

2019

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

**Eritrea National Protected Areas Network**

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# Basic Data

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| **Project Information** | |
| UNDP PIMS ID | 4816 |
| GEF ID | 4559 |
| Title | Operationalizing Protected Area Management Systems in Eritrea |
| Country(ies) | Eritrea, Eritrea |
| UNDP-GEF Technical Team | Ecosystems and Biodiversity |
| Project Implementing Partner | Government |
| Joint Agencies | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Project Type | Full Size |

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| **Project Description** |
| The Title is Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation. The project directly addresses BD-1: Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems. Biodiversity conservation received limited support in the initial years after independence, as the government focused on addressing pressing human development issues. The government has however, recently refocused its development program with a view to improving environmental management, but the country has no national framework for the management of Protected Areas. The project seeks to address this gapÔÇöthe operationalization of a National Protected Area system. It will do so by establishing the necessary institutional framework and capacity for management, as well as gazetting and operationalising management in the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori- Hawakil Protected Area cluster, which will provide the initial heart of the PA system. These areas will be zoned into national parks and limited use marine and terrestrial Reserves, covering 110,860 hectares, encompassing areas of highest biodiversity significance. The project will further seek to address threats to biodiversity in immediately surrounding areas, also critical for biodiversity, but where human settlements preclude the establishment of strict protected areas. Land degradation in these areas poses a critical risk to habitats, and is threatening flora and fauna. A total of 190,777 hectares of land will be designated as Managed Resource Use PA (IUCN category 6) to contain these pressures. The MRPAs will be managed under a range of co-management agreements between Zoba and national authorities, local communities and the private sector, as suited to the specific management challenges facing different sites. SLM technologies will be promoted to combat land and accompanying habitat degradation, and reduce the vulnerability of the comunities to climate change and poverty, thereby containing the threats to biodversity in this landscape. |

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| **Project Contacts** | |
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| Project Implementing Partner | MoMR, MoA (depenvdg@eol.com.er) |
| Other Partners | MoMR, MoA (depenvdg@eol.com.er) |

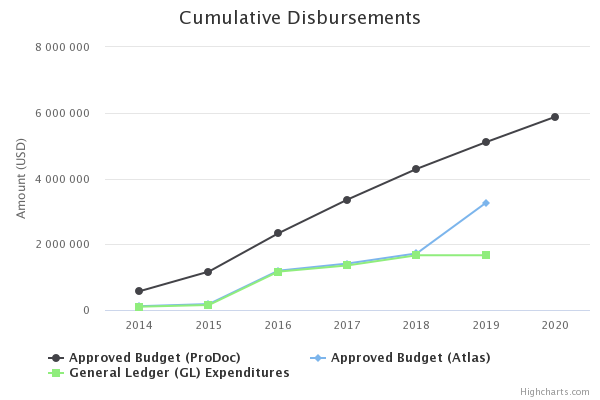
# Overall Ratings

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| Overall DO Rating | Moderately Unsatisfactory |
| Overall IP Rating | Unsatisfactory |
| Overall Risk Rating | Substantial |

