

2019

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

**Maximizing carbon sink capacity and conservi**

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# Basic Data

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| **Project Information** | |
| UNDP PIMS ID | 4951 |
| GEF ID | 5330 |
| Title | Maximizing carbon sink capacity and conserving biodiversity and through sustainable conservation, restoration and management of peat-swamp ecosystems |
| Country(ies) | Thailand, Thailand |
| 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** |
| This project is aligned with both the GEF5 Biodiversity and Climate Change Mitigation Focal Areas. In line with the BD Objective 2: Mainstream Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use into Production Landscapes, Seascapes and Sectors, the project will ensure that multiple use zones of peat land landscapes in Thailand are effectively managed to maximize biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. In line with the Outcome 2.1: Increase in sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation, the project will promote the creation of environmental conservation areas on critical peat lands with full support of local communities and local governments and will help develop and implement national environmental standards for such lands that incorporate biodiversity considerations. In line with CCM-SO5: Promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through sustainable management of land use, land-use change and forestry, the project will help establish carbon stock monitoring systems and promote effective soil and water conservation management on peat lands to reduce emission of GHG gases through their mineralization. |

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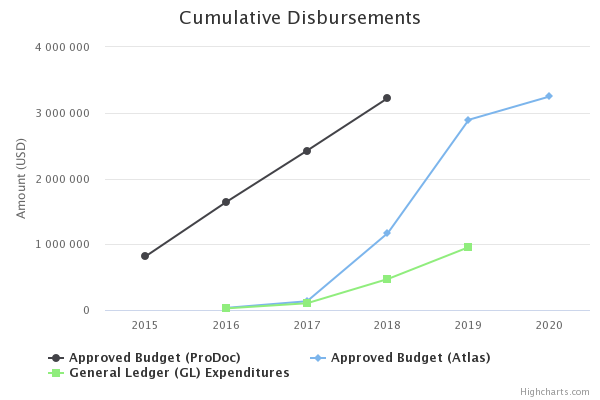
# Overall Ratings

