management responses to MTR recommendations.....	39
<b>Table 18:</b> Summary of materialized cofinancing .....	42
<b>Table 19:</b> Women representation in LPA and CBO decision-making bodies, 2016-2017 .....	43
<b>Table 20:</b> Income generated by women-led businesses, 2016-2017 .....	44

### List of Figures:

<b>Figure 1:</b> Theory of change diagram.....	9
<b>Figure 2:</b> Project Organization Structure.....	15
<b>Figure 3:</b> LPA database (www.eic.mn/spalocal/) screenshot 23 April 2018 .....	18
<b>Figure 4:</b> CBO database (www.eic.mn/community/) screenshot 23 April 2018 .....	18
<b>Figure 5:</b> Country map showing locations of three demonstration LPAs.....	19
<b>Figure 6:</b> Map of Gulzat LPA.....	20
<b>Figure 7:</b> Map of Khavtgar LPA.....	20
<b>Figure 8:</b> Map of Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA.....	21
<b>Figure 9:</b> Population of Argali sheep in the Gulzat LPA, based on WWF monitoring reports .....	28
<b>Figure 10:</b> Planned annual budgets and actual expenditures, 2013-2018.....	31
<b>Figure 11:</b> Exchange rate history MNT:USD, April 2013 to April 2018 .....	32
<b>Figure 12:</b> Real GDP and Services Growth, 2011-2017 .....	34
<b>Figure 13:</b> Desertification and land degradation in Mongolia, 2015.....	36

## Executive Summary

The project was implemented under the GEF-5 biodiversity strategic program through a national implementation modality with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) as the executing agency, supported by the UNDP as the GEF agency. Basic project information and finances are summarized below in **Table 1**.

**Table 1: Project summary table**

Project Title:	Mongolia's Network of Managed Resource Protected Areas		at endorsement (USD million)	at completion* (USD million)
GEF Project ID:	4562	GEF financing, PPG grant:	54,545	54,545
UNDP Project ID:	4393	GEF financing, project grant:	1,309,091	1,222,794
Country:	Mongolia	IA own:	1,300,000	1,259,914
Region:	Asia and the Pacific	Government:	500,000	552,040
Focal Area:	Biodiversity (GEF-5)	Other:	3,144,000	1,930,266
Focal Area Objective:	Objective 1: Improve Sustainability of Protected Areas	Total co-financing:	4,944,000	3,742,220
		Total Project Cost:	<b>6,307,636</b>	<b>5,019,559</b>
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Environment and Tourism	Prodoc Signature (date project began):		30 July 2013
Other Partners Involved:	Administration of Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography; Ministry of Finance	(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 29 July 2018	Actual: 29 July 2018

Note: Total expenditures based upon figures through 19 March 2018.

### Project Description:

The project goal was to ensure the integrity of Mongolia's diverse ecosystems to secure the viability of the nation's globally significant biodiversity. The project objective was to catalyze the strategic expansion of Mongolia's protected area (PA) system through establishment of a network of community conservation areas covering under-represented terrestrial ecosystems.

Most Mongolian species require vast expanses of intact habitat to survive. The system of national protected areas (NPAs) at project entry was far too small and geographically isolated to maintain required connectivity. Biodiversity outside of PAs faces rapidly escalating threats (unsustainable harvest, habitat loss due to infrastructure development and livestock management, and climate change). These threats are segregating species into increasingly disconnected PAs. The government and rural communities recognize the challenges and desire to conserve large tracts of lands between existing PAs. However, the four primary NPA designations are restrictive and not well suited to safeguarding even sparsely inhabited landscapes. Emerging community-based approaches generally lacked well defined national regulatory support that strategically targets conservation priorities.

The project's two Outcomes were designed to address these challenges. The aim of Outcome One was to establish a new protected area category for strategic PA expansion, and Outcome Two focuses on institutional capacity and resource base development to ensure sustainability of managed resource PAs. The GEF catalyzed alternative provided incremental support for enabling conservation to take place on an ecologically meaningful scale across large landscapes. Ultimately, lessons learned are envisaged to be amplified so that over twenty million hectares of locally conserved lands in under-represented ecosystems will enhance NPA system effectiveness.

### Terminal Evaluation Purpose and Methodology:

This terminal evaluation was conducted to provide conclusions and recommendations about the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of the project. The evaluation also aimed to identify lessons from the Project for future similar undertakings, and to propose recommendations for ensuring the sustainability of the results. The evaluation was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, review of available documents and records, and findings made during field visits.

## Global Environmental Benefits generated:

The project generated the following global environmental benefits:

Number of new protected areas: 1 (Tumenkhaan-Shalz local protected area), 2 local protected areas near Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA

New coverage of unprotected ecosystems: 510,451 ha

## Summary of Conclusions:

Following some delays in initiating implementation and a period of shared management with the UNDP supported, GEF financed project “Strengthening Protected Area Network (SPAN)” (GEF ID 3820), the project gained traction and has made significant contributions towards realizing a sustainable modality for managed resource protected areas in Mongolia, building upon results of previous initiatives by multiple partners.

Policy reforms were not achieved as envisaged, but the groundwork has been laid for a revision to the Law on Special Protected Areas and an amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection that would recognize local protected areas (LPAs) as part of the national system and provide legal status of community-based organizations (CBOs) under a managed resource protected area modality, something that is essential for the long-term viability of the Mongolian protected area system. The project worked closely with governmental partners on the proposed legislative reforms, the working group in charge of the process remains in place at project closure and Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) officials interviewed during the TE mission indicated their commitment to further advance the process. Secondary regulations have also been drafted, which would become enacted after approval of the revised and amended laws. One of the draft regulations, on taking land under special needs and registering in the cadastral database, was approved in 2017 by the Director of the Agency for Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography (ALAGAC) as a technical guideline and was delivered to all aimags in the country for implementation.

The project supported the development of a comprehensive database on LPAs, working with partners from the ALAGAC and Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority in sorting out legal issues, particularly conflicts with existing mining claims, and discrepancies in georeferenced coordinates. By the time of the TE, in April 2018, 1,361 of the total registered 2,593 LPAs were deemed free of legal issues. The cumulative area of these 1,361 LPAs covers 23,671,182.49 ha, or 15.13% of the total land area in Mongolia; this is nearly the as extensive as the 102 SPAs, which extend across 27,954,017 ha, or 17.87% of the total land area. The vastness of the LPA system underscores the importance of this type of protected area and the challenge in delivering effective management. A four-party agreement involving the ALAGAC, the PAAD, the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority, and the Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment, has been reached for maintaining the LPA database, which is integrated onto the knowledge platform managed by the Environmental Management Center ([www.eic.mn](http://www.eic.mn)).

The term “managed resource protected area” on the project referred to LPAs that are managed through community conservation arrangements. This modality is also relevant for buffer zones of special protected areas (SPAs) and could promoted as a viable option for management of SPAs, considering the remoteness of many of the protected areas in the country and the limited public funds allocated for management. In fact, many of the nature reserves and national monuments, two of the four types of SPAs, are currently not staffed. Achieving the 30% PA coverage target set by the government in the *Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030*, will also depend on full recognition of LPAs. Surprisingly, this strategic document and the 2015-2025 *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan* (NBSAP) do not specifically address LPAs or community conservation areas.

Many of the registered LPAs were declared under provisions included in Article 28 of the Law on Special Protected Areas, primarily as a deterrent by local governments against mining claims. The ecoregional assessments made by TNC have been increasingly used to guide land use planning, including declaration of LPAs, and the information from these assessments supported the PA expansions achieved under the project. The project set a target of reducing the area of under-represented ecosystems in the protected area system by 22 million ha, a figure that is implausible considering that the current SPA system is 27.95 million ha. The TE team concludes that 683,851 ha of under-represented ecosystems were added to the protected area system over the course of the 5-year project, including 173,000 ha to the SPA system and 510,451 ha to the LPA system.

The project provided technical assistance for the development of a database and website for national association of community-based organizations (CBOs). Project support included processing and interpreting questionnaires that were sent out to more than 1,500 CBOs. As of 23 April 2018, there were 1,078 registered natural resource CBOs on the database (66% of the 1,629 total), having a cumulative number of 26,255 members in 10,783 households, covering 4,729,299.84 ha of land, of which 489,290.54 ha are within LPAs. Management of the CBO database ceased at the end of 2017, when the full-time positions financed by the project completed their contractual terms. The national



organization of natural resource CBOs has been unable to keep the database running; sorting this out is one of the follow-up actions recommended after project closure.

Approximately 1,300 people have directly benefitted from the project activities implemented among three demonstration LPAs, specifically the Gulzat LPA in western Mongolia and the Khavtgar LPA and Tumenkhaan-Shalz in eastern Mongolia. The direct beneficiaries are primarily traditional, nomadic herders residing in communities where 33 CBOs in 6 soums in 4 different aimags are leading the management of the three LPAs through community conservation arrangements and in close collaboration with local governments and other partners. An international eco-school program was implemented in 3 primary schools in 3 of the target soums, further increasing awareness among the local communities. Although gender mainstreaming targets were not integrated into the project results framework, the project has generated some notable results in terms of gender inclusion, including women representation in LPA governance structures. Moreover, 50% of the small grants distributed to CBOs in 2016 were awarded to women, and the supported alternative livelihood activities contributed towards increases in CBO self-generating income.

Environmental status changes have been reported at the LPA scale among the three demonstration areas, including the population of Argali (*Ovis ammon*) at the Gulzat LPA in western Mongolia has been above 1,400 in the past 4 surveys made between 2014 and 2017, up from 1,046 in 2012 (project baseline) and significantly more than the conditions in 2013 when the number of Argali was reported at 161. The reintroduction of marmot (*Marmota sibirica*) at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA has been successful in a span of a couple of years. Through joint funding with the Adaptation Fund project, a total of 117 marmots were introduced to habitats in two of the soums at this LPA in 2015-2016 by scientists from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. Local herders, as volunteer rangers, have subsequently reported frequent marmot sightings in their monitoring rounds.

With respect to environmental stress reduction, biophysical changes to degraded grassland ecosystems, e.g., in response to improved pastureland management will require many years to reach a healthy status. The focus of the project was on capacitating CBOs in participatory conservation, including having volunteer rangers provide monitoring and enforcement. Several interviewed herders reinforced anecdotal evidence indicating that threats from wildlife hunting and other illegal activities have significantly reduced and, in some cases, stopped altogether. Inclusion of broader ecosystem recovery objectives should be covered in later versions of LPA management plans, e.g., through implementation of pasture use fees and improved coordination between LPAs, SPAs and buffer zones to SPAs.

The project benefitted from effective and consistent project management. Financial management was good throughout, with financial delivery rates exceeding 90% in the past 3 years, from 2015-2017. Some of the delays at project inception in 2014 and 2015, were partly attributed to a shift from a national execution modality (NEX) to a national implementation modality (NIM) – procurement and human resources were managed under government systems and it took some time before the requisite capacities were built up.

Twice per year project board meetings provided timely oversight and progress reporting was informative and thorough. There were some shortcomings regarding monitoring & evaluation design and implementation, including inconsistencies in assessment of the GEF tracking tools, lack of common biodiversity monitoring protocols, and the some of the indicators in the project results framework were not fully validated or updated.

With a relatively modest implementation grant of USD 1,309,091 for this full-sized GEF project, the team was successful in leveraging partnerships – one of the main strengths of the project and which further enhances the likelihood that results achieved will be sustained after GEF funding ceases.

### Evaluation Ratings:

Evaluation ratings are summarized below in **Table 2**.

**Table 2: Evaluation ratings**

Criteria	Rating	Comments
<b>1. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b>		
M&E Design	Moderately Satisfactory	The M&E budget allocation of USD 97,000 or 7.4% of GEF grant was proportionally sufficient; however, plan was not sufficiently elaborated at project inception, i.e., clarifying certain indicators, validating baseline conditions, identifying roles and responsibilities, cofinancing contributions and developing consistent and scientifically sound protocols for species monitoring.  Appointment of a M&E officer was a positive addition to the project implementation unit (PIU); project reporting was timely, with issues and challenges with candor;

Criteria	Rating	Comments
M&E Implementation	Satisfactory	<p>project board provided proactive platform for M&amp;E feedback. Partnership arrangements with WWF and some of the special protected areas located near the demonstration LPAs enhance sustainability of M&amp;E structures; and participatory evaluations of LPA management plan implementation and management effectiveness provide scale-able models of good practice. Concerted management responses were implemented in response to the midterm review recommendations (21 in number). Inconsistencies in tracking tool assessments and species monitoring reduce overall quality of M&amp;E.</p>
<b>2. Implementing Agency (IA) and Lead Implementing Partner (Executing Agency - EA) Execution</b>		
Quality of Implementation (UNDP as GEF Agency)	Satisfactory	<p>Drawing from long-standing operations in Mongolia and strong institutional capacity in leading biodiversity conservation and human development projects and programs, UNDP as the GEF agency on the project, proactively supported the Government of Mongolia throughout the project cycle, from conceptualization to project development and throughout implementation. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) is an experienced executing agency of GEF-financed projects, and satisfactorily led the execution of this project, transitioning directly from the execution of the SPAN project which closed in December 2015.</p> <p>The project board convened regularly (twice per year generally) and provided constructive guidance and supervision. Key issues and critical risks were captured in project reporting and discussed at the board meetings. Mitigation of the risk associated with delays in passing the promoted legislative reforms was affected by a change in government during the lifespan of the project.</p>
Quality Execution (MET as Executing Agency)	Satisfactory	<p>There were challenges associated with the shift from a supported national execution modality (NEX) to a full national implementation modality (NIM); including procurement delays and other administrative inconsistencies. In the long run, transitioning to NIM arrangements should further strengthen the institutional capacities of the MET and increase the level of country ownership.</p> <p>Designing shared management duties for the national project coordinator for two full sized GEF projects (SPAN and MRPA) was counter-productive, placing an unreasonable workload onto the coordinator and contributing towards the delay in starting the implementation of the MRPA project.</p>
<b>3. Assessment of Outcomes</b>		
Overall Quality of Project Outcomes	Satisfactory	<p>GEF funds addressed the key barriers highlighted in the project design. The project has managed to satisfactorily achieve the intended project outcomes within the allocated budget and timeframe. Efficiency is partly diminished because of delays in passing legislative reforms under Outcome 1. Efficiency gains were realized through effective partnership arrangements.</p> <p>Although total cofinancing materialized amounts to 76% of the sum confirmed at CEO endorsement, contributions were realized by five different partners, including recipient government (MET and local governments), UNDP as the GEF agency, an international NGO (WWF), a bilateral technical cooperation agency (GIZ) and a bilateral financial cooperation agency (KfW).</p>
Relevance	Moderately Satisfactory	<p>The project was aligned to Strategic Objective 1 under the GEF-5 Strategic Objective 1 under the GEF-5 biodiversity strategy, "Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems", specifically Outcome 1.1, "Improved management effectiveness of existing and new protected areas". The project was consistent with the priorities of the Government of Mongolia at the time of project development, e.g., as documented in the 2007-2021 National Development Strategy, which included the objective to "improve natural resource management at the national and local levels through strengthening the regulatory framework for mineral resource utilization and environment protection, providing law enforcement, introducing economic tools and incentives, creating self-financing mechanisms and upgrading cross sector coordination." The relevance rating is moderately satisfactory because the project objective does not seem to have held up as prominently with national strategies. For example, the 2015-2025 NBSAP does not include specific targets associated with elevating the legal status of LPAs, recognizing this sub-system of protected areas into the national protected area system, and does not directly address the need to strengthen community conservation capacities. The Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030 (approved in 2016) reiterates the target set in the 2008 National Development Strategy, regarding expanding the protected area system,</p>



Criteria	Rating	Comments
		specifically under Section 2.3.3 on Ecosystem Balance, which calls for increasing the area of special protected areas to 30% by 2030. LPAs and community conservation areas are, however, not addressed. There is a draft version of an updated national program on protected areas (the current version dates to 1998) but is not yet approved. The draft version for the period 2018-2022 calls for (1) developing and ensuring implementation of standards and regulations relevant for effective management of SPAs, LPAs and buffer zones of SPAs; (2) establishing a favorable legal environment for the conservation management of ecological connectivity areas between SPAs and LPAs and pilot models of effective management; and (3) increasing employment and income, encouraging and rewarding the initiatives of local residents, communities and entities on planting trees, raising animals and producing ecological products.
Effectiveness	Satisfactory	Outcome 1: Establishment of new PA category for strategic PA expansion
		Outcome 2: Emplacement of institutional capacity and resource base development to ensure sustainability of Managed Resource PAs
Efficiency	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory  Satisfactory
		The GEF funding addressed the key barriers highlighted in the project design. The project has managed to satisfactorily achieve the intended project outcomes within the allocated budget and timeframe, without "no cost" time extension. Efficiency diminished because of delays in passing legislative reforms, Efficiency gains realized through effective partnership arrangements. Cofinancing materialized by five different partners; however, total cofinancing materialized amounts to 76% of the sum confirmed at CEO endorsement.
<b>4. Sustainability</b>		
Overall likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure	Moderately Likely	Progress made towards achievement of the envisaged project outcomes have increased the likelihood that the results achieved will be sustained after GEF funding ceases. Public resources have been committed to maintain the LPA database through an agreement involving three agencies. There is strong government commitment to further advance the proposed legislative reforms associated with LPAs. Awareness regarding the importance of LPAs has been raised across several levels, ranging from national, aimag, soum and local communities. Scale-able frameworks for community conservation arrangements were demonstrated at three LPAs, capacities of local community-based organizations were strengthened, there was clear evidence in the field of herders continuing under their own initiative, and several options for sustainable financing were identified. Moreover, the continuation of partner activities, including by WWF, TNC, WCS, Green Gold, KfW, SFA and other international and national NGOs and donors, enhance the sustainability prospects.  On the other hand, several factors across each of the four risk dimensions assessed diminish the likelihood that results will be sustained. Achieving the proposed legislative reforms will require concerted advocacy, as land use related regulations intrinsically tied to the mining sector. Under current legislation, LPA management/oversight is not fully recognized by local governments; although, local governments are responsible for management of buffer zones within SPAs that fall within their jurisdictions. Most of the CBOs require further capacity development, and the CBO umbrella NGO has been unable maintain the CBO database established under the project. The trophy hunting income sharing arrangements at the Gulzat LPA has been advanced over the course of the project, but there are legal issues associated with the local NGO there and the aimag government has withheld budget allocations to the soums based on economic circumstances. The feasibility of other sustainable financing options need to be more thoroughly assessed at the site level. And, the uncertainties associated with the potential impacts of climate change are concerns over the medium to long term.
Financial dimension	Moderately Likely	
Socioeconomic dimension	Moderately Likely	
Institutional Framework and Governance dimension	Moderately Likely	
Environmental dimension	Moderately Likely	
<b>5. Overall Project Results</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	Global environmental benefits generated include 463,592 ha of new coverage of unprotected ecosystems. The project has strengthened the enabling environment and demonstrated best practice for managed resource protected areas in Mongolia, where such management modalities are critical for the long-term viability of the PA system and protection of globally significant biodiversity.

## Recommendations:

TE recommendations are summarized below in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Recommendations table**

No.	Recommendation	Responsible Entities	Timeframe
<b>Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project</b>			
1.	Prepare an exit plan that outlines actions that require follow-up after project closure, clearly describing what has been delivered through the project and what actions the beneficiaries are responsible. Recommended follow-up actions are described below in sub-recommendations 1a-1f.	PIU, MET	Before project closure
1a.	Prepare a policy dialogue and advocacy plan (e.g., incorporating into an existing project or one under development) for advancing the proposed legislative and regulatory reforms that have not been passed by project closure.	PIU, MET	Before project closure
1b.	Resolve the continued operation of CBO database and assess ways in which the maintenance of this site could be self-sustaining. One option is combining it to the website of the national organization of natural resource CBOs and promoting online sale of CBO products and services and linking with more advanced small and medium size businesses that have a proven track record and established networks in Mongolia.	National organization of natural resource CBOs, PAAD, ALAGAC	Before project closure
1c.	Monitor the operation of the trophy hunting cost sharing arrangements at the Gulzat LPA; particularly considering the current legal case regarding the local NGO overseeing the CBOs that are managing the LPA. And, advocate for the aimag government to stop cutting soum governments budgets, depending upon how much income is allocated to the soums from trophy hunting revenue.	PAAD, MET, local governments	Before project closure
1d.	Provide information to all aimag governors regarding the lessons learned through the trophy hunting income sharing arrangements at the Gulzat LPA and opportunities for generating mutually beneficial conservation and socioeconomic outcomes.	PAAD, MET, local governments, NGOs	Before project closure
1e.	Monitor and facilitate the initial functioning of the conservation trust fund established with contributions from CBOs in three soums, the project and the Green Gold program.	Soum governments, Green Gold	Before project closure
1f.	Facilitate partnerships for advancing the sustainable financing options identified for the demonstration LPAs, e.g., carrying out feasibility studies and/or value chain analyses of the potential impact investments at the Khavtgar LPA and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA regarding sustainable meat production.	PAAD, Soum Governments, KfW and other partners	Before project closure
2.	Prepare a best practice guideline for managed resource protected areas in Mongolia, drawing upon the experiences gained through the three demonstration sites on the project. The guideline should be available on the PAAD website and disseminated to other governmental and non-governmental partners.	PIU, PAAD	Before project closure
3.	Carry out a critical review of the end-of-project assessments of management effectiveness of the three demonstration LPAs and document the results using the standard GEF-5 tracking tool template; some of the scores seemed overly optimistic and the GEF-5 Excel form was not used. As part of this process, it would be advisable also apply the approved Mongolian version of the METT to allow comparative analysis among other protected areas in the national system.	PIU	Before project closure
4.	Account for cofinancing contributions that materialized during project implementation, e.g., from the Land Agency (ALAGAC), aimag and soum governments at the three LPA demonstration areas, the Green Gold program funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Khan Khentii SPA, etc.	PIU	Before project closure
<b>Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project</b>			
5.	Prepare a technical report summarizing the reintroduction and subsequent monitoring of marmot at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA. The success achieved through this reintroduction could provide useful guidance to other conservation efforts; the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, who led the efforts, might be interested in preparing a scientific publication.	MET, Mongolian Academy of Sciences	By Dec 2018
6.	Further develop the LPA management plans, including broader ecosystem recovery objectives, e.g., through implementation of pasture use fees and improved coordination between LPAs, SPAs and buffer zones to SPAs.	LPA co-management councils, PAAD, NGOs and other enabling partners	Within the next 1-2 years
<b>Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives</b>			
7.	Prepare (or update) a national protected area (PA) system strategy. The role of LPAs in the national PA system is unclear. For example, aimag governments show higher ownership of buffer zones than LPAs; many LPAs declared to deter mining activities; role of state protected areas unclear in the management of LPAs and buffer zones; there has been a strong focus on PA expansion and less attention placed on effective management and governance. Moreover, LPAs and community conservation co-management arrangements are under-represented in the 2015-2025 NBSAP. The PA system strategy should include, but not be limited to the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify LPA priority areas, using the ecoregional assessments prepared by TNC, overlaying key biodiversity areas (KBAs), etc.</li> <li>Encourage multiple functions, including biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services (e.g., water security), fire danger areas, etc.</li> <li>Outline institutional arrangements, including buffer zone management.</li> </ul>	MET, PAAD, with consultation from leading conservation agencies and organizations	Within the next 1-2 years

No.	Recommendation	Responsible Entities	Timeframe
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify roles of state protected areas (SPAs) in management of buffer zones and LPAs.</li> </ul> <p>The PA system strategy should be incorporated into upcoming release of the national program on protected areas.</p>		
8.	Review and update wildlife management policies and legislation regarding trophy hunting. Based on the findings of this terminal evaluation, there is a high demand for implementing wildlife trophy hunting; this was the fallback financing option mentioned by local governments and CBOs managing the demonstration LPAs. Issues to consider in updated policies and legislation include, but are not limited to, participatory governance, allocation of income generated, alternative forms of issuing licenses, e.g., through online auctions, revising the Law on Natural Resource Payment to provide the legal basis for some of these income allocation alternatives, etc.	MET	Within the next 1-2 years
9.	Increase public awareness of the value of the protected area system, including managed resource protected areas, using contemporary mechanisms, such as social media, performing arts, etc.	PAAD, NGOs	Within the next 1-2 years

A few examples of good practices and lessons learned regarding project design and implementation are presented below.

### Good Practices:

**Partnerships arrangements were well integrated into project design and implementation.** Collaborations with cofinancing and other enabling partners were well integrated into the project design and followed through during project implementation, enhancing the range of participation, capitalizing on stakeholder expertise, and increasing the likelihood that results achieved will be sustained after project closure. Partners included governmental agencies, technical and financial cooperation donor agencies, NGOs, and the private sector.

**Demonstration of an effective LPA governance model.** The project demonstrated that local community-based organizations have the capacity and willingness to take on the responsibility of managing local protected areas. Regarding the Gulzat and Khavtgar LPAs, management of the LPAs was granted to legal entities and supported by local governments. In the case of the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, the project showcased how local governments can effectively oversee the management of vast areas with support of local herders (CBOs), and demonstrated the proactive stewardship of local CBOs with respect to the reintroduction of marmot.

**Demonstration of locally driven improvements in biodiversity conservation through expanding ecological connectivity.** The project also demonstrated how locally driven interests, facilitated by multiple partners, can lead to improvements in biodiversity conservation, specifically regarding expanding ecological connectivity for key species. During the project implementation phase, roughly 77,500 ha of the Gulzat LPA was expanded to provide improved connectivity for Argali sheep habitat, and an approximate 59,400-ha ecological corridor was established at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA to enable expanded migration of the Mongolian gazelle.

**Effectiveness of training and awareness raising at the community level.** Based on findings of the TE field mission, the project efforts in training and raising awareness among the local herder communities was very effective, as indicated by sound biodiversity knowledge, detailed understanding of local conservation regulations and the LPA management plans, reduction in threats such as hunting, and self-motivation to continue LPA management activities.

**Cooperating with the Khan-Khentii special protected area (SPA) in wildlife monitoring was a constructive adaptive management measure.** This cooperation provided learning-by-doing capacity building to the LPA volunteer rangers and strengthened the partnership arrangements between the LPA and SPA. It would have been advisable to build such cooperation into the M&E design and confirming through cofinancing arrangements.

**Ownership of LPA database confirmed through a four-party agreement.** The four-party agreement involving the ALAGAC, the PAAD, the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority, and the Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment, regarding the responsibility of maintaining the LPA database is a good example of national ownership.

**Evaluation of the performance of the implementation of LPA management plans.** The project worked with governmental and non-governmental partners in developing a set of criteria for evaluating the performance of the implementation of the LPA management plans for the three demonstration areas and applied the criteria through a participatory approach. This process provides a good practice framework that could be replicated for other LPAs and for special protected areas.

**Contributions by local herders into the Tumenkhaan-Shalz conservation trust fund enhances sustainability.** Along with the project and the Green Gold program, local herder families from three soums located at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA have made contributions to the conservation trust fund. The local herders see the trust fund as a more favorable mechanism for providing short-term, bridging loans that have better terms than offered from commercial banks. The

participation by the local herders in the trust fund strengthens social collaborative structures in the communities and enhances the prospects that the fund will be sustained.

**Alternative income opportunities promoted among local herder communities.** Introducing alternative livelihood opportunities to local herder communities was an effective approach that provided options that did not involve wildlife hunting. Participation in the trade fair held in Ulaanbaatar in 2016 as part of the Second National Forum of CBO exposed the involved herders to the broad interest, at a national level, to the products and services offered by natural resource CBOs.

**Involvement of the local herders and volunteer rangers contributed to the success of the marmot reintroduction.** The volunteer rangers and other members of the CBOs at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA where the marmot reintroduction was carried out provided important monitoring and enforcement duties, increasing local ownership and awareness.

#### **Lessons Learned:**

**The project inception workshop should be made as early as possible, baselines validated/adjusted at that time and approved changes recorded.** Sorting out issues, such as validating baselines and agreeing to performance metrics in the project results framework, should be made as early as possible in the inception phase, and changes recommended should be formally presented to the project board, requesting and recording approval, followed by approval of the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor.

**Scientifically sound species monitoring protocols should be outlined in the project design and elaborated at project inception.** To provide defensible information on changes to environmental status, e.g., populations of target species, it is important that scientifically sound monitoring protocols are developed and consistently followed.

**Inclusion of legislative targets should have specific commitments from recipient government cofinancing partners.** If legislative targets are included in a project design, there should be specific commitments from recipient government cofinancing partners, e.g., reflecting commitment in cofinancing letters and establishing a non-political, cross-sectoral (public sector, NGOs, donor community, private sector, research-academic sector, etc.) working group that would be tasked with advancing the proposed legislative reforms during the timeframe of the project implementation and beyond closure.

**Cofinancing allocations should extend beyond project closure to cover follow-up actions.** Allocation of cofinancing contributions should extend beyond the date of project closure, e.g., by 2-3 years, to cover the cost and oversight for follow-up actions, such as further guiding sustainable PA financing options and advocating for passing legislative reforms.

**Socioeconomic benefits and gender issues should be sufficiently integrated into the project results framework.** The project generated socioeconomic benefits, including gender inclusion issues; however, these were not sufficiently integrated into the project results framework and not systematically reported.

**It would have been advisable to develop a knowledge management strategy.** The project made considerable contributions to knowledge associated with local protected areas, including the LPA database, the CBO database and website, as well as technical and non-technical written products, and Output 2.3 focused on capturing and disseminating lessons learned. It would have been advisable to develop a knowledge management strategy, describing roles and responsibilities, cofinancing contributions, ownership of knowledge platforms and systems after GEF funding ceases, etc.

**Allowing room for improvement on METT assessments.** It is important to allow room for improvement on METT assessments, particularly for the types of protected areas targeted by the project, i.e., local protected areas managed through community conservation arrangements.

**Tracking cofinancing that materializes during project implementation.** There were cofinancing contributions from several partners that materialized during project implementation but were not tracked or reported. Such contributions should be accounted along with cofinancing confirmed at CEO endorsement.