# Development Progress

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| **Description** | | | | | | |
| **Objective**  **Create policy and institutional conditions to operationalize the national protected area system** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Total annual government financing for management and conservation of national protected area system. | Baseline: US$ 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Target: US$ 1,000,000/annual\*    \* cumulative for national PA administration and individual PA management | The total cumulative government's financing for management and conservation of the Protected Area System (2014-2017) is US$4,210,000 (57% of expected co-funding of the GoE to this project. Per the MTR quite a lot of activities directly related to the project were implemented in 2014-2017 in the project areas using from the GoE co-financing. | The total cumulative government's financing for management and conservation of the Protected Area System (2014-2018) is US$4,210,000 (57% of expected co-funding of the GoE to this project). A a lot of activities directly related to the project were implemented in 2014-2018 in the project areas using from the GoE co-financing. |
| Total hectares legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories | Terrestrial: 0  Marine: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Terrestrial: 649,100 ha  Marine: 360,000 ha | Even though, the proposed protected area system is not legally designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories, the whole proposed area i.e.; 1,009,100 hectares is currently under strict protection from unwarranted human and animal encroachment.  The legal framework for establishing legally designated national protected area conforming to IUCN standards is being formulated and is at its final stage.  Moreover, as the first step of establishment of regulatory framework for PA establishment and management the GoE approved Proclamation # 179/2017 “The Eritrean Environmental Protection, Management, and Rehabilitation Framework”. This policy has Article 27 “Protection of Natural Heritage” that provides basis for establishment of national PAs and local natural enclosures. Article 27: Protection of Natural Heritage: (1) The appropriate authority may designate by regulation any area as a national protected area for the purpose of better management of one or more natural resources and their ecosystems; (2) Zoba Administrations and councils of village communities may designate enclosures for purposes of protecting degradation of land and marine resources, preserving vegetation cover for sustainable use of the same. Development of the Protected Area Act was started in 2017 by a team of national consultants.  Law enforcement of protective regime, functional zoning and demarcation) was supported by significant co-funding from the Government of Eritrea (GoE) and started before the official PA were established. | A final draft of the legal framework for establishing legally designated national protected area conforming to IUCN standards has been completed and is to be presented to the government for its approval.  Moreover, as the first step of establishment of regulatory framework for PA establishment and management the GoE approved Proclamation # 179/2017 “The Eritrean Environmental Protection, Management, and Rehabilitation Framework”. This policy has Article 27 “Protection of Natural Heritage” that provides basis for establishment of national PAs and local natural enclosures. Article 27: Protection of Natural Heritage: (1) The appropriate authority may designate by regulation any area as a national protected area for the purpose of better management of one or more natural resources and their ecosystems; (2) Zoba Administrations and councils of village communities may designate enclosures for purposes of protecting degradation of land and marine resources, preserving vegetation cover for sustainable use of the same. Development of the Protected Area Act was started in 2017 by a team of national consultants.  Law enforcement of protective regime, functional zoning and demarcation) was supported by significant co-funding from the Government of Eritrea (GoE) and started before the official PA were established. |
| Total hectares of critical habitat conserved within newly established national protected areas. | Hectares of:    Native highland forest: 0  Native mangrove: 0  African wild ass habitat: 0  Turtle nesting sites: 0  Sea grass: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Hectares of:    Native highland forest: 55,000 Native mangrove: 12,000  African wild ass habitat: 80,000  Turtle nesting sites: 1300  Sea grass: 2,300 | Despite lack of official PA status, the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area has been demarcated, zoned and protected by FWA rangers and village scouts since 2014 using funds of the GEF project and GoE. Given the data collected by the MTR, due to enforced PA regime number of households selling firewood in Durfo village decreased from 300 (2014) to 0 (2017); total number of livestock decreased from 8,890 (2014) to 5,920 (2017). In another village in the PA – Shegrni Arberibue – number of livestock decreased from 3,190 (2014) to 1,600 (2017). These facts demonstrate obvious threat reduction to the PA ecosystems.  Similarly, the Buri area (includes key wild ass and gazelles’ habitat) has also been under strict protection, protected by FWA rangers and established regime since 2014.  The current strict natural resources management in place has positive effect on improvement of forest ecosystem status in the project area.  Livestock grazing and firewood collection has been greatly limited in the area to the mixed-use and buffer zone of the proposed PA.  Sustainable agriculture and alternative income opportunities were provided to local communities inside the proposed PA and in surrounding areas. | Though no part of the proposed protected area system is yet designated as a national protected area conforming to basic IUCN standards/categories, using current management practice, 91,130ha of critical habitat of the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri are under strict conservation management.  Thanks to this strict management practice different flora and fauna important species have been restored and conserved. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 1**  **Establishment of protected area policy and institutional frameworks to operationalize national protected areas system** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| National government law/proclamation legalizing the application of IUCN based designations for establishment of terrestrial and marine protected areas. | Baseline: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Target: 1 | Development of necessary PA legislative and institutional framework is at advanced stage and the final draft has been submitted to Ministry of Land, Water, and Environment for review and approval and is expected to be finalized by end of July 2018. | Final PA legislative and institutional framework has been completed and has been submitted to Ministry of Land, Water, and Environment for review and approval. |