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

# Development Progress

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| **Description** | | | | | | |
| **Objective**  **To conserve and restore peatlands to increase their capacities to act as carbon sinks, as habitats for globally important species, and as sources of ecosystem services for improved livelihoods** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Extent of peat swamp area under effective management (IUCN Category IV, V) in KKL, under the framework of a National Strategy for Peat swamps (NSP) | Currently there is no NSP; there are 2 NHAs (IUCN category IV) as follows:  Thale Noi NHA and buffer zone - 48,000 ha  Bor Lor NHA - 10,016 ha | *(not set or not applicable)* | 154,363 ha    [TARGET REVISED during inception phase; no change to target ha but detailed specification of sites omitted] | Progress is off track.    A minor adjustment to target interpretation was made to reflect government policy change.    According to footnote no.29 (page 33) of the original project document, the policy direction has changed after project approval, making it no longer viable to have the Songkla Lake Basin designated as EPA. The new EPA criteria is under development and need approval site by site from the Cabinet. After consulting with ONEP, having EPAs established within the project duration is not feasible. Hence the original target is being revisited. It is envisioned that the total target area of the project will remain 154,363 ha, but under an integrated mosaic of various appropriate land categorization and sustainable co-management regimes (i.e. this entire area will not be entirely classified as EPA as per the original indicator), dependent on a feasibility study the project will currently undertake (beginning in July 2018) to identify appropriate conservation mechanisms. In any case, Songkla Lake Basin would still remain as a 'benefit area' from Kuan Kreng Peatswamp conservation practices. | A minor adjustment to target interpretation was made to reflect government policy change.    According to footnote no.29 (page 33) of the original project document, the policy direction has changed after project approval, making it no longer viable to have the Songkla Lake Basin designated as EPA. The new EPA criteria is under development and need approval site by site from the Cabinet. After consulting with ONEP, having EPAs established within the project duration is not feasible. Hence the original target is being revisited. It is envisioned that the total target area of the project will remain 154,363 ha, but under an integrated mosaic of various appropriate land categorization and sustainable co-management regimes (i.e. this entire area will not be entirely classified as EPA as per the original indicator), dependent on a feasibility study the project will currently undertake (beginning in July 2018) to identify appropriate conservation mechanisms. In any case, Songkla Lake Basin would still remain as a 'benefit area' from Kuan Kreng Peatswamp conservation practices.  Progress is on track towards the revised targets approved by PB in April 2018. Key project progress towards these targets to date include:  Integrated Landscape Management Strategy:  Geo database system has been completed covering land use, boundary, forest cover, water management system, schools, community forests, potential sites for learning centers, small-enterprise groups, community networks, hotspots for forest fire, and irrigation systems. With support from the project and Nakhon Si Thammarat provincial office, a Landscape Task Force has been formed in June 2019 to work on an Integrated Landscape Management Strategy Development. The Task Force consists of representatives from landscape stakeholders in Nakhon Si Thammarat, Phatthalung and Songkla including government agencies, civil society, and academic institutes. The Landscape Integrated Management Strategy will determine direction for any provincial plans related to Kuan Kreng peat swamps resource management for short, medium and long term. The Nakhon Si Thammarat provincial office by the Vice Governor has a strong interest to transform this Landscape Task Force to formal entity and convert the landscape strategy into long term provincial development plan. Landscape Task Force recommended to have specific technical working groups on peat swamp reforestation, carbon and forest fire management, land use, and water integrated management strategy.  Co-management mechanisms:  Different formal and informal co-management mechanisms have been identified by the Local Wisdom Institute, one of the local academic organizations. They have already commenced the feasibility analysis with support from landscape stakeholders.  Landscape stakeholder engagement:  Landscape stakeholders groups such local government staff, local leaders, school teachers, youth, local media, academic institutes, small-scale peat swamps enterprise in targeted areas have increased their knowledge about peat swamps and started to apply these into their works and public campaign contributing to Kuan Kreng peat swamps conservation. Local media and youth initiated their own social media for peat swamp exchange through Facebook, LINE group, and monthly e-news independently.  