**Instructions for allocation of project management costs should be clarified at project inception.** Allocation of PIU staff costs across the project components should be agreed upon at project inception. If PIU staff are providing substantive contributions to the technical components, then costs should not be only allocated to project management.

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

Exchange Rate, MNT:USD (9 February 2018) = 2,402.34

ALAGAC	Agency for Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography
APR	Annual Project/Progress Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BIOFIN	Biodiversity Finance Initiative
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBNRM	Community-based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community-based Organization
CO	Country Office (UNDP)
CPD	Country Programme Document
EBD	Ecosystems and Biodiversity
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IBRM	Integrated River Basin Management
KBA	Key Biodiversity Areas
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MNT	Mongolian Tugrik
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTR	Midterm Review
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NGO	Non-Governmental organization
NPA	National Protected Areas
PA	Protected Area
PAAD	Protected Area Administration Department
PB	Project Board
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PPG	(GEF) Project Preparation Grant
RTA	(UNDP) Regional Technical Advisor
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USD	United States Dollar
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of Evaluation

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The purposes of evaluations of UNDP supported, GEF financed projects also include the following:

- ✓ To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose the extent of project accomplishments;
- ✓ To synthesize lessons that can help to improve the selection, design and implementation of future GEF financed UNDP activities;
- ✓ To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the UNDP portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues;
- ✓ To contribute to the overall assessment of results in achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefit; and
- ✓ To gauge the extent of project convergence with other UN and UNDP priorities, including harmonization with other UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).

### **Thematic Learning Review of UNDP-GEF Ecosystems and Biodiversity Team's Portfolio of PA Projects:**

The TE is also part of a thematic learning review of UNDP-GEF Ecosystems and Biodiversity team's portfolio of projects on protected areas. UNDP's work in Ecosystems and Biodiversity (EBD) has as an overall strategic objective to maintain and enhance the goods and services provided by biodiversity and ecosystems to secure livelihoods, food, water and health, enhance resilience, conserve threatened species and their habitats, and increase carbon storage and sequestration. The aim of the thematic learning review is to advance understanding of solutions that have worked or not worked within the UNDP-GEF EBD protected areas portfolio of projects to improve the design and implementation of ongoing and/or future projects. Apart from the objectives of the TE outlined above, the evaluation will also address the following questions in support of the thematic learning review.

#### *High-level technical questions:*

1. What are the **key characteristics, collective outcomes and innovation highlights** of the protected area project **portfolio**?
2. At **project-level**, which protected area strengthening **approaches/practices have worked well** (and under what conditions), what **challenges** have been encountered and how have/can they be resolved?
3. How does the protected area work supported by UNDP **deliver on the sustainable development goals (SDGs)**, and how can this delivery be **enhanced** in future?

#### *High-level operational/strategic questions:*

4. What **practical recommendations for strengthening protected area project design** can be made, with particular attention paid to **effective ways of integrating protected area work into multifocal programming approaches**?
5. How best can UNDP's **information management systems and project evaluation processes be enhanced**, so that they contribute maximally to enhanced data availability, improved knowledge management, and reflexive learning?

What recommendations can be made for **embedding protected-area related work in the EBD team's future strategic priorities**, in line with the new UNDP Strategic Plan, and evolving GEF programming directions?

## 1.2 Evaluation Scope and Methodology

The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation follows the guidelines outlined in the following guidance documents:

- Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluation for Full-sized Projects, Approved by the GEF IEO Director on 11th of April 2017
- UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects, 2012



The terminal evaluation was an evidence-based assessment, relying on feedback from persons who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, and review of available documents and findings made during field visits.

The evaluation included following activities:

- ✓ The TE mission was completed over the period 9-24 March 2018. The mission itinerary is compiled in **Annex 1**.
- ✓ As a data collection and analysis guidance tool, the evaluation matrix included as **Annex 2** was used to guide the evaluation. Evidence gathered during the evaluation was cross-checked between as many sources as practicable, to validate the findings.
- ✓ A desk review was made of available reports and other documents, listed in **Annex 3**.
- ✓ The TE team interviewed key project stakeholders, including the project manager, representatives from participating government agencies and ministries, NGO partners, consultants, local beneficiaries, as well as the country manager of the UNDP Country Office, the natural resource management and environmental governance programme officer of the UNDP CO and the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor; a list of interviewed people is included in **Annex 4**.
- ✓ The project results framework was used as an evaluation tool, in assessing attainment of the project objective and outcomes against indicators (see **Annex 5**).
- ✓ The TE team reviewed information regarding cofinancing realized throughout the duration of the project; the filled in cofinancing table is compiled in **Annex 6**.

The project was approved under the GEF-5 replenishment cycle; tracking tools under Objective 1 of the GEF-5 Biodiversity Strategy were assessed at CEO endorsement (baseline), midterm, and project closure (terminal evaluation).

Evidence gathered during the fact-finding phase of the evaluation was cross-checked between as many sources as practicable, to validate the findings.

### 1.3 Structure of the Evaluation Report

The evaluation report starts out with a description of the project, indicating the duration, main stakeholders, and the immediate and development objectives. The findings of the evaluation are broken down into the following sections in the report:

- Project Formulation
- Project Implementation
- Project Results

The discussion on **project formulation** focuses on how clear and practicable the project's objectives and components were formulated, and whether project outcomes were designed according to SMART criteria:

- **S: Specific:** Outcomes must use change language, describing a specific future condition;
- **M: Measurable:** Results, whether quantitative or qualitative, must have measurable indicators, making it possible to assess whether they were achieved or not;
- **A: Achievable:** Results must be within the capacity of the partners to achieve;
- **R: Relevant:** Results must make contributions to selected priorities of the national development framework;
- **T: Time-bound:** Results are never open-ended. There should be an expected date of accomplishment.

Project formulation also covers whether capacities of the implementation partners were sufficiently considered when designing the project, and if partnership arrangements were identified and negotiated prior to project approval. An assessment of how assumptions and risks were considered in the development phase is also included.

The report section on **project implementation** first looks at how the logical results framework was used as an M&E tool during the project. Also, the effectiveness of partnerships and the degree of involvement of stakeholders are evaluated. Project finance is assessed, by looking at the degree of cofinancing that was materialized in comparison to what was committed, and whether additional or leveraged financing was secured during the implementation phase. The cost-effectiveness of the project is evaluated by analyzing how the planned activities met or exceeded the expected outcomes over the designed timeframe, and whether an appropriate level of due diligence was maintained in managing project funds. Cost-effectiveness is not only based on how judiciously the funds were managed, but also examines

compliance with respect to the incremental cost concept, i.e., the GEF funds were allocated for activities not supported under baseline conditions, with the goal of generating global environmental benefits.

The quality of execution by both the implementing agency and the lead implementing partner (executing agency) is also evaluated and rated in the project implementation section of the report. This evaluation considers whether there was sufficient focus on results, looks at the level of support provided, quality of risk management, and the candor and realism represented in the annual reports.

The project implementation section also contains an evaluation and rating of the project M&E system. The appropriateness of the M&E plan is assessed, as well as a review of how the plan was implemented, e.g., compliance with progress and financial reporting requirements, how were adaptive measures taken in line with M&E findings, and management response to the recommendations from the midterm review.

In GEF terms, **project results** include direct project outputs, short- to medium-term outcomes, and longer-term impact, including global environmental benefits, replication efforts, and local effects.

Project outcomes were evaluated and rated according to relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency:

- Relevance:** The extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time. Also, relevance considers the extent to which the project is in line with GEF Operational Programs or the strategic priorities under which the project was funded.
- Effectiveness:** The extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
- Efficiency:** The extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible; also called cost effectiveness or efficacy.

In addition to assessing outcomes, the report includes an evaluation of country ownership, mainstreaming, **sustainability** (which is also rated), catalytic role, mainstreaming, and impact.

With respect to **mainstreaming**, the evaluation assesses 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.

In terms of **impact**, the evaluator assessed 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.

Finally, the evaluation presents **recommendations** for reinforcing and following up on initial project benefits. The report concludes with a discussion of **good practices** and **lessons learned** which should be considered for other GEF and UNDP interventions.

## 1.4 Ethics

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators, and the TE team members have signed the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement form (**Annex 7**). The TE team ensures the anonymity and confidentiality of individuals who were interviewed and surveyed. In respect to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, results are presented in a manner that clearly respects stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.

## 1.5 Evaluation Ratings

The findings of the evaluation are compared against the targets set forth in the logical results framework and analyzed according to developments that occurred over the course of the project. The effectiveness and efficiency of project outcomes are rated according to the 6-point GEF scale, ranging from Highly Satisfactory (no shortcomings) to Highly Unsatisfactory (severe shortcomings). Monitoring & evaluation and execution of the implementing and executing agencies were also rated according to this scale. Relevance is evaluated to be either relevant or not relevant. Sustainability is rated according to a 4-point scale, ranging from Likely (negligible risks to the likelihood of continued benefits after the project ends) to Unlikely (severe risks that project outcomes will not be sustained). More detailed descriptions of the rating scales are compiled in **Annex 8**.

## 1.6 Audit Trail

As an “audit trail” of the evaluation process, review comments to the draft report are compiled along with responses from the TE team as an annex separate from the TE report. Relevant modifications to the report will be incorporated into the final version of the TE report.

## 1.7 Limitations

The evaluation was carried out over the period of February-May 2018; including preparatory activities, field mission, desk review, and completion of the evaluation report, according to the guidelines outlined in the Terms of Reference (**Annex 9**).

The project deliverables were prepared in English and Mongolian, with progress reports and work plans in English. Considering that the team consisted one of national consultant and one international consultant, there were no limitations with respect to language.

The TE team feels that the information obtained in the field was representative of the total set of demonstration sites.

# 2 Project Description and Development Context

## 2.1 Project start and duration

Key project dates are listed below:

<b>Preparation Grant Approved:</b>	05 August 2011
<b>Project approved for implementation by GEF Secretariat:</b>	06 June 2013
<b>Project start (project document signed by Government of Mongolia):</b>	30 July 2013
<b>Project inception workshop:</b>	02 September 2014
<b>Midterm review:</b>	August 2016
<b>Project completion (planned):</b>	29 July 2018
<b>Terminal evaluation</b>	February - April 2018

The project preparation grant was approved in August 2011, and the project was approved for implementation by the GEF Secretariat on 06 June 2013. The Government of Mongolia signed the project document shortly after this date, on 30 July 2013, which marks the official start of the project. The project inception workshop was held more than a year later, on 02 September 2014. The midterm review was carried out in 2016, with the final report dated 01 September of that year. The project completion date is set at 29 July 2018, consistent with the original closure date, 60 months following the start date.

## 2.2 Problems that the project sought to address

Biodiversity in Mongolia is slowly recovering from the massive over-harvest of natural resources that occurred following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. More than 10% of forest cover, or 1,240,000 ha were lost over the 15-year period from 1990 to 2005, and populations of many key wildlife species were decimated during that time because of uncontrolled poaching and commercial hunting. The Government of Mongolia, with support from the international donor community and NGOs, has built up an extensive protected area system and enacted legislation aimed at sustainably managing the vast natural resources in the country. Implementation and enforcement of the legislative frameworks continues to be a challenge and ecosystems are under threat by overexploitation, habitat loss and climate change.

The transition from communism to a free-market economy has also brought widespread changes to livestock management practices in Mongolia. Prior to 1991, government regulations and State ownership of approximately 70% of livestock kept the numbers of livestock in check. The subsequent privatization of herds, the loss of control Soviet markets and the discontinuation of pasture user fees have eventually led to an immense increase in the number of livestock in the country, with some estimates indicating an approximate doubling from 26 million in 1990 to nearly 50

million in recent years. The over-exploitation of grasslands in some parts of the country has led to increased rates of degradation of soil and water systems, which have diminished ecosystem productivity and habitat integrity.

Growth in the mining sector has also resulted in widespread pressure on fragile ecosystems. Thousands of mining concessions have been granted, covering a cumulative area of approximately 500,000 square kilometers, roughly one-third of the country. Many of the concessions extend across vast areas of critical ecosystems, and the onset of exploration and development activities pose widespread threats to biodiversity, not only on the territories where the mineral resources are located but through the infrastructure, such as roads, railways, electrical power transmission lines, etc., as well as the accompanying social disruptions.

Apart from livestock management practices and mining, the impacts of climate change are estimated to exacerbate ecosystem degradation. Increased intensity of weather events, spatial and temporal shifts in weather patterns, increasing temperatures and an estimated decrease in precipitation pose considerable threats to biodiversity in the country.

The Government of Mongolia has taken steps to mitigate the threats outlined above, including establishing a national target of expanding the protected area system to 30% of the total land area in the country by 2030. Even if this target is reached, there will remain large swathes of land between protected areas that provide ecological connectivity, providing natural genetic interchange for many migratory species. Considering the remoteness of rural areas in Mongolia, the only viable management approach for the protected area system is through managed resource arrangements with herder and other local communities.

There were two primary barriers that were identified that hinder efforts under the baseline to expand the effectiveness of the protected area system and conserve landscapes at a scale required for ecological viability.

**Barrier #1: Current legislation does not offer adequate tools and guidance to successfully conserve critical ecosystems and species beyond the borders of NPAs**

The Government of Mongolia set a millennium development goal target of reaching 30% protected area coverage; however, there were only four primary designations for conservation landscapes, including strictly protected areas, national parks, nature reserves and national monuments – which are roughly comparable to IUCN's restrictive categories I-III. The available designations were not favorable for conservation of large landscapes with human populations, e.g., used by herders. Certain legislative advances were made to allow rural communities to manage natural resources, but inconsistencies remained in the collective legal framework, as summarized below in **Table 4**.

**Table 4: Summary of legislative gaps regarding managed resource protected areas<sup>1</sup>**

Designation Type	Relevant Law	Relevant information and key gaps
Local protected areas (LPAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law on Special Protected Areas, Articles 3, 28 and 29</li> <li>• Law on Environmental Protection, Article 47</li> <li>• Regulation to designate land for local protection", Minister for Environment, 2000</li> </ul>	Decisions on the delineation of LPAs and protection regime lie with the local Citizen's Representative Councils. The management of these local level PAs is regulated by the Law on Land because it is considered as a "Special needs land". A regulation under the Law on the PAs provides generic guideline on designating land under the local protection making the protection regime similar IUCN category 6. LPA inventories are not conducted properly (still not separately accounted for) and the policies and guidelines to facilitate the LPA management are practically non-existent. There are no specific management structures for LPAs at the national and local levels, although there is an officer at the MEGD/PAAD appointed as responsible for the management of LPAs. Even without well-established management regulations for LPAs, the Environmental Protection Law already provided the potential for Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) arrangements.
Community managed buffer zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law on Buffer Zones</li> </ul>	Buffer zones are designated by Soums and Khoroo citizen's representatives Khurals and approved by the MEGD to minimize, eliminate, prevent actual and potential adverse impacts to Strictly Protected Areas (SPAs), National parks, Nature reserves and Natural monuments, to increase public participation, to secure their livelihood and to establish requirements for the proper use of natural resources. Establishment of buffer zones is allowed based on prior introduction and consultation of PAAD with the community on the boundaries, purpose, governing legislation of buffer zones and the participation of citizens.
Community managed areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law on Environmental Protection, Articles 45-52</li> </ul>	Law on Environmental Protection amended in May 2012 integrates articles on CBNRM through provisions assigning rights to use natural resources sustainably and benefit from nature conservation to herder communities. There was no full inventory of community managed areas, which include community managed

<sup>1</sup> Summarized from information contained in the project document; legal summaries relevant at the time of project development, i.e., 2012.

Designation Type	Relevant Law	Relevant information and key gaps
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulation on community based natural resource management (No. 114, 2006 by MNET), revised in 2010.</li> </ul>	forests, herding areas and buffer zones. One of the key gaps was the fact that there was no common land use management arrangement that coordinates sustainable use and management of LPA, buffer zones of SPAs and SPAs, e.g., through application of landscape-level planning approaches. SPA administrations at the local level are managed and funded by the central government (MET), but the management and land use regimes are not adequately coordinated between local governments and the SPA administration.
Special needs lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land Law, Articles 10 and 16</li> <li>Law on Special Protected Areas</li> </ul>	A total of 10 types of special needs lands are distinguished, such as state border strips, foreign diplomatic lands, inter-aimag reserve pastures etc. State PAs are also classified as Special Needs lands. Upon submitted proposals by central and local Governments to take under or release from special needs category, respective Aimag and soums, as well as ALAGAC provide justifications. Mongolian Parliament makes a final decision on lands for State special needs.
Community forest areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forest Law</li> <li>Law on Environmental Protection</li> </ul>	Soum and district Citizen's Representatives Councils can grant possession right of forest to forest communities, economic entities, or an organization on a contractual basis. The contract is signed for the first time for one year, with possibilities for extension for 10 years, in total for 60 years. The 2012 amendments incorporated establishment of database as obligatory covering status, size, taxonomy and their changes, protection, utilization and regeneration measures of forest reserves, as well as community forest areas. The legal framework on community-managed forest areas is relatively well-established and can be easily managed by local governments.
Community herding areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land Law</li> </ul>	Pastureland under state ownership, de facto managed as a common property, albeit with more exclusive rights of herding families to certain winter and summer camps.

## Barrier #2: Insufficient national, state, and local level capacity to successfully conserve biodiversity within inhabited landscapes

The Government of Mongolia has developed policies decentralizing natural resource management to local authorities; however, this devolving of authority has not been accompanied with the requisite strengthening of local capacities. There have been several conservation projects and programs completed at local levels, but most of these relied on technical and financial support from external donors and are implemented over limited durations, insufficient to build sufficient capacity for self-sustaining or replicating the results achieved.

There was no national level institutional framework to provide ongoing and consistent capacity building support and a safety net for local conservation initiatives. Instead, these local initiatives were largely on their own, not benefitting from central level service and support to help facilitate strategic designation, sustainable financing, proactive management, and/or ongoing capacity strengthening.

The lack of coordination between national protected areas and LPAs resulted in conservation inefficiencies, e.g., critical habitats not included within protected landscapes and opportunities for ecosystem connectivity not realized.

## 2.3 Immediate and development objectives of the project

The project aimed to support and enhance the ability of rural communities and associated LPAs to become more effective tools for biodiversity conservation. These new protected areas were envisaged to be aligned with IUCN categories IV, V, and VI and designed to cater for the dual objectives of biodiversity conservation and livelihood enhancement. The project was designed to demonstrate that co-management of PAs and a participatory approach that involves local communities in decision-making can lead to better biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihood outcomes of protected areas in the Mongolian context. By bringing in new thinking to landscape management in Mongolia, the project aimed to substantially increase the amount of territory where biodiversity is conserved, cultivate broader support for large-scale biodiversity conservation, and vastly improve the effectiveness of the NPA system to address both threats and barriers. Overall, the project was slated to contribute towards achievement of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1 to reduce poverty and MDG7 to ensure environmental sustainability, as well as advancement of human development.

This project was within the parameters of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) and the UNDP Country Programme document (CPD) for 2012-2016. The project was consistent within these parameters by addressing the complimentary issues of increasing sector capacity for sustainable resources management with the participation of primary resource users.

UNDP/Mongolia's 2012-16 UNDAF, in its outcome 7, placed strong priority to conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, emphasizing the need for a participatory approach to conservation and sustainable resource management. The project was slated to contribute directly to strengthening of environmental governance capacity (output 7.1), as well as a landscape-based approach for planning, management and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity (output 7.2). UNDP's 2012-16 CPD highlighted conservation of landscapes and their natural resources, including biodiversity, as a top priority. Its primary indicator focused on "change in protected areas and water resources." Mongolia adopted an official national MDG target to cover 30% of the country with PAs.

## 2.4 Baseline indicators established

Baseline indicators established include:

- 16 million ha of local protected areas (LPAs) had been declared (in 2012) but were not included in the national protected area system.
- 102 million ha of under-represented ecosystems (in 2012) in the national protected area system
- Community conservation areas (or, in other words, managed resource protected areas) were not legally recognized as part of the national protected area system.
- Management effectiveness of local protected areas had only been assessed for a few sites.
- The Protected Areas Administration Department of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism did not have a mandate to provide support to community conservation areas.
- Legally enforceable management plans had not been applied at local protected areas.

## 2.5 Main stakeholders

The main stakeholders relevant to the project were described in the project document, as listed below in **Table 5**.

**Table 5: Project stakeholders**

Stakeholder	Relevance
<b>Government of Mongolia</b>	
State Great Khural, Mongolian Parliament	State Ikh Khural (Parliament) as the highest legislative body in Mongolia has the mandate to propose and review legislation and policies and proposed revisions. The Mongolian parliament is responsible for the gazetting of new protected areas, including designation and changes in state PA boundaries, while the MEGD has the power to approve the internal zones of these PAs. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Environment plays an important role in facilitating changes in the legislative framework and/or reviewing effectiveness of implementation.
Ministry of Environment and Green Development (MEGD) (name changed to Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET))	National Government Ministry to be the national executing agency for the project. It is responsible for developing policy and laws on biodiversity conservation and wildlife management. It includes the Protected Area Administration Department (PAAD) that manages Mongolia's PAs. A senior MET delegate was chair the Project Board.
Ministry of Finance	The Ministry is responsible for financing and the annual budget allocation and was involved in all key consultations and training activities, as well as policy development activities.
Agency for Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography, MCUD	ALAGAC is in charge of regulating land use, including land use management plans, surveying and mapping, administration and registration of land as property. Although included in the consolidated land use report since 2011, the inventory of LPAs, as well as community managed areas (contracted with soum government as required by the Regulation A 250 on the NR management herder communities) still needed to be improved.
Local governments	Key beneficiaries of the project. Provincial and District government having the highest authority in the aimag and the District, ensures policy and planning consistency. Aimag and Soum governments were key in proposing, allocating and co-managing the expanded LPAs. Soum governments (where applicable through Soum Environmental Units), under technical guidance of Aimag Department of Environment and Tourism are mandated to support herder groups in their formation and development and allocated certain areas to herder communities for natural resource management for 5-10 years.
<b>International Development Organizations</b>	
KfW	KfW supports a US\$ 14.3 million project on biodiversity and adaptation to climate change. The KfW supported project aims to conserve biodiversity and improve rural livelihoods, as well as improve management effectiveness in selected local PAs. KfW confirmed US\$ 2 million in co-financing at project entry for Outcome 2 of the project.



Stakeholder	Relevance
GIZ	Supports PA management in the Khangai and Khentii Mountains, including LPAs. GIZ committed to provide co-financing of US\$ 260,000 over the three-year period from 2012 to 2015, in support of the MRPA development for policy and regulatory framework at the central and PA management effectiveness improvement at the at Khavtgar LPA demonstration sites.
International Development Organizations	Key organizations including World Bank, the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency (SDC) were envisaged to be part of the technical advisory group of the project and participate in all policy development activities. Where possible, activities were envisaged to be joint implemented to empower local government and improve livelihoods.
<b>Civil Society/Non-Governmental Organizations</b>	
WWF	Co-financier and local implementation partner for the project. WWF has been active in Altai Sayan and Eastern steppe region for almost 20 years, with current focus on climate change, water management and biodiversity conservation. In the east, it focuses on community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), integrated river basin management (IRBM) and transboundary PA/wildlife conservation support. It also provides capacity building support for local NGOs in local PA management. During the project development phase, WWF Mongolia was starting the process of generating a formal compendium of locally conserved landscapes, including LPAs.
Other NGOs	The project planned on closely partnering with key NGOs WCS, the Asia Foundation, IPECON (Initiative for People Centered Conservation) and TNC who are among the major organizations active in conservation in Mongolia. These agencies were envisaged to be part of the technical advisory group of the project and participate in all policy development activities. Where possible, joint activities were envisaged to be organized in capacity building of local communities in nature conservation, as well as on PA management including LPAs. Representatives from CSOs will be included in all trainings and consultations. Local NGOs, Gulzat in Uvs and Khavtgar in Batshireet, Khentii, as well as Community Associations in Uvs aimag, active in conservation, public awareness activities, management of LPAs and supporting NRM herder communities were envisaged to be the direct stakeholders/co-managers at the project sites in Uvs and Khentii aimags.
<b>Academic and Scientific Organizations</b>	
Scientific Organizations	Provide scientific research to develop justifications for new PAs and to provide information/data for establishment of database on LPAs, as well as to advise on policy work. Research institutes affiliated under the Mongolian Academy of Sciences were envisaged to be the key partners.
<b>Local and Indigenous Communities</b>	
Local Communities	Key users and beneficiaries of natural resources and beneficiaries of the project. They play critical roles in site level activities as a co-management partner of the Managed Resource PAs, particularly including the communities of "Khavtgar" LPA and "Gulzat" LPA, as well as local herders in the north to the Toson Khulstai Natural Reserve.
<b>Private Sector</b>	
Private businesses	Tourism and hunting companies are important users of natural resources and a key partner for local communities to generate income and employment opportunities. They were envisaged to be consulted intensively during the preparatory phase/policy activities and represented in the Project Board.

## 2.6 Project theory of change

The GEF alternative addressed the two primary barriers that were identified in the project design as hindering the conservation effectiveness of Mongolia's PA system to conserve a host of globally important resources. The **project goal** was to ensure the integrity of Mongolia's diverse ecosystems to secure the viability of the nation's globally significant biodiversity. The **project objective** was to catalyze the strategic expansion of Mongolia's PA system through establishment of a network of community conservation areas covering under-represented terrestrial ecosystems. The objective was designed to be achieved through two outcomes: Outcome One: Establishment of new a new PA category for strategic protected area expansion; and, Outcome 2: Emplacement of institutional capacity and resource base development to ensure sustainability of Managed Resource Protected Areas (MRPAs).

The project aimed to strengthen the enabling environment required to facilitate effective management of managed resource protected areas and demonstrate best practice at implementing this modality. The theory of change reconstructed in **Figure 1** presents the intermediate states and ultimate impacts following achievement of the project outcomes. Making further progress towards impact will be contingent upon the assumptions impact drivers outlined, including enactment of the proposed legislative reforms and continued financing available to further capacitate and incentivize local herders to engage in community-driven protected area management.

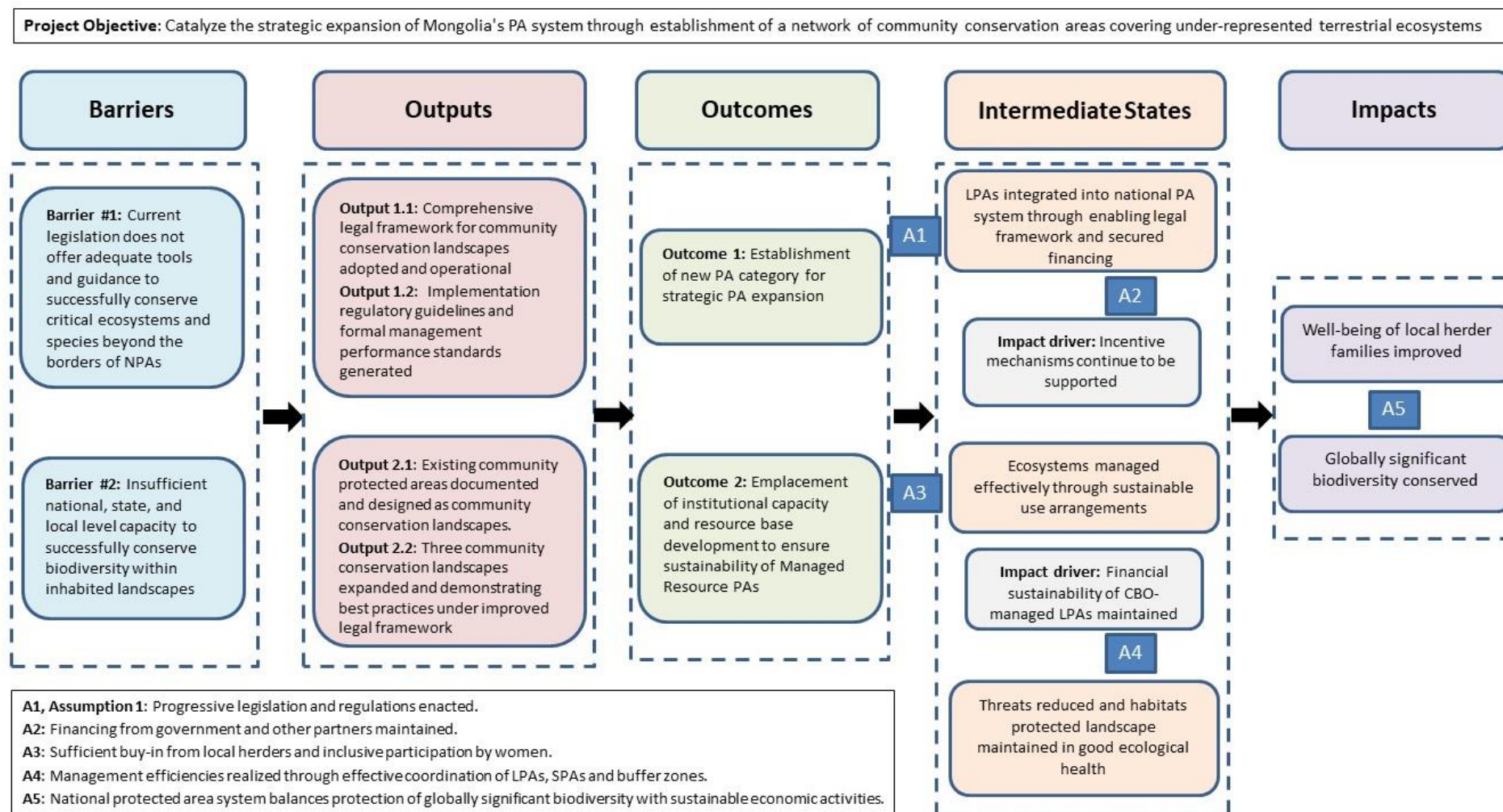


Figure 1: Theory of change diagram

### 3 Assessment of Project Design

#### 3.1 Analysis of project results framework

The project was approved under the GEF-5 replenishment cycle and aligned to the GEF-5 Biodiversity Strategy, specifically Objective 1, *"Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems"*, Outcome 1.1, *"Improved management effectiveness of existing and new protected areas"*.

