

2019

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

**Comoros PA System**

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# Basic Data

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| **Project Information** | |
| UNDP PIMS ID | 4950 |
| GEF ID | 5062 |
| Title | Development of a national network of terrestrial and marine protected areas representative of the Comoros unique natural heritage and co-managed with local village communities |
| Country(ies) | Comoros, Comoros |
| 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 project will seek to conserve globally significant marine and terrestrial biological diversity in the Union of Comoros by establishing an expanded and functional system of protected areas (PAs) in the country, a system that is both representative of the countryÔÇÖs biodiversity endowment and which has good prospects for a sustainable future. The project will strengthen the PA system through expansion and capacity building, and by investing signficant resources in PA management at the site level. |

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| Other Partners | *(not set or not applicable)* |

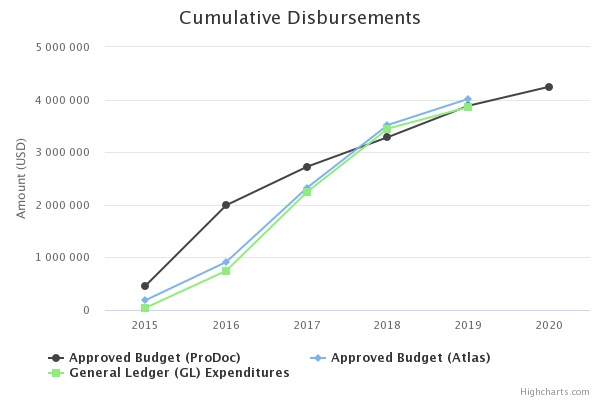
# Overall Ratings

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| Overall DO Rating | Satisfactory |
| Overall IP Rating | Satisfactory |
| Overall Risk Rating | Substantial |