| Number of wildlife monitoring surveys/studies conducted and reported annually by protected area administration for key species and habitats within national protected areas. | Number of annual surveys, assessments, and reports for:    Wild ass: 0  Mangrove: 0  Land use/degradation: 0  Forest cover: 0  Turtle nests: 0  Water quantity/quality: 0  Marine fisheries: 0  Coral reef : 0  Sea grass: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Number of annual surveys, assessments, and reports for:    Wild ass: 7  Mangrove: 8  Land use/degradation:5  Forest cover: 7  Turtle nests: 7  Water quantity/quality: 7  Marine fisheries: 7  Coral reef : 7  Sea grass: 7 | The Forestry and Wildlife Authority has been carrying out wildlife monitoring every three months. Thus far, it has conducted 12 monitoring exercises both for flora and fauna species.  A national biodiversity conservation strategy which is being formulated and expected to be completed in July 2018, will be an important tool for the monitoring exercise routine. | The Forestry and Wildlife Authority conducts wildlife monitoring every three months. During the reporting FWA has 3 monitoring exercises both for flora and fauna species.  A final national biodiversity conservation strategy has been completed and is ready to be released for use and will be an important tool for the monitoring exercise routine. |
| Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government as part of the protected areas administration to manage the national protected area system. | Baseline: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Target: 10\*    \* Terrestrial and Marine PA’s | Since, 2014, sixteen trained professionals have been employed by the government as full-time PA staff, 7 professionals deployed at HQ (FWLA) and 3 professionals in each of the PAs  During the reporting no, relevant staff has been hired. | Since, 2014, sixteen trained professionals have been employed by the government as full-time PA staff, 7 professionals deployed at HQ (FWLA) and 3 professionals in each of the PAs. During the reporting 5 staff has been hired. |
| Number of national protected area conservation strategies and annual reports completed and updated by the national protected area administration(s). | Strategies: 0  Annual status reports: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Strategies: 2  Annual status reports: 4 | The final drafts of the national protected area conservation strategies have been completed and submitted to MoLWE for review and approval. The documents are expected to be finalized by end of July 2018.  1. The national policy and institutional framework necessary to operationalize PA management system is currently being developed by a team of national consultants.  2. A national biodiversity conservation monitoring strategy/program is currently being drafted by a team of national consultants.  3. A national strategy for protected area conservation and financing is currently being drafted by a team of national consultants.  4. A national biodiversity conservation training strategy/program is currently being drafted by a team of national consultants.  One IP annual progress report was prepared. Moreover, an MTR report has been completed. | Four national protected area conservation strategies have been completed during the reporting period:  1. The national policy and institutional framework necessary to operationalize PA management system,  2. A national biodiversity conservation monitoring strategy/program,  3. A national strategy for protected area conservation and financing,  4. A national biodiversity conservation training strategy/program.  MTR report has also been completed. |
| Number of Eritreans annually enrolled in national university accredited biodiversity conservation training course. | Baseline: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Target: 30 | Since 2014, sixty students have been enrolled in the national university accredited biodiversity conservation training courses. The breakdown is: 40 students have been enrolled in Marine College and 20in the HAC. | Since 2014, 100 students have been enrolled in the national university accredited biodiversity conservation training courses. The breakdown is: 60 students have been enrolled in Marine College and 40 in the HAC. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 2**  **Emplacement of management capacity and experience required operationalize national protected area system** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| METT scores for at least three marine/terrestrial protected areas increase by 25% | METT Scores:    Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 29  Buri: 32  Bera’sole Bay: 22 | *(not set or not applicable)* | METT Scores:    Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 80  Buri: 82  Bera’sole Bay: 71 | Despite lack of official PA status, the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area has been demarcated, zoned and protected by FWA rangers and village scouts. PA awareness campaign was conducted local communities in 2016-2017 in Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri and Buri-Irrori-Hawakil. The METT score for the area increased from 29 to 44. However, no significant METT score was registered for other two proposed PAs. Significant GoE funding was mainly provided to the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area (97%), but not the two other proposed PAs. To keep the target on track the project have to invest more resources in the Buri-Irrori-Hawakil and Bera’sole areas. | The Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area has been demarcated, zoned and protected by FWA rangers and village scouts. The METT score for the area increased from 29 to 44. However, no significant METT score was registered for other two proposed PAs. Significant GoE funding was mainly provided to the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area (97%), but not the two other proposed PAs. To keep the target on track the project have to invest more resources in the Buri-Irrori-Hawakil and Bera’sole areas. |
| Number of protected area management and business plans operational, assessed and updated by each protected area administration. | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 3  Buri: 3  Bera’sole Bay: 3 | A final draft national strategy for protected area conservation and financing is completed and submitted to MoLWE for review and approval. The strategy is expected to be completed by end of July 2018. | A final national strategy for protected area conservation and financing is completed and submitted to MoLWE. |
| Number of trained professional staff employed full-time by the Government to manage individual protected areas. | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 10  Buri: 15  Bera’sole Bay: 5 | 9 pofessionals employed, 3 for each PA | 9 professionals employed, 3 for each PA |