The two project components were designed to be mutually supportive:

**Component 1:** Establishment of new protected area category for strategic protected area expansion

**Component 2:** Emplacement of institutional capacity and resource base development to ensure sustainability of managed resource protected areas

Component 1 focuses on legislative reforms required for legally recognizing LPAs in the national protected area system and providing legal status to community-based organizations (CBOs) that are tasked with managing LPAs under community conservation arrangements. And, Component 2 was formulated to strengthen institutional and local capacities for implementing community conservation areas (or managed resource protected areas) and demonstrate the implementation best practice at three LPA sites.

As part of this terminal evaluation, the project results framework for the project was assessed against "SMART" criteria, to evaluate whether the indicators and targets were sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. With respect to the time-bound criterion, all targets are assumed compliant, as they are set as end-of-project performance metrics.

#### Project Objective:

There are two indicators at the project objective level, with the first indicator representing changes in the area under the national protected system, and the second one focusing on increased coverage of under-represented ecosystems in the protected area system. The SMART analysis of the objective level section of the project results framework is presented below in **Table 6**.

**Table 6: SMART analysis of project results framework (project objective)**

Indicator	Baseline	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
<b>Objective:</b> To catalyze the strategic expansion of Mongolia's PA system through establishment of a network of community conservation areas covering under-represented terrestrial ecosystems							
1. Hectares within the total protected area system, including community conservation areas	Total LPA (without community managed areas) is 16 million ha, but not included in the NPA System	19.2 million ha	?	?	?	Y	Y
2. Hectares of seven under-represented ecosystems within total protected areas system, including community conservation areas	Total area of under-represented ecosystems is 102 million ha	80 million ha	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria							

Regarding Indicator No. 1, it is unclear whether the focus is on LPAs with community managed areas or LPAs integrated into the national protected area system – or both. The baseline was indicated to be 16 million ha, of LPAs without community managed areas and not included in the national PA system. The end target was 19.2 million ha. Based on this unclear formulation, the indicator is considered not fully compliant with SMART criteria. For Indicator No. 2, the achievability of the targeted reduction of 22 million of area of under-represented ecosystems is implausible; this area is nearly equal to the current size of the special protected area system. Achieving such a reduction, or in other words, an expansion of the protected area system, in 5 years is overly optimistic.

#### **Outcome 1:**

There are two indicators under Outcome 1; Indicator No. 3 regards amended legislation and new regulations adopted to establish and guide effective management of community conservation areas, and Indicator No. 4 is a measure of the envisaged increase in the number of community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the national protected area system. The SMART analysis of Outcome 1 indicators included in the project results framework is presented below in **Table 7**.

**Table 7: SMART analysis of project results framework (Outcome 1)**

Indicator	Baseline	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
Outcome 1: Establishment of new PA category for strategic PA expansion							
3. Specific NPA legislation amended and/or new regulation adopted to establish and guide effective management of community conservation areas	0 No national law and/or regulation adopted as described	1 national law and/or regulation adopted as described	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
4. Number of community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system according to the amended national legislation and/or regulation	0 community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system	50 community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria							

The Outcome 1 indicators were found to be largely compliant with SMART criteria. The term community conservation area is assumed interchangeable with managed resource protected areas; the community conservation area seems to be a term more commonly used in Mongolia on earlier projects and, hence, stakeholders seem more sensitized to this term. Regarding Indicator No. 3, the achievability of adopting amended legislation and new regulations is questionable; it is often difficult to match a 5-year project timeline with legislative processes, which are often interrupted by changes in governments – something that indeed happened during the implementation phase of the project.

### Outcome 2:

Four indicators were established for Outcome 2. The first one, Indicator No. 5, is a measure of management effectiveness of LPAs at the three demonstration areas using the GEF-5 management effectiveness tracking tool (METT). Indicator No. 6 represents the ownership of the PAAD regarding oversight of community conservation areas, measured through establishment of a dedicated center within the PAAD. Indicator No. 7 is a measure of decentralized protected area governance, demonstrated through enforceable management plans at the local level and sustainable financing solutions identified. In the case of the Gulzat LPA, Argali trophy hunting was operating under the baseline conditions, but none of the income was allocated towards conservation management. Indicator No. 8 was formulated to measure the influence of improved enforcement on reducing threats. The SMART analysis of the Outcome 2 indicators included in the project results framework is presented below in **Table 8**.

**Table 8: SMART analysis of project results framework (Outcome 2)**

Indicator	Baseline	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
Outcome 2: Emplacement of institutional capacity and resource base development to ensure sustainability of Managed Resource PAs							
5. METT Scores for at least three LPAs converted and/or established as community conservation areas	METT scores for three pilot sites: Gulzat LPA: 37 (36.3%) Khavtgar LPA: 26 (25.5%) Tosonkhulstai (Buffer Zone): 4 (4%)	METT scores increased to: Gulzat LPA: 50 Khavtgar LPA: 40 Tosonkhulstai (Buffer Zone): 26 Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA: N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
6. PAAD has a fully functional, staffed and government funded CCA resource center providing on-going monitoring, support and extension training for local conservation decision-makers	0 functional institutional, staffed center within PAAD to support effective CCAs	1 functional institutional center within PAAD to support effective CCA	Y	Y	?	?	Y
7. Decentralized regional PA governance framework involving community and local governments (Soum and Aimag) established in 3 demonstration sites	0 project sites applying legally enforceable management plan to improve conservation of wide-ranging species and mitigate conservation threats	3 project sites applying enforceable management plan to improve conservation of wide-ranging species and mitigate conservation threats	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Gulzat LPA: Current Gulzat NGO runs with 3 employees 0 amount has spent on conservation management from income of hunting	Gulzat LPA: The effective conservation management model is developed and strengthened. No less than 50% of income from hunting is spent on conservation management	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Khavtgar LPA: “Khavtgar Shireet” NGO management structure & organizational capacity are weak & no clear financial source	Khavtgar LPA: -The effective conservation management model is developed and strengthened	?	Y	Y	?	Y

Indicator	Baseline	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
			S	M	A	R	T
		- sustainable financial sources are identified					
	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> No legal body appointed for the conservation management of LPA and no clear financial source	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> -LPA conservation management model and management plan is developed -sustainable financial sources are identified	?	Y	Y	?	Y
8. Policing and enforcement of laws and regulations for biodiversity conservation results in reduction of threats and no net loss of key indicators at three pilot sites	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Total population of Argali sheep ( <i>Ovis ammon ammon</i> ) (1048 as of 2012)	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Increase in population of Argali sheep ( <i>Ovis ammon ammon</i> ) (1,150)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population of moose <i>Alces alces</i> (20 as of 2010)</li> <li>Population of musk deer <i>Moschus moschiferus</i> (7 as of 2010)</li> <li>Population of red deer <i>Cervus elaphus</i> (22 as of 2010)</li> </ul>	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in population of moose <i>Alces alces</i> (25)</li> <li>Increase in population of musk deer <i>Moschus moschiferus</i> (15)</li> <li>Increase in population of red deer <i>Cervus elaphus</i> (30)</li> </ul>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> No. of protected wetlands/lakes as habitat for key migratory bird species <sup>2</sup> : 0	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> No. of protected wetlands/lakes as habitat for key migratory bird species: 5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound  
Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria

Indicator No. 5 was found to be SMART compliant. Regarding Indicator No. 6, the relevance and achievability of establishing and maintaining a dedicated center within the PAAD are questionable. Considering the budget shortfalls and hiring restrictions, focusing on mainstreaming responsibilities of overseeing management of community conservation areas into the current structure of PAAD might have been a more practicable approach.

Securing sustainable financing for the Khavtgar and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPAs is understandably difficult to achieve over a relatively short period of time; however, identifying sustainable financial sources is a bit weak. For example, amending the end target with preparation of a business plan based on the identified sustainable financial solutions would increase the likelihood that the local CBOs would be able to raise funds after the project closed.

### 3.2 Assumptions and risks

Assumptions and risks to the success of project implementation were outlined in the project document, along with ratings of the probability of risks materializing and the associated impact would ensue. Summaries of the planned mitigation measures and indications of whether the risks remain valid at closure are discussed below in **Table 9**.

**Table 9: Project risks**

Risk/Assumption	Rating Impact / Probability High: 5; Low: 1	Summary of planned mitigation measure and validity of the identified risk at project closure
Revised Protected Area / Natural Resource Management Legislation will not be passed.	Impact: 2 Probability: 3	This risk proved to be valid and remains open at project closure. Considering legislative delays in the past regarding protected area legislation, the probability rating should have been set higher. The impact rating also seems under-estimated. The project did proactively engage with the working group established to advance the proposed amendments to the Law on Special Areas, but changes in government over course of the project set the process back.
Adequate expertise is not harnessed to support project implementation.	Impact 4: Probability: 2	The project was successful in recruiting conservation professionals; although having the national project coordinator cover both the SPAN project and this one through the end of 2015 was too much to ask one person, in the opinion of the TE team, and not the most effective solution. Delays in procurement of services during the transition to a full NIM implementation

<sup>2</sup> Protected lakes will have no herder households reside within 2 km radius. The wetlands are habitat for Demoiselle crane, White-naped crane and



Risk/Assumption	Rating Impact / Probability High: 5; Low: 1	Summary of planned mitigation measure and validity of the identified risk at project closure
		modality was possibly more of an issue than the availability of experts.
Growing mining interests – including artisanal mining – prevent the further establishment of protected areas.	Impact: 2 Probability: 2	Local protected areas (LPA)s are integrated into local development planning, typically based on the premise of deterring land claims by the mining sector. The Mineral Resources Authority was involved during project implementation, together with the MET and ALAGAC, in sorting out legal conflicts associated with declared LPAs. If both LPAs and SPAs are counted, the 30% target of PAs set by the government has been essentially fulfilled. Moving forward, mainstreaming biodiversity conservation within the mining sector, in areas outside of PAs will be increasingly important.
Stakeholders' individual interests inhibit viable co-management and key decision makers are not convinced of the feasibility of co-management.	Impact: 2 Probability: 3	National and international organizations have been promoting community-based conservation for several years in Mongolia. This risk did not materialize during project implementation and, in the opinion of the TE team, is not valid at project closure.
Financial sustainability of community conservation areas fails to materialize, resulting in low level of management effectiveness.	Impact: 2 Probability: 3	Mitigation of this risk included focusing on legislative and regulatory reform that would legally recognize LPAs and the CBOs that are managing them and strengthening capacities of CBOs in developing management and business plans and identifying sustainable financing sources. Considering lessons learned on other projects in Mongolia, the estimated impact and probability of this risk seem to have been under-stated. This risk was elevated to a critical risk near the end of the project. The project worked with the BIOFIN team and cofinancing partners in establishing and identifying sustainable financing solutions for the demonstration LPAs. This risk remains valid at project closure.
Climate change could lead to both changed distributions of BD components, and changes in demands on biodiversity-based resources.	Impact: 2 Probability: 5	The project was designed to build resilience through expansion of the protected area system among under-represented ecosystems and through strengthening capacities of local communities to manage the natural resources they are reliant upon. The risk remains valid at project closure.

One risk was identified as part of the environmental and social screening process at project development<sup>3</sup>, specifically under the category of Social Equity and Equality, regarding the risk of “Would the proposed project have environmental and social impacts that could affect indigenous people or other vulnerable groups”. Indigenous people were indicated to include the Buriats people (3,000) in Khavtgai and the Durved (2,500) and Bayad (250) people in Gulza. Potential negative consequences identified include management practices and regulatory frameworks that diminish access to natural resources (e.g., water, grazing areas), lower investment incentives for pro-conservation economic activities, and increase social and economic vulnerabilities. This risk should have been included in the risk table in the main body of the project document.

There are socioeconomic benefits inherently included in the project strategy; however, specific socioeconomic benefits and gender mainstreaming targets were not captured in the project results framework.

### 3.3 Lessons learned and linkages with other projects

The project design was informed by lessons learned on other projects and potential synergies with concurrent projects and programs. The project was most closely aligned with the UNDP supported, GEF financed project “Strengthening of the PA Networking System in Mongolia (SPAN)” (GEF ID 3820), which closed in December 2015. Apart with complementary objectives, the MRPA and SPAN projects shared administrative and management resources in the first

<sup>3</sup> Environmental and Social Screening Checklist, Annex F to the project document.



two years. This included having project manager of the SPAN project take responsibility for the MRPA project as well, holding joint project board meetings and sharing assets.

The project also built upon results achieved under the UNDP supported, GEF financed project “Community-based Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mountain Landscapes of Mongolia's Altai Sayan Ecoregion” (GEF ID 1100), which closed in December 2011. The local capacities strengthened on that project supported the project activities in the Gulzat LPA, situated in the Altai region in Western Mongolia.

Synergies were highlighted with the UNDP supported, Adaptation Fund 6-year, USD 5.5 million grant project “Ecosystem Based Adaptation Approach to Maintaining Water Security in Critical Water Catchments in Mongolia”, which began in 2012. The Adaptation Fund project is operating in some of the same areas as the MRPA project, promoting ecosystem-based adaptation through incentivizing sustainable agriculture, livestock management and protection of water resources. Reintroduction of marmot in the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA in the eastern part of Mongolia was jointly funded by the Adaptation Fund and MRPA projects.

The donor community and domestic and international NGOs play an important role in biodiversity conservation in Mongolia, and the project design drew off from lessons learned by the civil society sector. WWF Mongolia, for example, has been promoting expansion of community-based conservation for many years, including in the Gulzat region which was selected as one of the three demonstration areas by the project. WCS has also been actively supporting community-based conservation, including managing a 5-year, USD 1 million project funded by the USAID, that was implemented starting in 2009, and focused on promoting landscape-based conservation on the Eastern Steppe and included improving community-based wildlife management, monitoring and enforcement.

At one of the other demonstration areas, the Khavtgar LPA in eastern Mongolia, a local NGO received USD 260,000 through a GIZ project to improve management capacities, including tourism development. Among the lessons learned from that project, community-based organizations were established with insufficient consultation and participation, and, as a result, there was general lack of ownership of the concepts developed.

### **3.4 Planned stakeholder participation**

Planned stakeholder participation was outlined in the Stakeholder Involvement Plan, Annex E to the project document. The plan provided a broad description of a participatory and inclusive approach to stakeholder engagement. The project board would provide overall guidance, and a technical advisory board established under the SPAN project would be shared on this project for support on technical issues. Stakeholder committees were also planned for each of the three demonstration areas. The project implementation unit (PIU) was tasked with being responsible for facilitating stakeholder participation.

Training was one of the mechanisms described for facilitating effective stakeholder involvement, with respect to the envisaged regulatory reforms, community-based conservation, gender mainstreaming, etc. The stakeholder involvement approach was also very much centered on partnership arrangements with cofinancing partners and with other organizations carrying out complementary projects and programs. Private enterprises were identified as one of the stakeholder groups; however, there were no specific strategies outlined for promoting private sector involvement.

### **3.5 Replication approach**

The project design was predicated on replication. The legislative and regulatory reform under Outcome 1 was envisaged to strengthen the enabling environment for establishment and management of local protected areas (LPAs) under community-based conservation arrangements. And, the experiences and lessons learned through three demonstration areas included in Outcome 2 would provide scale-able implementation frameworks for replicating across the protected area system, including special protected areas (SPAs).

Specific aspects of the project design that were developed to facilitate replication include, but are not limited to the following:

- Output 2.3, “Lessons learned captured and enhancing effectiveness of community conservation landscapes nationally” was included specifically for promoting replication.
- One of the performance targets under Outcome 2 called for a “functional institutional staffed and government funded within PAAD to support effective center within PAAD to community conservation area community conservation areas”.
- A quarterly newsletter was planned, for distribution nationally to all Soum governments and all Directors of PAAs.

- A conservation landscape toolbox tailored specifically for Soum level decisionmakers was planned to assist these individuals in increasing their understanding of best national and international integrated conservation principles and practices. The toolbox was envisaged to be packaged into a DVD or similar electronic media and distributed nationally to all 329 Soum governors and Khural speakers.

### 3.6 UNDP comparative advantage

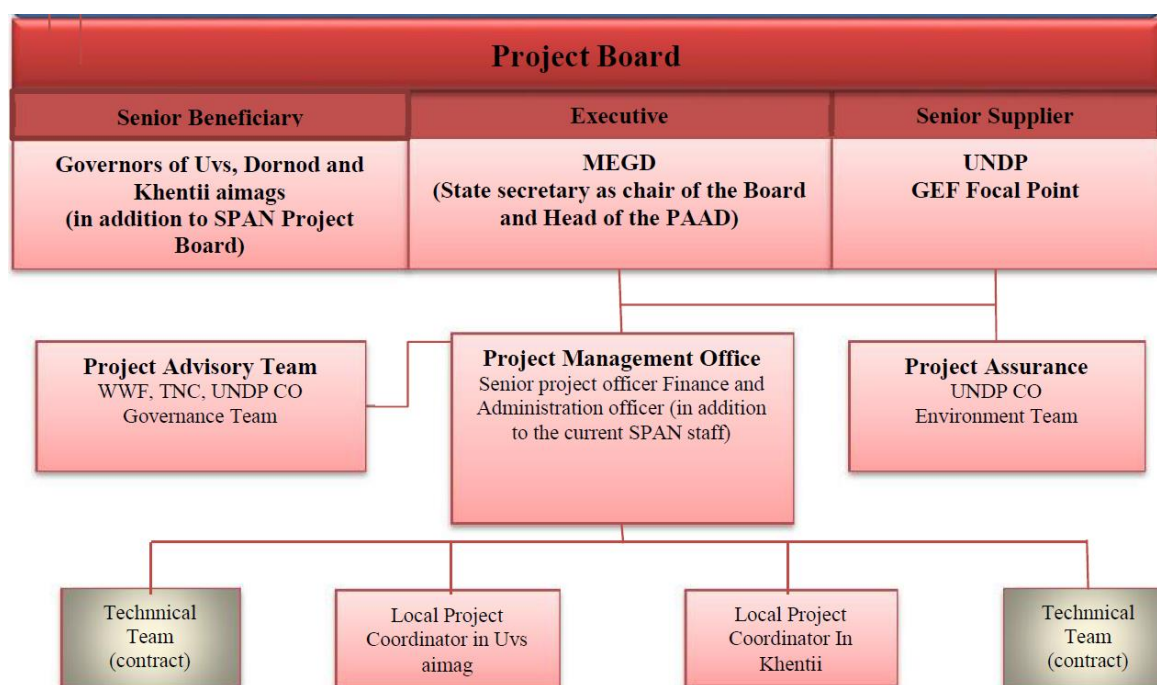
The UNDP comparative advantage as the GEF agency was based on their extensive experience working in Mongolia, with in-country operations in Ulaanbaatar, their favorable standing among national stakeholders, including the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, and their institutional expertise in supporting biodiversity conservation projects; protected areas remains one of the key focuses of UNDP's Ecosystems and Biodiversity team. UNDP has delivered extensive and continuous in-country support to the Mongolian government and other partners in strengthening institutional and individual capacities with respect to biodiversity conservation, and the multitude of aspects centered on human development, including gender and social inclusion.

UNDP has worked in Mongolia since the 1970s and has supported GEF biodiversity projects since the start of GEF programming in the early 1990s. The Programme team at the UNDP Country Office has in-house specialists to support the project, and senior management in the CO provides resident strategic guidance. The UNDP Regional Technical Advisor based in Bangkok provides high level advisory services, e.g., through sharing best practices and lessons learned from the large portfolio of GEF biodiversity projects supported by UNDP.

### 3.7 Management arrangements

The project was designed under a national implementation modality (NIM), with UNDP operating at the GEF agency (implementing agency) and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) as the lead implementation partner (or executing agency). The project design was completed during a period of transition, when the former national execution modality (NEX) was phased into NIM arrangements. The earlier NEX modality was in fact a "supported" NEX arrangement, with UNDP contracting project staff, carrying out procurement, contracting sub-contractors and suppliers, etc. The NIM modality shifted most of these services to the executing agency, under public procurement and human resource legislation and procedures.

The management arrangements are illustrated in the project organization structure copied below in **Figure 2**.



**Figure 2: Project Organization Structure<sup>4</sup>**

A Project Implementation Unit (PIU), or project management office was set up under the Protected Areas Administration Department (PAAD) of MET, utilizing office space external from the PAAD offices. The project board was co-chaired by the State Secretary of MET and the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative. The project board also

<sup>4</sup> Copied from the project document.

included the GEF Focal Point and governors of the aimags where the three demonstration areas are located: Uvs, Dornad and Khentii. The head of the PAAD was appointed the National Project Director (NPD) and provided day-to-day guidance to the project team.

The National Project Coordinator (NPC) of the SPAN project was upgraded to also cover the MRPA project. The PIU also included a Project Finance and Administration Officer for the duration of the project, and a Monitoring & Evaluation Officer and Policy Officer who worked under full-time arrangements for part of the project implementation timeframe. Local project coordinators were recruited in the local government units where the three demonstration areas are located.

## 4 Assessment of Project Results

### 4.1 Outputs

#### Output 1.1: Comprehensive legal framework for community conservation landscapes adopted and operational

##### Key Achievements:

- Provided technical assistance in supporting the MET in developing a concept paper and drafting a proposed revision to the Law on Special Protected Areas, to legally recognize LPAs in the national protected area system.
- Provided technical assistance in developing a concept paper and drafting an amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection, involving clarifying the legal status of conservation CBOs, registration of CBOs, assigning responsibility to local governments on funding and approving management plans of CBOs from local budgets and allowing CBOs to enter into legal collaboration with third parties.
- Provided technical assistance in drafting the proposed "Guideline for local governments on granting the management of LPAs to legal entities. This guideline would become a regulation upon approval of the proposed revision to the Law on Special Protected Areas and amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection.
- Provided technical assistance in drafting the proposed "Guideline on taking land under special needs and registering in cadastral database". The guideline was approved by the order of the Director of ALAGAC (Order No. A/73-16, March 2017) and delivered to all aimags in the country for implementation.
- Provided technical assistance in drafting a revision to the "Regulation on taking land under local protection". This regulation together with the guideline outlined in the previous point would be incorporated into a regulation upon agreement of the METG and ALAGAC.
- Completed a landscape-level study on the conservation of key species; the results of the study, summarized below in **Table 10**, was delivered to target aimags and soums for further integration into policy and action plans.

**Table 10:** Summary of landscape-level study on the conservation of key species<sup>5</sup>

Species covered by study	% of area outside of SPA		% of area under mining license	
	Distribution area	Core area	Distribution area	Core area
Argali sheep	71.3	52.6	12.3	8.0
Elk	67.8	51.2	3.1	1.5
Roe deer	73.2	54.3	3.0	2.0
Musk deer	53.7	41.8	2.3	1.6
Moose	31.6	10.1	2.0	1.0
Wild boar	58.4	28.4	3.0	2.3
Mongolian Gazelle	88.3	83.2	9.0	7.3
White-naped Crane	75.9	76.4	14.2	2.0

- Organized an international study tour to the Republic of Kazakhstan with 10 participants, including representatives of the Standing Committee of Parliament, MET, Special Protected Area administrations, and representatives from aimag and soum governments among the three demonstration areas. One of the main take-aways from the study tour was the development of land use master plans for newly designated PAs and

<sup>5</sup> Extracted from the slides presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Forum for Conservation Communities held on 2017 February 21 on Local Protected Areas, community-based conservation.

potential sustainable financing alternatives for PAs, including retention of income at the site. Based on information gathered on the study tour, some additional provisions were added to the proposed revision/amendment to the Law on Special Protected Areas.

- Facilitated inter-sectoral cooperation through funding a contract worker at the PAAD, who assisted in integrating the LPA database with the cadastral database of the Mining Authority, assisted the Institute of Meteorology and the National Association of CBOs in maintaining the database on natural resource co-management CBOs.

#### **Issues/Challenges:**

- The proposed legislative reforms have not been enacted by project closure. The project team has assisted the legislative working group established by the MET in finalizing the draft documentations. The State Secretary of the MET informed the TE team that he will continue to promote advancement of these legislative and regulatory reforms and expects to have the draft documentation submitted to parliament later in 2017.

### **Output 1.2: Implementation regulatory guidelines and formal management performance standards generated**

#### **Key Achievements:**

- In collaboration with partners including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation's Green Gold program, TNC and WWF, developed criteria for evaluating performance of the implementation of LPA management plans and agreements between soum governments and CBOs. Using the developed set of criteria, the project facilitated participatory evaluations of performance of the implementation of management plans for the three demonstration LPAs. The criteria and process of evaluating performance of management plans were included in the proposed revision/amendment to the Law on Special Protected Areas.
- Facilitated participatory assessments of LPA management effectiveness for the three demonstration LPAs using the management effectiveness tracking tool.
- Worked with CBOs, local governments and cofinancing partners in identifying and promoting sustainable financing solutions for management of the three demonstration LPAs.
- Facilitated implementation of landscape level conservation strategy for conservation of key species at demonstration LPAs, including (1) memorandum of understanding between three soums and two special protected areas (Dornod and Onon Balj) at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, and (2) a tripartite contract between the Khavtgar LPA management entity, the Khan-Khentii special protected area and the soum.
- Convened project board and technical advisory committee meetings.

#### **Issues/Challenges:**

- Sustainable financing solutions identified and promoted require further feasibility analysis and partnership building, e.g., for the proposed sustainable meat impact investment for the Khavtgar and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPAs, monitoring of the function and replenishment of the conservation trust fund established for the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, and monitoring of the shared allocation of trophy hunting income generated at the Gulzat LPA.

### **Output 2.1: Existing community protected areas documented and designated as community conservation landscapes**

#### **Key Achievements:**

- Provided technical assistance in supporting the development of a database containing information local protected areas. The database is housed on the system managed by the Environmental Information Center ([www.eic.mn/spalocal/](http://www.eic.mn/spalocal/)); A screenshot of the LPA database is shown below in **Figure 3**.

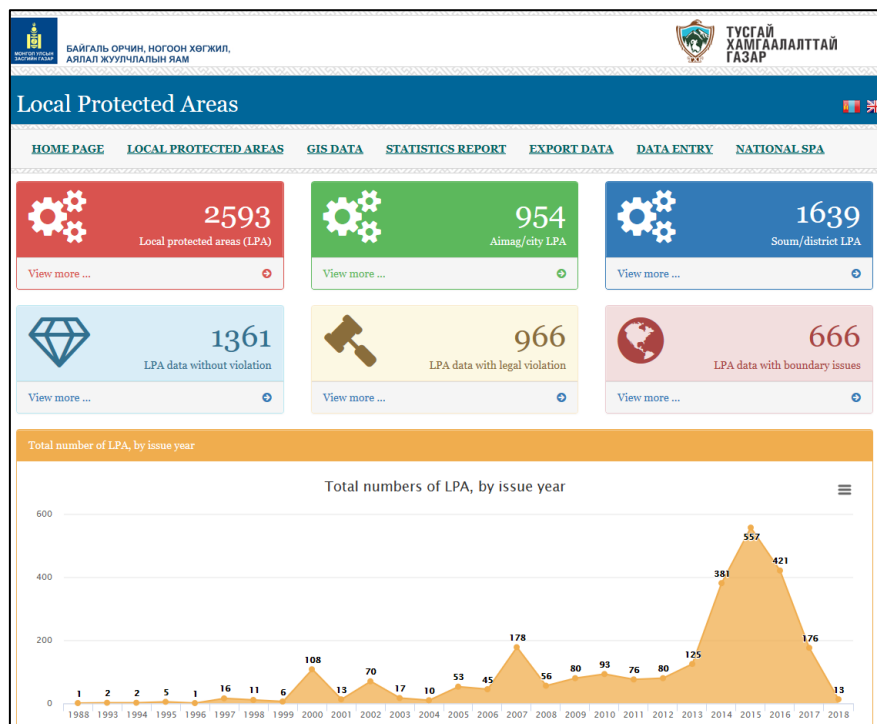


Figure 3: LPA database ([www.eic.mn/spalocal/](http://www.eic.mn/spalocal/)) screenshot 23 April 2018

- In November 2017, four-party agreement was concluded between the ALAGAC, the PAAD, the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority, and the Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment, regarding the responsibility of maintaining the LPA database.
- In collaboration with the Mongolian Association of Natural Resource CBO's, the project provided technical assistance in development of a website ([www.nukhurlul.gov.mn](http://www.nukhurlul.gov.mn)) and database of natural resource CBOs ([www.eic.mn/community/](http://www.eic.mn/community/)); A screenshot of the CBO database is shown below in Figure 4.

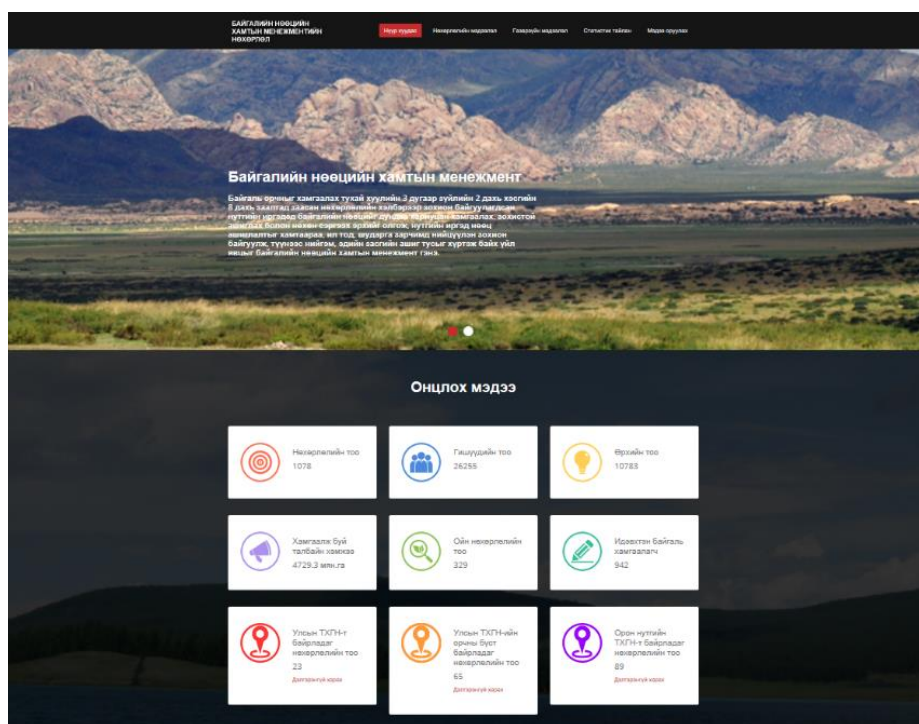


Figure 4: CBO database ([www.eic.mn/community/](http://www.eic.mn/community/)) screenshot 23 April 2018

- Based on information available on the CBO database ([www.eic.mn/community/](http://www.eic.mn/community/)) on 23 April 2018, there are 1,078 registered CBOs, including 10,783 households and having 26,255 total members.