# Development Progress

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| **Description** | | | | | | |
| **Objective**  **To establish an expanded and functional system of protected areas (PAs) in the Union of Comoros, representative of the country’s biodiversity endowment and with good prospects for a sustainable future.** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 1. Capacity development scores for the three island PA system applied on main PA managing entities (government and non-government):    - Systemic capacity  - Institutional capacity  - Individual capacity | Average scorecard results, as applied during project preparatory phase:        30%  24%  29% | *(not set or not applicable)* | Scores are independently applied or vetted by evaluators and reach at least:  45%  40%  35% | On track.    Systemic capacity: 35 percent  -Adoption of the strategy to expand the 2017-2021 national protected areas system, whose vision is as follows: “By 2021, the protected areas system will provide rational management of 25 percent of the national territory, based on a community approach, to achieve environmentally and economically sustainable development.”  -Adoption of the protected areas law by the parliamentary commission. The deputies were unable to adopt the law in parliamentary session because of an institutional crisis within the Assembly of the Union of the Comoros that began in April 2018.  This law provides supports creation of protected areas and a national protected areas agency for the country, including establishing a board of directors. Given the situation, the project plans to create protected areas by decree, in accordance with certain provisions of the framework law on environmental management.  The challenge facing the protected areas is uncertain funding. An environmental fund is to be created to support the country’s protected areas. It will be associated with the Madagascar biodiversity fund, the Fondation pour les Aires Protégées et la Biodiversité de Madagascar (FAPBM). The campaign to mobilize funding will be launched in the second half of 2018.    Institutional Capacity: 30 percent    -Development and validation of management plans for each protected area: Karthala, Mistamihouli, Coelacanth, Ntringui and Shisiwani; the boundaries and zoning for these five new protected areas are georeferenced.  -The national protected areas agency, which will administer and manage the terrestrial and marine protected areas system, will be created when the protected areas law is adopted in plenary session.  - 121 people trained in protected area management are deployed in the field to manage all of the Comoros’ protected areas.  - Operational resources for effective protected area management are available: Equipment for surveillance, ecological monitoring and construction/rehabilitation of protected area offices.    Individual capacity: 32 percent    426 actors responsible for protected areas management are trained on 20 protected area management modules: guide, marine and terrestrial ecology; negotiating co-management agreements and developing survey forms; importance of respect for gender equality; training in preparing and using management plans; knowledge of target species and ecosystems.  The project’s weaknesses are in the areas of involving the communities in managing the protected areas. The project has not been able to provide adequate capacity-building training for the members of the protected areas’ co-management, although they will responsible to ensure the future management of the national parks. Future efforts will focus entirely on training the co-management actors, particularly the co-management committees in the protected areas created and the persons directly affected by their creation. | Systemic capacity : 40%  On 5 December 2018, the Assembly of the Union of the Comoros adopted, by unanimous vote, the law on the national protected areas system. Thanks to the will of the Government, and with the support of UNDP/GEF, to strive for sustainable development, the country has established a unified legal framework for protected areas management, enabling it to better protect the country’s biodiversity. This new law will allow the Comorian Government to protect the country against potential environmental risks and preserve its biological diversity by increasing the protected areas from one (Mohéli National Park) to six. The ministry for the environment has sent the decrees establishing these protected areas to the Council of Ministers. The country’s protected land area will thus increase from 19,895 ha to 50,500 ha (+27%) and its protected waters will increase from 366.75 km² to 584.90 km² (+4.49%). This law will allow the Government, with support from UNDP/GEF, to establish the institutional framework governing the national protected areas system by delegating management of the protected areas to an agency to be known as Parcs Nationaux des Comores (Comoros National Parks), which is a non-profit association. The law strengthens the protection of marine and land biodiversity by creating an appropriate criminal law framework to improve efforts to combat environmental degradation, poaching and trafficking in endangered species.  Institutional Capacity : 35%  - Seven new sites housing the offices of the national parks and the Directorate General of the Environment and Forests are operational. Each park has an onsite management team, composed of a warden, community organizers and rangers. The national parks offices are supplied with computer equipment and office furniture, enabling them to manage and operationalize the national parks under the proper conditions.  - In accordance with the project’s mid-term evaluation mission, the management and development plans for the five new parks were reviewed. These five new 2019/2023 development and management plans incorporated the key concerns of the protected areas’ neighbouring communities and comply with IUCN standards. The costs of implementing the management plan for each park are defined.  Individual capacity : 33%  In addition to the 426 actors trained in 2018, 600 students from the national parks’ pilot schools received training in marine and land ecology and five national parks agents were trained in the region’s countries in environmental monitoring/evaluation and managing invasive species. In addition, 40 national parks agents received training in replanting, soil protection and restoration, accelerated participatory research methods (MARP), and rural communication techniques.  The national park wardens and the community mobilization specialists all took online courses (MOOC) on protected area management and received their certification. |
| 2. Estimated annual financial gap for sustaining an expanded PA system under a basic PA management scenario ($ million) | $1.7M - $2.1M for the current and extrapolated financial gap (based on the 2014 application of the financial scorecard) | *(not set or not applicable)* | The gap is reduced by approx. 10% by project end | On track.    The financial deficit totals USD 938,241, based on the results obtained using the Financial Sustainability Scorecard.  With support from AFD, in connection with the project to support Mohéli National Park, EUR 3,000,000 has been raised to manage this park.  Similarly, the process of creating an environmental fund for the Comoros (FEC) is nearly complete. The board of directors has been set up, the economic and legal studies have been validated, the fundraising strategy has been adopted, and the pooling arrangement between the Comoros fund and the FAPBM, authorized by the board of directors, has just been approved by the Comorian Government in the Council of Ministers. Operationalization of this fund will thus provide the protected areas network a sustainable funding mechanism.  The Comorian Government plans to develop another GEF7 project to operationalize the protected areas created in the Comoros so that it will have enough time to mobilize sustainable financing and secure the achievements in terms of resource management and co-management with neighbouring communities. | The financial gap increased from USD938,241 to USD1,447,556, based on the results obtained using the Financial Sustainability Scorecard.  The process to create the Environmental Fund for the Comoros (FEC), which will manage the protected areas, is still in the FAPBCM/FEC pooling consolidation phase. Although the Government, through the Council of Ministers, approved this pooling arrangement in 2018, an agreement ratifying it has not been signed yet. In addition, UNDP and the French Development Agency (AFD) agreed to finance FEC office operations for FY 2019-20. A road map has been validated to initiate the process of creating an autonomous FEC. A call for applications for the FEC director position has been issued. This person will carry out the FEC/FAPBM consolidation process and mobilize resources.  The Comorian Government has also allocated USD4.5 million in GEF-7 STAR funds for the second phase of the National Protected Areas Network (RNAP) project. Those funds will be used to finalize the establishment of the FEC and mobilize additional funds needed to operate the national parks (among other activities). The PIF for this new project has been drafted and will be submitted to the GEF Board in October 2019. AFD is also preparing a second phase of the Mohéli National Park support project (USD6 million), which will begin in 2020. |
| 3. Number of gazetted national PAs/MPAs effectively and equitably managed in collaboration with local populations | One (1) MPA legally created with significant gaps in terms of collaborative management | *(not set or not applicable)* | 4 new national PAs and MPAs, one extended PA and 4 community reserves legally gazetted and effectively managed by collaborative management committees | On track.    Five new protected areas are being created:  -Karthala National Park  -Cœlacanth National Park  -Mitsamiouli–National Park  -Shisiwani National Park  -Mount Ntringui National Park    The decrees creating these new protected areas have been drafted and are awaiting adoption of the law by the National Assembly so that they can be enacted. If the Assembly is unable to meet this year because of organizational problems, the decrees will be sent to the Government for enactment in accordance with the provisions of the framework law on the environment. The project coordination team will temporarily assume the functions of the national protected areas agency while awaiting the law’s adoption. | Five new protected areas are being created:  -Karthala National Park  -Coelacanth National Park  -Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park  -Shissiwani National Park  -Mount Ntringui National Park  The National Assembly passed the national protected areas national system law. The decrees creating the five new national parks have been drafted, approved by the stakeholders and sent, by the Minister for the environment, to the Council of Ministers. When the President has promulgated the law, the five new parks will be officially operational. |
| 4. Number of sites that have been designated as globally important in terms of biodiversity that are integrated in the PA system | One (1) Ramsar site, lake Dziani-Boundouni is integrated in the PMM | *(not set or not applicable)* | The three Ramsar sites of the country (Karthala, Ntringui and lake Dziani-Boundouni) and three of the four IBAs (Mount Karthala, Mwali highlands and Ndzuani highlands) are included in the PA system by the end of the project | On track.    Two Ramsar sites are integrated into the protected area network:  The decrees and the protected area management and development plans incorporate two Ramsar sites (Karthala and Mount Ntringui) and four areas of importance for the birds of the Comoros within the boundaries of the areas.  Thanks to the terrestrial biodiversity inventory studies and the boundary-setting and zoning process, all the Ramsar sites and sites of importance for the birds within the national protected areas system were integrated into the national protected areas system.  Similarly, a process to classify Mohéli island as a biosphere reserve in partnership with UNESCO has been launched. The 2018-2019 roadmap was validated by the Governorate of the Autonomous Island of Mohéli and the Directorate General of Environment and Forests (DGEF). | Two Ramsar sites are included in the protected areas network:  With the terrestrial biodiversity inventory studies and the boundary-setting and zoning process, all of the Ramsar sites and areas of significance for birds were included in the national protected areas system. The decrees creating the protected areas thus incorporated two RAMSAR sites within their perimeter (Karthala and Mount Ntringui) and the four areas of significance for the birds of the Comores.  In addition, the process of classifying the Island of Mohéli as a Biosphere Reserve is underway, with technical support from the UNESCO offices in Paris and Nairobi. The package will be submitted in October. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 1**  **PA system strengthened through expansion and capacity building** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 5. Coverage (ha) and proportion (%) of the country’s land surface included in the national PA estate | 3,725 ha representing 2% (islets in Moheli’s Marine Park) of the land surface | *(not set or not applicable)* | By project end: approximately 50,500 ha representing ~27% of the land surface have been included in the national PA estate (including the gazetting of the terrestrial expansion of PMM to include Mwali’s rainforest and of 2 new national PAs for the Karthala forest and Mount Ntringui) | On track.    The protected terrestrial coverage totals 47,479 ha, corresponding to 25.5 percent of the land area of the Comoros (see the maps of the terrestrial protected area boundaries).  Pending the law’s enactment, the draft park decrees are being developed, the management and development plans are being finalized, and the environmental and social safeguard plans are being defined.  However, the Comorian government has begun building a road that passes directly within Mount Ntringui National Park. The objective is to open up the region and improve the circulation of people and goods. This road will have major environmental impacts and compromises the viability of the national park over the long term. The boundaries and zoning of this park could be reviewed after the study to be conducted this year; this could lead to changes in the current percentage of the land area classified as protected. | Protected land coverage currently totals 50,500 ha (see the national park boundary maps). Although the decrees formalizing the parks have not yet been issued, the law on the national protected areas national system was passed and the Government and the neighbouring communities are operating as if they were already in force and are implementing the regulations included under the law. |
| 6. Number of community reserves (CR) legally created | No official community reserve | *(not set or not applicable)* | Four new CRs created by end of year 4: two included in the Karthala forest national PA: Hantsogoma and Nyumbadju, the forest of Moya and the Turtle Island. | As noted last year, the four community reserves outlined in the project document are no longer planned. These areas have all been integrated into the national parks, as provided in the protected areas expansion strategy validated by the Government. Thus, two reserves – Hantsogoma and Nyumbadju – are incorporated in Karthala Park, the Moya reserve is incorporated in Mount Ntringui Park, and the Turtle Island reserve is incorporated in Mistamihouli Park. | As noted last year, the four community reserves outlined in the project document are no longer included in the plan. These areas have all been included in the national parks, as provided in the protected areas expansion strategy validated by the Government. Thus, two reserves – Hantsogoma and Nyumbadju – are included in Karthala Park, the Moya reserve is included in Mount Ntringui Park, and the Turtle Island reserve is included in Mistamihouli Park. |
| 7. Coverage (ha) and proportion (%) of the territorial waters covered by national MPAs and marine community reserves | 36,675 ha (Moheli’s Marine Park maritime area) representing 2.9% of the territorial waters. | *(not set or not applicable)* | Two national PAs (1 marine: Coelacanth zone and 1 terrestrial/marine: Bimbini peninsula) and one marine CR (Turtle Island) are legally created by end of year 4, for a total of 47 690 ha of marine area, representing 3.8% of the territorial waters. | In 2017, the studies conducted led to the classification of 53,447 ha of protected marine coverage and in 2018, coastal areas and islets were also classified, bringing the protected marine coverage to 58,490 ha. | Protected marine coverage increased to 584.90 km2 of territorial waters, by 4.49%. In addition to Mohéli National Park, three new protected marine areas have been established:  - Coelacanth National Park  - Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park:  - Shissiwani National Park |