| Individual protected areas receive annual financial support adequate to implement PA management plan priorities and conserve globally significant species. | Total annual government PA budget:    Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: 0  Buri: 0  Bera’sole Bay: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Total annual government PA budget:    Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri: US$ 250,000  Buri: US$ 300,000  Bera’sole Bay: US$ 100,000 | US$ 331,335.00 has been distributed to three PAs (Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri, Buri: and Bera’sole Bay) since 2014 up till the current reporting period. | US$ 331,335.00 has been distributed to three PAs (Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri, Buri: and Bera’sole Bay) since 2014 up till the current reporting period. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 3**  **Generation of SLM/SFM capacity required to support national system of protected areas** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Number of project area residents who are participating members of farm/fisheries field (FFS) schools. | Men: 0  Women: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Men: 750  Women: 750 | At least 150 families (28% women) in Durfo village switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and LE regime of the PAs. Similar shifts to sustainable practices are likely for other 8 villages located in Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri area due to similar measures. Once implemntation started as planned another 200 families will be enrolled and participate. | At least 300 families (48% women) living villages located in the buffer zone of Semenawi and Debubawi Durfo switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and LE regime of the PAs. |
| Number of FFS participant households and women reporting increased levels of food security. | FFS households: 0  FFS Women: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | FFS households: 500  FFS Women: 500 | Circa 8,499 ha is currently under sustainable community-based NRM and SLM practices in the project areas. They were demarcated around 8 villages in Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri for sustainable SLM, SFM and livestock grazing. Plus, additional territory of the PA core zone can be used for beekeeping and NTFP collection by local communities. Due to the measures in Durfo community about 97 ha of agricultural land were made available for SLM.  At least 150 families in Durfo village switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and law enforcement regime of the PAs. Similar shifts to sustainable practices are likely for other 8 villages located in Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri area due to similar measures implemented in 2014-2017  96 ha of hill terraces were made and planted with 159,000 tree seedlings (Terminalia brownii, Acacia laeta, and Eucalyptus rudis) by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri area (Asmara and Ghinda sub-zoba) in 2014-2017 (GoE co-funding). However, no sustainable NRM activities were implemented in other project areas. | Circa 10,500 ha is currently under sustainable community-based NRM and SLM practices in the project areas. They were demarcated around 8 villages in Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri for sustainable SLM, SFM and livestock grazing. Plus, additional territory of the PA core zone can be used for beekeeping and NTFP collection by local communities. Due to the measures in villages located in the buffer zone of the PAs 150 ha of agricultural land were made available for SLM.  At least 300 families in villages living in the buffer zone switched to sustainable agriculture and beekeeping from firewood selling and livestock breeding after 2014 due to provided sustainable water source (check-dams and micro-dams), trainings and law enforcement regime of the PAs. Similar shifts to sustainable practices are likely for other 8 villages located in Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri area due to similar measures implemented in 2014-2018  150 ha of hill terraces were made and planted with 300,000 tree seedlings (Terminalia brownii, Acacia laeta, and Eucalyptus rudis) by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri area (Asmara and Ghinda sub-zoba) in 2014-2018 (GoE co-funding). However, no sustainable NRM activities were implemented in other project areas. |
| Number of farm and fishing field school participants adopting ecosystem conservation practices as detailed in the community ecosystem services conservation plans. | Baseline: 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Target: 1,000 | No progress. | 150 farmers are participants adopting ecosystem conservation practices as detailed in the community ecosystem services conservation plans. |
| Total hectares of native forest cover within the Green Belt. | Baseline: 31,680 ha | *(not set or not applicable)* | Target: 55,000 ha | 35,824 ha | 45,824ha |
| Surface water quality/quantity of main upland streams improved to more closely meet needs of natural ecosystem function. | Water quality/quantity target sites and baseline standards TBD at inception | *(not set or not applicable)* | Water quality/quantity target sites and standards TBD at inception. | As part of soil and water conservation to improve surface water quality/quantity of upland streams within the Semenawi Kieh Bahri twelve (12) sites for biophysical conservation measures have been selected and check dams with a capacity of 21,808.5 m3 has been constructed. A total of 4,469 farmers, 1,489 men and 2,980 (67%) women participated through the cash for work scheme. | As part of soil and water conservation to improve surface water quality/quantity of upland streams within the Semenawi Kieh Bahri 96 check dams with a capacity of 55,108.00 m3 have been constructed in 96 sites selected for biophysical conservation measures. A total of 11,293 farmers of which 4,517.20 men and 6,775.80 (60%) women participated through the cash for work scheme. |
| Total number of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas. | Numbers of:    African wild ass: ≈ 200  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | *(not set or not applicable)* | Numbers of:    African wild ass: ≈ 250  Dorcas Gazelle: TBD  Soemmoring Gazelle: TBD | The total number of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas remains stable.  African wild ass is assessed as stable: ≈ 200  Dorcas Gazelle: 1,500-2000 (group size observed increased from 3-7 in 2014 to 7-17 in 2017)  Soemmoring Gazelle: 7,000-8,000 (group size observed increased from 15-30 in 2014 to 40-80 in 2017) | The total number of grazing species found within project’s coastal areas remains stable.  African wild ass is assessed as stable: ≈ 200  Dorcas Gazelle: 1,500-2000 (group size observed increased from 3-7 in 2014 to 7-17 in 2017)  Soemmoring Gazelle: 7,000-8,000 (group size observed increased from 15-30 in 2014 to 40-80 in 2017) |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |

# Implementation Progress



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| Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in prodoc): | 28.33% |
| Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year: | 32.61% |
| Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August): | 1,665,466 |

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| **Key Financing Amounts** | |
| PPG Amount | 150,000 |
| GEF Grant Amount | 5,878,000 |
| Co-financing | 10,450,000 |

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| **Key Project Dates** | |
| PIF Approval Date | Nov 11, 2011 |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Jan 8, 2014 |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | Feb 28, 2014 |
| Date of Inception Workshop | Jul 22, 2014 |
| Expected Date of Mid-term Review | Dec 1, 2017 |
| Actual Date of Mid-term Review | Dec 22, 2017 |
| Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation | Dec 1, 2020 |
| Original Planned Closing Date | Feb 28, 2021 |
| Revised Planned Closing Date | *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **Dates of Project Steering Committee/Board Meetings during reporting period (30 June 2018 to 1 July 2019)** |

# Critical Risk Management

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| Current Types of Critical Risks | Critical risk management measures undertaken this reporting period |

# Adjustments

**Comments on delays in key project milestones**

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| **Project Manager: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| Inadequate institutional arrangement of the project remains to be the single most important constraint which hampers smooth and robust implementation and delivery of the project. |

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| **Country Office: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| Inadequate institutional arrangement of the project remains to be the single most important constraint which hampers smooth and robust implementation and delivery of the project. During the MTR mission, the project management arrangement was partly clarified but still need further clarifications for effective project management. Unclear management structure, staff lack of PMUs with fully detached, transfer of Executing Agency Responsibilities from one government agency to another, and very slow process to officially approve and start implement Annual Work Plans.  The Government and UNDP are working to clarify and implement the project management arrangements that were shaped during the MTR mission with MND/MoLG as Implementing Partners. |

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| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The MTR was conducted in 2017 as expected. TE is planned for December 2020. The project still suffers from a lack of dedicated project management arrangements, resulting in lack of oversight over project activities. As a result no project steering committee meeting has been held in this reporting period and the project has not expended any GEF resources either. |