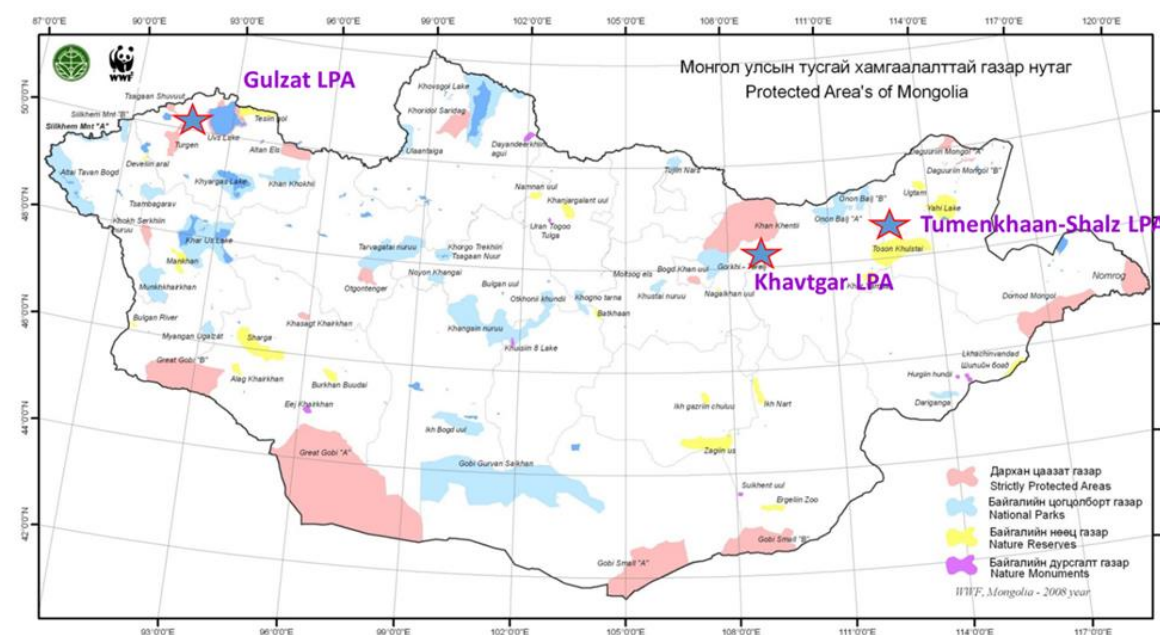
### Issues/Challenges:

- The National Association of Natural Resource CBOs has been unable to maintain the CBO database and website since project funded IT experts completed their contract terms at the end of 2017.

### Output 2.2: Three community conservation landscapes expanded and demonstrating best practices under improved legal framework

#### Key Achievements:

- Facilitated expansion of three demonstration LPAs; the locations of the three LPAs are shown on the map below in **Figure 5**.



**Figure 5:** Country map showing locations of three demonstration LPAs

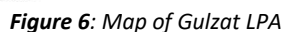
- The cumulative land area of the three LPAs at project closure is 742,851 ha, an increase of 510,451 ha from project baseline, broken down below in **Table 11**.

**Table 11:** Breakdown of expansions at demonstration LPAs

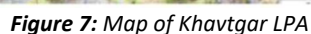
Local Protected Area	Georeferenced Coordinates		Size at CEO endorsement, ha	Area at project closure, ha
	Longitude	Latitude		
Gulzat LPA	90°0'-90°30' E	49°50'-50°10' N	126,772	203,316
Khavtgar LPA	109°47'-110°0' E	48°40'-48°50' N	104,936	104,936
Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA	112°0'-113°0' E	48°40'-49°0' N	0	374,499
Two LPAs established near Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA	112°0'-113°0' E	48°49'-49°1' N	0	26,880
				32,518
Total:			231,708	742,149
New coverage of unprotected ecosystems:			510,451 ha	

The Gulzat LPA covers a cumulative area of 203,316 ha (including 76,554 ha connecting Argali habitat between the two participating soums), which was expanded over the course of the project from 126,772 ha at project entry. The LPA extends across Buhmurun and Sagil soums of Uvs aimag. The 13 CBOs that are managing the LPA comprise a total of 600 herders in 198 households, with 14 volunteer rangers carrying out monitoring and enforcement tasks as outlined in the management plan. The layout of the Gulzat LPA is shown on the map below in **Figure 6**.

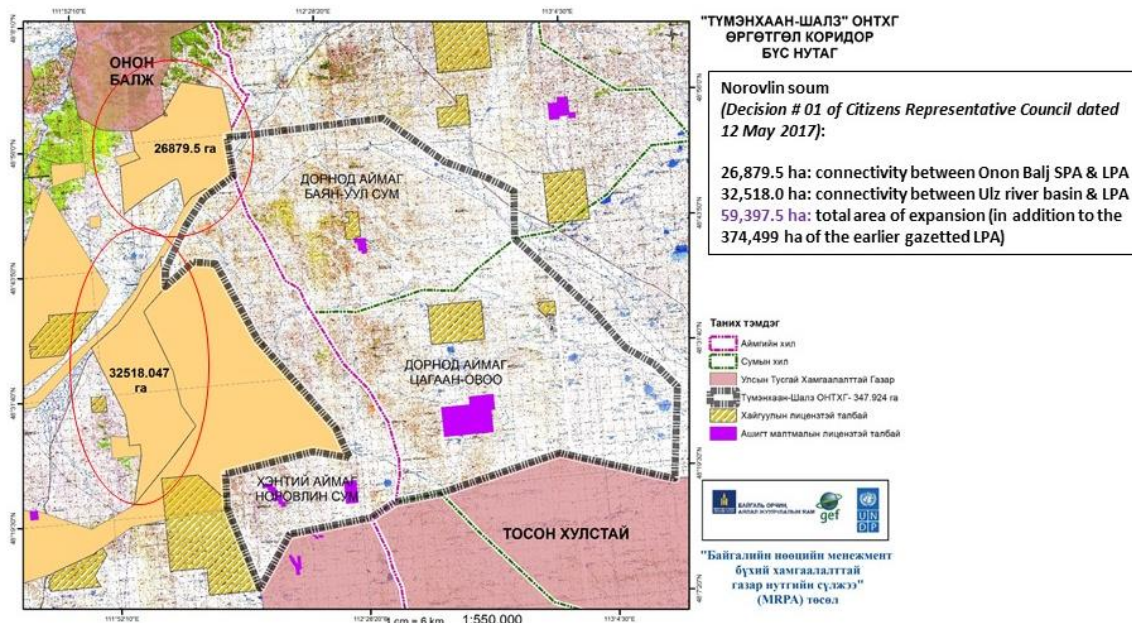




The Khavtgar LPA covers 104,936 ha and is adjacent to the buffer zone of the Khan Khentii SPA, in the Batshireet soum of Khentii aimag. The 6 forest user CBOs that are managing the LPA comprise a total of 88 households, with 8 volunteer rangers carrying out monitoring and enforcement tasks as outlined in the management plan. The layout of the Khavtgar LPA is shown on the map below in **Figure 7**.



The Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA covers a cumulative area of 374,499 ha. The LPA extends across three soums in two aimags: Bayan-Uul and Tsagaan-ovoo soums of Dornod aimag, and Norovlin soum in Khentii aimag. The 15 CBOs that are managing the LPA comprise a total of 149 households, with 30 volunteer rangers carrying out monitoring and enforcement tasks as outlined in the management plan. Moreover, two other LPAs were gazetted adjacent to the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA covering a cumulative area of 59,397.5 ha; these two LPAs were established to improve connectivity for Mongolian gazelle. The layout of the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA and the two other LPAs established nearby are shown on the map below in **Figure 8**.



**Figure 8: Map of Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA**

- The project guided the development and implementation of LPA management plans and identified sustainable financing options for the three demonstration LPAs.
- The project strengthened the capacities of 33 CBOs that are managing the three demonstration LPAs; the CBOs are largely comprised of traditional, nomadic herders, in 6 soums in 3 different aimags. An estimated 1,300 people residing in these soums have directly benefitted.
- The project provided equipment and supplies for monitoring and enforcement activities.
- In 2016, the project implemented a small grants program, supporting alternative livelihood activities for households among the participating CBOs.
- Sustainable financing options have been identified for each of the demonstration LPAs. The Gulzat LPA is largely financed from revenue shared from proceeds generated from Argali trophy hunting. The Khavtgar LPA is partially supported from the cooperating with an adjacent SPA buffer zone; however, buffer zone funding from the central government is temporarily not forthcoming. A conservation trust fund was established for the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA. Through cooperation with the BIOFIN initiative, potential impact investments were identified for Tumenkhaan-Shalz and Khavtgar LPAs associated with sustainable meat production.
- An international eco-school program was implemented in collaboration with a NGO and cofinanced with funding from the Canada fund, in 3 schools in 3 of the target soums (Norovlin, Bayan-uul and Tsagaan-ovoo).

#### **Issues/Challenges:**

- Sustainable financing options require further oversight and development.

#### **Output 2.3: Lessons learned captured and enhancing effectiveness of community conservation landscapes nationally**

##### **Key Achievements:**

- Supported participation of 17 herders representing 9 CBOs in 5 soums, in the Second National Forum for Natural Resource CBOs held in Ulaanbaatar in 2016. The forum was attended by more than 800 participants and included a trade fair, in which some of the invited CBO representatives showcased and traded some of the products developed for alternative income generation.



- In collaboration with the National Federation of Pasture User Groups, organized a 20-person study tour in September 2017 to Tariat and Ikh Tamir soums of the Arkhangai aimaig for CBO members, rangers and soum officials for sharing experiences on fund management, pasture management and income generation activities.
- Developed and implemented a volunteer ranger award program, to recognize good work and motivate the rangers.
- Prepared several knowledge products, including but not limited to the following:
  - Project fact sheet
  - Fact sheet for Tumenkhaan-Shalz, Khavtgar and Gulzat LPA's
  - Prepared and printed labels for above 20 products;
  - Banner on project introduction for Second national forum;
  - Photo board on the project activities and results
  - Factsheet on the National protected Area Network (updated);
  - Poster and leaflet on birds in Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA.

#### Issues/Challenges:

- It would be beneficial to prepare a best practice guideline on managed resource protected areas in Mongolia, drawing upon the lessons learned on the project and sharing with the broader conservation.

## 4.2 Outcomes

### 4.2.1 Effectiveness

Effectiveness was evaluated by assessing achievement of the project objective and outcomes according to the agreed performance metrics included in the project results framework.

With respect to targets established under the relevant GEF-5 focal area outputs, the project aimed at achieving four (4) new protected areas, covering 450,409 ha of previously unprotected ecosystems and protecting three (3) threatened species. At the time of TE, 510,451 ha of new coverage of unprotected ecosystems was realized, including the new Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA and the expansion of the Gulzat LPA. With respect to protected of threatened species, the new Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA includes habitat for migratory birds; limited information was available regarding populations and conservation status. Overall, achievement of the focal area output targets is rated as partially achieved.

Expected Focal Area Outputs*	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Output 1.1. New protected areas (4) and coverage (450,409 hectares) of unprotected ecosystems	New Protected Areas: 1 (Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA) New Coverage of Unprotected Ecosystems: 510,451 ha	Partially Achieved
Output 1.2. New protected areas (4) and coverage (450,409 hectares) of unprotected threatened species (3)	New Protected Areas: 1 (Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA) New Coverage of Unprotected Ecosystems: 510,451 ha Protected threatened species: migratory birds at Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA	

\*Source: CEO Endorsement Request, 2 April 2013

**Objective: Catalyze the strategic expansion of Mongolia's PA system through establishment of a network of community conservation areas covering under-represented terrestrial ecosystems**

**Achievement of the project objective is rated as: Satisfactory**

With respect to Indicator No. 1, according to the LPA database ([www.eic.mn/spalocal](http://www.eic.mn/spalocal)) managed by the Environmental Information Center, as of 23 April 2018 there were a total of 1,361 LPA's without having legal issues covering a cumulative area of 23,671,182.49 ha, or 15.13% of the total land area of the country. This figure exceeds the 19.2 million ha end target; however, this result was assessed by the TE team as partially achieved because LPAs are not yet fully recognized in the NPA system.

Indicator No. 1: Hectares within the total protected area system, including community conservation areas				
	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Value:	Total LPA (without community managed areas) is 16 million ha, but not included in the NPA System	19.2 million ha	23.67 million ha Source: <a href="http://www.eic.mn/spalocal">www.eic.mn/spalocal</a>	Partially Achieved
Date:	2012	July 2018	23 April 2018	

With respect to the term “community managed area”, for the purposes of the TE, these areas are defined as LPAs covered/managed by CBOs. As of 23 April 2018, the CBO database ([www.eic.mn/community/](http://www.eic.mn/community/)) had 1,078 CBOs registered (which are 66% of the total 1,629 reported) covering/managing a total of 4,729,299.84 ha, of which 489,290.54 ha are located within LPAs, as broken down below in **Table 12**.

**Table 12: Breakdown of types of natural resource CBOs registered and types of land covered**

Type of land/use covered by CBO	Number	Area, ha
Special Protected Areas (SPAs)	23	134,320.50
Buffer zones to SPAs	65	268,058.20
<b>Local Protected Areas (LPAs) – community managed areas</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>489,290.54</b>
Forest user groups	329	933,414.60
Undefined CBOs + Pasture user groups	572	2,904,216.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1078</b>	<b>4,729,299.84</b>

Source: CBO database 23 April 2018, [www.eic.mn/community](http://www.eic.mn/community)

The second objective level indicator focuses on increasing coverage of under-represented ecosystems within the total protected area systems in the country, including community conservation areas. The baseline, in 2012, was indicated to be 102 million ha; this is the total area under-represented ecosystems. The end target was set at 80 million ha, which is a decrease of 22 million ha from the baseline. As discussed in Section 3 of this TE report, this target is implausible. In fact, the description of Outcome 1.1 in the Project Framework in the CEO Endorsement Request read as follows: “National PA estate expanded by 450,409 ha over baseline of 26.2 million ha, and increased PA coverage of the following globally important habitats currently under-represented in the PA system”, and the baseline and target ecosystem coverage shown below in **Table 13** were included.

**Table 13: Breakdown under-represented ecosystems in PA system: baseline and end targets**

Ecosystem	Baseline PA Cover (as % of habitat)	Target PA Cover (as % of habitat)	Status at TE
High Mountain Steppe	11.14	15.98	Unable to assess
Sub-boreal mixed forest	9.96	10.41	Unable to assess
Meadow Steppe	7.62	8.41	Unable to assess
Moderate dry steppe	5.39	5.71	Unable to assess
Dry Steppe	4.24	4.41	Unable to assess
Desert Steppe	6.56	6.59	Unable to assess
Closed Depression, salt banks	9.03	9.03	Unable to assess

As reported under the Indicator No. 1 discussion, the LPA system expanded by 4.47 million ha (23.67 million ha – 19.2 million ha) over the course of the project, and 510,451 ha of that expansion occurred among the three demonstration LPAs on the project. For the purposes of the TE, we assume that the 510,451-ha expansion occurred in under-represented ecosystems, according to local government resolutions and reference to ecoregional assessment maps prepared by TNC. The special protected area (SPA) system also expanded over the same timeframe (see **Table 14**).

**Table 14: SPA system expansion from 2008 to April 2018**

SPA category	Baseline, Area (ha)	April 2018, Area (ha)
Strictly protected area	12,411,066	12,411,057
National park	11,711,815	11,885,224
Nature reserve	2,958,142	3,528,774
National monument	126,848	128,962
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,207,871</b>	<b>27,954,017</b>
<b>Expansion, total:</b>		<b>746,146</b>
<b>Expansion, strictly protected areas and national parks:</b>		<b>173,400</b>

\*Source: project document; \*\*Source: [www.eic.mn/spa/](http://www.eic.mn/spa/)

Regarding coverage of under-represented ecosystems, the 173,400 ha of strictly protected area and national park expansions were considered. The cumulative coverage of under-represented ecosystems is 683,851 ha (LPAs + strictly protected areas + national parks); this figure is considerably short of the 22 million ha target.

<b>Indicator No. 2:</b> Hectares of seven under-represented ecosystems within total protected areas system, including community conservation areas				
	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Value:	Total area of under-represented ecosystems is 102 million ha	80 million ha	683,851 ha	Unlikely to be achieved by project closure
Date:	2012	July 2018	April 2018	

**Outcome 1: Establishment of new PA category for strategic PA expansion**

**Achievement of Outcome 1 is rated as: Moderately Satisfactory**

The project provided a considerable amount of technical advisory support to the Government of Mongolia in drafting a proposed revision to the Law on Special Protected Areas (SPAs), an amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection and secondary regulations associated with legally recognizing LPAs in the national protected area system, clarifying the legal status of conservation CBOs, funding of managed resource protected areas, and other provisions enabling management of LPAs through community conservation arrangements. At the time of the TE mission in March 2018, the proposed legislative reforms had not yet been enacted; MET officials indicated that the proposals are expected to be submitted to parliament in September 2018. The secondary regulations are contingent on enactment of the revised and amended laws. Changes to the legal framework on protected areas are contentious in Mongolia, partly due to land use conflicts with the mining sector. The project has provided important inputs to the process; but achieving the envisaged result of adopting the revision to the law on SPAs, the amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection and secondary is unlikely to be achieved by project closure.

<b>Indicator No. 3:</b> Specific NPA legislation amended and/or new regulation adopted to establish and guide effective management of community conservation areas				
	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Value:	0 No national law and/or regulation adopted as described	1 national law and/or regulation adopted as described	1 draft revision to the Law on Special Protected Areas; 1 draft amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection; 2 draft regulations associated with granting LPA management to legal entities and on taking land under special needs and registering in the cadastral database.	Unlikely to be achieved by project closure
Date:	2012	July 2018	April 2018	

Indicator No. 4 refers to the number of community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system. According to the 2017 PIR, documenting information as of June 2017, there were 89 CBOs within LPAs covering a cumulative area of 489,300 ha. Among these CBOs, 30 of them were in project supported LPAs. The total number of community conservation areas, i.e., areas within the protected area system managed by CBOs, exceed the end target of 50, LPAs are not yet legally recognized as part of the NPA system. The proposed amendments to the Protected Areas Law includes a provision recognizing LPAs under the NPA system; for this reason, the result envisaged through this indicator is assessed as partially achieved.

<b>Indicator No. 4:</b> Number of community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system according to the amended national legislation and/or regulation				
	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Value:	0 community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system	50 community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system	As of 23 April 2018 <sup>6</sup> , there were 89 CBOs within LPAs covering a cumulative area of 489,300 ha. LPAs are not yet legally recognized as part of the NPA system	Partially achieved
Date:	2012	July 2018	April 2018	

<sup>6</sup> CBO database: [www.eic.mn/community/](http://www.eic.mn/community/)

## Outcome 2: Emplacement of institutional capacity and resource base development to ensure sustainability of Managed Resource PAs

### Achievement of Outcome 2 is rated as: Satisfactory

Management effectiveness of the three demonstration LPAs, Gulzat, Khavtgar and Tumenkhaan-Shalz, improved significantly over the course of the project. Expansions of the LPAs improved ecological protection, implementation of the management plans was initiated, capacities of volunteer rangers were strengthened through training and provision of monitoring equipment and supplies, economic benefits derived from the LPAs were improved, etc. The management effectiveness tracking tool (METT) was used under Indicator No. 5 to evaluate changes from baseline assessments, which were made in April 2012 for the Gulzat LPA, the Khavtgar LPA and the Tosonkhulstai Buffer Zone using the GEF-5 version of the METT. The third demonstration LPA, Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, had not been established at that time; this LPA was established in 2014. In fact, the Tosonkhulstai Buffer Zone had also not been established, and understandably, the baseline METT score was 4%; the project results framework mistakenly indicates a baseline score of 20 for this site.

End of project METT assessments were made in October 2017. Separate reports were prepared for each of the three demonstration LPAs. Several people participated in the assessment process and the reports are well written and provide detailed explanations for the scores. The end of project assessments report significant improvements in management effectiveness; the October 2017 score for the Gulzat LPA was 75 (69.4%), up from a baseline of 37 (36.3%), and the October 2017 score for the Khavtgar LPA was 78 (72.2%), up from a baseline of 26 (25.5%). The score for the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA was 67.5 (62.2%); a METT assessment made in May 2016 for this LPA reported a score of 48. An end of project assessment of the Tosonkhulstai Buffer Zone was not made.

The TE team observed a few issues associated with the METT assessments. Firstly, the GEF-5 version of the METT was not used in all cases. For example, the October 2017 assessment for the Khavtgar LPA used a form having 32 questions, 2 more than the GEF-5 version; Question No. 31 was on periodic review of management effectiveness, and Question No. 32 was on PA buffer zone capacity. The METT form used for the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA assessment has different numbering than the GEF-5 version; this seems to be the Mongolian METT form. In 2015, the Mongolian METT was approved through a Ministerial Council Decision.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the scoring in the October 2017 assessments provide an over-estimate of the actual conditions, in the opinion of the TE team. For instance, scores associated with security of budget, visitor facilities, cooperation with tourism operators, etc.

Indicator No. 5: METT Scores for at least three LPAs converted and/or established as community conservation areas				
	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Value:	METT scores for three pilot sites: Gulzat LPA: <b>37 (36.3%)</b> Khavtgar LPA: <b>26 (25.5%)</b> Tosonkhulstai (Buffer Zone): <b>4 (4%)</b>	METT scores increased to: Gulzat LPA: 50 Khavtgar LPA: 40 Tosonkhulstai (Buffer Zone): 26 Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA: N/A	METT scores: Gulzat LPA: <b>75 (69.4%)</b> Khavtgar LPA: <b>78 (72.2%)</b> Tosonkhulstai (Buffer Zone): not reported Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA: <b>67.5 (62.5%)</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Date:	April 2012	July 2018	October 2017	

With respect to Indicator No. 6, the PAAD has not established a CCA resource center as envisaged; however, the Department is overseeing community conservation areas through its current structure. Community-based organizations (CBOs) are in 4,729,300 ha of protected areas, comprising approximately 9% of the cumulative total of SPAs and LPAs (27,954,020 ha and 23,671,182.49 ha, respectively, as of 23 April 2018). Apart from the 89 CBOs located in LPAs, there are 23 CBOs located among the 90 SPAs and 65 CBOs located in buffer zones of SPAs. As documented in the 2017 PIR, the coordination mechanism between the Forest Policy and Coordination Department, the State Administration Department, the PAAD and the National Consortium of CBOs remains in place and is an important advocacy platform. Issues that have been raised include passing the proposed amendments to the Law on Environmental Protection that would recognize the legal status of conservation CBOs, ownership of the CBO database and allocation of funding among local governments for implementation of LPA management plans. In the opinion of the TE team, working towards further integration of community conservation areas into the operations of the PAAD would be a more effective approach than having a separate CCA resource center.

<sup>7</sup> Based upon feedback obtained during TE interviews with Ministry of Environment and Tourism officials in March 2018.



**Indicator No. 6:** PAAD has a fully functional, staffed and government funded CCA resource center providing on-going monitoring, support and extension training for local conservation decision-makers

	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Value:	0 functional institutional, staffed center within PAAD to support effective CCAs	1 functional institutional center within PAAD to support effective CCA	A separate CCA center has not been established; however, the PAAD is overseeing community conservation areas through its current structure.	Partially Achieved
Date:	2012	July 2018	April 2018	

The project has worked with local governments, both at the Soum and Aimag levels, in developing and strengthening management plans for the three target LPAs. For the Gulzat LPA, the Aimag government has approved the management plan, and the Soum governments approved the management plans for the Khavtgar LPA and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA. The proposed amendment to the Law on Special Protected Areas includes a provision that would make local government approval of management plans for LPA obligatory. The achievements at the three target LPAs on this project provide a framework for replicating across the LPA system nationwide. The project also supported the implementation of the management plans and introduced participatory evaluation mechanisms that promoted accountability and continuous improvement among the involved stakeholders.

For the Gulzat LPA, the end target under Indicator No. 7 called for strengthening the conservation model associated with income generated from Argali trophy hunting, with no less than 50% of the income spent on conservation management. From the baseline conditions of having no Argali trophy hunting income allocated to the local government for conservation management, considerable progress has been made over the past 5 years. The 2017 PIR report indicates that 30%, or MNT 30 million (approx. USD 12,000 at Dec 2016 exchange) was retained by the Buhmurun Soum and 35%, or MNT 52 million (approx. USD 21,000 at Dec 2016 exchange) was retained by the Sagil Soum for income generated based on Argali trophy hunting income in 2016. These figures were confirmed during the TE field mission, and local government officials summarized income retention in 2017 and expectations for 2018, and aimag government officials provided additional information. The Argali trophy hunting income is significant, when comparing to the overall budget allocations to the soums, and the annual values depend on the number of licenses granted. The net benefit realized at the soum level also depends upon discretionary decisions at the aimag level. For example, the Aimag government has held back other funding to the Gulzat soums by the aimag governor, approximately commensurate with the funds directly allocated to the soums from the trophy hunting income. These decisions are influenced by the current economic conditions in the aimag. Considering these funding reductions imposed by the Aimag, achieving the target of spending 50% of the trophy hunting funds on conservation management becomes much less feasible. The soum governments are increasing funding of the Gulzat LPA management plan, based upon specific action items advocated by the NGO that is managing the LPA. The TE team feels that the term "conservation management" should be more broadly defined. For example, improvements to soum infrastructure and services have indirect (and in some cases, direct) impacts on the financial sustainability of managing the LPA through community conservation arrangements; such investments increase the attractiveness of the site for eco-tourists, for instance.

The sustainability of the Gulzat LPA was significantly disrupted in the past year, because of the Aimag Governor's decision to discontinue the contract with local NGO previously managing the LPA and granting the management contract to a newly established NGO. The previous NGO has since initiated a legal case, and the local communities have been caught in the middle. At the time of the TE field mission in March 2018, the interviewed CBOs and soum government officials seemed to be in positive working relationships with the new NGO; however, the legal decision is pending and there has been a certain degree of setback from the progress made earlier.

The end targets for the Khavtgar LPA and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA were formulated different than for the Gulzat LPA because there were no secure sources of funding comparable to the Argali trophy hunting funds. For these other two target LPAs, the sustainable financing end targets under Indicator No. 7 were "sustainable financial sources are identified". The project benefitted from the concurrent BIOFIN<sup>8</sup> project, which has worked with the Government of Mongolia in identifying viable biodiversity solutions. As documented in the financing plan developed through the BIOFIN project, four financing solutions were highlighted: (1) Improving the implementation of the law on the Natural resources usage fee, (2) Re-establishment of Mongolia's Biodiversity Trust Fund, (3) Re-establishment of Mongolia's Biodiversity Trust Fund; Re-introduction of the pasture use fees, which should be used for financing of sustainable management

<sup>8</sup> BIOFIN (the Biodiversity Finance Initiative) was initiated in response to the urgent global need to divert more finance from all possible sources towards global and national biodiversity goals, as highlighted during the 2010 CBD COP 10 in Nagoya. UNDP and the European Commission launched BIOFIN in 2012 and were joined by the Governments of Germany, Switzerland, Norway and Flanders. There are 30 core countries involved, including Mongolia. The draft finance plan for Mongolia was issued in August 2017.

activities; and (4) To apply impact investment as mechanism for financing of PA. For the Khavtgar and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPAs, impact investments, specifically associated with sustainable meat production, were identified as potentially feasible options for helping to sustain the activities of local CBOs in managing these LPAs. The project has reached out to partners regarding supporting further analyses and possibly pilot implementation of impact investment at the target LPAs; the ongoing KfW supported project is one possibility in this regard.

For the Khavtgar LPA, the partnership with the buffer zone management of the nearby Khan Khentii SPA also contributes towards the sustainability of LPA financing. At the time of the TE, in March-April 2018, the Buffer Zone Fund had been suspended - awaiting approval of the State Secretary of a revised rule regarding buffer zone funding.

For the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, a conservation trust fund has been established in each of the three soums in this LPA through a tripartite agreement among the Green Gold Program managed by the National Federation of Pasture User Groups (NFPUG), the project and herder groups. According to TE interviews, information contained in the 2017 annual progress report and updated testimonial evidence provided during the TE mission, the trust funds are nearly reached the targeted contributions, with one-third matching funds made by Green Gold and the project and two of the three soums fulfilling or exceeding their third. As of April 2018, the trust funds are financed as follows:

- Norovlin soum: MNT 13,550,000 (USD 5,650) of which MNT 3,000,000 (USD 1,250) herders' share 22%
- Bayan-uul soum: MNT 35,775,000 (USD 14,950), of which at least MNT 11,925,000 (4,985) herders' share 33%
- Tsagaan-ovoo soum: MNT 26,870,000 (USD 11,225), of which MNT 9,620,000 (USD 4,020) herders' share 36%

Interviews during the TE mission confirmed the high level of interest among herders regarding these conservation trust funds. The interviewed herders not only saw the fund as a mechanism to further support participatory management of the LPA, but also as a micro-credit platform, providing more favorable terms than local banks on bridging (short-term) loans that are often needed during low-season periods. This micro-credit opportunity increases the likelihood that local herders will continue to make contributions into the fund.