| 8. Financial Sustainability Scores for Comoros’ PA System | Financial Sustainability Scorecard Scores:    Component 1 – Legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks: 7 points    Component 2 – Business planning and tools for cost-effective management: 6 points    Component 3 – Tools for revenue generation by PAs: 7 points    Total Score: 20 points | *(not set or not applicable)* | Scores of at least the following for components:  Component 1: 18 points  Component 2: 12 points  Componenet 3: 14 points  Total Score: 44 points (20%) | The results of the financial sustainability assessment, Financial Scorecard – Assessing Elements of the Financing System, are as follows:  Component 1 – Legislative, regulatory and institutional frameworks 16 points    Component 2 - Business planning and tools for profitable management: 6 points    Component 3 – Tools for revenue generation by the PAs 8 points    Total points: 30    Financial sustainability is very weak and constitutes the main challenge for coming years. The legal frameworks are not adequately developed to ensure revenue generation, such as taxes, entry fees and other environmental taxes. The national parks under development do not yet have business plans and cannot yet quantify their needs for financing or budget allocations to ensure effective management of the PAs. Tourism, which should contribute to generating financing in the protected areas, is not yet developed, including facilities such as housing and dining facilities. The process of creating an environmental fund for Comoros is still underway. | The results of the financial sustainability assessment, Financial Scorecard – Assessing Elements of the Financing System, are as follows:  Component 1 – Legislative, regulatory and institutional frameworks: 17 points  Component 2 - Business planning and tools for profitable management: 6 points  Component 3 – PAs income-generating tools: 8 points  Total points: 31  Passage of the national protected areas system law strengthens the legal and institutional sustainability of the national protected areas system.  As noted in the mid-term project evaluation, the financial sustainability of the Comoros national parks remains the main challenge. Although the business plans for the new national parks are not yet developed, the economic assessment of their funding needs was estimated at USD15-30 million.  Support has not yet been provided to the communities and individuals affected by the creation of the national parks to develop income-generating activities (IGA). A plan to do that should be developed and funding sought. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 2**  **Site level PA operationalization** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 9. METT scores (threats)    [1] PMM  [2] Karthala\*  [3] Moheli Rainf  [4] Mt Ntringui  [5] Moya Comm Res  [8] I Tortues Comm Res  [9] Z Coelac B Dauph  [10] Bimbini- I Selle    \* Note: Includes also the following sites:  [6] Hantsogoma Comm Res  [7] Ngubadju Comm Res | Baseline threat level , measured as (a) total threat score and (b) number of threats that scored 3:    (a) 44 points, (b) 6 threats  (a) 55 points, (b) 10 threats  (a) 72 points, (b) 15 threats  (a) 29 points, (b) 8 threats  (a) 44 points, (b) 9 threats  (a) 46 points, (b) 11 threats  (a) 45 points, (b) 4 threats  (a) 64 points, (b) 12 threats | *(not set or not applicable)* | Independently vetted results from applying the METT for PAs, with respect to threats show the following:  (a) total threat points decrease by 15% by project end vis-à-vis the baseline; and  (b) at least 5 of the top 9 threats which scored 3 at baseline have been reduced by 1 point, by the end of the project. | The result of the threat scoring exercise, measured as (a) threat scoring and (b) number of threats that received a score of at least 3, is as follows:    Mohéli National Park (a) 31 points; (b) 3 threats, or a 50 percent threat reduction.  This is the result of Park team’s awareness-raising and surveillance efforts, as well as of the efforts by the rangers at the Shisiwani and Mitsamiouli parks, because most turtle poachers, for example, came from Bimbini and northern Ngazidja. The creation of these new marine protected areas helped reduce the threats to Mohéli National Park.  Karthala National Park: (a) 40 points; (b) 5 threats, or a 50 percent threat reduction.  This is the result of the surveillance efforts by the rangers, with support from communities neighbouring the PAs, the national police and the communes. The latter voluntarily set up village committees to support the parks and have organized to provide surveillance of the PAs.  Mount Ntringui National Park: (a) 31 points; (b) 7 threats, or a 60 percent threat reduction.  The major threat involves construction of the road linking the villages of Dindri and Lingoni, which harms the integrity of Mount Ntringui National Park. This route passes through the park’s interior and has created significant damage in terms of tree cutting. It has also harmed conservation targets, including the Livingstone fruit bats, small owls and other endemic birds, which could disappear altogether.  Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park: (a) 23 points; (b) 4 threats, or a 75 percent threat reduction.  This is the result of the awareness-raising campaigns targeting women who fish on foot and fishers who previously used dynamite and have agreed to abandon those destructive practices.  Cœlacanth National Park: (a) 21 points; (b) 1 threats, or a 90 percent threat reduction.  This is the result of awareness-raising efforts directed at the fishers and trainings in ecologically-sound fishing. No coelacanth have been caught accidentally in three years.  Shisiwani National Park: (a) 29 points; (b) 4 threats, or a 67 percent threat reduction.  Turtle poaching has stopped altogether. Eight villages bordering Shisiwani National Park voluntarily stopped the practice of gillnetting. | The result of the threat scoring, measured by (a) threat scoring and (b) number of threats that received a score of at least 3, is as follows:  Mohéli National Park: (a) 31 points; (b) 2 threats, or a 75% reduction in threats.  This is the result of awareness-raising efforts for the actors and the commitment of the neighbouring communities. Monitoring in the new marine protected areas contributed significantly to reducing threats within Mohéli National Park.  Despite these efforts, the main threats remain marine turtle poaching and deforestation to create land for farming, but also for ylang ylang distillation.  Karthala National Park: (a) 40 points; (b) 4 threats, or a 60% reduction in threats.  This is the result of the rangers’ monitoring efforts, as well as the commitment of the communities, national police and communes. The village committees supporting the parks and the police also support the rangers’ monitoring efforts. The ongoing threats are: deforestation; slash-and-burn agriculture; watershed degradation; and invasive species.  Mount Ntringui National Park: (a) 31 points; (b) 3 threats, or a 60% reduction in threats.  The ongoing threats are: deforestation; invasive species; and watershed degradation.  Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park: (a) 23 points; (b) 3 threats, or a 75% reduction in threats.  The rangers and the communities have done remarkable work in reducing marine turtle poaching and net fishing. The following threats still exist: net fishing; dynamite fishing; and trampling of the coral reefs at low tide by young people and women.  Coelacanth National Park: (a) 21 points; (b) 1 threat, or a 90% reduction in threats.  This is the result of awareness-raising efforts with the fishers and training in ecologically-sound fishing. No coelacanth have been caught accidentally in four years. The remaining threat is trampling of coral at low tide.  Shissiwani National Park: (a) 29 points; (b) 3 threats, or a 70% reduction in threats.  Thanks to the efforts of the park management team, turtle poachers are now rare. Turtle nesting and emergence were observed this year. The continuing threats are: net fishing; trampling of coral at low tide; and dumping of household wastes along the beaches. |
| 10. METT scores  (over 102 possible points) :  [1] PMM  [2] Karthala\*  [3] Moheli Rainf  [4] Mt Ntringui  [5] Moya Comm Res  [8] I Tortues Comm Res  [9] Z Coelac B Dauph  [10] Bimbini- I Selle    \* Note: Includes also the following sites:  [6] Hantsogoma Comm Res  [7] Ngubadju Comm Res | Scored points and %:    38 = 37%  39 = 38%  13 = 13%  8 = 8%  10 = 10%  19 = 19%  40 = 39%  14 = 14% | *(not set or not applicable)* | Independently vetted results from applying the METT for PAs, with respect to management effectiveness show tangible improvement by the end of the project:  (i) no scores below 60% for sites [1], [2], [8] and [9];  (ii) no scores below 30% for sites [8] and [10];  (iii) no scores below 25% for sites [3], [4] and [5]; and  (iv) average of METT scores for all 10 sites increased from 22% to at least 39%. | The results obtained from the management effectiveness assessment using the METT reflect the following improvements, out of a total of 102 points:    Mohéli National Park: 71=69.6 percent  Karthala National Park: 76=74.5 percent  Mount Ntringui National Park: 59=57.8 percent  Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park: 67=65.6 percent  Cœlacanth National Park: 84=82.3 percent  Shisiwani National Park: 67=65.6 percent    This improvement is due to the protected areas law. Each national park has sufficient staff and supplies to operate properly. Every year, all of the parks prepare an annual workplan and budget, secured by the National Protected Areas Network (RNAP) level until June 2021. Fifty-two rangers are responsible for natural resource surveillance; turtle poaching and tree cutting have declined. However, the road under construction in Mount Ntringui National Park has caused significant environmental impacts and calls for urgent mitigation measures.    Source: METT, April 2018 | The results obtained from the management effectiveness assessment using the METT reflect the following improvements, out of a total of 102 points:  Mohéli National Park: 74=74%  Karthala National Park: 77 = 76.5%  Mount Ntringui National Park: 72= 71.8%  Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park: 69 = 68.6%  Coelacanth National Park: 90 = 89.3%  Shissiwani National Park: 70 = 68.6%  The improved effectiveness is due to the national protected areas system law, passed by the National Assembly, which will enter into force after it is signed by the President of the Republic. All of the national parks have new furnished offices. The teams at each park now operate independently in terms of planning and managing their activities.  Source: METT, June 2019. |
| 11. Safety of Comoros beaches for turtles nesting for the beaches of the PMM, Bimbini, Chindini, and Turtle Island as measured by:  • turtles nesting tracks;  • successful nesting attempts. | > 2200 tracks  > 1500 successful attemps measured in the PMM between August 2009 and July 2010  Baseline t.b.d. for Bimbini, Chindini and Turtle Island | *(not set or not applicable)* | No decrease by project end | Mohéli National Park:    -19,085 turtle crawls, or an increase of 1,143 over last year;  -21,306 successful clutches, or an increase of 9,901 over last year;  -32 poached turtles recorded.    Shisiwani National Park:    -18 turtle crawls, or an increase of 15 over last year;  - four successful clutches, or an increase of three over last year;  - 20 poaching cases recorded.  This is the result of the daily surveillance campaign conducted by the rangers, as well as the awareness-raising and training for the fishers.    Cœlacanth National Park:    -Six turtle crawls;  -Seven turtles laid eggs and returned to the sea, for an increase of four turtles who laid eggs;  -Two poachers caught.  This is the result of the commitment on the part of the communities and the communes to support the rangers’ efforts and the systematic prosecution of poachers.    Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park:    -33 turtle crawls, or an increase of 18 over last year;  -Eight poachers caught.  This is the result of the commitment on the part of the communities and the communes to support the rangers’ efforts and the systematic prosecution of poachers. | Mohéli National Park:  -27,200 marine turtle crawls recorded, or a 27% increase  -24,500 successful nesting attempts  -12 poaching cases recorded.  Shissiwani National Park:  -26 crawls recorded  - 12 successful nesting attempts  - Emergence of 180 juveniles recorded for the first time in 30 years  Coelacanth National Park:  -Seven turtle crawls  -4 turtles laid eggs and returned to the sea  -3 poachers caught.  Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park:  -36 turtle crawls recorded  - 24 successful nesting attempts  -4 poachers caught.  This is the result of the communities’ and communes’ commitment to support the rangers’ efforts and the systematic prosecution of poachers. |
| 12. Coral reef health status in MPAs as measured by:  • Proportion of benthic habitat covered by live coral assemblages, versus bleached corals, algae and non-living substrate;  • Number of coral recruits (per m2)  • Grazer fish diversity and abundance | • T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project  • T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project  • T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project | *(not set or not applicable)* | No decrease by project end  No decrease by project end  No decrease by project end | In 2017, in cooperation with the NGO, AIDE, which monitors the Comoros’ reefs, the following results were obtained:    - Shisiwani National Park:    Two transects were conducted:  Hamwa drogo site:  Living coral: 40 percent  Bleached coral: 15 percent    Mlongo Mhu site:  Living coral: 38 percent  Bleached coral: 20 percent    Mohéli National Park:    Two transects were conducted:  Sambia site:  Living coral: 55 percent  Bleached coral: 10 percent  Kandzoni site:  Living coral: 45 percent    - Mitsamiouli site:    One transect was conducted:  Membwaboini site:  Living coral: 60 percent  Bleached coral: 10 percent | Hurricane Kenneth, which struck the country on 21 April 2019, caused significant environmental damage and losses on three islands. The impacts worsened an already precarious situation and were detrimental to all of the Comoros national parks’ biodiversity restoration initiatives undertaken since 2017. The following coral reef areas were damaged: Mohéli: the Hagnamoida and Itsamia reefs and the Mnayevandjé and Itsamia reef zones. On Grande Comore, the reef along the entire perimeter of Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park and Ouroveni-Malé reef; on Anjouan, Île de la Selle reef and Milembeni reef.  Mohéli National Park  The Mnayevandjé external slope is relatively threatened and was affected by the hurricane, with 41% of coral broken; this represents 50 ha of coral affected by the hurricane;  Kenneth affected 5% of the coral on the Itsamia reef, or 20 ha;  The hurricane also affected Mboimadji reef, further north in the park. There, 8% of the coral was affected, or 10 ha;  Mitsamiouli–Ndroudé National Park:  - Coral cover declined from 45% before the hurricane to 15% after it  Coelacanth National Park  The south Grande Comore reef (Ouroveni, Malé as far as Foumbouni) also experienced the most violent winds. The coral was torn from its habitat and dispersed toward the shore, indicating the breadth of the damage. Dives to evaluate the damage reported the loss of at least 50 ha of reefs. Eighty percent of the reef flat was destroyed.  Shissiwani National Park  The reef in the Bimbini-Milembeni area was damaged. The hurricane affected 80 ha of reefs. Coverage fell from 35% to 15% on the external slope and from 12% to 7% on the reef flat. |