Water Modeling:  Completion of a water management system assessment in 4600 ha and the development of a water management model. The model will help Kuan Kreng Landscape (KKL) stakeholders to develop and implement management plans for effective water usage and water level retention contributing to effective forest fire management and the mitigation of deleterious effects of natural disasters such as flash floods and droughts. Relevant agencies have already provided comments and feedback on how to pilot the model in targeted areas. The test has been in running now. Though this may take about 12 months before having the final model, key water stakeholders and relevant agencies are working together via a technical working group to develop a water integrated management strategy. By the end of Q4-2019, a draft strategy must be developed.  Peat swamps status assessment criteria:  The project developed and shared with ONEP a draft set of criteria for Peat Swamps Status Assessment based on experiences from the KKL to be considered for peat swamps national inventory.  The Prince of Songkla University (PSU) is in the process of reviewing and developing a National Strategy for Peat Swamps with ONEP guidance. KKL project experiences are being fed into this process.  Extension in benefit areas:  Villages in benefit areas around KKL and Songkla lake basin have been identified and prioritized for relevant project extension plans. Key criteria for prioritization includes the existing of peat swamp forests, living in or around the Kuan Kreng Landscape, and being interested in sustainable peat swamp resource management. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **Off track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 1**  **Expanding protection of high conservation value peat swamp forests and demonstrating their sustainable use within the broader landscape** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Peat swamp forests in KKL under protection | Thale Noi NHA – 48,000 ha  Bor Lor NHA – 10,016 ha | *(not set or not applicable)* | Additional 16,347 ha  [TARGET REVISED during inception phase; no change to target ha but detailed specification of sites omitted] | Progress is off track.    A revision to target was made during inception phase based on changed government policy.  Management and protection of peat swamp forests within this area will be improved under an integrated mosaic of various appropriate land categorization and sustainable co-management regimes, identified through a feasibility study. The feasibility study will start from July onward. (Adaptive Management) | Progress is on track. According to the revised target for co-management feasibility study, existing peat swamp co-management mechanisms have been reviewed with inputs from landscape stakeholders. Different formal and informal co-management mechanisms have been identified.with local communities and government agencies These include government initiatives, traditional and community networks, existing community groups, any other initiatives under NGOs or other projects. The Local Wisdom Collage, one of the local academic organizations already commenced the feasibility analysis with support from landscape stakeholders in 3 provinces. on how these mechanisms work under which conditions. The study will be completed by the end of Q4/ 2019. Results from the feasibility study will be incorporated into a Landscape Integrated Management Strategy approved by the Landscape Task Force formed by the Nakhon Si Thammarat provincial office.  The project is on process to promote locally owned knowledge with government, civil society and development agencies. Local knowledge related to sustainable peat swamp resource management practices within the landscape has been studied. Results have been shared with local communities and will be initially used to develop the first 3 local learning centers in 3 sub-districts. The local knowledge focus on the following key practices: (i) krajood production (a species of grass growing in the peat swamp) weaving & handicraft making, (ii) krajood processing in Cha oud District, (iii) krajood uprooting techniques, (iv) local fishing gear (Sai), (v) local and spiritual beliefs in Kreng (Tuad), (vi) bee-keeping, (vii) traditional wild honey collection, (viii) medicinal plants, and (ix) local traditional dance for conservation (Nora Thai dance performance). Cha uad Subdistrict indicates strong interest to incorporate the learning center program into their development programs with allocated budget and personnel. The development of local learning centers will be part of co- management mechanism. Process for local learning center development will be documented and shared with other communities within the landscape.  The results of co-management study and model for local learning centers will be extended to benefit area in 2019.  Please note from the 1st PB meeting 2018, PB agreed that within the project life period (26 months), having additional 16,374 ha classified under EPA is not viable. |
| [INDICATOR DELETED during inception phase; output not outcome-based]    Area covered by EPA Management Plans that will result in the release of pressures on the 29 million tC pool | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | [INDICATOR DELETED during inception phase]    154,363 ha | [INDICATOR DELETED] | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Enhanced management effectiveness at existing PAs (NHAs) and Songkhla and Kuan Kreng peat swamp landscapes as measured by METT  [INDICATOR REVISED during inception phase; minor wording revision to clarify site names; no change to METT sites] | Thale Noi NHA: 64  Bor Lor NHA: 42  Kuan Kreng: 12  Songkhla: 19 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Thale Noi NHA: 75  Bor Lor NHA: 70  Kuan Kreng: 20  Songkhla: 30 | Progress is behind schedule.    Different land use and land categories are under review. Following the engagement of RECOFTC, the project was introduced to the Chiefs of Thale Noi NHA and Bor Lor NHA, as well as Tambon Administrative Organizations (TAOs) in the 3 sub-districts in May and June. Meetings with local leaders and local authorities are scheduled for July.    Indicator has been revised to clarify site names. | Progress in on track as per the METT scores under the MTR.  Thale Noi : NHA 69  Bor Lor NHA: 57  Kuan Kreng: 18  Songkha: 12 |