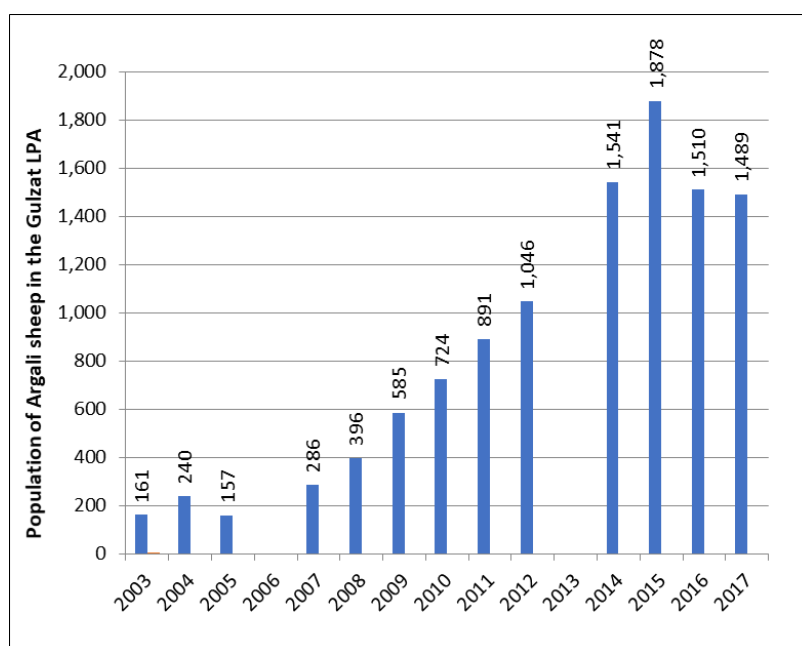
<b>Indicator No. 7:</b> Decentralized regional PA governance framework involving community and local governments (Soum and Aimag) established in 3 demonstration sites				
	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>End Target</b>	<b>Status at TE</b>	<b>TE Assessment</b>
Value:	0 project sites applying legally enforceable management plan to improve conservation of wide-ranging species and mitigate conservation threats	3 project sites applying enforceable management plan to improve conservation of wide-ranging species and mitigate conservation threats	Management plans for the three target LPAs developed and/or strengthened; the plans were approved by the local governments and implementation performance regularly evaluated through participatory processes.	<b>Achieved</b>
	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Current Gulzat NGO runs with 3 employers 0 amount has spent on conservation management from income of hunting	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> The effective conservation management model is developed and strengthened. No less than 50% of income from hunting is spent on conservation management	The community conservation management model for the LPA was strengthened through capacity building among local CBOs and support for implementation of the management plan.  Allocation of Argali trophy hunting income towards conservation management has steadily increased, albeit not reaching the 50% target.	<b>Partially achieved</b>
	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> "Khavtgar Shireet" NGO management structure & organizational capacity are weak & no clear financial source	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> -The effective conservation management model is developed and strengthened - sustainable financial sources are identified	The community conservation management model for the LPA was strengthened through capacity building among local CBOs and support for implementation of the management plan.  Sustainable financial sources include (1) partnership with buffer zone management of the nearby SPA – buffer zone funding is awaiting government approval, and (2) identification of potential impact investment associated with sustainable meat production.	<b>Partially achieved</b>
	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b>	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b>	The community conservation management model for the LPA was strengthened through capacity building among local CBOs and	<b>Achieved</b>

**Indicator No. 7:** Decentralized regional PA governance framework involving community and local governments (Soum and Aimag) established in 3 demonstration sites

	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
	No legal body appointed for the conservation management of LPA and no clear financial source	-LPA conservation management model and management plan is developed -sustainable financial sources are identified	support for implementation of the management plan. Sustainable financial sources include (1) establishment of a conservation trust fund with up-front contributions from the Green Gold program, the project and herders among the three LPA soums; and (2) identification of potential impact investment associated with sustainable meat production.	
Date:	2012	July 2018	April 2018	

Indicator No. 8 is a measure of the how implementation of improved management of the three target LPAs is reflected in the population of selected indicator species. For indicator species for the Gulzat LPA is the Argali sheep, which is also the main financing stream for this protected area, through income generated from trophy hunting. WWF began working with local communities in Gulzat in the early 2000's, at a time when Argali populations were less than 200 in annual surveys. Through establishment of the LPA there, capacity building and awareness raising, the Argali population steadily increased; the 2012 annual survey, the baseline for the MRPA project, indicated a count of 1,046 animals, and the project set a target of 1,150 by the end of the 5-year implementation phase.

As seen below in **Figure 9**, Argali populations have been estimated at levels exceeding 1,400 over the past 4 years, from 2014-2017, with a peak of 1,878 reported in the 2015 survey. Although significantly greater than in 2012 and earlier, the numbers have declined in the past two years; the local partners should follow up as part of implementation of the LPA management plan and the hunting management plan.



**Figure 9:** Population of Argali sheep in the Gulzat LPA, based on WWF monitoring reports

Proposed modification to the baseline conditions and end targets for Indicator No. 8 were presented in the project inception report; in addition to adjusting the end target of the population of Argali to 1,400, a sub-target was added on the number of households involved in community groups managing the LPA. Although the inception report was approved, the modifications to the results framework were not implemented, as the project has reported against the original version in the project document (lesson learned).

As the Argali population has grown, the number of hunting licenses granted have also increased. In 2017, there were nine licenses issued, compared to only one in 2013. The economic benefits to the local communities have also, consequently increased; 20% of the income hunting income is allocated to the local soums and 80% is retained by the

hunting companies. Over the course of the project the number of CBOs, and hence households, involved in the management LPA has expanded. When the project started, there were seven (7) CBOs operating, representing an estimated 60% of the total households, and by project closure, more than 80% of households were involved through thirteen (13) CBOs.

For the Khavtgar LPA, three species were selected as measures of ecosystem health in response to reductions of threats achieved through improved management of the protected area: moose (*Alces alces*), musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*) and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*). Monitoring transects were established for the LPA, and the administration of the nearby Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area provided field training on wildlife monitoring to the volunteer rangers among the CBOs managing the LPA. The project 2017 annual report and the 2017 PIR indicates a moose population of 42, up from a baseline of 20 and exceeding the end target of 25; a musk deer population of 3, down from the baseline of 7 and short of the end target of 15; and a red deer population of 67, up from the baseline of 22 and exceeding the end target of 30.

Established in 2014, the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA covers a cumulative area of 374,499 ha, including 125,700 ha in the Bayan-Uul soum of Dornod Aimag, 149,700 ha in the Tsagaan-ovoo soum of Dornod Aimag, and 99,100 ha in the Norovlin soum of Khentii Aimag. The LPA is situated partly in the buffer Zone of Tosonkhulstai National Park, which includes one of the last remaining Daurian steppe ecosystems, providing globally important habitat for the Mongolian gazelle. In 2017, the Khural of the Norovlin Soum approved a newly gazetted LPA, covering 59,400 ha, providing ecological connectivity between the Onon Balj SPA and the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA.

<b>Indicator No. 8:</b> Policing and enforcement of laws and regulations for biodiversity conservation results in reduction of threats and no net loss of key indicators at three pilot sites				
	Baseline	End Target	Status at TE	TE Assessment
Value:	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Total population of Argali sheep ( <i>Ovis ammon ammon</i> ) (1048 as of 2012)	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Increase in population of Argali sheep ( <i>Ovis ammon ammon</i> ) (1,150)	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Population of Argali sheep reported as follows in WWF monitoring reports: year 2014 (1,541), year 2015 (1,878), year 2016 (1,510) and year 2017 (1,489).	<b>Achieved</b>
	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population of moose <i>Alces alces</i> (20 as of 2010)</li> <li>Population of musk deer <i>Moschus moschiferus</i> (7 as of 2010)</li> <li>Population of red deer <i>Cervus elaphus</i> (22 as of 2010)</li> </ul>	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in population of moose <i>Alces alces</i> (25)</li> <li>Increase in population of musk deer <i>Moschus moschiferus</i> (15)</li> <li>Increase in population of red deer <i>Cervus elaphus</i> (30)</li> </ul>	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population of moose <i>Alces alces</i> (42)</li> <li>Population of musk deer <i>Moschus moschiferus</i> (3)</li> <li>Population of red deer <i>Cervus elaphus</i> (67)</li> </ul> <p>Source: Wildlife inventory final report, 2017, Khan Khentii SPA.</p>	<b>Partially Achieved</b>
	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> No. of protected wetlands/lakes as habitat for key migratory bird species <sup>9</sup> : 0	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> No. of protected wetlands/lakes as habitat for key migratory bird species: 5	<b>Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA:</b> Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA was declared and later expanded, improving habitat connectivity. No information available regarding the number of protected wetlands/lakes as habitat for key migratory species.	<b>Partially Achieved</b>
Date:	2012	July 2018	April 2018	

#### 4.2.2 Relevance

##### Efficiency is rated as: Moderately Satisfactory

The project was aligned to Strategic Objective 1 under the GEF-5 biodiversity strategy, “Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems”, specifically Outcome 1.1, “Improved management effectiveness of existing and new protected areas”. The project promoted integrating Managed Resource Protected Areas (MRPAs) into the national PA system as a new category and strengthening capacities of PA management through collaborative arrangements with

<sup>9</sup> Protected lakes will have no herder households reside within 2 km radius. The wetlands are habitat for Demoiselle crane, White-naped crane and

governmental, NGO, private sector and community partners. These results would allow for meaningful expansion of the PA system, particularly regarding under-represented ecosystems.

The goal of the project was consistent with the priorities of the Government of Mongolia at the time of project development, e.g., as documented in the 2007-2021 National Development Strategy, which included the objective to *"improve natural resource management at the national and local levels through strengthening the regulatory framework for mineral resource utilization and environment protection, providing law enforcement, introducing economic tools and incentives, creating self-financing mechanisms and upgrading cross sector coordination."* The National Program on PAs outlined a strategy to extend the PA system to cover 30% of the country's territory by 2030, which was also integrated into the Mongolian Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) and MDG-based Comprehensive National Development Strategy (2008).

The project was also aligned with UNDAF (2012-2016) Outcome 7 *"Increased sector capacity for sustainable resources management with participation of primary resource users"*, the UNDP Strategic Plan Environment and Sustainable Development Primary Outcome *"Mobilizing environmental financing"*, and the Country Programme/UNDAF Outcome (2012-2016) *"Improved sustainability of natural resources management and resilience of ecosystems and vulnerable populations to the changing climate"*.

During the lifespan of the project the Government of Mongolia developed an updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for the period 2015-2025. Goal 5 of the NBSAP is most relevant to the objectives of the project: *"Goal 5: At least 30% of representatives from each main ecosystem and all patch and vulnerable to climate change ecosystems are included in to the National Protected Area network and their management is ensured "*. The 2015-2025 NBSAP, however, does not include specific targets associated with elevating the legal status of LPAs, recognizing this sub-system of protected areas into the national protected area system. There is only one, single reference to LPAs in the NBSAP – a statistic indicating the number of LPAs and the cumulative area covered by them. Although one of the outputs under Objective 10 of Goal 5 focuses on legislation regarding collaborative management in protected areas, the NBSAP does not directly address the need to strengthen community conservation capacities.

One of the five principles of environmental sustainability listed in the Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030 (approved in 2016) reads: *"Promote participation of local residents and people at large to ensure environmental sustainability"*. This strategic document reiterates the objective of expanding the protected area system, specifically under Section 2.3.3 on Ecosystem Balance, which calls for increasing the area of special protected areas to 30% by 2030. LPAs and community conservation areas are not addressed in the sustainable development vision.

In summary, the TE team considers that the relevance of the project objective has only marginally held up to the current priorities of the Government of Mongolia.

#### 4.2.3 Efficiency

**Efficiency is rated as: Satisfactory**

##### Supporting Evidence:

- + The GEF funding addressed the key barriers highlighted in the project design.
- + The project has managed to satisfactorily achieve the intended project outcomes within the allocated budget and timeframe, without "no cost" time extension.
- + Efficiency gains realized through effective partnership arrangements.
- + Cofinancing materialized by five different partners, including recipient government, UNDP as the GEF agency, an international NGO, a bilateral technical cooperation agency and a bilateral financial cooperation agency. Other cofinancing, although not accounted, materialized during project implementation, including from the land agency (ALAGAC), aimag and soum governments, and the Swiss Development Agency.
- Total cofinancing materialized amounts to 76% of the sum confirmed at CEO endorsement.
- Achievement of Outcome 1 diminished because of delays in passing legislative reforms.

As of 19 March 2018, total project expenditures incurred were USD 1,432,794, which includes USD 1,222,794 accounted towards the GEF grant and USD 210,000 of UNDP grant resources, as broken down below in **Table 15**.

**Table 15: Actual expenditures broken down by project component, 2013-2018**

Outcome	Funding Source	Actual Expenditures through 19 March 2018 (USD)							Indicative Prodoc Budget
		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018*	Total	
Component 1	GEF	0	52,314	59,252	122,358	87,364	3,348	324,636	256,000
	UNDP	25,254	14,540	2,660		8,432		50,885	0
Component 2	GEF	0	150,359	265,290	213,906	86,484	4,367	720,405	958,000
	UNDP	9,840	10,221	2,660				22,721	0
Project Management	GEF	1,366	4,892	47,096	58,167	45,752	4,432	161,706	95,091
	UNDP	10,452	62,923	41,680	14,591	6,747		136,394	200,000
Unrealized Loss		0	4,362	4,587	11,387	1,426	0	21,762	N/A
Unrealized Gain		0	0	(1,081)	(1,256)	(3,375)	(3.5)	(5,716)	N/A
Total	GEF	1,366	211,926	375,145	404,564	217,651	12,143	1,222,794	1,309,091
	UNDP	45,546	87,684	47,000	14,591	15,179	0	210,000	200,000
	Total	46,913	299,610	422,145	419,154	232,830	12,143	1,432,794	1,509,091

Figures in USD

Source of budget figures: approved Project Document

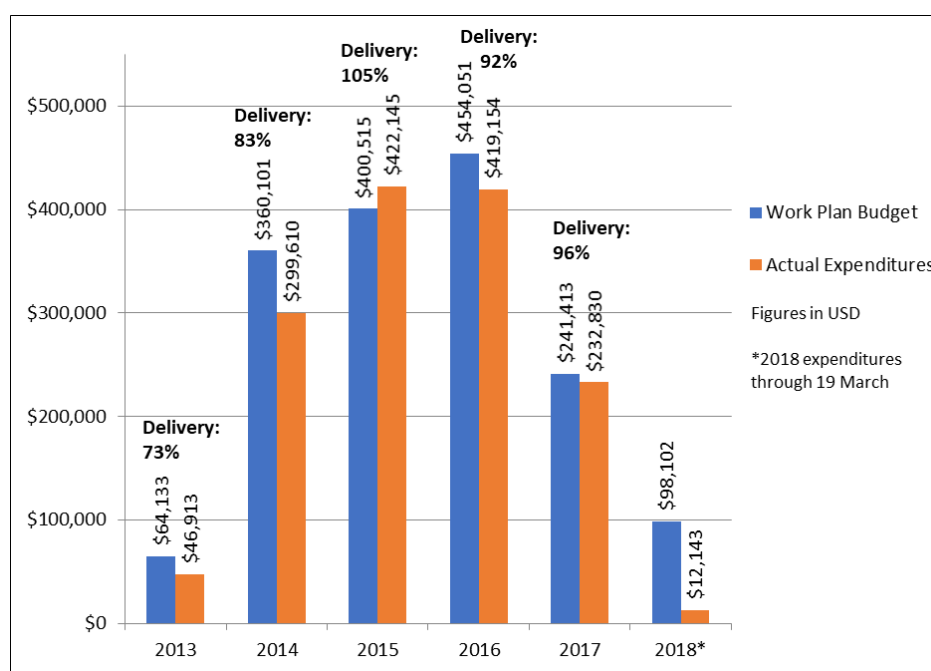
Source of expenditures: Combined Delivery Reports (CDR), provided by UNDP

\*2018 expenditures reported through 19 March

Of the USD 1,309,091 GEF implementation grant, USD 86,297 remains as of 19 March 2018. The USD 210,000 of UNDP resources exceeds the USD 200,000 figure included in the project document budget.

Spending on Component 1 activities, USD 324,636 (GEF funds) through 19 March 2018, exceeds the indicate budget amount of USD 256,000, and Component 2 spending of GEF funds (USD 720,405) has been consequently lower than the indicative budget (USD 958,000). Project management costs have been higher than planned in the indicative project document budget; USD 161,706 of GEF resources have been accounted towards project management, compared to the USD 95,091 indicative budget. The USD 161,706 figure is approximately 13% of the USD 1,222,794 of the GEF funds expended; this rate exceeds the 7.3% approved in the indicative budget included in the project document. The project has not had a “no cost” time extension, which often results in higher project management costs. Considering the substantive contribution the national project coordinator and PIU staff members made towards the technical components of the project, it would have been advisable to allocate more of their costs to Components 1 and 2 (lesson learned).

With the project officially starting on 30 July 2013, only USD 46,913 were expended that year. Expenditures increased considerably in subsequent years, reaching a maximum in 2016 when annual expenditures reached USD 419,154. Financial delivery has been commendably high, including 96% in 2017, 92% in 2016, and 105% in 2015 (see **Figure 10**).



**Figure 10: Planned annual budgets and actual expenditures, 2013-2018**



Certain efficiency gains were also achieved because of steady devaluation of the Mongolian tugrik (MNT) over the course of the project. At the start of the project the MNT:USD exchange rate was 1,499.6 (31 July 2013) and over the course of nearly 5 years, the rate has devalued nearly 60%, to 2,395.9 on 23 April 2018 (see **Figure 11**). Apart from currency devaluation, inflation rates fluctuated during the project implementation timeframe, reaching nearly 15% in 2014. Local prices, however, did not increase commensurate with these devaluation and inflation pressures.



**Figure 11:** Exchange rate history MNT:USD, April 2013 to April 2018

Independent financial audits have been completed of the project, to demonstrate due diligence in the management of funds. The TE team reviewed the audit report for calendar year 2016.<sup>10</sup> The unmodified opinion stated in the audit report indicated the following: *“In our opinion, the attached Statement of Expenditure presents fairly, in all material respects, the expenses of USD 419,154.26 incurred by the Mongolia's Network of Managed Resource Protected Areas Project for the period from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 in accordance with agreed upon accounting policies and were: (i) in conformity with the approved project budgets; (ii) for the approved purposes of the project; (iii) in compliance with the relevant UNDP regulations and rules, policies and procedures; and (iv) supported by properly approved vouchers and other supporting documents.”* One audit observation, classified as medium risk severity, was made, regarding not deducting social health insurance contributions from short term contractors’ payment, as required through the Social Insurance Law of Mongolia. Project Management and UNDP CO comments explained their understanding of the applicability of the law. There was also reference in the audit report of certain adjustments that needed to be made in response to the transition of an original national execution modality (NEX) to a national implementation modality (NIM).

The 2016 audit report includes an update to the issues raised in the previous year’s audit. One of these issues was a human resource observation regarding the workload of the PIU staff, who were covering the MRPA project as well as another UNDP supported, GEF financed project, the SPAN project. There were other issues associated with financial reporting and contractual management (procurement) which were resolved as described through explanations provided by Project Management and UNDP CO.

According to an April 2018 dated asset register provided to the TE team, the project has acquired 481 separate items having a cumulative purchase value of USD 95,136.31. Apart from these assets, 59 items having a cumulative purchase value of USD 62,167.32 were transferred to the project from the now closed SPAN project. The complete asset register, thus, contains 540 items with a combined value of USD 157,303.63. The assets include computer equipment, office furniture, books, and monitoring and support equipment and supplies for the participating CBOs and volunteer rangers – including motorbikes, cameras, drones, binoculars, GPS units, outdoor clothing, wildfire management equipment (such as fire blowers), etc. The transferred assets from the SPAN project includes one vehicle, a Toyota Land Cruiser, as well as computer equipment, office furniture and field monitoring equipment.

### 4.3 Sustainability

Sustainability is generally considered to be the likelihood of continued benefits after the GEF funding ends. Under GEF criteria each sustainability dimension is critical, and the overall ranking, therefore, cannot be higher than the lowest one.

<sup>10</sup> Ulaanbaatar Audit Corporation LLC, Audit Report, for the period January 1 0216 to December 31, 2016, Project Number 86907 MON/13/303, March 30, 2017.

**Overall:**

**Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately Likely**

**Supporting Evidence:**

- + Government ownership satisfactory, including commitment to advocate for advancing proposed legislative amendments and regulations.
- + Several options promoted for sustainable LPA financing.
- + Evidence in the field of herders taking their own initiative – effective training, local champions, etc.
- + Government resources earmarked for management of LPA database.
- + Scale-able frameworks of community conservation arrangements demonstrated.
- + Community based organizations strengthened.
- + Continuation of partner activities, including WWF, TNC, WCS, Green Gold, KfW, etc.
- + Awareness increased across several levels (national, aimag, soum, community), and including through eco-school initiative.
- Delays in passing proposed amendments to legislation
- Many LPAs declared to dissuade mining activity; limited strategic approach for sustainable management or financing.
- Responsibility for LPA management/oversight not (yet) fully recognized by aimag governments.
- Most CBOs require further capacity development
- Database on CBOs is uncertain, umbrella NGO unable to maintain
- Trophy hunting contributions to soum governments do not, in all years, represent extra income to their budgets, e.g., aimag government withholding budget allocations to soums
- Uncertainties associated with potential impacts of climate change.

**Financial Dimension:**

**Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately Likely**

With respect to the financial resources dimension of sustainability, a rating of “moderately likely” has been applied by the TE team.

From a macro level, public financing is currently under several constraints associated with reforms that the Government of Mongolia has agreed to implement as part of a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Confronting a fiscal crisis largely due to falling commodity prices, the Government of Mongolia requested support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in October 2016. The IMF approved a three-year USD 434 million loan in May 2017, as part of a broader USD 5.5 billion financing package supported by Japan, Korea, China, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Economic performance has improved, with a 5.1% increase in real GDP in 2017 (see **Figure 12**), but the government has reduced public financing, including decreasing the budget of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. Several of the interviewed national and local level government officials during the TE mission indicated spending restrictions associated with the conditions of the IMF financing package, e.g., hiring new staff and securing funds for buffer zone management.

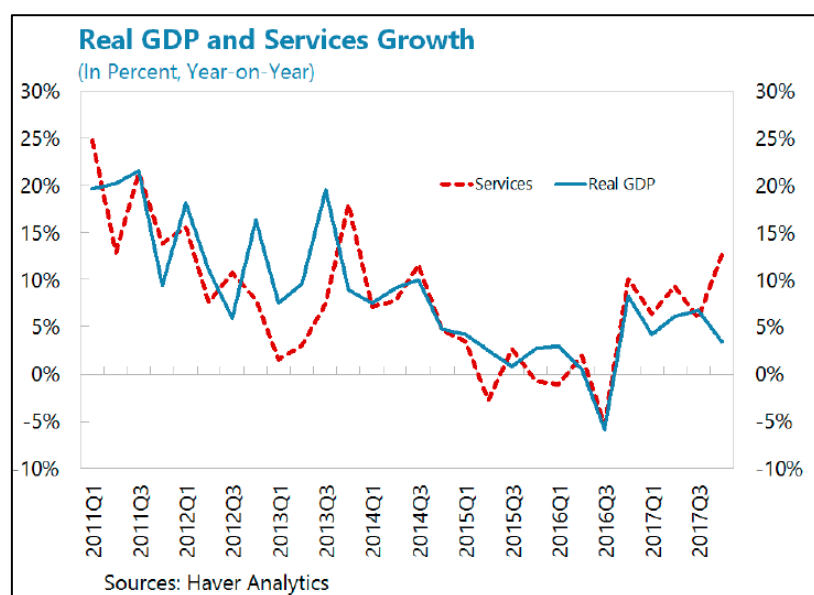


Figure 12: Real GDP and Services Growth, 2011-2017<sup>11</sup>

The project has made substantive contributions towards enhancing the financial sustainability. The proposed amendments to the Law on Special Protected Areas and associated secondary legislation on CBOs would result strengthen the legal status of LPAs and community conservation modalities, are cost-effective, and in many cases, the only viable PA management option in Mongolia. At the site level, the Argali trophy hunting shared income arrangement at the Gulzat LPA provides a valuable framework for financially sustainable community conservation. There are opportunities for improvement, including increasing the share of the income allocated for conservation, but early success achieved increases the likelihood that stakeholders will continue to advance this mechanism. Local stakeholders interviewed by the TE team at the other two target LPAs highlighted trophy hunting as the most feasible financing option for them. Lessons learned from the Gulzat experience could inform broader adjustments to trophy hunting arrangements nationwide.

Local government units have also made commitments that enhance the prospects for sustaining the results realized under the project. For instance, since mid-2017 the Bayan-Uul Soum in Dornod Aimag (Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA) has integrated the former local coordinator for the project into their organization. The other soum and aimag governments are requesting for approval to add more permanent field rangers.

The international donor community and NGOs have provided considerable biodiversity financing support and are working with the Government of Mongolia in developing viable finance solutions. The BIOFIN<sup>12</sup> initiative is one example of such support. Among the ten financial solutions considered by the BIOFIN team in Mongolia, the following four were selected as the most viable:

1. Improving the implementation of the law on the Natural resources usage fee;
2. Re-establishment of Mongolia's Biodiversity Trust Fund;
3. Re-introduction of the pasture use fees, which should be used for financing of sustainable management activities; and
4. To apply impact investment as mechanism for financing of PA.

During the TE field mission, the TE team members asked several herders their opinion regarding the possibility of reintroducing pasture use fee. In the western region, interviewed herders were overwhelming in favor of this solution, citing the problems they are facing regarding pressures on grasslands during overgrazing and the quality of livestock. The responses from herders in the eastern region, where grasslands are more intact and under less pressure, were mixed. Some of the respondents supported the idea of reintroducing pasture use fees, but others indicated that they thought local solutions, such as the conservation trust fund established for the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, would be more appropriate.

<sup>11</sup> IMF Country Report 18/98, April 2018. Mongolia: Staff report for the third review under the extended fund facility.

<sup>12</sup> BIOFIN (the Biodiversity Finance Initiative) was initiated in response to the urgent global need to divert more finance from all possible sources towards global and national biodiversity goals, as highlighted during the 2010 CBD COP 10 in Nagoya. UNDP and the European Commission launched BIOFIN in 2012 and were joined by the Governments of Germany, Switzerland, Norway and Flanders. There are 30 core countries involved, including Mongolia. The draft finance plan for Mongolia was issued in August 2017.

The project worked with the BIOFIN team in identifying possible application of the recommended finance solutions to the three target LPAs. Impact investments associated with sustainable meat production were concluded as potentially viable for the Khavtgar and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPAs. Local communities and governments expressed interest in such an investment, and, at the same time, stressed their aspiration to diversify into non-traditional products and services. Meat production was considered a proven, traditional income source for some the herders; further communication is required in this regard, explaining how the proposed impact investment would provide expanded opportunities for the herders. Potential partnerships among the international donor community and NGOs have been explored.

**Socio-Economic Dimension:****Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately Likely**

The project has made notable contributions towards elevating the importance of LPAs among national and subnational governmental stakeholders and strengthened the collective capacities of community-based organizations (CBOs) nationwide, e.g., through assisting in drafting proposed regulations on recognizing the legal status of CBOs, establishing a national CBO database, and sponsoring a CBO trade fair in Ulaanbaatar in 2016. At the site level, the capacities of the engaged CBOs have clearly been strengthened. Volunteer rangers were knowledgeable of the underlying conservation objectives and were highly motivated to continue their activities. Interactions between the CBOs and local soum government officials were also observed to be open and mutually supportive. There are, however, a few issues that diminish the prospect of sustaining the results achieved. The legal case involving the former NGO managing the Gulzat LPA and the aimag government increases the uncertainty regarding LPA management, at least over the short term. Financing for the management of Khavtgar LPA is partly contingent on support for advancing some of the sustainable financing ideas, such as the impact investment associated with meat production, and on funding for buffer zone management of the nearby SPA. In the case of the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, initial contributions to the conservation trust fund have been made from each of the three partners, and the Green Gold program will continue working in this area, thus, enhancing the likelihood that the operation and replenishment of the trust fund will be maintained.

**Institutional Framework and Governance Dimension:****Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately Likely**

The project has generated important, scale-able results regarding governance of LPAs. Working with soum and aimag governments and local CBOs at the three target LPA sites, governance mechanisms were strengthened through participatory stakeholder involvement. LPA management plans provided platforms for prioritizing conservation activities and the requisite allocation of resources. The proposed amendments to the Law on Special Protected Areas and secondary regulations on the legal status of CBOs would further strengthen the institutional and governance frameworks required for mainstreaming LPA management through community conservation arrangements.