| 13. Mangrove health in MPAs, as measured by:  • Total area covered in ha;  • Area successfully restored | • PMM: 91 ha  • Bimbini: 25 ha    Total: 10,000 propagules planted in Bimbini/ success rate and area t.b.d. in the 1st year of the project | *(not set or not applicable)* | No decrease in mangrove coverage in PMM and Bimbini by project end  Target restoration area to be determined in MPA management plans | Mohéli National Park:    Total area covered: 94.65 ha, or an increase of 3.65 ha over the previous year.  The restoration target is to plant 50,000 mangrove propagules by year-end 2021. The restoration campaign of at least 10,000 plants will be carried out in October 2018.  The 2017 estimate provided the following result: a total of nine species of mangrove trees, divided into six families, were inventoried, including a new one (Xylocarpus granatum J. Koenig). However, three-quarters of the Mohéli mangrove sites occupied by Sonneratia alba Sm and Rhizophora mucronata Lam are infested with a parasite that has not yet been identified.  The study of this parasite and the total number of mangroves affected will be conducted in September 2018, in collaboration with the University of the Comoros.    Shisiwani National Park:    The restoration target is to plant 40,000 propagules June 2021.  There are eight small mangrove sites in Shisiwani National Park (Fadhulani mangrove; Mrowamouji; Nyambo; Mbouyoujou; Mafoumbouni; Hamoiousseni Boina; and Îlot de la Selle). Three species were recorded among these mangroves (Sonneratia alba, Rhizophora micronata and Avicenia marina). The mangroves in Shisiwani Park cover an area of 15.82 ha. The data dating from the 1990s were reviewed this year based on the monitoring conducted and with support from the eBee drone, which helped to calculate the exact land area of mangroves in Shisiwani.  The mangrove restoration campaign will be carried out in October 2018; 15,000 plants are to be planted.    Cœlacanth National Park:    The target is to plant 20,000 propagules by June 2021.  Total land area of mangrove: 3.75 ha  Two mangrove sites exist in the Coelacanth National Park:  1. Simamboini mangrove  Seven species were recorded (Bruiguiera gymnorhiza, Xylocarpus granatium, Ceriops tagal, Xylocarpus mollussencis, Lumnizera racemosa, Rhizophora micronata, Soneratia alba and Bruguiera gymnoriza).  The total land area of mangrove is 0.7 ha.  2. Ouroveni mangrove  The mangrove is composed of two species: Soneratia alba and Rihzophora mucronate.  The total land area of this mangrove is 3.05 ha.  Five hundred propagules were planted in June 2018. This year, the rangers were trained in mangrove monitoring and restoration, with 10,000 propagules scheduled to be planted over the year June 2018-June 2019.    Mitsamiouli National Park:    The total land area is 0.94 ha.  Nroudé: two mangrove sites, the Saada and the Lac salé sites. The mangrove is composed of two species: Soneratia alba and Rhizophora mucronata. | Mohéli National Park  Total area covered: 94.65 ha  Nine species of mangrove trees, from six families, were inventoried in 2018, including a new one (Xylocarpus granatum J. Koenig). The replanting campaign (15,000 propagules) is scheduled for October 2019.  Shissiwani National Park  The restoration target is to plant 40,000 propagules by June 2021.  12,500 plants were replanted in 2018. Three species were found in the park (Sonneratia alba, Rhizophora micronata and Avicenia marina). The mangroves in Shissiwani Park cover 15.82 ha.  Coelacanth National Park  The target is to plant 20,000 propagules by June 2021. This year, fisherwomen from Ouroveni planted 9,500 as part of World Environment Day activities.  The park’s mangrove area totals 3,75 ha.  There are two mangrove sites in Coelacanth National Park:  seven species were identified (Bruiguiera gymnorhiza, Xylocarpus granatium, Ceriops tagal, Xylocarpus mollussencis, Lumnizera racemosa, Rhizophora micronata, Soneratia alba and Bruguiera gymnoriza).  Mitsamiouli National Park  The target is to plant at least 20,000 propagules by 2020. The Mitsamiouli Park team has replanted 4,200 propagules in partnership with neighbouring communities.  The park’s mangrove area totals 0.94 ha.  . The mangroves include two species: Soneratia alba and Rihzophora mucronate. |
| 14. Seagrass bed health in all MPAs, as measured by:  • area covered in ha;  • species diversity | T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project | *(not set or not applicable)* | No decrease by project end | Mohéli National Park:    Land area covered: 28.8 km  Five genera and six species of marine phanerogams compose the park’s seagrass bed: Halodule uninervis complex; Halophle ovalis-­minor complex, Syringodium isoetifolium, Cymodocea serrulata, Cymodocea rotundata and Thalassia hemprichii. A seventh species, Thalassodendron ciliatum, has only been observed floating.    Mitsamiouli-Ndroudé Park    Land area covered: 3.3 km2  The following species were recorded: Thalassia hemprichii, Halophia ovalis, Halodule univernis complex, Syringodium isoetifolium and Cymodocea rotundata.    Shisiwani Park:    Land area covered: 14.2 km2 of seagrass  The following species were recorded: Thalassia hemprichii, Halophia ovalis, Halodule univernis complex, Syringodium isoetifolium and Cymodocea rotundata. | This year’s observations confirm last year’s analysis: No reduction in terms of area and species identified.  Mohéli National Park  Land area covered: 28.8 km  The park’s seagrasses are composed of five genera and six species of marine phanerogams: Halodule uninervis complex; Halophle ovalis-­minor complex, Syringodium isoetifolium; Cymodocea serrulata, Cymodocea rotundata; and Thalassia hemprichii. A seventh species, Thalassodendron ciliatum, has only been observed floating.  Mitsamiouli-Ndroudé Park Land area covered: 3.3 km2  The following species were identified: Thalassia hemprichii, halophia ovalis, halodule univernis complex, syringodium isoetifolium and cymodocea rotundata.  Shissiwani Park:  Land area covered: 14.2 km2 of seagrass  The following species were identified: Thalassia hemprichii, halophia ovalis, halodule univernis complex, syringodium isoetifolium and cymodocea rotundata.  However, Hurricane Kenneth damaged a significant part of these seagrasses. In Mitsamiouli, the beaches in the town of Mitsamiouli and of Meboimboini were piled with washed-up seagrasses. At least 75% of the seagrasses were destroyed, corresponding to 40 ha of seagrass. In Bimbini, 35 ha were destroyed. |
| 15. Distribution and density of invasive species along permanent transects in core areas of terrestrial PAs such as Psydium cattleianum and Syzygium jambos | T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project | *(not set or not applicable)* | 10% decrease by project end | The Comoros National Centre for Documentation and Scientific Research (CNDRS) has conducted a complete assessment. The data show the following changes in terms of invasive species:  Syzygium jambos, 75 percent, or a 25 percent reduction;  Psidium cattleianum, 70 percent, or a 30 percent reduction;  Hedichyum flavescence, 2 percent, or a 60 percent reduction;  Lantana camara, 2 percent, or a 50 percent reduction;  Kandzi, 3 percent, or a 40 percent reduction;  Clidemia hirta, 4 percent, no reduction;  Stachytarpheta urticifolia, 2 percent, no reduction  Bidens pilosa, 2 percent, or a 35 percent reduction;  Senna alata, 2 percent no reduction;  Cassia sophera, 4 percent, or a 20 percent reduction;  Vigna radiata, 3 percent, no reduction. | The assessment of invasive species was not revised for 2019. The data remain the same, as follows:  Syzygium jambos, 75%, a 25% reduction;  Psidium cattleianum, 70%, a 30% reduction;  Psidium cattleianum, 2%, a 60% reduction;  Psidium cattleianum, 2%, a 50% reduction;  Kandzi, 3%, a 40% reduction;  Clidemia hirta, 4%, no reduction;  Stachytarpheta urticifolia, 2%, no reduction  Bidens pilosa, 2%, a 35% reduction;  Senna alata, 2% no reduction;  Cassia sophera, 4%, a 20% reduction; and,  Vigna radiata, 3%, no reduction. |
| 16. (i) Distribution of roost sites (number and tree species) and  (ii) abundance of the Livingstone fruit bat Pteropus livingstonii in Mwali and Ndzuani | i) T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project    ii) Mwali: ~ 300  Ndzuani: ~ 950 | *(not set or not applicable)* | i) No decrease by project end  ii) No decrease by project end | Mohéli National Park:  5 Pteropus livingstonii nesting houses; 477 individuals recorded    Ntringui Park:    19 Pteropus livingstonii sites; (ii) abundance of Pteropus livingstonii ~ 766 individuals recorded    These results were obtained from the rangers’ monitoring and inventories, with assistance from a national consultant who is an expert in terrestrial fauna.  To conduct the monitoring and inventories, the rangers received rapid training on:   the wealth of wildlife, to develop basic knowledge of the Comoros’ environment and ecosystems;   the importance of the flora and fauna of the Comoros, as well as impacts that could result in the dysfunction of ecosystem services related to biodiversity;   the various methods and tools needed to limit loss of habitat and the disappearance of species; and,   the theoretical models and newly-applied biostatistical tools to monitor natural populations over the medium- and long-term.  A group of two to three transects at 500- to 1,000-km intervals was laid out in each forest or forest fragment, based on habitat accessibility. These transects, one to two kilometres in length, generally started at the edge of the forest and headed into the interior. | The Livingstone fruit bat data have not changed since last year:  Mohéli National Park:  5 Pteropus livingstonii roost sites; 477 individuals recorded  Ntringui Park: 19 Pteropus livingstonii sites; (ii) abundance of Pteropus livingstonii ~ 766 individuals recorded |
| 17. Perception of values of PAs/MPAs, including non use and non market values, among local communities and other stakeholders | T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project | *(not set or not applicable)* | Increased perception of the benefits provided by PAs/MPAs in terms of non use and non markets values by the end of the project | The survey conducted this year with the protected areas’ neighbouring communities to assess their perceptions generated the following data:  39 percent consider the protected areas to be an opportunity to improve living conditions and the profitability of their production. Their comments often refer to their children’s future. Protected areas are also associated with the return of fish for the communities neighbouring the marine protected areas. The populations are aware that the increasing scarcity of the fishing resource results from overexploitation and that protected areas seem to be the obvious solution.  28 percent view the introduction of the protected areas as an opportunity. We consciously chose to use the two words, “usefulness” and “opportunity” in our maintenance guide. They may seem to be close in meaning, but are different based on the needs and expectations of the populations neighbouring the protected areas. “Opportunity” is associated here with the supports (in-kind and cash) that may accompany the creation of protected areas, particularly capacity-building among co-management actors, coaching for those who are participating in biodiversity preservation and poverty reduction, and funding for sustainable revenue-generating activities.  21 percent of those surveyed are optimistic about the introduction of the protected areas. This sense of optimism bodes well for positive perceptions of the protected areas among local communities.  Only 12 percent of the individuals questioned have a negative view of the creation of the protected areas. They consider these areas as an obstacle to their activities.  87 percent of those questioned believe that creating the protected areas can have a positive influence on changing attitudes. This predisposition to “change” is a prerequisite to the success of the protected areas. | No additional survey was conducted this year. Another survey on perceptions of the values of the national parks is scheduled for 2020.  Thus, the 2018 data remain valid for 2019:  39% consider the protected areas to be an opportunity to improve living conditions and the profitability of their production. Their comments often refer to their children’s future. Protected areas are also associated with the return of fish for communities neighbouring the marine protected areas. The populations are aware that the decline of the fisheries results from overexploitation and that protected areas appear clearly to be the solution.  28% view the introduction of the protected areas as an opportunity. We consciously chose to use the two words “usefulness” and “opportunity” in our maintenance guide. They may seem to be close in meaning, but differ based on the needs and expectations of the populations neighbouring the protected areas. “Opportunity” is associated here with the supports (in-kind and cash) that may come with the creation of protected areas, particularly capacity-building among co-management actors, coaching for those who are participating in biodiversity preservation and poverty reduction, and funding for sustainable IGA.  21% of those surveyed are optimistic about the introduction of the protected areas. This sense of optimism bodes well for positive perceptions of the protected areas among local communities.  Only 12% of the persons questioned have a negative view of the creation of the protected areas, considering these areas as impeding their activities.  87% of those questioned believe that creating the protected areas can have a positive influence on changing attitudes. This predisposition to “change” is a prerequisite to the success of the protected areas. |
| 18. Changes in income levels for local community households attributable to the development of biodiversity-friendly income generating activities, and proportion of village households that benefit from such IGAs | T.b.d. in the 1st year of the project (average income levels for households in PA riparian villages and for households involved in IGAs such as honey production through OCB project, tree nurseries through SGP and others, and proportion of such households in each village) | *(not set or not applicable)* | Numbers to be defined in baseline survey:  % average increase in household income levels  % increase in the proportion of village households that benefit from biodiversity-friendly IGAs by project end | A 2017 community survey revealed a need for revenue-generating activities benefiting the populations affected by the creation of the protected areas. Proposals have been offered, particularly for direct support for individuals with income-generating initiatives and individuals offering job opportunities at the community level, with priority to persons affected by the creation of the protected areas. The communities have identified 32 innovative initiatives. The priority beneficiaries have also been identified: 3,000 people affected directly by the new protected areas and 120,000 affected indirectly.  A major community support campaign will be launched in August 2018; changes can be measured after that.  For now, a pilot initiative for income-generating activities has been launched benefiting 150 fishers, 200 farmers and 500 potential tourists. The following income-generating activities were supported:  - Development of artisanal, selective and ecological fishing in the coral reefs, Shisiwani Marine Park (Anjouan);  - Establishment of a sustainable honey production unit (Grand Comoros);  - Promotion of the Trou du Prophète site (Grand Comoros);  - Establishment of an environmental education and ecotourism development agency to promote the Comoros National Parks (Karthala and Grand Comoros);  - Strengthening the network of private nursery growers (Mohéli); and,  - Promotion of Karthala’s medicinal plants (Karthala and Grand Comoros). | In 2018/2019, a strategy was developed to finance innovative initiatives proposed by individuals affected by the creation of the protected areas. On that basis, the project sought funding from the GEF’s Small Grant Program for a portion of these activities.  Thus, one income-generating activity for fisherwomen in the Mitsamiouli National Park received USD50,000 from the SGP. This will enable 120 women who lived directly from fishing on foot and with nets in this area to be retrained and earn stable complementary income.  Two other requests for support for beekeeping to benefit women in Shissiwani Park and farmers in Karthala Park are in the SGP funding pipeline.  The fisherwomen from the village of Ouroveni in Coelacanth National Park also received support from a Swedish company, which launched the NetEnt appeal that raised USD7,500. This support will enable 30 women to shift from the destructive practice of fishing on foot and benefit from an opportunity to raise goats profitably. |
| **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): | 90.89% |
| Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year: | 99.36% |
| Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August): | 3,859,282 |