| Incidence of violations of NHA regulations | NHA  2013 2014 (up to Sept.)  Bor Lor: 2 (1 cutting tree, 1 invasion) 1 (invasion)  Thale Noi: 21 (4 cutting tree, 17 burning forest for land) 15 (1 cutting tree, 14 burning forest for land) | *(not set or not applicable)* | Bor Lor: 0 Thale Noi: No tree cutting, Less than 6 invasions | No progress yet to report as implementation has been delayed. Stakeholder analysis has been basically completed in targeted area. The hotspots for forest fire will be identified with NHA chiefs and relevant local agencies in July and August.  As noted for the indicator above, forest fire hotspots will be identified with NHA chiefs and relevant local agencies in July and August. | Off track:  Bor Lor NHA : 7 invasions, 2 Cutting tree    The map of forest fire hot spots has been developed and reported to line agencies.  The burning area has already documented which is 3,525 rai (564 Ha) as of June 2018-2019. |
| Incidence of fires | Wildfires burning on average 680 ha per year (0.91%) of KKL | *(not set or not applicable)* | Wildfires burning on average 408 ha per year KKL | No progress yet to report as implementation has been delayed. As noted for the indicator above, forest fire hotspots will be identified with NHA chiefs and relevant local agencies in July and August. | Off Track:  The incidence of wildfires in the KKL has increased to date, burning on an average area of 564 ha per year as of June 2018- 2019. The project has contributed through the following interventions:  A network of 42 local forest fire management voluntary groups discussed and started to implement plans for forest fire risk monitoring. This initiative helps improve the level of community engagement in reducing wildfire in KKL and gain thrust between local people and government agencies.  In collaboration with Protected Areas Regional Office 5 (Nakhon Si Thammarat) PARO 5, series of Forest Fire campaigns were organized raising awareness with over 700 local residents (students and local communities in KKL. |
| Number of units trained for patrolling, managing water levels, fire protection, and enforcement of regulations | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 6 units in Thale Noi NHA  2 units in Bor Lor NHA  3 units in in Kreng, Cha-uad and Baan Tul sub-districts | Progress is behind schedule based on original plan.    Ongoing initiatives related to forest fire management are under review with local government agencies. Key target clients have been preliminary determined but will be confirmed with relevant government agencies in July. A capacity building needs assessment framework will also be developed in July. | Off track:  A GIS Mapping training for 8 forest fire management units and NHAs was conducted. It was attended by 65 participants. After the training, risk areas have been identified and reviewed by local forest fire networks and forest fire control units via a series of meetings. In addition, forest officers use trained GPS application for forest fire patrolling in 5 districts around the landscape.    Forest fire management basic training was conducted for 120 staff from PARO no. 5 office. Participants developed forest fire management annual plan as well as patrolling plans together with voluntary fire management network.  Ten (10) local schools organized youth camping trips in peat swamp areas for 210 students with support from Bo Lor NHA and inputs from the project. In addition, youth and local community representatives (37 participants [ M:14 Female:23]) gained basic knowledge on communication and started using different tools such as VDO clip development technique and Facebook to support forest fire management in peat swamp areas.  Local media in the landscape produced a series of radio programs, VDOs, and communication materials for public awareness on peat swamp around the KKL. These local media plays an effective role in campaigning for forest fire prevention, raising awareness among local people and public on benefits from peat swamp, and what the landscape stakeholders should do to manage the peat swamps sustainably.  Series of workshops conducted with the voluntary fire management network members to understand the nature of peat swamp fire and to clarify roles and responsibilities among the network members.  An Integrated Forest Fire Management plan has been collectively developed by Bor Lor NHA, forest fire control officers, representatives of forest fire networks, and local authority through a series of workshops with 268 participants (M: 213 F: 55) |