The delays in approving the proposed amendments to the Law on Special Protected Areas and secondary regulations on the legal status of CBOs, however, reduce the likelihood that the project results will be sustained and replicated across the protected area system. Passing legislation on protected areas have faced delays in the past, partly due to the sensitivity of land use issues in Mongolia, as economic output is closely tied to exploitation of natural resources, particularly associated with the mining sector. Administrative inefficiencies have also contributed to legislative delays. The stakeholder analysis section of the 2017 European Union Action Document for “Strengthening Governance for Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Mongolia”, funded by the EU over the period of 2014-2020, includes the following:

*“Important stakeholders in the context of this analysis are the Parliament, the government administration, civil society and the private sector. Weak legislative processes have led to enactment of laws without sufficient policy analysis and risk assessment, resulting in frequent changes and amendments soon after their initial adoption. To respond to these challenges, the Parliament approved the “Law on Legislation” in 2015, requiring that all draft legislation is subject to mandatory impact assessment and cost-benefit analysis prior to submission to Parliament.”*

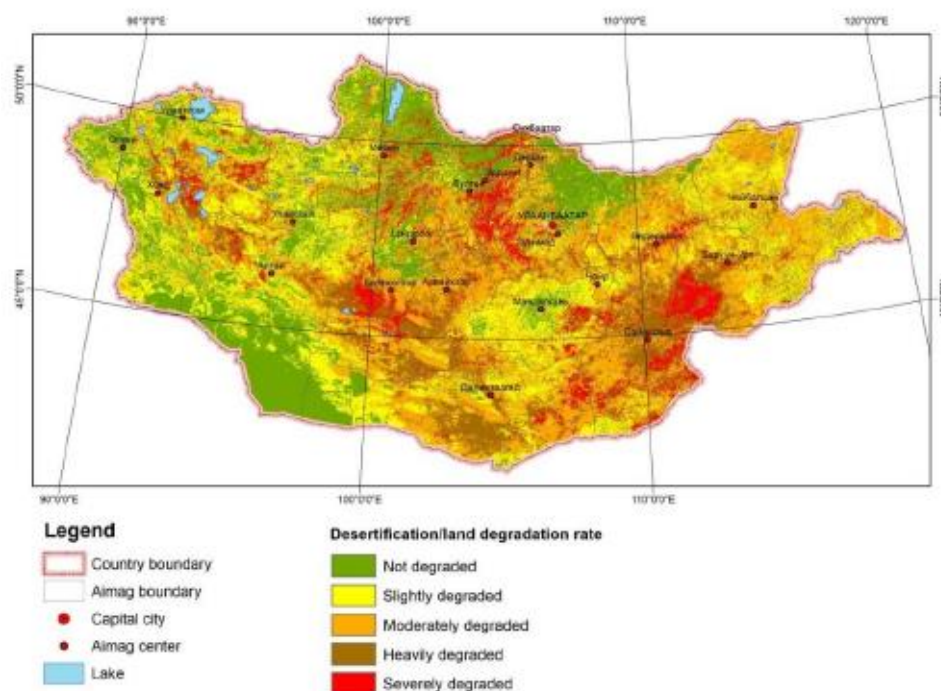
The process of drafting the proposed amendments to the Law on Special Protected Areas and associated secondary regulations has been participatory, facilitated by a working group established by the MET. Based on feedback obtained during TE interviews, there is high level support for advancing these legislative frameworks; further advocacy will likely be needed to ensure the process remains on track after GEF funding ceases. One of the lessons learned in an ex ante evaluation reported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in December 2017<sup>13</sup> for a proposed project in Mongolia pointed out the need to implement policy dialogue after project completion, to monitor efforts for sustaining reform and improving impact.

<sup>13</sup> JICA, Ex-Ante Evaluation, Project: Fiscal, Social and Economic Reform Development Policy Loan, Mongolia, 5 December 2017.

## Environmental Dimension:

### Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Likely

With respect to environmental risks, the potential impacts associated with climate change pose the most significant threats to biodiversity in Mongolia, particularly associated to degradation of grassland habitats. More than 80% of the land area in Mongolia is classified as natural pastureland and based on the results of a study in 2015, 76.8% of pasturelands have been affected by desertification and other forms of land degradation, as illustrated on the country map shown below in **Figure 13**.



**Figure 13:** Desertification and land degradation in Mongolia, 2015<sup>14</sup>

Key reasons for pasture degradation include overgrazing caused the increasing number of livestock (by the end of 2015, the number of livestock reached a historical level of 56 million head<sup>15</sup>) and increasing intensity of droughts and dryness. Among the five adaptation technologies, or approaches, assessed to reduce the vulnerability of biological biodiversity, as part of Mongolia's adaptation strategy, protected areas and planning scored the highest (see **Table 16**).

**Table 16:** Summary of Technology Needs Assessment on Reduction of Vulnerability of Biological Diversity<sup>16</sup>

Technology	Total Score
1. Protected areas and regions	31
2. Ecological corridors and buffer zones	28
3. Protection and planning of biological diversity	32
4. Wetland and peatland protection and rehabilitation	28
5. Monitoring for biological biodiversity	27

The project has generated adaptation benefits, though strengthening capacities of CBOs in natural resource management, thus increasing the resilience of their communities. Advancing legislative reform and awareness regarding the importance of LPAs and community conservation modalities also contribute towards increased adaptive capacity. Overall, however, biodiversity in Mongolia face significant risk to the effects of climate change, and a moderately likely rating is applied to the environmental risk dimension.

<sup>14</sup> Mongolia Third National Communication, 2018, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ulaanbaatar.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

## 4.4 Progress towards impact

### **Environmental Stress Reduction:**

With respect to environmental stress reduction, biophysical changes to degraded grassland ecosystems, e.g., in response to improved pastureland management will require many years to reach a healthy status. The focus of the project was on capacitating CBOs in participatory conservation, including having volunteer rangers provide monitoring and enforcement. Several interviewed herders reinforced anecdotal evidence indicating that threats from wildlife hunting and other illegal activities have significantly reduced and, in some cases, stopped altogether.

Inclusion of broader ecosystem recovery objectives should be covered in later versions of LPA management plans, e.g., through implementation of pasture use fees and improved coordination between LPAs, SPAs and buffer zones to SPAs. There are opportunities in this regard, e.g., in collaboration with the Green Gold program, which is promoting improved pasture management in Mongolia. As stated among the assumptions in the theory of change diagram in **Figure 1**, further advancing ecosystem recovery initiatives depends on secured financing and support from governmental and non-governmental partners. The findings of the TE mission confirmed that buy-in by local herders, at least ones in the demonstration sites, is high, e.g., many of the interviewed herders were overwhelming in favor of reintroducing pasture use fees, which is one of the four biodiversity financing solutions concluded in the BIOFIN finance plan.

### **Environmental Status Change:**

Environmental status changes have been reported at the LPA scale among the three demonstration areas, including the population of Argali (*Ovis ammon*) at the Gulzat LPA in western Mongolia has been above 1,400 in the past 4 surveys made between 2014 and 2017, up from 1,046 in 2012 (project baseline) and significantly more than the conditions in 2013 when the number of Argali was reported at 161. The reintroduction of marmot (*Marmota sibirica*) at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA has been successful in a span of a couple of years. Through joint funding with the Adaptation Fund project, a total of 117 marmots were introduced to habitats in two of the soums at this LPA in 2015-2016 by scientists from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. Local herders, as volunteer rangers, have subsequently reported frequent marmot sightings in their monitoring rounds, and some of the herders floated a suggestion of arranging a marmot hunting season that would provide some income in support of the CBOs managing the LPA and provide meat supply, e.g., during festivals, to the local communities.

### **Contributions to Changes in Policy/Legal/Regulatory Enabling Frameworks:**

The project made significant contributions to enabling legal and regulatory frameworks. Although the proposed legislative reforms had not been passed by project closure, substantive groundwork has been made through extensive participatory working group sessions and interviewed MET officials stressed a high level of ownership to further advance the proposed legislative reforms. One of the key assumptions in the reconstructed theory of change for the project is that progressive legislative and regulatory frameworks would enable effective management through managed resource protected area modalities.

### **Arrangements to Facilitate Follow-up Actions:**

The project has taken concerted steps regarding identifying potential partnerships that could continue or replicate the results achieved among the three demonstration sites. The LPA database has been successfully institutionalized; however, the CBO database has not been updated since the end of 2017. There is a need to sort out sustained management of that database.

At the site level, the project has also facilitated partnership arrangements. For instance, a conservation trust fund was established at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, in partnership with the Green Gold program. Another example is the possible follow-up with KfW regarding the potential impact investments associated with sustainable meat production for the Khavtgar and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPAs. At the Gulzat LPA, there is an NGO in place, appointed by the aimag governor, to oversee management of the LPA, particularly associated with the trophy hunting income sharing arrangements. In 2017, the former NGO that was replaced following a change in the government after the last election has filed a lawsuit. At the time of the TE the lawsuit had not yet been settled and there was a certain degree of uncertainty regarding the sustainability of the CBO-driven management of the LPA.

### **Contributions of other Actors and Factors:**

The project has successfully leveraged contributions, financial and technical, from a wide range of partners, including several government agencies, soum and aimag governments, bilateral donor agencies including GIZ and KfW, NGOs including WWF, TNC and local organizations, and private sector associations such as the Sustainable Fiber Association (SFA). These contributions have improved the overall effectiveness of the project and enhance the likelihood that results generated will be sustained after GEF funding ceases.



### **Replication:**

The project design is predicated on replication, including strengthening the enabling environment for managed resource protected areas and demonstrating best practice management. The proposed legislative reforms would facilitate replication across the PA system, as LPAs would be integrated into the national PA system and natural resource CBOs would have the legal status required to raise funds and sustain PA management arrangements. The LPA and CBO databases contribute towards replication, as these systems facilitate continuity and improved cooperation between national and local governments. At the site level, 463,952 ha of new LPA coverage was realized during the project, including an expansion of the Gulzat LPA and declaration of the new Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA.

## **5 Assessment of Monitoring & Evaluation Systems**

### **5.1 M&E Design**

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation design at entry is rated as: Moderately Satisfactory**

The M&E plan was developed using the standard UNDP template for GEF-financed projects. The indicative budget for the M&E plan was USD 97,000 (excluding PIU and UNDP staff time and travel expenses), which is 7.4% of the USD 1,309,091 GEF grant. The proportional allocation of M&E costs exceeds the 5% recommendation in the July 2017 version of the project document template; however, the budget was broken down into only four items: USD 11,000 for the inception workshop and report, USD 40,000 for the midterm review, USD 42,000 for the terminal evaluation, and USD 5,000 for financial audits.

Revisions to the project results framework are indicated in the project inception report; for example, some of the target species and baseline conditions under Indicator No. 8 were modified. There is no record that the revisions indicated in the inception report were approved (lesson learned); in fact, the project has reported against the version of the results framework that is included in the project document.

Regarding species monitoring, under Indicator No. 8, partnership arrangements were built into the project design for the Gulzat LPA, where WWF had been providing support for several years and leading regular monitoring surveys. There was less structure in place for species and threat reduction monitoring at the other two demonstration LPAs.

### **5.2 M&E implementation**

#### **Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is rated as: Satisfactory**

The quality of implementation of the M&E plan was found to be generally proactive and effective, facilitated by the M&E officer and guided by the national project coordinator. M&E results were documented in project implementation review (PIR) review reports, annual progress reports and stand-alone monitoring reports. The project board was an important platform for M&E, providing strategic feedback to issues raised through project reporting and discussions during the board meetings.

A monitoring & evaluation officer was not included in the proposed organizational structure and indicative project budget outlined in the project document, but the position was discussed in the project inception report and the project recruited a monitoring & evaluation officer under a long-term arrangement that continued through the end of 2017.

Evaluation of performance of the implementation of LPA management plans for three demonstration areas was a valuable exercise that stressed the importance of following up on the implementation of the management plans and provided good practice guidance on promoting continuous improvement.

The participatory process implemented for the midterm and end-of-project METT assessments was commendable, in that a broad range of stakeholders were involved and the results of the discussions were well documented (good practice). There were some inconsistencies, however, regarding the METT tool used in the assessments, i.e., different templates were used among the three end-of-project METT assessments. One of the versions appears to be consistent with the Mongolian version of the METT, and additional questions were added to the others. In 2015, Ministerial Council Decision was issued approving a version of the METT to be applied for protected areas in Mongolia. The Mongolian METT seems largely consistent with the GEF-5 version; although the TE team has not made a thorough comparison. It would have been more prudent to consistently use the GEF-5 METT version and separately make assessments using the Mongolian version. This would have fulfilled the GEF requirements and provided input for the Mongolian protected area system (lesson learned).

Cooperating with the Khan-Khentii Special Protected Area in wildlife monitoring was a constructive adaptive management measure, providing learning-by-doing capacity building to the LPA volunteer rangers and in strengthening partnership arrangements between the LPA and SPA (good practice). In hindsight, these collaborative monitoring arrangements should have been built into the M&E design (lesson learned).

There was room for improvement with respect on results-based management, e.g., certain baseline figures remain unclear at project closure.

The recommendations from the midterm review were satisfactorily addressed by the project during the second half of the implementation timeframe, as summarized below in **Table 17**.

**Table 17: Summary of management responses to MTR recommendations**

Midterm review recommendation	Status at terminal evaluation
1. Ensure project trainings, including training on monitoring of wildlife and habitat, is consistent with new standards adopted by the MEGDT ( <i>Ministry of Environment, Green Development and Tourism - hereunder referred to MET (Ministry of Environment and Tourism) as per the new title under the new government</i> ).	The project responded to this recommendation by implementing training modules for rangers and PA managers developed through KfW support.
2. Modify the composition of the Project Board (PB) to ensure a wider range of stakeholders including NGOs and technical experts in relevant fields who may not be working with government, is helpful to project success. It is recommended that the PB be comprised of at least two NGOs which should be focused on the science of biodiversity conservation.	The composition of the project board was modified through Minister's Order #A/81, Oct 2016. Representatives from WWF and TNC were invited to join, as well as one SPA Management Agency.
3. Modify the composition of the Technical Committee to include more people with on-the-ground practical experience with relevant initiatives in Mongolia such as, for example, those with experience with species reintroduction efforts, community managed hunting areas, ecotourism, wildlife and habitat monitoring, wildlife conservation contracts, livestock risk revolving funds, pasture offset initiatives.	The members of the technical committee were changed to: MET, institute of Biology, WWF, TNC, Mongolian national university, Pasture Association (livestock risk fund).
4. The MTR believes there is still plenty of work to be done in relation to building capacity of LPA management entities, supporting the implementation of management/business plans of the three LPAs, figuring out and putting into place sustainable financing mechanisms for the three LPAs, pursuing collaboration with the private sector, and supporting the identification, production and marketing of products by CBOs. The MTR recommends that the project continue on to its original closing date and not be closed early.	The closing date of the project was maintained at 29 July 2018. The size of the PIU was gradually reduced during the second half of the project.
5. Actively pursue collaboration with the private sector as part of a project exit strategy immediately following the MTR. Support CBOs to identify, design and produce innovative, eco-friendly products with even greater value-added. The project should help CBOs to market products and make connections between private companies producing similar products.	The project took steps to engage the private sector, facilitating skills training through small grants, and involving private sector associations, including the Sustainable Fiber Association (sustainable cashmere sourcing).
6. Ensure financial sustainability of LPAs: Gulzat – sort out the issue of the basis on which the number of hunting permits is issued; Khavtgar – review existing Tourism Plan prepared by GTZ; T-K – carefully study past and ongoing examples of Livestock Risk Revolving Fund; b) Adopt an incremental buy-in approach related to seven positions currently paid by project.	The project devoted considerable resources during the second half of the project on identifying and strengthening sustainable financing alternatives for the demonstration LPAs.
7. Clarify the TOR for the national financial sustainability consultant and for the International Biodiversity Consultant.	This recommendation was supported, and the TOR was clarified.
8. Study tours. 1. Critical to be clear on the objective, best target audience of the study tour, agree on follow up actions with the participants before the study tour take place. 2. The MTR suggests to learn more on CBNRM, community hunting management in Mongolia, if any, and elsewhere in other countries.	Domestic and international (Kazakhstan) study tours were organized, and findings were well documented.
9. Establish connectivity between the 3 LPAs and the nearby SPAs and ensure that key landscape features are included within the protected landscape. Although the project should certainly share information and lessons learned regarding the adoption of this greater landscape approach with other LPAs, it is not the business of this project to ensure connectivity across the country. Consider establishing a mechanism to facilitate information sharing between all landscape level stakeholders (if this is to be pursued it should be a very simple practical mechanism).	The Gulzat LPA was expanded around Uureg Lake, and the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA was expanded to provide increased connectivity with the nearby SPA and another LPA.
10. Recommendations for WG on revision of Law on Fauna (Hunting): a) specific penalties regarding non-compliance be introduced in the revised regulations; b) not just research institutions but CBOs and others can do wildlife census once they pass quality control standards; c) stipulate once a sustainable population reached for a given species within its contiguous range, that hunting –either subsistence or trophy both – will be allowed.	The composition of the working group was revised during the second half of the project.
11. In the opinion of the MTR, instead of strictly adhering to the indicator which stipulates that "PAAD has a fully functional, staffed and government-funded CCA resource centre providing ongoing monitoring, support and extension training for local conservation decision makers", the project should work closely with Government to decide how best to proceed to achieve the objective of providing ongoing monitoring, support and extension training for those involved with LPAs whether that be a resource center or a different institutional mechanism. Greater inclusion of scientific conservation-focused NGOs in	The project concurred with this recommendation. The indicator remained unchanged, but the definition of a CCA resource center was broadened, not necessarily referring to a physical center. Collaboration with NGO and SPA partners remains an important consideration regarding biodiversity monitoring.

Midterm review recommendation	Status at terminal evaluation
project activities and oversight to ensure scientifically sound conservation measures and scientifically rigorous monitoring methods are adopted by the project.	
12. Ensure maximum effectiveness of project effort regarding database. Prepare a draft order for consideration by Government regarding inter-ministerial cooperation between the MEGDT, the Mining Cadastral Authority, and the Land Management Agency in which the three would agree that anything entered into the database of one is automatically shared with the others (e.g. through a simple email alert). Include in the proposed revisions to the old Regulation for taking land under LPA the stipulation that once entered in the LPA database, an LPA is automatically considered to be entered in the Mining database and therefore protected from mining exploration.	A four-party agreement was reached in 2017 by governmental agencies, effectively institutionalizing the LPA database.
13. Livestock components of LPA management plans need to be directly linked to environmental conservation. One recommendation is to increase profit of herders by reducing or eliminating middlemen. Consider providing herders with sheering equipment that will increase amount of wool produced per animal. Suggest CBO members agree to certain terms that will result in environmental benefit (e.g., agree to reduce livestock numbers by equivalent as what is gained from benefit provided by cutting out middleman or providing sheers, agree to monitor grassland with agreed upon methodology for doing vegetative transects and base their livestock numbers are results of vegetative transects, etc.).	In the opinion of the TE team, the LPA management plans should gradually be broadened in time, including capturing issues such as livestock management.
14. Wildlife and habitat monitoring: 1) Rangers and local decision makers need to be clear on why and what they are monitoring; 2) conduct monitoring in the entire area they use; 3) use a single standard methodology and ensure information sharing between soums to have an overall picture; and 4) set a clear target and letting people know where you are in terms of reaching that target.	The project took steps to increase training on biodiversity monitoring and facilitating partnerships with SPAs and NGOs. These partnerships remain critical in sustaining scientifically meaningful monitoring.
15. Small grants projects should clearly demonstrate two things: benefit to local people and benefit to the environment. Allow successful SGP recipients to access fund more than once but after first time it becomes a low-interest loan (offered through the SGP) instead of a grant. Loan is repaid into SGP trust fund.	The conservation trust fund established for the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA was developed as a low interest, short-term loan facility for local herders.
16. Livestock Risk Revolving Fund: The NC on Sustainable Financing should work together with the IC on Biodiversity to scrutinize the Livestock Risk Revolving fund and to make specific recommendations regarding how the fund could be modified to achieve the desired biodiversity results. (It is important that this documentation be translated into English. The MTR did not have the benefit of seeing the full documentation on the fund in English.)	The management response called for reviewing the rules of the revolving funds in the target 3 LPAs. It would be advisable to follow-up on the operation of the conservation trust funds after project closure.
17. Reduce the size of the PIU soon after the MTR. Consider eliminating the policy advisor and secretary positions. The new M&E and Community Development Officer should spend a good proportion of his time in the 3 LPAs.	The PIU was maintained until June 2017 and then gradually reduced in size.
18. UNDP and the PIU should strive to come to a common understanding regarding the connectivity issue before the next PB meeting. We urge the two parties to understand the theme of connectivity as limited to the three LPAs and the landscapes in which these three exist.	The Gulzat LPA was expanded around Uureg Lake, and the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA was expanded to provide increased connectivity with the nearby SPA and another LPA.
19. Include in the TOR of the IC on BD a review and critical analysis of the management and business plans of the 3 LPAs.	The project implemented a participatory evaluation process, assessing the performance of the implementation of the LPA management plans.
20. Ensure the National Biodiversity Consultant has extensive on-the-ground experience and can fully brief the IC on relevant policies, laws (not just the SPA law and Environment Protection law but also the new Pasture law, the new revisions to the Mining Law, etc.), programmes, ongoing and past relevant initiatives related to pasture/livestock management, hunting, wildlife trade, various funds.	The national consultant had already been recruited; the consultant was briefed on expectations and given updated project information.
21. When drafting regulations to the SPA law, consider including a stipulation on the minimum time period for which an LPA can be established. (e.g., not less than 10 years).	This stipulation had already been included.

## 6 Assessment of Implementation and Execution

### 6.1 Quality of implementation

#### Quality of Implementation (UNDP) is rated as: Satisfactory

The quality of implementation by UNDP as the GEF agency on this project is rated as satisfactory. UNDP supported the Government of Mongolia throughout the process, from conceptualization to project development and throughout implementation. The project development was thoroughly vetted with key stakeholders and focused on addressing specific barriers, specifically the need to legal recognize managed resource protected areas and build capacities required to enable effective implementation of this protected area management approach.

The UNDP County Office in Mongolia provided administrative and strategic guidance throughout the implementation phase. The project board was co-chaired by the UNDP CO Deputy Resident Representative, who consistently participated in the board meetings. Apart from USD 1,049,914 of in-kind cofinancing, the UNDP contributed USD 210,000 in grant cofinancing, directly financing certain project expenditures.

The UNDP regional technical advisor (RTA) has also been actively involved, providing overall guidance during the project preparation phase, liaising with the Ecosystems and Biodiversity team at UNDP headquarters and with the GEF Secretariat. Project progress reports provided candid accounts of issues, and these were followed up during project board meetings. Internal ratings were reasonable, and project risks, such as sustainable financing, were raised in PIR reports. Progress reports also contained constructive recommendations, such as preparing an exit strategy.

A few lessons learned, room for improvement regarding project implementation include:

- Processing recommendations made at project inception, e.g., changes to the project results framework, should be moved upstream within the project implementation arrangements and recorded either as a modification or rejected based on specific reasons.
- Designing shared management duties of the national project coordinator for the two full-sized GEF projects, the SPAN the MRPA projects was unreasonable from a human resource management perspective and was counter-productive in the early stages of the project when this role is critical in guiding the inception phase.
- Assessment of GEF tracking tools is often out-sourced to external consultants or institutions; it is important that protected area staff, project staff and agency staff members are involved in the process. And, it is advisable to provide refresher training to the external organizations facilitating the process.

## 6.2 Quality of execution

### Quality of Execution (Ministry of Environment and Tourism) is rated as: Satisfactory

The quality of execution by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) is rated as satisfactory. There was institutional capacity in place, as the MET had executed UNDP supported, GEF-financed projects earlier. The State Secretary of the MET acted as co-chairperson of the project board, providing high level involvement. There were a few changes in this position throughout the five years of implementation, e.g., as a result in personnel changes after the last government election. The director of the Protected Area Administration Department (PAAD) of the MET worked as national project director (NPD). This was a sensible choice, as the project objective was closely aligned with the mandate of the PAAD. Cofinancing contributions materialized by MET totaled USD 552,040, exceeding the USD 500,000 confirmed at CEO endorsement.

Inclusion on the project board of the governors of the aimags where the three demonstration areas are located was a sensible decision, providing proportional representation on the project board.

There were challenges associated with the shift from a supported national execution modality (NEX) in the beginning of the project - what had been the long-standing modality on earlier GEF-financed projects - to a full national implementation modality (NIM). Delays associated with prolonged procurement and administrative inconsistencies related to social insurance payments and human resource issues were sorted out in the later years of implementation; the long-term benefits include strengthened capacities of the national implementing partner and a higher likelihood for country ownership.

The project document was signed by the Government of Mongolia on 30 July 2013, but the inception workshop was held more than a year later, in September 2014. There were some activities carried out in the interim period, as the SPAN project was under implementation and the coordinator of that project was also tasked with the same role for the MRPA project. The delay in the beginning of the project was attributed partly to the shift in implementation modality and to scarcity of candidates for the PIU positions.

The project benefited from effective and consistent project management, led by the national project coordinator - even though her time was spread thin across two projects in first half of the project - and supported by the PIU staff and hired consultants and other sub-contractors. Hiring local project coordinators at the three demonstration areas was a sensible decision, considering the far distances from Ulaanbaatar and the advantage of having a project representative linked up with the local government.

## 7 Other Assessments

### 7.1 Need for follow-up

There are a few key issues that should be followed up after project closure, including:

- Delivering policy dialogue and advocacy for advancing the legislative reforms initiated through the project.
- Continuing the operation of CBO database, possibly linking it to the website of the national organization of natural resource CBOs.
- Monitoring and facilitating the initial functioning of the conservation trust fund established with contributions from CBOs in three soums, the project and the Green Gold program.
- Facilitating partnerships for advancing the sustainable financing options identified for the demonstration LPAs, e.g., carrying out feasibility studies and/or value chain analyses of the potential impact investments at the Khavtgar LPA and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA regarding sustainable meat production.
- Monitoring the operation of the trophy hunting cost sharing arrangements at the Gulzat LPA; particularly considering the current legal case regarding the local NGO overseeing the CBOs that are managing the LPA.

### 7.2 Materialization of cofinancing

The cumulative amount of cofinancing confirmed at project entry was USD 4,944,000, contributed from five different partners, including the Government of Mongolia, specifically the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), the UNDP as GEF agency, WWF Mongolia, KfW and GIZ (see **Annex 6**). According to direct feedback from the cofinancing partners, financial expenditure reports and information contained in the midterm review report, USD 3,742,220, or 76% of cofinancing were materialized by the end of the project (see **Table 18**).

**Table 18:** Summary of materialized cofinancing

Sources of Cofinancing	Name of Cofinancer	Type of Cofinancing	Cofinancing Amount (USD)	
			Confirmed	at End of Project
GEF Agency	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Grant	200,000	210,000
		In-kind	1,100,000	1,049,914
Recipient Government	Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)	In-kind	500,000	552,040
Non-governmental Organization	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)	Grant	884,000	884,000
Bilateral Financial Cooperation Agency	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)	Grant	2,000,000	786,266
Bilateral Technical Cooperation Agency	German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ)	Grant	260,000	260,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>4,944,000</b>	<b>3,742,220</b>

Confirmed cofinancing values obtained from signed cofinancing letters annexed to the approved project document.

The shortfall in the cofinancing is primarily attributed to the contributions from KfW, at USD 786,266 compared to a confirmed amount of USD 2,000,000 at project entry. The timing of the projects supported by KfW started later than originally envisaged; although cofinancing contributions fell, the ongoing investments by KfW enhance the sustainability of the results achieved on the MRPA project.

### 7.3 Environmental and social safeguards

Environmental and social risks were screened at the project preparation phase; the results of the screening were included as Annex F to the project document. One risk was identified as part of the environmental and social screening process<sup>17</sup>, specifically under the category of Social Equity and Equality, regarding the risk of "Would the proposed project have environmental and social impacts that could affect indigenous people or other vulnerable groups". Indigenous people were indicated to include the Buriats people (3,000) in Khavtgar and the Durved (2,500) and Bayad (250) people in Gulza.

As reported in the summary of the environmental and social screening outcome, "the project was designed to safeguard rather than risk the interests of vulnerable communities including traditional nomadic peoples and women/women headed households". However, potential negative consequences were pointed out, due to management practices and

<sup>17</sup> Environmental and Social Screening Checklist, Annex F to the project document.

regulatory frameworks that might diminish access to natural resources (e.g., water, grazing areas), lower investment incentives for pro-conservation economic activities, and increase social and economic vulnerabilities.

The identified mitigation measures to these potential risks included monitoring by technical experts, partnering with NGOs who have long-standing experience with community development in Mongolia, and implementation of proactive stakeholder engagement and communication plans.

The activities implemented at the three demonstration LPAs involved strengthening the capacities of community-based organizations that were largely comprised of traditional, nomadic herders. A strong emphasis and considerable project resources were placed on ensuring that these peoples lead the community conservation arrangements promoted through the managed resource protected area concept.

Project management costs, allocated from the GEF funds, totaled USD 161,706 through 19 March 2018. An additional USD 136,394 of project management costs over this period were financed by UNDP. The USD 161,706 figure is approximately 13% of the USD 1,222,794 of the GEF funds expended; this rate exceeds the 7.3% approved in the indicative budget included in the project document. The national project coordinator and PIU staff members made substantive contributions under the technical components of the project; it would have been advisable to allocate more of their costs to Components 1 and 2 (lesson learned).

## 7.4 Gender concerns

A thorough gender analysis carried out during the project preparation phase is mentioned in the project, but a report on the analysis or a gender action plan were prepared at that time. Gender risks were addressed as part of the environmental and social screening process; none of the assessed gender aspects were scored as a risk.

Although gender mainstreaming targets were not integrated into the project results framework, the project has generated some notable results in terms of gender inclusion, as documented in a MRPA gender report issued in 2017. Women representation in LPA governance structures include an average of approximately 28% among the LPA co-management councils and CBO steering committees in 2017. Women comprised 73% of the monitoring committees in 2017 among the 33 CBOs managing the three demonstration LPAs (see **Table 19**).

**Table 19:** Women representation in LPA and CBO decision-making bodies, 2016-2017<sup>18</sup>

Decision-making Body	Total members	Gender breakdown of members			
		2016		2017	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>LPA Co-management Councils:</b>					
Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA	12-13	12	1	10	2
Khavtgar LPA	11	8	3	7	4
Gulzat LPA	9-10	8	2	6	3
<b>Total:</b>	<b>32-34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6 (17.6%)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9 (28.1%)</b>
<b>CBO Steering Committees (33 CBOs):</b>					
Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA (15 CBOs)	63	50	13	45	18
Khavtgar LPA (6 CBOs)	21	17	4	15	6
Gulzat LPA (12 CBOs)	52	43	9	38	14
<b>Total:</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>26 (19.1%)</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>38 (27.9%)</b>
<b>CBO Monitoring Committees (33 CBOs):</b>					
Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA (15 CBOs)	31	10	21	10	21
Khavtgar LPA (6 CBOs)	18	3	15	3	15
Gulzat LPA (12 CBOs)	36	10	26	10	26
<b>Total:</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>62 (72.9%)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>62 (72.9%)</b>

According to the 2017 gender report, 50% of the small grants distributed to CBOs in 2016 were awarded to women, ranging from MNT 840,000 (approx. USD 350) to the Khukh Asgan CBO in the Norovlin soum in Khentii Aimag for a vegetable garden plot and small greenhouse, to MNT 3,912,100 (approx. USD 1,650) to the Tsegeen CBO in the Batshireet Soum in Khentii Aimag for a small bakery plant. The alternative livelihood activities supported through the small grants contributed towards an increase in CBO self-generated income for the participating CBOs (see **Table 20**).