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| **Key Financing Amounts** | |
| PPG Amount | 99,440 |
| GEF Grant Amount | 4,246,000 |
| Co-financing | 21,630,314 |

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| **Key Project Dates** | |
| PIF Approval Date | Nov 15, 2012 |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Sep 15, 2014 |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | Apr 21, 2015 |
| Date of Inception Workshop | Mar 24, 2016 |
| Expected Date of Mid-term Review | Apr 30, 2018 |
| Actual Date of Mid-term Review | Jun 30, 2018 |
| Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation | Dec 1, 2021 |
| Original Planned Closing Date | Apr 21, 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)** |
| 2018-12-27 |

# Critical Risk Management

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| Current Types of Critical Risks | Critical risk management measures undertaken this reporting period |
| Financial | Operationalizing the sustainable financing mechanism for the protected areas:  This risk could compromise the effectiveness of PA management beyond the duration of the project’s intervention. The continuity of the PAs beyond the life of the project is not guaranteed. When the project ends, six protected areas could be left without financing.  To address this risk, the Government has taken the following steps:  1. Ensure a second phase for the RNAP project and the project to support Mohéli National Park  Based on the commendable results of the RNAP project, as shown in the mid-term evaluation, the Comorian Government has allocated USD4.5 million of GEF-7 STAR funds to develop a second phase of the project. It will focus on protecting the Comoros’ biodiversity through the effective management of the national protected areas network. This second phase will allow the project team to continue the process of operationalizing the FEC and mobilizing the necessary resources, which were clearly identified in the funding mobilization strategy. It will also provide an opportunity for the national protected areas system to establish partnerships with large international NGOs. The PIF for this new project was negotiated with the stakeholders and validated in a workshop. It will be submitted to the GEF Board in October 2019.    AFD is also developing a second phase of its project to support development of the Mohéli National Park. The feasibility study for this new project is being prepared, with a budget of USD6 million, to be mobilized starting in 2020, to continue the Mohéli Park development activities.    2. Operationalizing the FEC.  UNDP and AFD have agreed to provide USD90,000 to fund the 2019/2020 operation of the FEC executive office. The terms of reference for hiring the FEC executive director have been written and published. The director’s responsibilities include relaunching the FAPBM/FEC financial pooling process and the mechanism for mobilizing the necessary resources.  3. Involving the communities in management to reduce the protected areas’ operating costs  Thanks to greater awareness, the communities have accepted the principle of co-management. Each village neighbouring a protected area has created a committee to support the park’s activities. In addition, community members hold a majority of seats on the protected areas’ co-management committees. The project has emphasized training for the co-management actors so that they can function autonomously and participate in monitoring and tracking the species and ecosystems to reduce the protected areas’ operating cost. |
| Political | The current crisis within the National Assembly.  The National Assembly passed the national protected areas national system law in December 2018, but it has not been transmitted to the President’s Office for promulgation since passage. A political disagreement between the National Assembly and the Government is having a serious impact on the project activity implementation timeline, particularly regarding formalizing the new protected areas, swearing-in the rangers and creating the national agency for national parks management. |

# 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.** |
| no applicable |

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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.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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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.** |
| At this stage, the project anticipates no delays. The TE will be undertaken in early 2020. |