| Area of peat swamp forests in Kuan Kreng landscape under participatory community forestry management plans or co-management    [INDICATOR REVISED during inception phase; addition of 'or co-management'; omission of 65 ha Kanthulee site from baseline and target as not part of Kuan Kreng landscape] | 435 ha under some form of community forestry as follows:  Community Forest Kuan Ngoen (90 ha; Baan Tul)  Community Forest Suan Somdej Chao Fa Chulabhorn (240 ha; Cha-uad)  Baan Sai Kannon (100 ha; Kreng sub-district)  No EHI monitoring system in use | *(not set or not applicable)* | 435 ha under improved peat swamp forest participatory management plans  Additional 1,500 ha established under co-management    [TARGET REVISED during inception phase; it used to say '1,500 ha established as community forest with management plan'] | Field team has approached local leaders and CF groups to explain the project in June. Overall progress is behind schedule since project start.    Sites covered under the indicator and targets were revised during inception phase for the following reasons:    1. From a field visit in May, the project team found out that Community Forest Baan Sai Kanoon, which was once area under the national forest reserve, has been included into Bor Lor NHA. This land reclassification means that CF Baan Sai Kanoon is no longer eligible for community forest registration under RFD.    2. PB saw that Kanthulee CF is about 250 KMs away from Kuan Kreng Landscape. Any project support to Kanthulee CF would bring no direct significant benefit to improved peat swamp management in Kuan Kreng. Nevertheless, there are key lessons on CF development the project can draw. Hence the project should not directly implement activities in Kanthulee CF, but should treat it as a learning site from which CFs can learn. | Off track:  Existing peat swamp co-management mechanisms have been reviewed with landscape stakeholders. Options for improved mechanisms were identified and will be piloted in target areas under support from line agencies. These co-management mechanisms include government initiatives, traditional and community networks, existing community groups, any other initiatives under NGOs or other projects. Co-management mechanisms cover areas such NHAs, reserved forest, areas under agricultural land reformed, and private farm lands in districts Cha-Uad, Hua Sai and Kuan Kanoon. This will cover more than 1500 Ha in addition to existing CFs.    Community representatives from 3 community forests received technical support to develop 3 community forestry management plans reflecting sustainable use of peat swamps covering 430 ha, maintaining carbon sequestration, and peat swamp biodiversity as well as adapting to the effects of climate change. The lesson learned from Kanthulee peat swamp management have been discussed and documented with CF representatives. Lessons learned from Kanthulee will be adopted and applied for community forest management plans in KKL.    Community awareness of and involvement in the project is high, and that much of the community-level work being done is effective. Local community representatives from target areas discussed and became more aware of the new Community Forest Act (recently enacted by the Royal Thai Government) through a series of consultations.    Land use maps in KKL have been updated and applied in working with local authorities and communities for management decision.    Engagement with 10 local schools within the landscape made much progress. With support from provincial education office, a master integrated local school curriculum for primary students has been developed and tested. Different aspects of peat swamp resource management are well integrated with basic subjects. It is now in the process that 10 local schools will apply into their education plan. The master school local curriculum will be shared with other schools in the surrounding area.    From inception phase, the PMU found having additional 1500 ha established as community forest at Baan Sai Kanoon is no longer possible. The area proposed for community forest at Baan Sai Kanoon was once under the national forest reserved category, but now it has been included into Bor Lor NHA. Under current land reclassification, the area is longer eligible for community forest registration under RFD. |
| Ecosystem Health Index (EHI) monitoring system for monitoring peatland health is developed and in place for 2 NHAs in order to ensure good quality habitat for Yellow-headed Tortoise, Fishing Cat | No EHI monitoring system in use | *(not set or not applicable)* | System applied at 2 NHAs | No EHI conducted yet. | Off track: EHI will be conducted by PMU in Q4 /2019 |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **Off track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 2**  **Implementing technologies to avoid peat swamp forest degradation and restore degraded peat swamps forests** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Peat swamp area in KKL that is under effective water table management regime | 0 ha | *(not set or not applicable)* | 4,600 ha | Water irrigation and management are under review. The field team has held discussions with local authorities to learn who is doing what on water management within targeted area. The basic set of required information has been identified by the water irrigation expert. Data collection on water management started in June. | Off track: An assessment of the water management system in target areas covering 4600 ha in Cha-Uad district has been completed with inputs from the Royal Irrigation Department (RID) and key stakeholders. A water management model through MIKE SHE has been developed which will help KKL stakeholders understand the water management situation and later design and implement management plans for effective water usage and water level retention contributing to effective forest fire management and the mitigation of deleterious effects of natural disasters; flash flooding and drought. The water research team expect to spend longer time than planned to validate the MIKE SHE model due to a number of variables within the landscape . This may affect the completion of water table management regime by the end of the project in June 2020.  