<sup>18</sup> Extracted from the MRPA project gender report, 2017.



**Table 20: Income generated by women-led businesses, 2016-2017<sup>19</sup>**

CBOs	Small grant MNT	No of women involved/Total No of CBO women	Previous experience	Income in 2016 (MNT)	Income in 2017 (MNT)
<b>Norovlin soum of Khentii aimag:</b>					
Khukh Asgan (Vegetable gardening, parcel 0.7 ha, greenhouse 4 x 8 m)	840,000	7/7	No	4,115,000	5,350,000
Enger Bulag (felt products)	1,680,000	5/7	Yes	1,590,000	2,130,000
Tumenkhaan (vegetable gardening, parcel 0.5 ha)	2,751,500	12/18	No	Partly provided household needs	Fully provided household needs
<b>Batshireet soum, Khentii aimag:</b>					
Tsegeen (small bakery plant)	3,912,100	5/15	Yes	8,500,000	18,500,000
Nomgon (vegetable gardening & dairy processing)	2,020,000	10/10	Yes	6,915,000	8,866,800
Mon-Eg (vegetable gardening and processing)	3,000,000	10/30	No	0	845,000
Sogoot (vegetable gardening and processing)	3,500,000	8/11	Yes	520,000	1,368,000
<b>Bayan-uul soum of Dornod aimag:</b>					
Ulaan Undur (breeding of chicken)	2,020,000	4/7	No	800,000	1,100,000
Erdenebulag (bee breeding)	3,000,000	5/10	No	900,000	2,000,000
Kharaatiin Gol	3,295,000	9/11	Yes	1,900,000	2,280,000
<b>Bukhmurun soum of Uvs aimag:</b>					
Tsakhir	3,855,500	12/24	Yes	6,000,000	5,500,000

More than 50% of the PIU and UNDP CO staff members, as well as contracted specialists, were women, including the UNDP CO deputy resident representative, the team leader of the UNDP CO energy and environment team, the regional UNDP regional technical advisor, the national project coordinator, the policy expert and the project finance/administrative officer.

## 7.5 Stakeholder engagement

The project has done a commendable job with respect to stakeholder engagement. With a relatively modest budget, it was imperative that the project build upon efforts initiated by governmental and non-governmental partner organizations. The investments in stakeholder engagement and partnership strengthening also enhance the likelihood that results achieved will be sustained after GEF funding ceases.

With respect to engagement with government level stakeholders, the activities under Component 1 primarily involved national level stakeholders, including the PAAD and the ALAGAC, as well as cross-sectoral Working Group established for advancing the envisaged legislative reform. Engagement with national level governmental stakeholders was also achieved as part of the Component 2 activities, including development of the LPA and CBO databases, which involved close cooperation with the Environmental Data Center. The Component 2 activities also required proactive involvement with local level governmental stakeholders, including both aimag and soum government officials, particularly in those areas where the three target LPAs are located.

As represented in the composition of the project cofinancing partners, stakeholder engagement extended to the non-governmental sector and donor community. The project upon the foundational work that WWF facilitated at the Gulzat LPA and closely involved WWF in the process, e.g., utilizing the results of the transboundary biodiversity monitoring activities sponsored by the organization. Other international and domestic NGOs were also engaged; including TNC, which as carried out ecoregional assessments throughout the country which have provided science-based guidance for expanding and strengthening protected area systems. There has been intensive involvement with domestic NGOs, including ones involved with supporting management of the LPAs targeted by the project; these engagements enhance the likelihood that the results achieved will be sustained.

The project effectively engaged with bilateral financial and technical cooperation agencies, including with two of the cofinancing partners, GIZ and KfW, who have supported projects aimed at strengthening LPA management, at the policy and field levels. Through the Green Gold program that provides technical and financial cooperation assistance towards improved pasture management, the project has engaged with the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency, including jointly contributing to a conservation trust fund established for the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA.

Stakeholder engagement with the private sector included partnering with the Sustainable Fiber Association (SFA) on providing training to herder groups, priming them for the process of becoming certified by SFA as herder groups for sustainable sourcing of cashmere. Engagement with the private sector hunting companies did not materialize as envisaged in the stakeholder analysis included in the project document. These hunting companies are important

<sup>19</sup> Extracted from the MRPA project gender report, 2017.

stakeholders with respect to the trophy hunting sector, something that has been increasingly implemented at the Gulzat LPA and considered by the other two target LPAs. The issuance of hunting licenses is controlled by a tight circle of stakeholders and the project was not able to develop meaningful inroads into these processes.

Engagement with the mining sector also fell short of expectations. The Ministry of Mineral Resources was actively involved in sorting out legal issues associated with many of the declared LPAs in the country and is also one of the parties agreeing to support the continued management of the LPA database; this is indeed a notable achievement. Conflicts between mining companies and local governments and communities are deep-seated, including among the target LPAs, such as Gulzat. The project had some collaboration with the ongoing UNDP supported, GEF financing project "Land Degradation Offset and Mitigation in Western Mongolia" (GEF ID 5700); but there seems to have been some missed opportunities for more substantive cooperation. There was collaboration on capacity building activities; for example, a two-day training in November 2017 on environmental planning and financing was delivered to aimag and soum decision makers, officers and NGOs was jointly delivered and supported by several UNDP projects, including the MRPA project, the land degradation offset project and the ecosystem-based adaption project. Other potential opportunities could have included considering biodiversity offsets as one of the solutions for sustainable LPA financing, awareness raising among local community members (the TE team observed a strong negative attitude among local government officials and herder stakeholders in the Gulzat area with respect to mining in general).

## 8 Lessons and Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated based upon the findings of the TE.

No.	Recommendation	Responsible Entities	Timeframe
<b>Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project</b>			
1.	Prepare an exit plan that outlines actions that require follow-up after project closure, clearly describing what has been delivered through the project and what actions the beneficiaries are responsible. Recommended follow-up actions are described below in sub-recommendations 1a-1f.	PIU, MET	Before project closure
1a.	Prepare a policy dialogue and advocacy plan (e.g., incorporating into an existing project or one under development) for advancing the proposed legislative and regulatory reforms that have not been passed by project closure.	PIU, MET	Before project closure
1b.	Resolve the continued operation of CBO database and assess ways in which the maintenance of this site could be self-sustaining. One option is combining it to the website of the national organization of natural resource CBOs and promoting online sale of CBO products and services and linking with more advanced small and medium size businesses that have a proven track record and established networks in Mongolia.	National organization of natural resource CBOs, PAAD, ALAGAC	Before project closure
1c.	Monitor the operation of the trophy hunting cost sharing arrangements at the Gulzat LPA; particularly considering the current legal case regarding the local NGO overseeing the CBOs that are managing the LPA. And, advocate for the aimag government to stop cutting soum governments budgets, depending upon how much income is allocated to the soums from trophy hunting revenue.	PAAD, MET, local governments	Before project closure
1d.	Provide information to all aimag governors regarding the lessons learned through the trophy hunting income sharing arrangements at the Gulzat LPA and opportunities for generating mutually beneficial conservation and socioeconomic outcomes.	PAAD, MET, local governments, NGOs	Before project closure
1e.	Monitor and facilitate the initial functioning of the conservation trust fund established with contributions from CBOs in three soums, the project and the Green Gold program.	Soum governments, Green Gold	Before project closure
1f.	Facilitate partnerships for advancing the sustainable financing options identified for the demonstration LPAs, e.g., carrying out feasibility studies and/or value chain analyses of the potential impact investments at the Khavtgar LPA and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA regarding sustainable meat production.	PAAD, Soum Governments, KfW and other partners	Before project closure
2.	Prepare a best practice guideline for managed resource protected areas in Mongolia, drawing upon the experiences gained through the three demonstration sites on the project. The guideline should be available on the PAAD website and disseminated to other governmental and non-governmental partners.	PIU, PAAD	Before project closure
3.	Carry out a critical review of the end-of-project assessments of management effectiveness of the three demonstration LPAs and document the results using the standard GEF-5 tracking tool template; some of the scores seemed overly optimistic and the GEF-5 Excel form was not used. As part of this process, it would be advisable also apply the approved Mongolian version of the METT to allow comparative analysis among other protected areas in the national system.	PIU	Before project closure
4.	Account for cofinancing contributions that materialized during project implementation, e.g., from the Land Agency (ALAGAC), aimag and soum governments at the three LPA demonstration areas, the Green Gold program funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Khan Khentii SPA, etc.	PIU	Before project closure
<b>Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project</b>			
5.	Prepare a technical report summarizing the reintroduction and subsequent monitoring of marmot at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA. The success achieved through this reintroduction could provide useful	MET, Mongolian Academy of Sciences	By Dec 2018

No.	Recommendation	Responsible Entities	Timeframe
	guidance to other conservation efforts; the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, who led the efforts, might be interested in preparing a scientific publication.		
6.	Further develop the LPA management plans, including broader ecosystem recovery objectives, e.g., through implementation of pasture use fees and improved coordination between LPAs, SPAs and buffer zones to SPAs.	LPA co-management councils, PAAD, NGOs and other enabling partners	Within the next 1-2 years
<b>Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives</b>			
7.	<p>Prepare (or update) a national protected area (PA) system strategy. The role of LPAs in the national PA system is unclear. For example, aimag governments show higher ownership of buffer zones than LPAs; many LPAs declared to deter mining activities; role of state protected areas unclear in the management of LPAs and buffer zones; there has been a strong focus on PA expansion and less attention placed on effective management and governance. Moreover, LPAs and community conservation co-management arrangements are under-represented in the 2015-2025 NBSAP. The PA system strategy should include, but not be limited to the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify LPA priority areas, using the ecoregional assessments prepared by TNC, overlaying key biodiversity areas (KBAs), etc.</li> <li>Encourage multiple functions, including biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services (e.g., water security), fire danger areas, etc.</li> <li>Outline institutional arrangements, including buffer zone management.</li> <li>Clarify roles of state protected areas (SPAs) in management of buffer zones and LPAs.</li> </ul> <p>The PA system strategy should be incorporated into upcoming release of the national program on protected areas.</p>	MET, PAAD, with consultation from leading conservation agencies and organizations	Within the next 1-2 years
8.	Review and update wildlife management policies and legislation regarding trophy hunting. Based on the findings of this terminal evaluation, there is a high demand for implementing wildlife trophy hunting; this was the fallback financing option mentioned by local governments and CBOs managing the demonstration LPAs. Issues to consider in updated policies and legislation include, but are not limited to, participatory governance, allocation of income generated, alternative forms of issuing licenses, e.g., through online auctions, revising the Law on Natural Resource Payment to provide the legal basis for some of these income allocation alternatives, etc.	MET	Within the next 1-2 years
9.	Increase public awareness of the value of the protected area system, including managed resource protected areas, using contemporary mechanisms, such as social media, performing arts, etc.	PAAD, NGOs	Within the next 1-2 years

A few examples of good practices and lessons learned regarding project design and implementation are presented below.

### Good Practices:

**Partnerships arrangements were well integrated into project design and implementation.** Collaborations with cofinancing and other enabling partners were well integrated into the project design and followed through during project implementation, enhancing the range of participation, capitalizing on stakeholder expertise, and increasing the likelihood that results achieved will be sustained after project closure. Partners included governmental agencies, technical and financial cooperation donor agencies, NGOs, and the private sector.

**Demonstration of an effective LPA governance model.** The project demonstrated that local community-based organizations have the capacity and willingness to take on the responsibility of managing local protected areas. Regarding the Gulzat and Khavtgar LPAs, management of the LPAs was granted to legal entities and supported by local governments. In the case of the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA, the project showcased how local governments can effectively oversee the management of vast areas with support of local herders (CBOs), and demonstrated the proactive stewardship of local CBOs with respect to the reintroduction of marmot.

**Demonstration of locally driven improvements in biodiversity conservation through expanding ecological connectivity.** The project also demonstrated how locally driven interests, facilitated by multiple partners, can lead to improvements in biodiversity conservation, specifically regarding expanding ecological connectivity for key species. During the project implementation phase, roughly 77,500 ha of the Gulzat LPA was expanded to provide improved connectivity for Argali sheep habitat, and an approximate 59,400-ha ecological corridor was established at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA to enable expanded migration of the Mongolian gazelle.

**Effectiveness of training and awareness raising at the community level.** Based on findings of the TE field mission, the project efforts in training and raising awareness among the local herder communities was very effective, as indicated by sound biodiversity knowledge, detailed understanding of local conservation regulations and the LPA management plans, reduction in threats such as hunting, and self-motivation to continue LPA management activities.

**Cooperating with the Khan-Khentii special protected area (SPA) in wildlife monitoring was a constructive adaptive management measure.** This cooperation provided learning-by-doing capacity building to the LPA volunteer rangers and

strengthened the partnership arrangements between the LPA and SPA. It would have been advisable to build such cooperation into the M&E design and confirming through cofinancing arrangements.

**Ownership of LPA database confirmed through a four-party agreement.** The four-party agreement involving the ALAGAC, the PAAD, the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority, and the Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment, regarding the responsibility of maintaining the LPA database is a good example of national ownership.

**Evaluation of the performance of the implementation of LPA management plans.** The project worked with governmental and non-governmental partners in developing a set of criteria for evaluating the performance of the implementation of the LPA management plans for the three demonstration areas and applied the criteria through a participatory approach. This process provides a good practice framework that could be replicated for other LPAs and for special protected areas.

**Contributions by local herders into the Tumenkhaan-Shalz conservation trust fund enhances sustainability.** Along with the project and the Green Gold program, local herder families from three soums located at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA have made contributions to the conservation trust fund. The local herders see the trust fund as a more favorable mechanism for providing short-term, bridging loans that have better terms than offered from commercial banks. The participation by the local herders in the trust fund strengthens social collaborative structures in the communities and enhances the prospects that the fund will be sustained.

**Alternative income opportunities promoted among local herder communities.** Introducing alternative livelihood opportunities to local herder communities was an effective approach that provided options that did not involve wildlife hunting. Participation in the trade fair held in Ulaanbaatar in 2016 as part of the Second National Forum of CBO exposed the involved herders to the broad interest, at a national level, to the products and services offered by natural resource CBOs.

**Involvement of the local herders and volunteer rangers contributed to the success of the marmot reintroduction.** The volunteer rangers and other members of the CBOs at the Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA where the marmot reintroduction was carried out provided important monitoring and enforcement duties, increasing local ownership and awareness.

#### **Lessons Learned:**

**The project inception workshop should be made as early as possible, baselines validated/adjusted at that time and approved changes recorded.** Sorting out issues, such as validating baselines and agreeing to performance metrics in the project results framework, should be made as early as possible in the inception phase, and changes recommended should be formally presented to the project board, requesting and recording approval, followed by approval of the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor.

**Scientifically sound species monitoring protocols should be outlined in the project design and elaborated at project inception.** To provide defensible information on changes to environmental status, e.g., populations of target species, it is important that scientifically sound monitoring protocols are developed and consistently followed.

**Inclusion of legislative targets should have specific commitments from recipient government cofinancing partners.** If legislative targets are included in a project design, there should be specific commitments from recipient government cofinancing partners, e.g., reflecting commitment in cofinancing letters and establishing a non-political, cross-sectoral (public sector, NGOs, donor community, private sector, research-academic sector, etc.) working group that would be tasked with advancing the proposed legislative reforms during the timeframe of the project implementation and beyond closure.

**Cofinancing allocations should extend beyond project closure to cover follow-up actions.** Allocation of cofinancing contributions should extend beyond the date of project closure, e.g., by 2-3 years, to cover the cost and oversight for follow-up actions, such as further guiding sustainable PA financing options and advocating for passing legislative reforms.

**Socioeconomic benefits and gender issues should be sufficiently integrated into the project results framework.** The project generated socioeconomic benefits, including gender inclusion issues; however, these were not sufficiently integrated into the project results framework and not systematically reported.

**It would have been advisable to develop a knowledge management strategy.** The project made considerable contributions to knowledge associated with local protected areas, including the LPA database, the CBO database and website, as well as technical and non-technical written products, and Output 2.3 focused on capturing and disseminating lessons learned. It would have been advisable to develop a knowledge management strategy, describing roles and responsibilities, cofinancing contributions, ownership of knowledge platforms and systems after GEF funding ceases, etc.

**Allowing room for improvement on METT assessments.** It is important to allow room for improvement on METT assessments, particularly for the types of protected areas targeted by the project, i.e., local protected areas managed through community conservation arrangements.

**Tracking cofinancing that materializes during project implementation.** There were cofinancing contributions from several partners that materialized during project implementation but were not tracked or reported. Such contributions should be accounted along with cofinancing confirmed at CEO endorsement.

**Instructions for allocation of project management costs should be clarified at project inception.** Allocation of PIU staff costs across the project components should be agreed upon at project inception. If PIU staff are providing substantive contributions to the technical components, then costs should not be only allocated to project management.



## Annex 1: TE Mission Itinerary

Time	Activity	Responsible parties/persons	Place
<b>March 10, Saturday DAY 1</b>			
	Arrival in Ulaanbaatar Pick up arranged by project car	Ulzii, AFO Dagvadorj, Driver	"Chinggis Khaan" international airport
<b>March 11, Sunday DAY 2</b>			
In the morning	Document reading		
13:30	Pick up from hotel by project car	Ulzii, AFO Dagvadorj, Driver	
14:00-15.30	<b>Introduction meeting at PIU (current staff)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms .Oyuntulkhuur , National project coordinator</li> <li>Ms.Ulzijargal., Administrative and finance officer</li> <li>Mr. Dagvadorj Ya., Driver</li> </ul>		PIU office in Zaisan
15:30-16:30	<b>Meeting with the former staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Mendsaikhan T., M&amp;E Officer</li> <li>Ms.Tungalag , Policy Officer</li> </ul>	Oyuntulkhuur, NPC	
<b>March 12, Monday DAY 3</b>			
9.00	<b>Pick up by project car</b>	Dagvadorj, driver	
09:30-13:00	<b>Briefing at UNDP Country Office , Mongolia</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms.Daniela Gasparikova, Deputy Resident Representative</li> </ul>	Khishigjargal Kh.	UN House
10.00-10.30	Security briefing	Ms.Bolorchimeg B., Security officer, UNDSS (tbd)	UNDSS, UN House
11.20-12.00	<b>Meeting with IP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr.Tsengel Ts., State Secretary of MET and Chairman of PB</li> </ul>	Oyuntulkhuur, NPC/Dorj, assistant to SS	MET building
12:00-12:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Javzan B, Head of the Department for M&amp;E and internal auditing</li> </ul>		
12.40-13.30	<b>Meeting with PAAD staff</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr.Batsansar Ch., Director of PAAD</li> </ul>		
13.30-14.30	<b>Lunch</b>		
	<b>Meeting with the project stakeholders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Batbold D., Director of WWF in Mongolia and the member of the PB (WWF is one of project co-funding partner)</li> <li>Mrs. Munkhchuluun Ch, Officer in charge of PA management (collaboration on establishment of connectivity conservation areas and some follow-up activities of SPAN)</li> <li>Ms.Enkhtuya O., Director of TNC in Mongolia and the member of PB</li> <li>Mr.Galbadrakh D, Programme Coordinator, TNC</li> </ul>	Munkhchuluun, WWF	WWF Office
15.30-15.50			
15.50-17.20			
17.20-18.00	<b>Meeting with project partners on sustainable financing:</b> Mr.Chimed-Ochir B, consultant to Biofin project Mr.Gankhuyag D, Chairman, National federation of pasture user groups of herders	Galbadrakh, TNC  Oyuntulkhuur, NPC	TNC office (in the same building with WWF)  UN House
<b>March 13-15 DAY 4-6</b>			

Annex 1

Time	Activity	Responsible parties/persons	Place
March 20, Tuesday	Trip to Khavtgar and Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPAs, Norovlin and Bayanuul soums, Khentii aimag	Orgiltuya, National Consultant Oyuntulkhuur, NPC Dagvadorj, driver	Norovlin soum, Khentii aimag
8:00-14:00	Drive to Norovlin soum, Khentii aimag		
15:00 -16:00	Meeting with Mr. Ganbyamga,		
20:00-22:00	Meeting with Khavtgar Community : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Bayarsaikah, communitiy leader</li><li>○ Gantsogt, NGO head</li><li>○ Tserenmaa, community member</li><li>○ Munkh-Ochir, environmental inspector</li></ul>		
March 21, Wednesday	Meeting with Norovlin soum Governor	Drive back to UB	Bayanuul soum
13:00-14:00	Meeting with Mr. Batbayar, Huh Asgat Community Leader		
14:00-16:00	Meeting with Ms. Gereltuya, Tumenkhaan Community member		
	Meeting with Mr. Bat-Amgalan, Bayanuul soum Administrative Department		
16:00- 18:00			
March 22, Thursday 9:00 – 21:00	Meeting with Mr. Gantulga, Dornod aimag environmental office and Kharaat community members		Dornod aimag
March 23, Friday DAY 14			
8:00 – 10:00	Preparation to de-briefing		Project office UN House
11.00-12.30	De-briefing at the UNDP – presentation of preliminary findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ms.Daniela Gasparikova, DRR, UNDP</li><li>○ Ms. Khishigjargal, Programme Officer</li><li>○ PAAD</li><li>○ TNC</li></ul>	Orgiltuya, National Consultant	
March 24, Saturday DAY 15			
6:30	Pick up by project car to airport Depart Mongolia	Dagvadorj, Driver	

## Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<b>Relevance: Is the project relevant with respect to the environmental and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?</b>			
To what extent is the principle of the project in line with national priorities?	Level of participation of the concerned agencies in project activities. Consistency with relevant strategies and policies.	Minutes of meetings, Project progress reports, national and regional strategy and policy documents	Desk review, interviews
To what extent is the project aligned to the main objectives of the GEF focal area?	Consistency with GEF strategic objectives	GEF Strategy documents, PIRs, Tracking Tools	Desk review, interview with UNDP-GEF RTA
To what extent is the project aligned to the strategic objectives of UNDP?	Consistency with UNDP strategic objectives	UNDP Strategic Plan, Country Programme Document	Desk review, interview
<b>Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?</b>			
Assessment of progress made toward achieving the indicator targets agreed upon in the logical results framework			
<b>Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</b>			
What evidence is available showing sufficient funding has been secured to sustain project results?	Financial risks	Progress reports, sectoral plans, budget allocation reports, testimonial evidence	Desk review, interviews
How have individual and institutional capacities been strengthened, and are governance structures capacitated and in place to sustain project results?	Institutional and individual capacities	Progress reports, testimonial evidence, training records	Desk review, interviews
What social or political risks threaten the sustainability of project results?	Socio-economic risks	Socio-economic studies, macroeconomic information	Desk review, interviews
Which ongoing circumstances and/or activities pose threats to the sustainability of project results?	Risks to sustainability	Sectoral plans, progress reports, macroeconomic information	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Have delays affected project outcomes and/or sustainability, and, if so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?	Impact of project delays	Progress reports	Desk review, interviews
<b>Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward long lasting desired changes?</b>			
What verifiable environmental improvements have been made?	Verifiable environmental improvements	Progress reports, sectoral plans, municipal development plans	Desk review, interviews, theory of change analysis
What verifiable reductions in stress on environmental systems have been made?	Verifiable reductions in stress on environmental systems	Progress reports, sectoral plans, municipal development plans	Desk review, interviews, theory of change analysis
How has the project demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements?	Progress toward impact achievements	Progress reports, sectoral plans, municipal development plans	Desk review, interviews, theory of change analysis
<b>Efficiency: Was the Project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?</b>			
How was the project efficient with respect to incremental cost criteria?	Incremental cost	National strategies and plans, progress reports	Desk review, interviews

Evaluation Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
To what extent were the project objective and outcomes realized according to the proposed budget and timeline?	Efficient utilization of project resources	Progress reports, financial records	Desk review, interviews
<b>Country Ownership:</b>			
How are project results contributing to national and subnational development plans and priorities?	Development planning	Government approved plans and policies	Desk review, interviews
Which governments policies or regulatory frameworks were approved in line with the project objective?	Policy reform	Government approved plans and policies	Desk review, interviews
How have governmental and other cofinancing partners maintained their financial commitment to the project?	Committed cofinancing realized	Audit reports, project accounting records	Desk review, interviews
<b>Stakeholder Involvement and Partnership Arrangements:</b>			
How has the project consulted with and made use of the skills, experience, and knowledge of the appropriate government entities, NGOs, community groups, private sector entities, local governments, and academic institutions?	Effective stakeholder involvement	Meeting minutes, reports, interview records	Desk review, interviews, field visits
How were partnership arrangements properly identified and roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project approval?	Partnership arrangements	Memorandums of understanding, agreements	Desk review, interviews
How have partnerships influenced the effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation?	Effective partnerships	Progress reports, interview records	Desk review, interviews, field visits
How have relevant vulnerable groups and powerful supporters and opponents of the processes been properly involved?	Inclusive stakeholder involvement	Meeting minutes, reports, interview records	Desk review, interviews, field visits
How has the project sought participation from stakeholders in (1) project design, (2) implementation, and (3) monitoring & evaluation?	Stakeholder involvement	Plans, reports	Desk review, interviews, field visits
<b>Catalytic Role:</b>			
How has the project had a catalytic or replication effect in the country?	Catalytic effect	Interview records, municipal development plans	Desk review, interviews
<b>Synergy with Other Projects/Programs</b>			
How were synergies with other projects/programs incorporated in the design and/or implementation of the project?	Collaboration with other projects/programs	Plans, reports, meeting minutes	Desk review, interviews
<b>Preparation and Readiness</b>			
Were project objective and components clear, practicable, and feasible within its time frame?	Project coherence	Logical results framework	Desk review, interviews



Evaluation Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
How were the capacities of the executing institution(s) and its counterparts properly considered when the project was designed?	Execution capacity	Progress reports, audit results	Desk review, interviews
Were counterpart resources, enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place at Project entry?	Readiness	Interview records, progress reports	Desk review, interviews, field visits
<b>Financial Planning</b>			
Did the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allowed management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allowed for timely flow of funds?	Financial control	Audit reports, project accounting records	Desk review, interviews
Has there been due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits?	Financial management	Audit reports, project accounting records	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Has promised cofinancing materialized?	Realization of cofinancing	Audit reports, project accounting records	Desk review, interviews
<b>Supervision and Backstopping</b>			
How have GEF agency staff members identified problems in a timely fashion and accurately estimate their seriousness?	Supervision effectiveness	Progress reports	Desk review, interviews
How have GEF agency staff members provided quality support, approved modifications in time, and restructured the project when needed?	Project oversight	Progress reports	Desk review, interviews
How has the implementing agency provided the right staffing levels, continuity, skill mix, and frequency of field visits for the project?	Project backstopping	Progress reports, back-to-office reports, internal appraisals	Desk review, interviews, field visits
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>			
Were intended results (outputs, outcomes) adequately defined, appropriate and stated in measurable terms, and were the results verifiable?	Monitoring and evaluation plan at entry	Project document, inception report	Desk review, interviews
How has the project monitoring & evaluation plan been implemented?	Effective monitoring and evaluation	Progress reports, monitoring reports	Desk review, interviews
How has there been focus on results-based management?	Results based management	Progress reports, monitoring reports	Desk review, interviews
<b>Mainstreaming</b>			
How were gender issues integrated in project design and implementation?	Greater consideration of gender aspects.	Project document, progress reports, monitoring reports	Desk review, interviews, field visits
How were effects on local populations considered in project design and implementation?	Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations.	Project document, progress reports, monitoring reports	Desk review, interviews, field visits