# Ratings and Overall Assessments

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| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Manager/Coordinator** | Satisfactory | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | In accordance with the workplan for the June 2018-July 2019 period, the following results were recorded:    1. Adoption of legislation and regulations governing the PAs  One of the main challenges facing the Comorian Government was to establish a legal and institutional system in line with international standards, as part of creating and operationalizing the PAs in the Comoros.  On 5 December 2018, the Assembly of the Union of the Comoros thus adopted the law on the national protected areas system by unanimous vote. This process was supported by UNDP/GEF through the project “to establish a national protected areas network in the Comoros, co-managed with local communities” (RNAP). Thanks to the will of the Government, and with UNDP’s support to strive for sustainable development, the country has established a unified legal framework for protected areas management, enabling it to better protect the country’s biodiversity.  - This new law will allow the Comorian Government to protect the country against potential environmental risks and preserve its biological diversity by increasing the protected areas from one (Mohéli National Park) to six. The ministry for the environment has sent the decrees establishing these protected areas to the Council of Ministers. The country’s protected land area will thus increase from 19,895 ha to 50,500 ha (+27%) and protected waters from 366.75 Km² to 584.90 Km² (+4.49%).  - The law will enable the Government, with UNDP support, to establish the institutional framework governing the national protected areas system by delegating management of the protected areas to a non-profit association, Parcs nationaux des Comores (Comoros National Parks);  - The law strengthens the protection of marine and land biodiversity by creating an appropriate criminal framework to improve efforts to combat environmental degradation, poaching and trafficking in endangered species.    2. Process for nominating Ile de Mohéli as a new Biosphere Reserve (BR)    The support of the Comorian Government and UNDP, through the RNAP project, enabled the Governorate of Ile de Mohéli, the communal authorities, local communities, civil society, youth and women to take ownership of the process of obtaining UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status for Ile de Mohéli. This was accomplished at the awareness-raising and capacity-building workshop, held on Mohéli on 3-6 December 2018. The workshop was honoured by the presence of the Governor of the Ile de Mohéli, the President of the Regional Government of Principe, the UNESCO-MAB representative and the UNDP Representative. The participants defined a common vision for the future Ile de Mohéli BR, the challenges and the actions to be taken in the reserve. With UNDP support, the Governorate of Ile de Mohéli and the Regional Government of Principe confirmed their intent to cooperate to share, with Mohéli, the experience of Principe and its islands, which obtained UNESCO BR status in 2012.    The government issued a decree establishing the MAB national committee and the proposal drafting committee. With support from a UNESCO international consultant, the drafting committee met several times. A final document proposing BR status for Ile de Mohéli will be validated in August 2019 and submitted to the UNESCO/MAB Board in October 2019.    3. National Parks biodiversity monitoring  Knowledge of the Comoros National Parks’ priority conservation targets has improved; this will help to improve conservation planning and ensure the sustainability of the ecosystems and the services they provide to local communities.  The protection efforts undertaken in collaboration with the communities, combined with the drone tracking technology conducted in the RNAP, showed that the parks mangrove areas increased from 109 ha in 2014 to 115.6 ha in 2018. The Livingstone fruit bats (Pteropus livingstonii) maintained their density at 1,243 individuals compared to 2014, with 477 individuals on Mohéli and 766 on Anjouan. However, the number of Livingstone fruit bat roost sites declined by 20%, from 30 in 2010 to 24 in 2018. Pteropus livingstonii is the indicator of the health status of the land habitats on Anjouan and Mohéli. This species is threatened in the short term based on its small population, limited distribution range in the high-altitude forests of Anjouan and Mohéli (160 km2), and rapid habitat loss (9% per year).  In addition, monitoring of marine turtle crawls in the new protected marine areas confirmed that marine turtle nesting has resumed at the beaches, increasing from two observed in 2010 to 27 in 2018.  The tracking designed to address the knowledge gaps found the following:  - Nine mangrove species in the parks, distributed differently according to the site (nine at Mohéli National Park, including a new species observed in 2017 (Xylocarpus granatum J. Koenig), three at Shissawani Park, seven at Coelacanth Park and two at Mitsamiouli- Ndroudé Park;  - 5,890 individual Otus paulianus distributed over 92 km2 at Karthala National Park;  - ; 3,450 individual Otus capnodes during the dry season and 5,450 individuals during the rainy season (source: Dahari); and,  - 8,550 individual Eulemur Mongoz on Anjouan, distributed over 171 individuals/km2.    In addition, thanks to the commitment of the communities and project staff, 2 ha of mangroves were restored (2,000 propagules) and 26.1 ha of forest (29,000 forest plants) were restored. Certain endemic species, such as Pteropus livingstonii, Otus paulianis and Otus capnodes, should be moved from the IUCN’s “threatened” category to the “endangered species” category.    4. Creating a georeferenced database    UNDP/GEF support through the RNAP project has made it possible to develop georeferenced maps on the health status of species and habitats. These data are also available on the ArcGIS Online global platform. In addition, use of the Ebee drone has provided the project officers and rangers aerial photographs of the position of conservation targets and habitats, thus providing zero reference points for the national parks’ conservation targets.    5. National parks monitoring    The commitment of the neighbouring communities to the protected areas, together with the 2,132 monitoring activities conducted by the rangers, has led to a 20% reduction in biodiversity-related infractions, from 164 in 2017 to 85 in 2018. The ongoing presence of the rangers, accompanied during monitoring visits by members of village co-management committees, has led to the seizure of 73 poachers, eight net fishermen/women and four loggers. In addition, a survey conducted this year at locations in Karthala Park where boards from local wood are sold found that logging in the park had fallen by 60%. Regarding the protected marine areas, the rangers’ monitoring efforts, followed by the commitment on the part of local police and magistrates, has ended the public sale of turtle meat.      6. Implementation of the training programme for the co-management actors    Management of the protected areas has improved thanks to capacity-building training for the RNAP staff and the co-management actors in tracking/monitoring the conservation targets, swimming, hospitality and catering (for the women), professional use of new media and social networks (benefiting the rangers), and on the importance of the PAs and their role (benefiting journalists).    Using the new biostatistical tools, the rangers and community mobilization specialists can now take collect, follow-up and analyse the target species data. In addition, the project will benefit from reliable data, thanks to the employees’ ability to use statistical analysis programmes, such as ArcGIS, Distance 7.1, and GPS and to perform GIS data entry.  Training for the 60 journalists on the importance of the protected areas and their roles in protecting biodiversity has created a pool of committed journalists who can build awareness and provide education for change. The journalists involved have voluntarily produced, completed and disseminated 14 articles, 15 TV broadcasts, one magazine and nine interviews highlighting the national parks.  Following their training on the environmental legal framework, the community mobilization specialists can now recognize and prevent infractions in the protected areas.    7. Communication, awareness and environmental education campaign at the national, regional and international levels    The project’s internet site, www.comorosparks.com, which is updated regularly, has brought the Comoros national parks to national, regional and international attention. A total of 164,000 internet users have expressed interest in the Comoros parks.  In addition, 184,281 internet users have been active on our social networks (Facebook and YouTube), learning about the environmental issues facing the national parks. The interaction has been strong (likes, shares, comments and clicks).  As a result of the training for 60 journalists on the importance of the protected areas and their roles in protecting biodiversity, a network of “friends of the national parks” has been created. The journalists involved have voluntarily produced, completed and disseminated 14 articles, 15 TV broadcasts, one magazine and nine interviews highlighting the national parks. More than 1,500 tri-lingual brochures, 2,000 park promotional fliers distributed to local and national authorities, institutions, NGOs and the private sector, together with an awareness-raising effort targeting 18,968 people from the communities neighbouring the national parks (including 6,493 women), have helped Comorians take ownership of the idea of the importance of the national parks. High levels of participation at in our ecosystem restoration events - cleaning the Ouroveni and Bimbini mangroves, replanting the Milembeni mangroves and the Karthala forest, developing the Nymbadjou botanic garden, replanting the Ile de la Selle and the Chandra forest, cleaning the Milembeni beach and Lake Dzialandzé - speak to population’s sense of the importance of the creation of the country’s national parks.    8. National parks co-management    The ongoing activities by the community mobilization specialists and the rangers in the communities have involved the actors and promoted participatory co-management principles.  Nearly 6,000 people – including 2,500 youth and 1,600 women – from the communities neighbouring the protected areas have volunteered in ecosystem restoration activities (cleaning beaches, reforesting, replanting mangroves and cleaning mangroves), monitoring and tracking infractions.  In Bimbini, a youth-led initiative gathered 1,000 signatures supporting Shissawani Park in ecosystem monitoring and restoration.  The communities of the five new parks negotiated and signed 65 co-management agreements with the Comoros national parks to support them in promoting and combating the destruction of natural resources, reporting individuals who commit infractions, punishing those infractions that fall within their jurisdiction, and participating in the mediation and resolution of conflicts related to resource conservation. In addition, seven marine resources co-management agreements were negotiated in close collaboration with the fisheries department.    9. Continue the process of operationalizing the FEC    With technical and financial support from UNDP and AFD, the Comorian Government approved a window for the FEC with the FAPBM at a 30 May 2018 meeting of the Council of Ministers. Creating this alliance will enable AFD to mobilize 1.5 million euros for Mohéli National Park.  In addition, UNDP and AFD agreed to finance the FEC office operations for FY 2019-20. A road map has been validated to initiate the process of creating an autonomous FEC.    10. Mobilize additional funds for the RNAP    Given the commendable results of the RNAP project, which the mid-term evaluation clearly highlights, the Comorian Government decided to allocate USD4.5 million of GEF-7 STAR7 funds to prepare a second phase of the project. It will focus on protecting the Comoros’ biodiversity through the effective management of the national protected areas network.  Co-construction workshops mobilizing all of the national park actors resulted in the drafting of the RNAP2 project PIF. This project identification form will be submitted for the October 2019 GEF Board meeting.  In addition, the steering committee for the closing of the joint projects - Integrating disaster risk reduction, Developing CBO capacities and Emergency clean-up of Moroni - made it possible for UNDP to allocate the remaining USD65,775 to the RNAP project.    11. Development and financing of income-generating activities    The support provided to the five income-generating activities, financed with RNAP project resources in December 2017, sharply increased beneficiaries’ income. The support provided to improve the Prophet’s Hole at Mitsamiouli-Ndroudé National Park enabled the beneficiary to offer guided visits by boat to see the park’s biodiversity and open a stand to sell related products, such as T-shirts and baseball caps.  The support provided to set up a tourism agency to promote the Comoros National Parks enabled the beneficiary to provide visitor services and guided walks. The beneficiary earned 200,000 KMF from leading four walking tours of Karthala Park to observe its biodiversity and see the volcano. The beneficiary also plans to find partners on Mohéli and Anjouan to promote the national parks. In addition, the beneficiary in Bimbini who obtained support to develop a profitable trap fishery was able to work with the net fishermen/women, who have shifted to trap fishing.    With assistance from the Diboini rural economic development centre (CRDE), the RNAP project also implemented 65 support activities, which involved providing 31,000 fruit trees and food-producing plants to generate income for the farmers affected by the creation of the protected areas. The objective is to increase their income so that they will stop clearing the forest area.    The women fishers from the Ouroveni villages and the Mitsamiouli marine area benefited, respectively, from support from a Swedish company and the SGP to help them manage their marine space sustainably and develop income-generating activities.      12. Evaluation of the environmental impacts of the road connecting Dindri and Lingoni    The road linking the villages of Dindri and Lingoni and that passes directly through the Mount Ntringui Park no-take area has produced the following impacts:    - Pollution and contamination of the four streams that feed Tratingua River coming from Dindri;  - Disruption of the water system (water flow, colour and quality) upstream from the Tatinga and Lingoni Rivers;  - Filling in of streams;  - Risk of constant landslides;  - Pollution and contamination of Lake Dzialandzé and rapid, easy access for farmers;  - Risk of drying-out of Lake Dzialandzé following the deposit of tailings from the quarry 100 m from the lake (as the crow files) and the low water flow into the lake;  - High levels of deforestation and intensification of market gardening following rapid access;  - Risk of extinction of certain endemic plant species (Weinmania, Khaya and Octea comorensis); and,  - High risk of extinction of certain animal species, such as the Alectroenas sganzini (Comoros blue pigeon).    The impacts along this road could threaten the viability of the Mount Ntringui National Park if mitigation measures are not taken quickly. The measures planned include:  - Replant along the entire road linking Dindri and Lingoni by planting Sandragon (Pterocarpus indicus);  - Integrate protection hedges (replant with certain species, particularly sugar cane, all along the streams);  - Restore the plant cover and strict prohibition against market gardening around Lake Dzialandzé; and,  - Set up a road tax (toll) to finance part of the impacts resulting from building the road. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP Country Office Programme Officer** | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | Despite the institutional crisis between the Assembly of the Union and the Government, which did not allow the President of the Union of Comoros to enact the law, to operationalize the institutional, legal and regulatory framework on management protected areas, we can say that the efforts of the project team are very encouraging in terms of achieving the project objectives by the end of the project. These include:    - the adoption by the Assembly of the Union of Comoros of the law on the management of protected areas which allows the country to have a legal and institutional framework for the management of protected areas, with the creation of the National Agency for Protected Areas, provided for in the law.  - the finalization of the technical submission documents to UNESCO (Reserve Management Plan, zoning and submission form) for the classification of the autonomous island of Moheli as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. This process is led by the MAB National Committee and the Proposal Drafting Committee,  - the reduction in the destruction of terrestrial and marine natural resources, mainly due to the commitment of the riparian communities, the monitoring missions carried out by the ecogard, the members of the village committees and the raising of awareness about the importance of protected areas.  -The capacity building of the actors on protected areas management.  -The advocacy led by the team to mobilize additional resources from the GEF with the allocation of 4.5 million USD from the country's STAR7, allocated to the management of protected areas and the continuity of AFD support at the Moheli National Park with the start of a new project on the management of natural resources, amounting to 6 million euros,  -The effective partnership with the Small Grant Program (SGP), which financed 3 income-generating activities for the benefit of 3 community associations of the villages bordering national parks; This will help reduce the pressure put on communities by natural resources. | |
| **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** | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | Rich in marine and terrestrial biodiversity, this project was created to conserve Comoros’ unique ecosystems by establishing a function system of protected areas (PAs). Since its inception in 2016, the project has already achieved a number of end of project targets. As a result, the DO rating is Satisfactory given that it is on track to fully achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.    Most notably from this report period (June 2018–June 2019), the Assembly of the Union of the Comoros adopted a new law for national PAs, establishing a unified legal framework for PA management. Once the President promulgates the law, the number of PAs will increase from 1 to 6 and allow the government to protect the country’s vital biodiversity. The country’s protected lands will increase by 27% while protected waters will increase by nearly 5%. As the project is on track meet its end of project targets, the DO rating is assessed as Satisfactory as it is on track to fully achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.    At the Objective level, the project is mostly on track to establish an expanded and functional system of protected areas (PAs) in Comoros. All capacity development scores are close to meeting their end of project targets (indicator 1). The systemic capacity score is 40% (compared to a target of 45%), with the notable achievement of the Government passing a law on national PAs, which will support the creation of new PAs and an institutional framework to delegate the governance of PAs to newly created agency - Comoros National Parks. The law will also establish a legal framework to improve anti-poaching and species trafficking efforts. The institutional capacity score is 35% (compared to a target of 40%), indicative of key achievements such as the opening and furnishing of 7 new office sites for national parks and the Directorate General of the Environment and Forests, and the review of management and development plans for 5 new parks (as suggested in the project’s MTR). The individual capacity score is 33% (compared with a target of 35%), indicative of key achievements such as 600 students from national park pilot schools trained in marine and land ecology, 5 national park agents trained in environmental monitoring and evaluation, 30 national park agents trained in replanting and soil restoration, and park wardens and community specialists receiving certifications from online courses on PA management. As previously mentioned, a number of new protected areas are being created through a national law once ratified by the President (indicator 3). Lastly, within the parameters of the new PAs, two Ramsar sites and four areas of significance for local bird populations have been included (indicator 4). Additionally, the process of classifying the Island of Moheli as a Biosphere Reserve is underway with the official submission expected in October 2019.    Under Component 1: The project is on track to strengthen the PA system through expansion and capacity building. Notable achievements include: 50,500 ha of land brought under protection (indicator 5 target met) and 584.90 km2 of territorial waters formally protected including 3 new marine protected areas (MPAs) (indicator 7 target met). While the project’s total financial sustainability score of 31 shows an increase of 11 points since project inception (indicator 8), financial sustainability remains a key concern for the future management of PAs in Comoros. Based on the Financial Sustainability Scorecard, the annual financial gap for sustaining an expanded PA system has increased from USD 938,241 to USD 1,447,556 (indicator 2). Additionally, an economic assessment of the future funding needs over 10 years was estimated at $15-30 million, which has not yet been sourced.    Under Component 2: The project is on track to operationalize the national PA system. Based on METT scores, national PAs (Moheli National Park, Karthala National Park, Mount Ntringui National Park, Mitsamiouli-Ndroude National Park, Coelacanth National Park and Shisiwani National Park) have seen 60-90% reduction in threats (indicator 9) and a 70-80% increase in management effectiveness since project inception (indicator 10). National PAs have also seen a significant increase in safety for turtles (indicator 11), notably Moheli National Park has recorded 27,200 marine turtle crawls (a 27% increase) and 24,500 nesting attempts this reporting period. As a result of increased community/commune commitment to rangers’ efforts, across Moheli, Shisiwani, Coelacanth and Mitsamiouli National Parks, a total of 19 turtle poachers have been caught. Restoration of mangroves occurred in a number of protected areas including Moheli (15,000 scheduled for planting in October 2019), Shisiwani (12,500 were replanted in 2018), Coelacanth (9,500 were replanted on World Environment Day), and Mitsamiouli (4,200 planted) (indicator 13). In terms of seabed health, there has been no recorded reduction in area of seabed cover (in ha) or in species diversity (indicator 14). No additional surveys were yet taken related to indicators 15, 16, 17.    Importantly, a strategy has been developed to finance livelihoods initiatives proposed by individuals and groups affected by the creation of new protected areas (indicator 18). The project sought funding from: the GEF Small Grants Programme (USD 50,000) for fisherwomen in Mitsamiouli National Park and two projects are in the pipeline for beekeeping in two national PAs. A Swedish company - NetEnt - also donated USD 7,500 to enable women to shift away from destructive fishing practices on fragile reef systems.    The project’s implementation progress is rated as Satisfactory. Cumulative financial delivery against expected delivery as of this year is 99%. The project can be presented as “good practice”.    One of the greatest risks to the future of national PAs in Comoros is long-term financial sustainability. An Environmental Fund for the Comoros (FEC), expected to manage PAs, is still in the consolidation phase and is awaiting a signature to be ratified. The Comorian Government has allocated funds to support the establishment of the FEC and mobilise additional funding. Additionally, the Government has agreed to allocate USD4.5 million of GEF-7 STAR funds to develop a second phase of the project. A key priority of this project, in addition to supporting more effective (co-) management of the new PA system with communities, is recruitment of the FEC executive director to relaunch resource mobilisation efforts, and involve community members in management of PAs to reduce operating costs.    In terms of political risks, a disagreement between the National Assembly and the Government resulted in a delay in the national PA system law (which has pass the Assembly) to be transmitted to the President’s Office for promulgation. This could have an impact on the implementation timeline of project activities such as formalizing new PAs, swearing-in rangers, and institutionalising the new national agency for PA management.    In terms of environmental risk, Hurricane Kenneth struck the country on April 21, 2019 resulting in significant environmental damage on the 3 main islands with negative consequences for all national parks. The hurricane was especially damaging for coral restoration initiatives underway. For example, the Coelacanth National Park experienced an 80% loss of its corals. Damage was also felt on key economic sectors such as fishing and agriculture, and ecosystem services (e.g. soil productivity, fresh water availability, etc.). In total, approximately 10,614 ha of soil/vegetation/forest, 2,000 ha of beach, 715ha of coral/seagrass reefs and 11,000 ha of national parks were negatively impacted by the hurricane.    Ultimately the much anticipated partnership with The Cousteau Society did not come to fruition as hoped. Despite protracted discussions to see how TCS could support this project as an RP (with emphasis on communications and resource mobilisation, and support to strengthen community co-management of new PAs), efforts to recruit TCS were unfortunately unsuccessful as Chief Scientist (Tarik Chekchak) and Strategic Advisor (Dr Rebecca Klaus) left TCS as we were finalising details in late 2018. This meant that TCS was not in a position to deliver technical project outputs relating to community co-management, livelihoods and communications as planned under the RPA. While we were able to identify a replacement consultant for TCS to help deliver the proposed outputs (noting that TCS does not have a field presence), as the project is nearing closure, discussions faltered due to the lack of time for realistic inputs and impacts. A challenge was that TCS were reluctant to sign a ‘contract’ i.e. an RPA with UNDP, given that MOUs are in place with both Govt of Comoros and UNDP - this caused confusion. Francine Cousteau understood (and maybe still understands) that the MOU is sufficient for involvement in a UNDP GEF project, which is an incorrect assumption.    Following the success of this project, the Government of Comoros have allocated $4.1M of GEF7 STAR for a second phase Biodiversity project titled 'Biodiversity protection through the Effective Management of the National Network of Protected Areas'. The PIF will be submitted for the December 2019 Work Program with a view to commencement of PPG in 1Q 2020 and project implementation in early 2021. The objective of the new project is 'to conserve terrestrial and marine biodiversity by strengthening management of the UoC’s newly created Protected Areas Network through effective co-management with communities for sustainable development'.    The next RTA mission will take place in November 2019 for oversight of this project and preparations for the GEF7 PPG phase on approval of the PIF submitted for the December 2019 Work Program. The RTA will also join a joint RTA retreat to restructure UNDP Comoros environment portfolio, comprising +$100M of GCF and GEF projects, with a view to establish a Project Coordination Unit with strong strategic, technical and operational capacity to support effective delivery and implementation in coming years.    The Terminal Evaluation for this project will take place early in 2020. | |