A technical working group on water management has been formed by the Landscape Task Force. This working group consists of relevant government agencies, and local representatives who have roles and mandates to play in water management system within the landscape. The technical working group will develop a landscape water integrated management plan and submit to the Landscape Task Force for further approval in Q1-2020. This plan will be incorporated into the medium and long term Nakhon Si Thamarat development strategy |
| Water levels at 4,600 ha of peat swamp forest (pilot sites where hydrotechnical measures are to be implemented) | 20-90 cm below surface during dry season. To be confirmed by detailed study on the hydrological system at the pilot sites under Output 2.1 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Drainage will be stopped or significantly reduced and the water level will substantially increase for all project sites. At least for 25% of the area (1,150 ha) the water level will never drop more than 20 cm below surface. | Existing and ongoing water management system are under review by experts. | Off track:  The project has engaged in discussions with relevant agencies to pilot the water management model via MIKE SHE in the area. Feedback/inputs from line agencies and communities to improve the water management model is scheduled in Q3-Q4/2019.  For the time being, raw data (real time) of the hydro-meteorology of the peat swamp forest is being systematically recorded. This includes precipitation, wind speed, temperature, solar radiation,evaporation rate, and humidity via mobile application logger link. Preliminary finding proved that the water level should be at 10 cm above surface level however in depth analysis will continue till Q4/ 2019. The delay of MIKE SHE testing may directly affect to the actual implementation of water level management at the end of the project in June 2020.  Local fire management units are using these data for forest fire management planning. |
| GHG emissions at 4,600 ha of peat swamp forest (pilot sites where hydrotechnical measures are to be implemented) | 2.793 Mt CO2-eq | *(not set or not applicable)* | 1.959 Mt CO2-eq | The Carbon Monitoring System within the targeted area is under review. A list of field equipment and necessary tools for carbon monitoring will be identified and purchased. The expert team will identify suitable places for monitoring stations. PB recommended that Kanthulee Community Forest cannot be considered as the control site for comparison due to different peatswamp ecosystem. | Off track:  Due to the hydrotechnica study took longer than planned and the testing of MIKE SHE model together with landscape stakeholders cause delay in implementing hydrotechnical measures.  Off track:  The development of Carbon Monitoring System has got affected by a natural disaster during Q4 2018. That thus delayed the process for field basic data collection. Carbon Monitoring variation has been reviewed at the landscape site in order to determine sampling plots for testing the Carbon Monitoring System. Installing carbon monitoring equipment in selected sites also got influenced by flash flood in Q1 2019. The research got all equipment installed and ready to measure GHG emission starting from June 2019.First round of data collection was done. It is on the process to consult with expert for GHG analysis. The project team found a challenge in getting an appropriate laboratory to analyze the GHG emission from peat swamp in Thailand.  Off Track : Mechanisms for community based carbon monitoring has been developed while sample plots have been established in 3 land categories i.e. undisturbed, disturb peat and palm oil area.  Data collection with support from local people has already commenced. The project anticipates that the carbon monitoring system will be moderately functioned by the end of 2019. Expert teams of both GHG monitoring system and water level monitoring system will revisit their work-plan to ensure the likelihood of having both systems integrated before the project ends  Community based carbon monitoring guideline has been outlined. |
| Carbon sequestration through reforestation with native species (projected over 20 years)    [INDICATOR REVISED during inception phase; addition of specification that indicator is projected over 20 years] | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 129,000 tCO2eq over a 20-year period | Progress is behind schedule since project start.    The target was clarified to confirm that it is projected over 20 years, as set in the Project Document Annexes but not included in the results framework.    This was needed as trees planted as part of reforestation interventions under the project will still be young at the end of the project. Hence it is unrealistic to have them store 129,000 tCO2eq by the end of the project in 2020. Instead, the target of 129,000 tCO2eq should be projected over longer timeframe. If needed, a smaller Mt CO2-eq target for project-end in 2019 will be set after further studies.    