# Ratings and Overall Assessments

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| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Manager/Coordinator** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP Country Office Programme Officer** | Moderately Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | The most critical project issue is an ineffective project management due to unclear management structure, lack of functional Steering and Technical Committees, lack of a PMU with detached or at least assigned project manager and management staff.  Despite these challenges, the project has been doing reasonably good in implementation of the project activities.  In 2018 significant soil and water conservation to improve surface water quality/quantity of upland streams within the protected area system 74 check-dams with the capacity of 30,000m3 water holding capacity.  The GoE commitment to establish functional PA system in the country remain high as reflected by quite remarkable government co-financing to the project and significant improvement of protection of Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri.  Moreover, through government co financing 10,500 ha of mixed-use zones were demarcated around 15 villages in Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri for sustainable SLM, SFM and livestock grazing. Additionally, 150 ha of hill terraces were made and planted with 300,000 tree seedlings (Terminalia brownii, Acacia laeta, and Eucalyptus rudis) by local people in the mixed use and buffer zones of the Semenawi & Debubawi Bahri.  Some of the reasons for low delivery and implementation of planned activities during the reporting period and previous years were unclear management structure, lack of PMUs with fully detached staff, transfer of Executing Agency Responsibilities from one government agency to another, and very slow process to officially approve and start implement Annual Work Plans.  MoLWE and UNDP are working to clarify and implement the project management arrangements that were shaped during the MTR mission with MLWE as Implementing Partner and Executing Agency and MMR, FWA, and Zoba Administrations as Key Actors (or Responsible Parties).  The MTR findings suggests that given experience of other UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects in Eritrea and high commitment of the GoE to the environmental protection issues and support to PAs, the project results (when achieved completely) will be rather sustainable in term of social, economic, environmental, and financial aspects. Institutional sustainability is questionable due to unsatisfactory project progress to achieve Outcome 1 (institutional and legislative framework for PA establishment). | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **GEF Operational Focal point** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Implementing Partner** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Other Partners** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser** | Unsatisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | During this reporting period, project implementation has stalled, and limited implementation has occurred. In fact, there is no evidence of any significant work having been done, other than completion of work that was ongoing during the last reporting period. For this reason, the project is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory because even though progress has stalled, some good foundation has been laid with the work that has so far been conducted, specifically at the policy level.    Monitoring and reporting remain major challenges with this project, and this year’s reporting in particular is revealing, indicating that there has not been much progress made during the past year, although during the previous reporting period an MTR had been undertaken and revealed some good progress in terms of landscape level work. This lack of reporting is a result of the lack of a PMU, or clear project management arrangements for the project to facilitate coordinated planning, implementation and M&E. As indicated in the 2018 PIR, and the one before that, the project continues to lack a ‘home’, although recently decisions were made to implement all UNDP/development partner-supported through the Ministry of Local Government. These ongoing changes and lack of clarity in institutional arrangements and priority continue to hamper implementation progress and quality.    Nonetheless, some progress has since been made with completion of draft laws and policies, but these remain stuck at official review and endorsement stage. Many of the policy and legal documents have been completed and submitted to the appropriate government institutions to facilitate official review and endorsement/approval. These include: 1. The national policy and institutional framework to operationalize PA management; 2. A national biodiversity conservation monitoring strategy/program; 3. A national strategy for protected area conservation and financing; and 4. A national biodiversity conservation training strategy/program.    Under outcome 1, while PA establishment remains pending, the policy and legislative framework for formal establishment of PAs was prepared, including to align with PA legislation and management with the IUCN standards, but since 2018, it is still pending endorsement/approval. So far there has been an approval of a Proclamation (179/2017 - The Eritrean Environmental Protection, Management, and Rehabilitation Framework) of which Article 27 on “Protection of Natural Heritage” provides basis for establishment of national PAs and local natural enclosures ‘for the purpose of better management of one or more natural resources and their ecosystems’.  Government investments in the management of the PAs/protected landscapes, particularly the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri wildlife landscapes have also stalled, with an observable lack of budgetary allocations in the last reporting period, nor use of project resources towards the same. It is estimated that since 2014, government has spent a total cumulative amount of US$4,210,000 (57% of the pledged co-financing for the project) on activities related to PA management and wildlife conservation, as reported in the previous year, but there is no evidence of new investments, nor any change in this area of work.    The Forestry and Wildlife Authority has also not been able to carry out any new wildlife monitoring exercises, which are meant to be undertaken every three months. Thus far, it has conducted 12 monitoring exercises both for flora and fauna species, but no new work is evident. It is therefore unclear whether the wildlife populations are increasing or remain the same as the last reporting period, or indeed whether they are decreasing in number, as no monitoring seems to be occurring.    Under outcome 2, significant GoE funding has been channeled towards increasing the management capacity of the Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri area (97%) in the past, but less so for the two other proposed PAs (Buri-Irrori-Hawakil and Bera’sole). There has also not been a demonstration of capacity or willingness to utilize GEF resources to fill these gaps, not seek technical support from UNDP or other organisations, e.g. IUCN, to provide support for PA management in general. The draft national strategy for protected area conservation and financing, which sets out procedures and interventions for PA management and wildlife conservation, is completed and still awaiting approval, as report in the previous reporting period.    Under outcome 3, significant progress has been made, as can be expected. Eritrea has decades of experience in implementing soil and water conservation interventions, and in principle this is what constitutes SLM in the Eritrean context. A large number of communities living in and around the PAs have been mobilized to participate in SLM interventions and supported to adopt SLM practices and income-generating activities that reduce pressure from PAs. Although the project is reporting new bigger numbers in terms of area under SLM, these seem to be a repeat or rehashing of previous year’s reporting as there is no evidence of any work having been undertaken since the last reporting period. In the previous reporting year there was evidence, as verified by the independent MTR consultants, that interventions on the ground were ongoing through government co-financing, but there is no evidence available to support that this is still the case.    As indicated, implementation has stalled. Cumulative delivery has only slightly improved, from less than 23,09% in the last reporting period, to 28,3% in this reporting period. Only a small amount of GEF resources were spent in the earlier part of 2018/2019 reporting period, and no annual workplan was prepared or submitted to UNDP to facilitate disbursement of funding in 2019 financial year. A significant part of the delays with the project have to do with the government-UN/development partner’s relations, where the partnership was in effect suspended for most of 2018 and the bulk of 2019 but has only slight progressed to mutual agreement to work together. Concrete action to operationalize agreements. At this point progress has stalled and is stuck at the stage of preparing workplans, and there has been no progress in defining implementation arrangements to operationalize these new workplans and priority areas. The project is scheduled to wrap in late 2020 with a terminal evaluation and close in 2021. These timelines may have to be reviewed to perhaps conduct the terminal evaluation earlier and to proceed with project closure, if these challenges continue to persist, as it seems to be the trend, not just with this project but also with the rest of the GEF-financed portfolio in Eritrea.    If no progress to improve the current status is made before the end of 2019, the RTA will have to consider initiating a discussion with the Eritrea CO on whether to initiate project closure or continue to engage government or resuming implementation. | |

# Gender

**Progress in Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

This information is used in the UNDP-GEF Annual Performance Report, UNDP-GEF Annual Gender Report, reporting to the UNDP Gender Steering and Implementation Committee and for other internal and external communications and learning.  The Project Manager and/or Project Gender Officer should complete this section with support from the UNDP Country Office.