## Annex 3: List of People Interviewed

No.	Name	Position	Telephone	Email
<b>MRPA project implementation unit 11 March 2018</b>				
1	Ms.B.Oyuntulkhuur	National Project Coordinator	976 -70114228 (o) 99174727	<a href="mailto:Oyuntulkhuur.band@undp.org">Oyuntulkhuur.band@undp.org</a>
2	Ms.Ulzijjargal	Administrative/Financial Officer	99040129	<a href="mailto:Uljijjargal.boldbaatar@undp.org">Uljijjargal.boldbaatar@undp.org</a>
3	Ms.Tungalag	PO (contract ended on 31 Dec 2017)	88038514	<a href="mailto:tungaagh@yahoo.com">tungaagh@yahoo.com</a>
4	Mr.Mendbaatar	M&E and community development officer (contract ended on 30 June 2017)	99083884	<a href="mailto:o_mendbaatar@yahoo.com">o_mendbaatar@yahoo.com</a>
5	Ya.Dagvadorj	Driver	99152376	<a href="mailto:Dagvadorj0115@gmail.com">Dagvadorj0115@gmail.com</a>
<b>UNDP Country office and Asia-Pacific Regional Hub</b>				
6	Daniela Gasparikova	DRR, UNDP Mongolia	976 11 327585(o)	<a href="mailto:daniela.gasparikova@undp.org">daniela.gasparikova@undp.org</a>
7	Ms.Khishigjargal Kh.	Programme Officer	99022215	<a href="mailto:khishigjargal.kharkhuu@undp.org">khishigjargal.kharkhuu@undp.org</a>
8	Ms.Bolorchimeg	UNDSS security	327585(o)	<a href="mailto:Bolorchimeg.bold@undss.org">Bolorchimeg.bold@undss.org</a>
9	Ms. Lisa Farroway	Regional Technical Advisor		<a href="mailto:lisa.farroway@undp.org">lisa.farroway@undp.org</a>
<b>MET 12 March 2018</b>				
10	Mr. Tsengel Ts.	State Secretary, Chairman of Project Board	266286 (o), 99199081	<a href="mailto:Dor.jorj@yahoo.com">Dor.jorj@yahoo.com</a>
11	Mr.Batsansar Ch.	Director of Protected area administration Department /PAAD/	88116047	<a href="mailto:sansar_glm2000@yahoo.com">sansar_glm2000@yahoo.com</a>
12	Ms.Javzan	Director, M&E and internal auditing department		<a href="mailto:Javzan55@yahoo.com">Javzan55@yahoo.com</a>
13	Mr.Enkhmunkh	Senior Officer, PAAD	267283 (o)	<a href="mailto:Munkh0901@gmail.com">Munkh0901@gmail.com</a>
14	Mr.Munkh-orgil	Officer in charge of donor projects		<a href="mailto:Munkhorgil88@hotmail.com">Munkhorgil88@hotmail.com</a>
15	Mr.Boldbaatar	Research Officer		<a href="mailto:boldbaatar@mne.gov.mn">boldbaatar@mne.gov.mn</a>
16	Ms.Javzan	Officer		<a href="mailto:b.javzaa86@yahoo.com">b.javzaa86@yahoo.com</a>
17	Ms.Delgertsetseg	Legal Officer		<a href="mailto:b.delgertsetseg23@yahoo.com">b.delgertsetseg23@yahoo.com</a>
18	Mr.Batbold	Director, WWF	99041022	<a href="mailto:batbold@wwf.mn">batbold@wwf.mn</a>
19	Mrs.Munkhchuluun	Officer in charge of PA	99818170	<a href="mailto:munkhchuluun@wwf.mn">munkhchuluun@wwf.mn</a>
20	Ms.Enkhtuya	Director, TNC	99082356	
21	Mr.Galmandakh	Programme Director	99064084	<a href="mailto:gdavaa@tnc.org">gdavaa@tnc.org</a>
22	Mr.Chimed-ochir	Consultant to Biofin	99727052	<a href="mailto:Chimedochir.bazarsad@gmail.com">Chimedochir.bazarsad@gmail.com</a>
23	Mr.Gankhuyag	Chairman, National Federation of PUG	99060647	<a href="mailto:Gankhuyag.nyam@gmail.com">Gankhuyag.nyam@gmail.com</a>
<b>Gulzat LPA</b>				
24	Mr.Nasanbat	Chairman of Citizens' Representative Khural		
25	Ms.Enkhtuya	Senior Officer, Investment and Policy Implementation Department	99459929	<a href="mailto:Enkhtuya_06@yahoo.com">Enkhtuya_06@yahoo.com</a>
26	Mr.Batsaikhan	Uvs aimag Governor, PB member	99451200	

No.	Name	Position	Telephone	Email
27	Ms.Tuguldur	Officer in charge of LPA and hunting issues, Environment Office	96150088	<a href="mailto:Tuguldur_113@yahoo.com">Tuguldur_113@yahoo.com</a>
28	Ms.Batkishig	Project local coordinator (Former BD Officer of Gulzat Initiative NGO)	99483767	<a href="mailto:b.batkishig@yahoo.com">b.batkishig@yahoo.com</a>
29	Mr.Khurelbaatar	Head of Board, Gulzat initiative NGO		
30	Mr.Ganbold	Director, Gulzat Initiative NGO (former Director of Env.Office)	99255265	<a href="mailto:panda_uvs2011@yahoo.com">panda_uvs2011@yahoo.com</a>
31	Mr.Barsuren	Director, Association of Community Organizations NGO	96451200	<a href="mailto:Baraa451200@gmail.com">Baraa451200@gmail.com</a>
32	Mr.Bayarsaikhan	Chairman, Buhmurun soum Representative Khural	99451343	
33	Mr.Turtogtokh	Bukhmurun Soum Governor	99636398	
34	Mr.Mandakh	Soum ranger responsible for Gulzat	94506571	
35	Ms.Oyunchimeg	Head of Financial Unit, Buhmurun soum	95719292	<a href="mailto:Sanjav0825@yahoo.com">Sanjav0825@yahoo.com</a>
36	Mr.Sainbayar	Chairman, Sagil soum Representative Khural	94992359	
37	Ms.Delgerkhishig	Sagil Soum Governor	99133214	
38	Mr.Bayanmukh	Deputy soum governor	91660058	
<b>Khavtgar LPA 19 March</b>				
39	Mr.Gansuren	Chairman, Batshireet soum Representative Khural	95102060	
40	Mr.Bold	Batshireet Soum Governor	93014249	
41	Mr.Altangerel	Deputy soum governor	98995547	
42	Mr.Gantsogt	Director, Khavtgar NGO	98968188	<a href="mailto:Khawtgar2017@gmail.com">Khawtgar2017@gmail.com</a>
43	Mr.Bayarsaikhan	Representative of Khural (former Soum Governor)	93014248	
<b>Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA</b>				
44	Mr.Khurelbaatar	Chairman, <b>Norovlin soum</b> Representative Khural	93014388	<a href="mailto:p.khurlee1979@yahoo.com">p.khurlee1979@yahoo.com</a>
45	Mr.Altangerel	Norovlin soum Governor	98071129	<a href="mailto:A_gerel_1011@yahoo.com">A_gerel_1011@yahoo.com</a>
46		State Inspector for Nature and Environment		
47		Soum land Officer		
48	Uuganbat	Ranger/Local project coordinator, Norovlin soum		<a href="mailto:Uuganaa1231@yahoo.com">Uuganaa1231@yahoo.com</a>
49	Ms.Ganchimeg	<b>Bayan-uul soum</b> governor	99928311	
50	Mr.Bat-Amgalan	Head, Soum Governor's office	99004676	
51	B.Munkhbat	Ranger/Local project coordinator, Bayn-uul soum	86600211	<a href="mailto:Moogii_zayanaa@yahoo.com">Moogii_zayanaa@yahoo.com</a>
52		State Inspector for Nature and Environment		
53		Soum Land Officer		
54	Mr.Dorjtseren	Chairman, <b>Tsagaan-ovoo soum</b> Representative Khural	91584558	
55	Mr.Bayarmagnai	Tsagaan-ovoo soum Governor	99580288	
56	Mr.Otgonkhuyag	State Inspector for Nature and Environment	95204477	
57	Mr.Aldar	Ranger/Local project coordinator	99589333	<a href="mailto:Aldar_dorhod@yahoo.com">Aldar_dorhod@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Other stakeholders 16 March</b>				
58	Ms.Gantsetseg	Contract worker for LPA database	99022272	<a href="mailto:bgantsetseg@yahoo.com">bgantsetseg@yahoo.com</a>
59	Ms.Batkishig	Head of Environmental Information center, Meteorology Institute		<a href="mailto:batkhishigbat@yahoo.com">batkhishigbat@yahoo.com</a>
60	Mr.Ganselem	Mongolian community association	88781945	<a href="mailto:d.ganselem@yahoo.com">d.ganselem@yahoo.com</a>

**Terminal Evaluation Report 2018**

Mongolia's Network of Managed Resource Protected Areas

UNDP PIMS ID: 4393; GEF Project ID: 4562

No.	Name	Position	Telephone	Email
61	Mr.Khashmargad	Director of Khan Khentii SPA	99192460	<a href="mailto:khashmargadb@yahoo.com">khashmargadb@yahoo.com</a>
62	Ms.Otgonsuren	Senior Officer, Cadastral Division, Mining Authority		
63	Mr.Galmandakh	Head of Cadastral Division, Land Management Authority		
64	Ms.Batkishig	Sustainable Fibre Alliance	99008889	<a href="mailto:Batkishig.baival@yahoo.com">Batkishig.baival@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Consultants 17 March</b>				
65	Mr.D.Enkhbileg	Consultant on Biodiversity conservation, researcher	91911940	<a href="mailto:enkhbileg_dulamtseren@yahoo.com">enkhbileg_dulamtseren@yahoo.com</a>
66	Ms.Shinetsetseg	Consultant on eco-schools	88111893	<a href="mailto:eshinetsetseg@yahoo.com">eshinetsetseg@yahoo.com</a>

## Annex 4: List of Information Reviewed

### 1. Project documents

- 1) GEF Project Identification Form (PIF), Project Document and Log Frame Analysis (LFA)
- 2) CEO Endorsement Request
- 3) Project Inception report
- 4) Implementing/executing partner arrangements
- 5) List and contact details for project staff, key project stakeholders, including Project Boards, and other partners to be consulted
- 6) Project sites, highlighting suggested visits
- 7) Midterm review (MTR) and other relevant evaluations and assessments
- 8) Management response to midterm review recommendations
- 9) Annual Project Implementation Reports (PIR), APR, QPR
- 10) Financial audit reports
- 11) Project budget, broken out by outcomes and outputs
- 12) Project GEF BD-1 Tracking Tool: baseline, midterm and terminal assessments
- 13) Financial Data including Combined Delivery Reports (CDR)
- 14) Actual cofinancing realized by the end of the project
- 15) Project monitoring reports, e.g., regarding the community level activities
- 16) Sample of project communications materials, i.e. press releases, brochures, documentaries, etc.
- 17) Comprehensive report of subcontracts (even in Chinese for national evaluator's reference).

### 2. UNDP documents

- 18) Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)
- 19) Country Programme Document (CPD)
- 20) Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)

### 3. GEF documents

- 21) GEF focal area strategic Programme Objectives

### 4. Other documents

- 22) Mongolia, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, 2015-2025
- 23) The 5<sup>th</sup> National Report of Mongolia to the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2014



## Annex 5: Matrix of Rating Achievement of Project Objective and Outcomes

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	End of Project Status	TE Assessment
<b>Objective: Catalyze the strategic expansion of Mongolia's PA system through establishment of a network of community conservation areas covering under-represented terrestrial ecosystems</b>				<b>Rating: Satisfactory</b>
1. Hectares within the total protected area system, including community conservation areas	Total LPA (without community managed areas) is 16 Mln. ha, but not included in the NPA System.	19.2 Mln. ha	23.67 million ha Source: <a href="http://www.eic.mn/spalocal">www.eic.mn/spalocal</a> 23 April 2018	Partially Achieved
2. Hectares of seven under-represented ecosystems within total protected areas system, including community conservation areas	Total area of under-represented ecosystems is 102 Mln. ha.	80 Mln. ha	637,352 ha	Unlikely to be achieved by project closure
<b>Outcome 1: Establishment of new PA category for strategic PA expansion</b>				<b>Rating: Moderately Satisfactory</b>
3. Specific NPA legislation amended and/or new regulation adopted to establish and guide effective management of community conservation areas	0 No national law and/or regulation adopted as described	1 national law and/or regulation adopted as described	1 draft revision to the Law on Special Protected Areas; 1 draft amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection; 2 draft regulations associated with granting LPA management to legal entities and on taking land under special needs and registering in the cadastral database.	Unlikely to be achieved by project closure
4. Number of community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system according to the amended national legislation and/or regulation	0 community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system	50 community conservation areas legally recognized as part of the NPA system	As of 23 April 2018, there were 89 CBOs within LPAs covering a cumulative area of 489,300 ha. LPAs are not yet legally recognized as part of the NPA system	Partially Achieved
<b>Outcome 2: Emplacement of institutional capacity and resource base development to ensure sustainability of Managed Resource PAs</b>				<b>Rating: Satisfactory</b>
5. METT Scores for at least three LPAs converted and/or established as community conservation areas	Need METT scores for three pilot sites: GulzatLPA 36 Khavtgar 26 Tosonkhulstai (Buffer Zone) 22	Each baseline METT score increased to: Gulzat LPA 50 Khavtgar 40 Tosonkhulstai (BZ) 26	METT scores: Gulzat LPA: <b>75 (69.4%)</b> Khavtgar LPA: <b>78 (72.2%)</b> Tosonkhulstai (Buffer Zone): not reported Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA: <b>67.5 (62.5%)</b>	Achieved
6. PAAD has a fully functional, staffed and government funded CCA resource center providing on-going monitoring, support and extension training for local conservation decision-makers	0 functional institutional, staffed center within PAAD to support effective CCAs	1 functional institutional center within PAAD to support effective CCA	A separate CCA center has not been established; however, the PAAD is overseeing community conservation areas through its current structure	Partially Achieved
7. Decentralised regional PA governance framework involving community and local governments (Soum and Aimag) established in 3 demonstration sites	0 project sites applying legally enforceable management plan to improve conservation of wide-ranging species and mitigate conservation threats	3 project sites applying enforceable management plan to improve conservation of wide-ranging species and mitigate conservation threats	Management plans for the three target LPAs developed and/or strengthened; the plans were approved by the local governments and implementation performance regularly evaluated through participatory processes.	Achieved

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	End of Project Status	TE Assessment
	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> "Khavtgar Shireet" NGO management structure & organizational capacity are weak & no clear financial source	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> -The effective conservation management model is developed and strengthened - sustainable financial sources are identified	The community conservation management model for the LPA was strengthened through capacity building among local CBOs and support for implementation of the management plan. Sustainable financial sources include (1) partnership with buffer zone management of the nearby SPA – buffer zone funding is awaiting government approval, and (2) identification of potential impact investment associated with sustainable meat production.	<b>Partially Achieved</b>
	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Current Gulzat NGO runs with 3 employers 0 amount has spent on conservation management from income of hunting	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> The effective conservation management model is developed and strengthened No less than 50% of income from hunting is spent on conservation management	The community conservation management model for the LPA was strengthened through capacity building among local CBOs and support for implementation of the management plan. Sustainable financial sources include (1) establishment of a conservation trust fund with up-front contributions from the Green Gold program, the project and herders among the three LPA soums; and (2) identification of potential impact investment associated with sustainable meat production.	<b>Partially Achieved</b>
	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> No legal body appointed for the conservation management of LPA and no clear financial source	<b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b> -LPA conservation management model and management plan is developed -sustainable financial sources are identified	<b>Tumenkhaah-Shalz LPA:</b> The community conservation management model for the LPA was strengthened through capacity building among local CBOs and support for implementation of the management plan. Sustainable financial sources include (1) partnership with buffer zone management of the nearby SPA – buffer zone funding is awaiting government approval, and (2) identification of potential impact investment associated with sustainable meat production.	<b>Achieved</b>
8. Policing and enforcement of laws and regulations for biodiversity conservation results in reduction of threats and no net loss of key indicators at three pilot sites	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> -Population of Argali sheep ( <i>Ovis ammon ammon</i> ) (1048 as of 2012) -Total household number involved in community groups: 60% of total household number at Gulzat LPA	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> - Population of Argali sheep ( <i>Ovis ammon ammon</i> ) ( 1400) -Total household number involved in community groups: 50% of remained non community household would be involved in community groups	<b>Gulzat LPA:</b> Population of Argali sheep reported as follows in WWF monitoring reports: year 2014 (1,541), year 2015 (1,878), year 2016 (1,510) and year 2017 (1,489).	<b>Achieved</b>
	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> -Population of roe deer ( <i>Capreolus pygargus</i> ) (210 as of 2013-0) -Population of red deer ( <i>Cervus elaphus</i> ) (100 as of 2013)	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> - Population of roe deer ( <i>Capreolus pygargus</i> ) increased by 10%	<b>Khavtgar LPA:</b> • Population of moose <i>Alces alces</i> (42) • Population of musk deer <i>Moschus moschiferus</i> (3) • Population of red deer <i>Cervus elaphus</i> (67)	<b>Partially Achieved</b>

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	End of Project Status	TE Assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marmot (<i>Marmota sibirica</i>)</li> <li>-Grouse (<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>, <i>Tetrao urogallus</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase in Population of red deer <i>Cervus elaphus</i> increased by 10-30% and kept the habitat</li> <li>- Marmot (<i>Marmota sibirica</i>) habitat is kept</li> <li>-Grouse habitat is kept</li> </ul>	<p><u>Source:</u> Wildlife inventory final report, 2017, Khan Khentii SPA.</p>	
	<p><b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b></p> <p>Habitat of gazelle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-land/territory under LPA (0 hectare)</li> <li>-No conservation status on migratory route</li> <li>-habitat has divided</li> <li>-No legal responsible body</li> </ul>	<p><b>Toson Khulstai NR Buffer Zone:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Size of area taken under LPA</li> <li>- Approved regulation and decrees to coordinate conservation management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA:</b></p> <p>Tumenkhaan-Shalz LPA was declared and later expanded, improving habitat connectivity. No information available regarding the number of protected wetlands/lakes as habitat for key migratory species.</p>	Partially Achieved

Note: the project results framework is the version included in the approved project document.

## Annex 6: Cofinancing Table

Cofinancing Source	Type	GEF Agency		Government		Non-governmental Organization		Bilateral Financial Cooperation Agency		Bilateral Technical Cooperation Agency		Total Cofinancing	
		Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual			Planned	Actual
GEF Agency:													
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Grant	200,000	210,000									200,000	210,000
	In-kind	1,100,000	1,049,914									1,100,000	1,049,914
Sub-total, UNDP		1,300,000	1,259,914									1,300,000	1,259,914
Government:													
Ministry of Environment and Tourism	In-kind			500,000	552,040							500,000	552,040
Sub-total, Government				500,000	552,040							500,000	552,040
Non-governmental Organization:													
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)	Grant					884,000	884,000					884,000	884,000
Sub-total, NGOs:	Grant					884,000	884,000					884,000	884,000
Bilateral Financial Cooperation Agency:													
Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KfW)	Grant							2,000,000	786,266			2,000,000	786,266
Sub-total, Bilateral Financial Cooperation Agency:	Grant							2,000,000	786,266			2,000,000	786,266
Bilateral Technical Cooperation Agency:													
German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ)	Grant									260,000	260,000	260,000	260,000
Sub-total, Bilateral Technical Cooperation Agency:	Grant									260,000	260,000	260,000	260,000
Total Cofinancing for Project Implementation:		1,300,000	1,259,914	500,000	552,040	884,000	884,000	2,000,000	786,266	260,000	260,000	4,944,000	3,742,220

Note: cost figures in United States dollars (USD)

\*KfW cofinancing contributions include EUR 479,100 through the end of March 2018 and an expected additional EUR 179,170 through the end of June 2018; converted to USD applying a rate of 1.23187 (www.oanda.com, 31 Mar 2018)

## Annex 7: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement Form

### Evaluators / Consultants:

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

### TE Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultants: James Lenoci, Orgiltuya Dashzegve

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

Signature:

Budapest, 06 July 2018

Ulaanbaatar, 06 July 2018

James Lenoci, International Consultant

Orgiltuya Dashzegve, National Consultant

## Annex 8: Rating Scales

### Outcome Ratings

The overall ratings on the outcomes of the project are based on performance on the following criteria:

- a. Relevance
- b. Effectiveness
- c. Efficiency

Project outcomes are rated based on the extent to which project objectives were achieved. A six-point rating scale is used to assess overall outcomes:

- Highly satisfactory (HS): Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no short comings.
- Satisfactory (S): Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor short comings.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate short comings.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings.
- Unsatisfactory (U): Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major short comings.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe short comings.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.

The calculation of the overall outcomes rating of projects considers all the three criteria, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical. The rating on relevance determines whether the overall outcome rating will be in the unsatisfactory range (MU to HU = unsatisfactory range). If the relevance rating is in the unsatisfactory range then the overall outcome is in the unsatisfactory range as well. However, where the relevance rating is in the satisfactory range (HS to MS), the overall outcome rating could, depending on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either in the satisfactory range or in the unsatisfactory range.

The second constraint applied is that the overall outcome achievement rating may not be higher than the effectiveness rating.

During project implementation, the results framework of some projects may have been modified. In cases where modifications in the project impact, outcomes and outputs have not scaled down their overall scope, the evaluator should assess outcome achievements based on the revised results framework. In instances where the scope of the project objectives and outcomes has been scaled down, the magnitude of and necessity for downscaling is taken into account and despite achievement of results as per the revised results framework, where appropriate, a lower outcome effectiveness rating may be given.

### Sustainability Ratings

The sustainability is assessed taking into account the risks related to financial, sociopolitical, institutional, and environmental sustainability of project outcomes. The evaluator may also take other risks into account that may affect sustainability. The overall sustainability is assessed using a four-point scale.

- Likely (L). There is little or no risks to sustainability.
- Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks to sustainability.
- Moderately Unlikely (MU). There are significant risks to sustainability.
- Unlikely (U). There are severe risks to sustainability.
- Unable to Assess (UA). Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

### Project M&E Ratings

Quality of project M&E is assessed in terms of:

- Design
- Implementation

Quality of M&E on these two dimensions is assessed on a six point scale:



- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no short comings and quality of M&E design / implementation exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor short comings and quality of M&E design / implementation meets expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some short comings and quality of M&E design/implementation more or less meets expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of M&E design / implementation somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major short comings and quality of M&E design/implementation substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe short comings in M&E design/ implementation.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design / implementation.

### **Implementation and Execution Rating**

Quality of implementation and of execution is rated separately. Quality of implementation pertains to the role and responsibilities discharged by the GEF Agencies that have direct access to GEF resources. Quality of Execution pertains to the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF Agencies and executed the funded activities on ground. The performance is rated on a six-point scale.

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no short comings and quality of implementation / execution exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor short comings and quality of implementation / execution meets expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some short comings and quality of implementation / execution more or less meets expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of implementation / execution somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major short comings and quality of implementation / execution substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe short comings in quality of implementation / execution.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation / execution.

## **Annex 9: Terms of Reference for Terminal Evaluation**

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### English Expert to undertake Thematic Learning Review of UNDP-GEF Ecosystems and Biodiversity Team's Portfolio of Projects on Protected Areas

Type of Contract:	Individual Contract
Location:	Home based with mission travel
Category	Sustainable Development
Languages Required:	English
Starting Date	November 27, 2017
Duration of Initial Contract:	68 days through 31 July 2018
Supervisor:	Head of Ecosystems and Biodiversity

#### Background:

Within UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS), the Ecosystems and Biodiversity (EBD) cluster under the Global Environmental Finance unit is engaged in supporting developing countries to access finance from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other sources on issues relating to biodiversity and the sustainable management of forests, crop and rangelands. The EBD cluster additionally provides support through global projects on related policy, finance and capacity development.

The EBD portfolio includes national projects in over 120 countries, with oversight and technical support provided by a Senior Technical Advisor (STA) and Regional Technical Advisors (RTAs), as well as global initiatives coordinated through the UNDP-GEF unit providing policy (BES-Net), capacity (NBSAP Forum) and finance (BIOFIN) support to countries. Teams work out of different locations and regions, requiring both staff and consultants to be flexible in order to produce results.

As an implementing agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP oversees a portfolio of projects in the Focal Areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, ozone-depleting substance phase-out, land degradation, and persistent organic pollutants. These are implemented through UNDP's network of more than 130 Country Offices located in developing countries, as well as numerous UN and other agency partners.

UNDP's work in Ecosystems and Biodiversity (EBD) has as an overall strategic objective to maintain and enhance the goods and services provided by biodiversity and ecosystems in order to secure livelihoods, food, water and health, enhance resilience, conserve threatened species and their habitats, and increase carbon storage and sequestration. The value of all UNDP-managed biodiversity and ecosystems projects currently in planning or under implementation is US\$1.6 billion, with UNDP supporting 132 countries to access GEF and other vertical funds' grant finance. Through this project portfolio UNDP provides support to work in three programming areas: (i) Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem management into development planning and production sector activities; (ii) Unlocking the potential of protected areas, including indigenous and community-conserved areas to contribute towards sustainable development; and (iii) Managing and rehabilitating ecosystems for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The UNDP Global Environmental Finance (UNDP-GEF) Unit is seeking the services of two international consultants to work as part of a team that will prepare a Thematic Learning Review. This review will be based on EBD protected area projects monitoring and evaluation reports. Most of these reports have been already prepared, and nine (9) will need to be prepared by the team. One consultant will serve as the overall Team Leader, who will take overall responsibility for the finalization of the Thematic Learning Review report that will be widely disseminated to support future project/programme design and implementation by UNDP and beyond.

#### Scope of work:

The Thematic Learning Review, which will be coordinated by the Team Leader, will focus on a collection of approximately 120 GEF-financed protected area projects under the GEF-3, -4 and -5 funding cycles. Nine monitoring and evaluation reports will also need to be prepared by the team, following standard UNDP-GEF guidance on conducting mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations. The Thematic Learning Review report must be ready for publication in September 2018, and to be launched in November 2018 at the CBD COP 14 in Egypt.

The Thematic Learning Review will be based on a review framework developed and agreed to at the beginning of the assignment. The report will include an in-depth exploration of themes (to be identified by the team) that advance understanding of solutions that have worked or not worked within the UNDP-GEF EBD protected areas portfolio of projects, so as to improve the design and implementation of ongoing and/or future projects.

#### **Tasks and Responsibilities:**

- Prepare two (2) project evaluation reports, following UNDP-GEF guidance. These reports will be cleared by and payment approved by the relevant RTA and with input from the UNDP Country Office concerned. Additional quality assurance support will be provided by the UNDP-GEF Directorate as needed.
- Prepare input from the two project reports to the TLR in line with the TLR framework. The Team Leader will review the outputs related to the Thematic Learning Review.

#### **Expected outputs and deliverables:**

The total contract duration will be 68 days through 31 July 2018 according to the following plan:

- Contribute to development of Thematic Learning Review framework, review questions, Thematic Learning Review report structure and detailed timeline by July 2018;
- Prepare two (2) evaluation reports, following UNDP-GEF guidance, and use these reports as input to the Thematic Review in line with the TLR framework. Each report will take approximately 30 days, including mission travels, and 8 days allocated for supporting the Thematic Learning Review by July 2018 (the expected dates for the eight evaluations are shown in Table 1 and will be confirmed in consultations with the relevant CO and the project team);
- Provide feedback on draft full Thematic Learning Review report by July 2018.

**Table 1 Expected Timeline for Evaluations**

TLR Team Member	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18
Team Member					4393 Mongolia // TE		4855 Kazakhstan // TE	

#### **Payment schedule:**

- Contribute to development of Thematic Learning Review framework, review questions, Thematic Learning Review report structure and detailed timeline by 31 July 2018 - 10%;
- Undertake and prepare two (2) monitoring and/or evaluation reports each, following UNDP-GEF guidance, and use these reports as input to the Thematic Review:
  - Evaluation work plan and framework for the two evaluation exercises: by 31 December 2017 - 10%
  - Delivery and approval of first finalized report (4393 Mongolia): by 31 March 2018 - 40%
  - Delivery and approval of second finalized report (4855 Kazakhstan): by 31 May 2018 - 40%

#### **Information on Working Arrangements:**

- The consultant will work from home with mission travel;
- The Consultant will be given access to relevant information necessary for execution of the tasks under this assignment;
- All templates and reports will be provided by UNDP;
- The Consultant will be responsible for providing his own working station (i.e. laptop, internet, phone, scanner/printer, etc.) and must have access to a reliable internet connection;
- Consultant will be supervised by the UNDP-GEF Head of EBD team based in New York, USA;
- Given the global consultations to be undertaken during this assignment, the consultant is expected to be reasonably flexible with his/her availability for such consultations taking into consideration different time zones;
- Payments will be made upon submission of a certification of payment form, and acceptance and confirmation by the Supervisor on days worked and outputs delivered.

#### **Travel:**

- Two (2) missions will be required. The exact duration of the mission will vary for each project;
- Mission travel must be approved in advance and in writing by the UNDP-GEF Head of EBD;
- Consultant will liaise with the corresponding Country Offices to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the government, etc. Country offices will likely contract in-country national consultant(s) to support the team members while in-country;
- The [Advanced and Basic Security in the Field II courses](#) successfully completed prior to commencement of travel;
- Individual Consultants are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the [UN Medical Director](#);
- Consultant is required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under <https://dss.un.org/dssweb/>;
- Consultant is responsible for obtaining any visas and security clearances needed in connection with travel with the necessary support from UNDP;
- The consultant will be responsible for making his/her own mission travel arrangements (including travel claims) in line with [UNDP travel policies](#);
- All related travel expenses will be supported by the project travel fund and will be reimbursed as per UNDP rules and regulations upon submission of an F-10 claim form and supporting documents. Costs for airfares, terminal expenses, and living allowances should not be included in the financial proposal.

#### **Competencies:**

##### **Corporate Competencies:**

- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards;
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism.

##### **Technical Competencies:**

- Demonstrated ability to coordinate processes to collate information and facilitate discussion and analysis of material;
- Technical competencies in undertaking complex evaluations which involve multiple countries and variety of stakeholders;
- Demonstrated strong research and analytical skills.

##### **Communications:**

- Excellent writing skills in English;
- Demonstrated knowledge of UN terms, language and style;
- Excellent communication skills and experience in conducting structured interviews with a variety of stakeholders.

**Professionalism:**

- Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and work under pressure;
- Demonstrated excellent organizational skills.

**Required skills and experience:****Education:**

- Master's degree or higher in a discipline relevant to natural resources management, biological sciences, forestry, agriculture, agro-economics, geography, climate sciences, international development, public policy, social sciences, economics, public administration, finance or other closely related fields.

**Experience:**

- At least 5 years of working experience in Biodiversity and/or Marine and coastal ecosystems;
- Experience working with international institutions, civil societies and/or governmental authorities, and experience working with and in developing countries;
- At least 5 years of work experience in one or more of the following UNDP locations: Africa, Eastern Europe & CIS, Asia & Pacific, and/or global;
- At least 5 years of relevant experience in Monitoring and evaluation/ knowledge management, including at least 2 years' experience in GEF work in: Project and programme design and development, Project and programme management and implementation, and/or Monitoring and evaluation/ knowledge.

**Language:**

- Proficient in written and spoken English.



## Annex 10: Signed TE Final Report Clearance Form

<b>Terminal Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared By:</b>	
<b>UNDP Country Office</b>	
Name: <i>Khishiyargal Kharkheer, Programme Officer</i>	
Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: 6 July 2018
<b>UNDP GEF Regional Technical Advisor</b>	
Name: Lisa Farroway	
Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: 6 July 2018