In addition, proposed sites for restoration are under revision as follows:  According to field research in Kuan Kreng, restoring just one large area of 300 ha will be risks having low survival and growth rates. In its May 2018 scoping exercise, the RECOFTC team found different areas in Bor Lor NHA which were previously destroyed by fires that already begun natural regeneration with native species. Hence RECOFTC proposes that the project develop different models with demonstration plots of community -based peat swamp restoration for not only in Baan Sai Kanoon but also distributed among other areas in Kuan Kreng Landscape. Each demonstration plot will not larger than 5 ha, with total of about 50 ha demonstration. By the end of the project, at least 100 ha will be reforested by local stakeholders. Despite shifting sites the carbon target is not changed. | Off track:  The actual reforestation in proposed site got affected by government procedure. The process of getting permission from NHAs for the proposes areas took steps and longer time. The area requested under the Chai Pattana Foundation got rejected. The research team looked for alternative area and found strong interest from local communities in both private and public land including in community forest, road site, and grassing area.  Local people representatives have been trained for peat swamp forest restoration. Local communities established 2 community based nurseries to prepare healthy seedlings for forest restoration activities in 2019 planting season. There are 300 local farmers registered their interest in applying agroforestry around farm lands with seedling support from the project.  Area covers 100 ha in Bor Lor NHA, Tale Noi NHA, Ta Chang Reserved Forest area and 3 Community Forests have been determined for forest restoration and agroforestry with native species.  Please note: Carbon sequestration directly from reforestation has not been monitored due to those trees are still too young. Carbon monitoring team will review the overall gain of carbon sequestration within the area in Q4 2019. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **Off track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 3**  **Improving policies, standards, and enforcement mechanisms for conservation and sustainable use of peat swamp forests** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| Cross-sectoral WG for promoting a landscape approach to peatlands conservation and sustainable use | Cross-sectoral platform exists in the form of National Wetland Management Committee, but no specific working group on landscape approach to peatlands conservation and sustainable use | *(not set or not applicable)* | Working Group formed by Year 1 | Progress is behind schedule. PB 1st /2018 meeting was done.  Need more consultation with ONEP on the ONEP roles and responsibilities for project implementation. | On track:  Landscape (KKL) Task Force, consisting of 37 persons from different landscape government agencies and civil society representatives covering Nakhon Si Thammarat, Phattalung, and Songkla has been formally appointed by Nakhon Si Thammarat governor with defined roles and responsibilities. The task force will function as a multi-stakeholder platform to design and draft a Kuan Kreng Landscape Integrated Management Strategy.    Two landscape forums on the Values of Peat Swamps ecosystem and also Community based Forest Fire have been done so far to create mutual understanding among key stakeholders and line authorities as well as raising awareness on sustainable peat swamps resource management. One of the recommendations from these forums led toward the formation of KKL Task Force.    The Nakhon Si Thammarat also has strong interest in transforming this Landscape Task Force to a formal entity, |
| Criteria and methodologies for assessment of peatlands’ state, function and services that take into account full range of ecosystem services | No documented criteria exist | *(not set or not applicable)* | Criteria and methodology endorsed by Year 2 and includes ecological criteria | No progress to date. The expert team for economic valuation and tool development has been identified. | On track: The project developed and shared a draft set of criteria for Peat Swamps Status Assessment based on experiences from the KKL with ONEP to be considered for peat swamps national inventory. |
| Inventory of all peatlands | Outdated listing of peatlands exists and it is spotty (not comprehensive) | *(not set or not applicable)* | Current and comprehensive listing of peatlands status, functions, services (based on above criteria) by Year 3 | No progress to date. A contract will be issued to implement Output 3.3 in Q4/2018. | Off track: The Inception report and the progress report (I) have been developed and reviewed by committees. The peats land inventory will be completed by April 2020.  Note : Responsible by Prince of Song kha University (PSU) |
| National Strategy for Peat swamps | None | *(not set or not applicable)* | New 20-year strategy that takes economic and ecological benefits into account in determining use of peatlands | No progress to date. A contract will be issued to implement this Output 3.4 in Q4/2018. | Off Track :  General information of peat swamps status is drafted.  List of peat swamps in Thailand has been identified and reviewed (25 peat swamps).  Note : Responsible by Prince of Song kha University |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **Off track** | | | | |