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| **Gender Analysis and Action Plan:** *not available* |
| **Please review the project's Gender Analysis and Action Plan. If the document is not attached or an updated Gender Analysis and/or Gender Action Plan is available please upload the document below or send to the Regional Programme Associate to upload in PIMS+. Please note that all projects approved since 1 July 2014 are required to carry out a gender analysis and all projects approved since 1 July 2018 are required to have a gender analysis and action plan.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **Please indicate in which results areas the project is contributing to gender equality (you may select more than one results area, or select not applicable):** |
| Contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources: Yes |
| Improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance: Yes |
| Targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women: Yes |
| Not applicable: No |

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| **Atlas Gender Marker Rating** |
| **GEN2:** gender equality as significant objective |

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| **Please describe any experiences or linkages (direct or indirect) between project activities and gender-based violence (GBV). This information is for UNDP use only and will not be shared with GEF Secretariat.** |
| There has been no gender-based violence related to project activities. |

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| **Please specify results achieved this reporting period that focus on increasing gender equality and the empowerment of women.**    **Please explain how the results reported addressed the different needs of men or women, changed norms, values, and power structures, and/or contributed to transforming or challenging gender inequalities and discrimination.** |
| The project is designed with very special consideration given to ensuring that benefits are equitably distributed across gender lines. The National Union of Eritrean Women is important to the integration of gender issues within conservation. The project incorporates issues of poverty alleviation and gender also address gender-specific issues related to nutrition and food security.  During the reporting period, a total of 6,824farmers participated in different soil and water conservation interventions through cash for work scheme out of which 4,094 (60%) were women-headed households where beneficiaries were able to purchase commodities of basic needs. |

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| **Please describe how work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment enhanced the project's environmental and/or resilience outcomes.** |
| The project is designed with very special consideration given to ensuring that benefits are equitably distributed across gender lines. Women are afforded equal opportunities to build their capacities to understand their potential, ability and the importance of conserving ecosystem functionality and services which they will benefit from greater access to decision making and livelihood improvements, including food security. Moreover, to increase their adaptive and resilience capacity to environmental challenges the project-specific activities will pay special attention to issues of gender, including identifying gender-specific challenges and mitigation measures related to protected areas conservation, climate change vulnerabilities, and sustainable land, forest, and marine resource management. |

# Social and Environmental Standards

**Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)**

The Project Manager and/or the project’s Safeguards Officer should complete this section of the PIR with support from the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP-GEF RTA should review to ensure it is complete and accurate.

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| **1) Have any new social and/or environmental risks been identified during project implementation?** |
| Yes |

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| **If any new social and/or environmental risks have been identified during project implementation please describe the new risk(s) and the response to it.** |
| NA |

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| **2) Have any existing social and/or environmental risks been escalated during the reporting period? For example, when a low risk increased to moderate, or a moderate risk increased to high.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **If any existing social and/or environmental risks have been escalated during implementation please describe the change(s) and the response to it.** |
| NA |

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| **SESP:** *not available*  **Environmental and Social Management Plan/Framework:** *not available* |
| **For reference, please find below the project's safeguards screening (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) or the old ESSP tool); management plans (if any); and its SESP categorization above. Please note that the SESP categorization might have been corrected during a centralized review.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **3) Have any required social and environmental assessments and/or management plans been prepared in the reporting period? For example, an updated Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) or Indigenous Peoples Plan.** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please upload the document(s) above. If no, please explain when the required documents will be prepared.** |
| NA |

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| **4) Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential )?** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please describe the complaint(s) or grievance(s) in detail including the status, significance, who was involved and what action was taken.** |
| NA |