# 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: No |
| 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.** |
| This year was marked by two key experiences.  1. The project made a commitment, from the outset, to promote equality and equity in its programme. Forty-five percent of the rangers are women and 30% of the community mobilization experts are women. This situation led to some marital conflicts. According to Comorian custom, married women must remain at home to care for the family. However, both rangers and community mobilization experts who work in the protected areas must sometimes monitor and track species. This may involve late nights and, even, sleeping in the field. The situation can lead to marital conflicts; both husbands and wives of the rangers are unhappy with the arrangement.  2. Another case arose in Karthala Park. A female ranger was supposed to speak publicly during an awareness-raising visit with students. However, she became nervous and was unable to speak. A male ranger made a disparaging comment, saying, “… shouldn’t hire girls … And especially not village girls who are embarrassed in front of the public.” The situation degenerated as, unable to restrain herself the woman struck the male ranger. |

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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.** |
| Women are active in fishing on foot in the marine protected areas, agriculture (particularly market gardening), petty trading in agricultural inputs, and the resale of fishery products. The needs assessment regarding income-generating activities emphasized that the project should give priority to women. To that end, 30 groups of women formed spontaneously at the community level and developed requests for support for income-generating activities that would aid the parks in managing biodiversity, as well as provide stable income.    This year, two groups of women received direct support for income-generating activities.    The involve involves support from Swedish company NetEnt for a cooperative of 30 women from Ouroveni villages. The funds (USD7,500) are intended to protect the coral roofs through the following activities: training in marine ecology and coral reef management; setting up marine reserves; and, developing an IGA.    The second involves support from the Small Grants Programme (SGP) to the women fishers’ cooperative in Mitsamiouli-Ndroudé National Park. This grant (USD40,000) will be used to add value to the region’s fishery products. The goal is to create jobs by processing and selling fishery products and contributing to biodiversity conservation.  The fisherwomen’s groups in the Mitsamiouli-Ndroudé park zone received direct support from the SGP to improve fishing management in the zone, forgo destructive fishing practices and improve their direct income by the resale of fish and smoking/salting fish.    The Nymbadjou women’s group, which is involved in catering and hospitality for tourists visiting the area, requested support from the project for capacity building. The project thus contacted the RETAJ Hotel to train the Nymbadjou women. Six women from the group received three weeks of training in hospitality and catering. They were in direct contact with tourists and were able to acquire the knowledge and skills to improve their abilities to assist visitors in the Nymbadjou zone. |

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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 established equity in terms of membership on the site and village national park support committees. This initiative helped women participate in decision-making regarding environmental management in the villages. The project received 23 requests for support from women’s groups for sustainable marine and terrestrial 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.** |
| Hurricane Kenneth, which struck the Comoros on 21 April 2019    Hurricane Kenneth caused significant environmental damage and losses on three islands. The impacts worsened an already precarious situation in this area, affecting all the biodiversity restoration initiatives that the Comoros National Parks have launched since 2017. Many environmental sectors and natural ecosystems were struck, particularly the natural vegetation, animal biodiversity, watersheds, wetlands, turtle nesting beaches, mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass. The areas affected in Ngazidja are: coral reefs and seagrass in Mitsamiouli, Meboimboini, Banguoi, Ndroudé, Moroni, Ouroveni, Malé and Foumbouni; Karthala forest, Lake Hantsogoma; on Mohéli, the affected areas are: entire coastline of the Mohéli National Park, Miringoni reefs, Nioumachoi islets, Itsamia nesting beaches, Fomboni reef, Mlédjelé forest; the affected areas on Anjouan are: Moya forest, Lake Dzialandzé, Mount Ntringui summit, Koni plateau, Bazimini zone, Bimbini reefs and seagrass in Milembeni, Sadapoini seagrass, 35,000 mangrove saplings replanted in Bimbini and Milembeni; landslides in Ouani.    This damage has negative impacts on key economic sectors, such as fishing and agriculture, as well as efforts undertaken to begin developing ecotourism in the national parks. The six protected terrestrial and marine areas were degraded significantly. Damage to the affected forests and shrub vegetation involved the uprooting of trees. This will have direct effects on the water cycle and the ability of the soil to retain water by increasing soil erosion sensitivity. Mohéli and Anjouan islands, which depend entirely on river water, could soon face drinking water supply problems. Forest fragmentation also disturbed the habitat of many of the Comoros’ endemic and unusual species. Livingstone fruit bat roost sites, which have already declined by 20% in the last 10 years, experienced huge losses, falling from 24 roost sites recorded in 2018 to 15. The coral and seagrass reefs were torn out and deposited along the coast, demonstrating the intensity of the disaster.  The environmental sub-sectors included in this evaluation, based on their significance to the country’s economy, are as follows:    - Soil-vegetation-forest: 10,614 ha affected;  - Beaches: 20 km affected;  - Coral-seagrass reefs: 715 ha affected;  - Protected areas: Six national parks affected, involving 11,000 ha  - Waste: 70 tonnes of waste produced    Given the close connections between the environment and the other sectors affected by Hurricane Kenneth, the country’s entire economy suffered; in particular, the protected areas, fishing, forests, destruction of beaches and loss of soil, and negative consequences for agricultural productivity.    The major areas of post-hurricane environmental recovery involve:    1. Restoring the plant cover affected by Kenneth and reducing natural resource degradation as follows:  – Replant and restore the ecosystems affected by Kenneth;  – Protect and develop the watersheds;  – Plant appropriate, fast-growing species;  – Manage the uses of wood;  – Protect the environment and basic natural resources (air, water and soil); and,  – Develop green job sectors benefiting the affected communities.    2. Restoring the coastal and marine ecosystems affected by Kenneth  – Clean all the waste deposited along the coast and the mangroves;  – Develop integrated waste management systems in the communes by emphasizing the economic value of waste;  – Replant mangroves so that they can improve resilience to natural disasters;  – Establish an on-site “coral nursery” policy to promote rapid budding of the coral reefs affected by Kenneth;  – Place a large portion of the affected reefs in a no-take zone to ensure that they can recover and regenerate quickly;  – Set up fish-aggregating devices benefiting the fishers in all the affected areas so that they can ease the pressures on the reef area and access the unexploited fisheries resources;  – Support the communes in implementing the prohibition on removing sea sand, particularly at the affected beaches, to limit coastal erosion;  – Establish erosion control mechanisms on the affected coastline; and,  – Develop blue job sectors benefiting the affected communities.    3. Automatically including environmental considerations at all levels  - Set up an environmental education programme;  - Ensure that the environment is factored into development plans, programmes and projects.    4. Developing resilience within the Comoros National Parks system  - Strengthen the individual capacities of national parks employees so that they can quickly respond to potential environmental disasters;  - Provide the national park rangers with sufficient monitoring resources to ensure that the recovery measures taken are sustainable;  - Establish a national park species and ecosystems follow-up/monitoring programme to quantify the success of the recovery measures taken  - Launch a major reforestation programme in the national parks’ forest areas  - Set up a mangrove replanting programme in the Comoros national parks to build the country’s resilience to natural disasters  - Strengthen the governance structures in the Comoros national parks |

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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.** |
| No |

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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.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **SESP:** [SUBMISSION\_PIMS 4950 Comoros PA System ESSP\_070514b\_EN\_FR (side by side)\_SIGNED.pdf](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4950/213702/1676603/1676893/SUBMISSION_PIMS%204950%20Comoros%20PA%20System%20ESSP_070514b_EN_FR%20%28side%20by%20side%29_SIGNED.pdf)  **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.** |
| Yes |

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| **If yes, please upload the document(s) above. If no, please explain when the required documents will be prepared.** |
| During the period of this evaluation, the following documents were negotiated and approved:  1. Stakeholder commitments  Seven resource co-management agreements were negotiated with the stakeholders on the three islands covered by the project, in direct collaboration with the Directorate-General for fisheries resources (SWIOFISH project).  - Marine resources co-management agreement (octopus, nets and reefs) among the village of Ndroudé, the RNAP and the Fisheries Department  - Marine resources co-management agreement among the village of Hatsindzi, the RNAP and the Fisheries Department  - Marine resources co-management agreement among the village of Hassimpao, the RNAP and the Fisheries Department  - Marine resources co-management agreement among the village of Vassi, the RNAP and the Fisheries Department  - Marine resources co-management agreement among the village of Vouani, the RNAP and the Fisheries Department  - Marine resources co-management agreement among the village of Ouallah2, the RNAP and the Fisheries Department  - Marine resources co-management agreement among the village of Ndrondroni, the RNAP and the Fisheries Department.    These agreements define the responsibilities of each party and ban net fishing and dynamite fishing and the use of tephrosia. They also establish strictly-protected marine areas in the seven villages.    2. Preparation of management and development plans    In accordance with the project’s mid-term evaluation mission, the five development and management plans for the new national parks were reviewed and validated by the communities neighbouring the protected areas.  Four components were defined for park management and development for the period 2019-2023:  Component I: Operationalize the park’s legal and institutional framework  Result 1: efficient, participatory park management is ensured (co-management)  Result 2: the communities take up the legislative framework  Result 3: a monitoring and evaluation system for park activities is developed  Outcome 4: a training programme is established for the co-management actors  Outcome 5: the park’s commitment in the national, regional and international systems is strengthened  Component II: Ensure that biodiversity protection and sustainable management are improved  Result 1: The conservation and scientific research targets are followed up/monitored  Result 2: Effective behavioural changes have been made to ensure that resources are used rationally and the natural and cultural patrimony are enhanced  Result 3: Pressures on the natural resources are reduced and ecosystems are restored  Component III: Mobilize additional financing  Result 1: Financing sources are identified and mobilized  Component IV: Support the communities to develop sustainable livelihoods  Result 1: A sense of entrepreneurship is created within the communities  Result 2: The populations affected by the creation of the park and that are developing initiatives receive support  Result 3: the ecotourism attractions are known and exploited |

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| **4) Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential )?** |
| Yes |

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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.** |
| The national parks management teams in the field receive complaints regularly from individuals directly affected by the creation of the protected areas.  - The net fishers, fisherwomen who fish on foot and loggers have been informed and are aware of the positive effects of creating the national parks. However, they assert that their livelihood comes directly from natural resources and that the Government and/or the project must finance IGA that will allow them to forgo destructive activities incompatible with the objectives of establishing the protected areas and to shift to other profitable activities.  - The farmers who have lived in the forest areas classified as no-take zones refuse to leave their plots voluntarily and request financial compensation. |

# 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.)** |
| One of the challenges of the national protected areas system is to support the individuals affected by creating the system and restore all of the deforested plots. A replanting programme was thus launched in June 2018 to restore at least 12,000 ha of degraded land in Karthala and Mount Ntringui parks.    To support the farmers in this replanting effort, the project created a programme to provide fast-growing banana and other fruit trees. The objective was to provide the farmers with plants that would allow them to earn direct income quickly, thus compensating them for the losses associated with withdrawing from lands in the fully protected zones. Providing 46,000 fruit and food crop plants to 75 farmers (including 26 women) reduced the pressure on the resources and fragile ecosystems within the protected areas and will ultimately generate additional income for the 75 beneficiary households.    In terms of access to financial and non-financial services to implement sustainable economic activities, financial and technical support from UNDP/GEF through RNAP has made it possible to launch eight IGA, including six individual activities and two community-based activities. The IGA involving enhancing the parks’ value allowed a young woman from the community neighbouring Karthala National Park to create and operate an ecotourism agency that has achieved international scope and employs 12 seasonal employees after just one year. Similarly, a young man has set up a business that takes visitors through Mitsamiouli-Ndroudé National Park on foot to observe the marine biodiversity. In six months, 128 visitors have used the service, providing him an income three times the minimum wage. In addition, the fisheries development IGA has led 35 fishermen/women to shift from net fishing to the more profitable, ecologically-sound basket fishing. |

**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.** |
| Knowledge management is essential to managing the protected areas in the Comoros. The following challenges were noted when the project document was developed:    - Data collection, access and dissemination. The coral reefs, the marine turtles of the Mohéli Marine Park and the Livingstone fruit bats are the only resources that have been monitored over several years. The databases created from this huge investment are not secured in a permanent structure and cannot be analysed easily.  - Most of the biodiversity studies do not focus on meeting management needs  - Lack of an information system  - The lack of communication among the database technicians and the inadequate dissemination of the content, which could create redundancies and spread resources too thinly, thereby reducing the efficiency of the knowledge management system.  To address this problem and ensure proper knowledge management, the project conducted a series of studies that established a zero-reference point and biodiversity knowledge. It will also continue to build the existing data via follow-up/monitoring. The following studies and research are available:  - An ecological and mapping study was conducted in the marine zones of the Coelacanth, Mitsamiouli and Shissiwani parks. This study identified the areas of ecological significance at these sites, the amounts of biodiversity, and the health status of all the species and ecosystems recorded. Georeferenced maps were produced, which the project team and the ministry for the environment used to delimit all of the protected marine areas and produce the necessary zoning. A scientific evaluation of terrestrial biodiversity was conducted in 2018 and follow-up/monitoring protocols were adopted. The protection efforts undertaken in collaboration with the communities, combined with the drone tracking technology conducted in the RNAP, showed an increase in the parks’ mangrove areas from 109 ha in 2014 to 115.6 ha in 2018. The Livingstone fruit bats (Pteropus livingstonii) maintained their density at 1,243 individuals compared to 2014, with 477 individuals on Mohéli and 766 on Anjouan. On the other hand, the number of Livingstone fruit bat roost sites fell by 20%, from 30 in 2010 to 24 in 2018. Pteropus livingstonii is the indicator of the health status of the land habitats on Anjouan and Mohéli. This species is threatened in the short term based on its small population, limited distribution range in the high-altitude forests of Anjouan and Mohéli (160 km2) and rapid habitat loss (9% per year). The tracking intended to address the knowledge gaps found the following: (i) nine mangrove species in the parks, distributed differently based on the site (nine at Mohéli National Park, including a new species observed in 2017 (Xylocarpus granatum J. Koenig), three at Shissawani Park, seven at Coelacanth Park and two at Mitsamiouli – Ndroudé Park; (ii) 5,890 individual Otus paulianus distributed over 92 km2 at Karthala National Park ; (iii) 3,450 individual Otus capnodes during the dry season and 5,450 individuals during the rainy season (source : Dahari) ; and, (iv) 8,550 Eulemur Mongoz on Anjouan, distributed over 171 individuals/km2;  - The project set up a geographic information system unit and supports the environmental directorate in operationalizing its GIS unit. A GIS unit has been created at each park and all staff have been trained to be able to enter their data independently and provide the necessary georeferenced maps. Equipment was also purchased, such as ecological tracking drones, map information software and satellite images. Thanks to this GIS unit, georeferenced boundary maps for the Comoros’ six national parks were produced and the data were all integrated into the international GIS platform. |

# 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?** |
| Yes |

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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?** |
| Yes |

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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:** [RE-SUBMISSION\_CEO Endorsement Request\_PIMS\_4950\_Comoros\_PAs\_100814.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4950/213702/1676614/1676910/RE-SUBMISSION_CEO%20Endorsement%20Request_PIMS_4950_Comoros_PAs_100814.docx) |
| **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.** |
| When the RNAP project preparations began, the stakeholders drafted a participation and co-financing commitment plan and committed to co-financing the project in the amount of USD21,630,314.    Progress has been made in terms of the commitment of a majority of the stakeholders:    - UNDP exceeded its cash contribution, from USD500,000 to USD750,000 to date. In addition, in the 2019/2020 multi-year workplan, UNDP promised to finance the RNAP project from its own resources in the amount of USD300,000.  - AFD also contributed 3,000,000 euros to the project. Its contribution is accounted for under the Mohéli National Park development project, which it has financed since 2013. UNDP and AFD also agreed to 90,000 euros to finance the FEC’s operation for FY 2019/2020.  - The Fisheries Department contributes actively to the RNAP project. Its contribution to the national protected areas system matched the commitment of USD408,000. In collaboration with the RNAP project, seven resource co-management agreements were negotiated. Marine monitoring is conducted in partnership with the Coast Guard and the SWIOFISH and the Mohéli National Park motorized watercraft were upgraded (automatic controls and roofing).  - The Djoumoichongo association contributed its premises to the project and its activities and is joining in all ecosystem restoration activities in exchange for its commitment to contribute up to USD400,000.  - The NGO, AIDE, which made a financial commitment to provide USD350,000 to the RNAP project, provided its staff for the ranger training in marine and coastal ecology, swimming and coral reef monitoring. The Government selected the NGO, AIDE, to assess reef health annually. Its evaluations of reef health in the Comoros protected marine area reefs underscores its participation in the RNAP project;  - The Gombessa association, which works to protect coelacanths, turned over its entire office, valued at USD250,000, to the RNAP project. It will serve as the headquarters of Coelacanth National Park. The association also gave the project all of its land for future needs of the national protected areas system;  - The UMAMA association deeded all of its premises to the RNAP project, which uses the space as the headquarters for Shissiwani National Park. |

# 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.