# Communicating Impact

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| **Tell us the story of the project focusing on how the project has helped to improve people’s lives.**  **(This text will be used for UNDP corporate communications, the UNDP-GEF website, and/or other internal and external knowledge and learning efforts.)** |
| The PAs project combines biodiversity conservation goals with social and economic issues needs of the local communities. Accordingly, the conservation programme offers the local communities and seasonal users from other localities tangible benefits. Farming communities residing in and around the protected area are permitted to carry out farming activities in compliance with the protected area conservation strategies. Communities are gaining economic benefits from the conservation of the protected area system in terms of watershed protection and soil conservation and creating favorable condition for alternative income generating activities such as apiary. Other environmental goods of importance to the local communities are honey, dry fuelwood, water and livestock shelter. Apiary activities are allowed within the mixed or economic use and buffer zones. Hence, local communities or seasonally migrating individuals to the area are free to place bee hives in the PAs within the mixed conservation area. However, no human activities are allowed within the core zone of the Protected area. Honey production is one of the major alternative income generating economic activity being practiced by the local communities and individuals who seasonally migrate to the protected area for apiary activities. About 3000 beehives hives managed by about 250-300 resident local community members and individual beekeepers who migrate to the PAs seasonally. Beekeeping in the protected area is adding value for biodiversity conservation and livelihood improvement. Moreover, beekeeping is serving as an income generating activities that will reduce pressure on natural resources. |

**Knowledge Management, Project Links and Social Media**

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| **Please describe knowledge activities / products as outlined in knowledge management approved at CEO Endorsement /Approval.**    **Please also include: project's website, project page on the UNDP website, blogs, photos stories (e.g. Exposure), Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, as well as hyperlinks to any media coverage of the project, for example, stories written by an outside source. Please upload any supporting files, including photos, videos, stories, and other documents using the 'file lirbary' button in the top right of the PIR.** |
| https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h\_nhqJHpZ5A  http://50.7.16.234/hadas-eritrea/eritrea\_profile\_06092017.pdf  http://50.7.16.234/hadas-eritrea/eritrea\_profile\_17052017.pdf  http://www.eritrea.be/old/semenawi-bahri.htm  http://www.asmera.nl/eritrea2007/eritrea7A20.htm  http://www.shabait.com/about-eritrea/art-a-sport/14224-eritreas-wildlife- |

# Partnerships

**Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagment**

Please select yes or no whether the project is working with any of the following partners. Please also provide an update on stakeholder engagement. This information is used by the GEF and UNDP for reporting and is therefore very important!  All sections must be completed by the Project Manager and reviewed by the CO and RTA.

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| **Does the project work with any Civil Society Organisations and/or NGOs?** |
| Yes |

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| **Does the project work with any Indigenous Peoples?** |
| Yes |

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| **Does the project work with the Private Sector?** |
| No |

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| **Does the project work with the GEF Small Grants Programme?** |
| Yes |

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| **Does the project work with UN Volunteers?** |
| No |

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| **Did the project support South-South Cooperation and/or Triangular Cooperation efforts in the reporting year?** |
| No |

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| **CEO Endorsement Request:** [PIMS 4816 CEO Endorsement Request\_PTA cleared 28Oct2013.doc](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4816/213574/1672313/1672600/PIMS%204816%20CEO%20%20Endorsement%20Request_PTA%20cleared%2028Oct2013.doc) |
| **Provide an update on progress, challenges and outcomes related to stakeholder engagement based on the description of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan as documented at CEO endorsement/approval (see document below). If any surveys have been conducted please upload all survey documents to the PIR file library.** |
| Efforts have been made to integrate national, regional, and local level stakeholders to enhance ensure that any emerging environmental and/or social risks are identified early and mitigated directly. The project has been subjected to mid-term evaluation in 2017/2018. The evaluation process included a consultative process with stakeholders at all levels, and particularly in rural areas, directly engaged and opinions solicited. |

# Annex - Ratings Definitions

**Development Objective Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Project is on track to exceed its end-of-project targets, and is likely to achieve transformational change by project closure. The project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Project is on track to fully achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Project is on track to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with minor shortcomings only.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is expected to partially achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with significant shortcomings. Project results might be fully achieved by project closure if adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. Project results might be partially achieved by project closure if major adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets without major restructuring.

**Implementation Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Implementation is exceeding expectations. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are fully on track. The project is managed extremely efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are on track. The project is managed efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned with minor deviations. Cumulative financial delivery and management of risks are mostly on track, with minor delays. The project is managed well.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces significant implementation issues. Implementation progress could be improved if adaptive management is undertaken immediately. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are significantly off track. The project is not fully or well supported.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces major implementation issues and restructuring may be necessary. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are off track with major issues and/or concerns. The project is not fully or well supported.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Implementation is seriously under performing and major restructuring is required. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones (e.g. start of activities), and management of critical risks are severely off track with severe issues and/or concerns. The project is not effectively or efficiently supported.