# Implementation Progress



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| Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in prodoc): | 29.64% |
| Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year: | 29.64% |
| Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August): | 955,841 |

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| **Key Financing Amounts** | |
| PPG Amount | 120,000 |
| GEF Grant Amount | 3,224,400 |
| Co-financing | 13,795,031 |

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| **Key Project Dates** | |
| PIF Approval Date | Jun 10, 2013 |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Dec 24, 2014 |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | Jul 21, 2016 |
| Date of Inception Workshop | Jul 17, 2017 |
| Expected Date of Mid-term Review | Dec 11, 2019 |
| Actual Date of Mid-term Review | Jul 23, 2019 |
| Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation | Apr 21, 2020 |
| Original Planned Closing Date | Jul 21, 2020 |
| 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)** |
| 2019-01-18 |

# Critical Risk Management

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

# Adjustments

**Comments on delays in key project milestones**

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| **Project Manager: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The mid-term review was done in April 2019 and will be reported to PB in September 2019.    Project implementation was affected by a natural disaster (Pa Buk Tropical Storm during 5-6 January 2019) which is lash to Nakhon Si Thammarat province, and also general elections in Thailand (held on 24 March 2019, which prohibited large gatherings of people during 14-24 March 2019). |

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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.** |
| The MTR was conducted over the reporting period. The MTR recommended requesting a 12-month extension to the project, to allow time for key deliverables in Outcome 2 to be achieved.  The extensive delays in commencement, particularly for recruitment of the Responsible Party, mean that achieving the very ambitious and technically demanding results under Outcome 2 by the end date of July 2020 will be extremely challenging. In particular, the GHG monitoring system proposed in the project document requires a two-year calibration period and relies on the prior establishment of a water level monitoring program; this two-year calibration has not yet commenced. In many ways, Outcome 2 represents the most substantial added value for Thailand from this GEF funding; if these results are not achieved then there will be significant missed opportunities for Thailand from the project. |

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| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The MTR was conducted over the reporting period with slight delays to align with appropriate timing for field missions. The report has been finalized. The management response is being finalized and will be presented to the Project Board shortly. The terminal evaluation is due to take place near the end of the next reporting period. |

# Ratings and Overall Assessments

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| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Manager/Coordinator** | Moderately Unsatisfactory | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | Overall assessment is moderate unsatisfactory  The original targets became ambitious - the project was designed to be implemented over 4 years (48 months) with consecutive processes. The current time frame is only 26 months.  After 15 months of project implementation, the team found many existing and ongoing initiatives within the project target area that could contribute to the project expected results. The team is regularly reviewing these initiatives and exploring different ways to optimize use of resources to ensure the project run effectively for significant impacts and create synergy across OPs and OCs.  The project manager and Project Administration Officer came on board in July 2018 and August 2018. Meanwhile, The Project Director who serves as a part time project team member, took the lead in providing strategic support to ensure the project dynamics and direction were on track. The overall program plan has been developed and approved by ONEP. These plans have been implemented in accordance with the ToR, and the project annual work plan.  Moreover, the project has been operating with good support from key stakeholders, local authorities, local academic institutes within the KKL and ONEP. The Kuan Kreng Landscape (KKL) Task Force has been formally appointed by Nakhon Si Thammarat governor with defined roles and responsibilities. The task force will function as a multi-stakeholder platform to design and draft a Kuan Kreng Landscape Integrated Management. Recently the Task Form formed technical working groups on Water Management, Forest FIre Management, Carbon and Reforestation, and Land Use management plan.  The project has found that private sector engagement and also local livelihood practices should be enhanced to support the conservation of KKL. The project team is working to integrate these two aspects into project work plan and implementation.  The monitoring system for GHG emissions normally requires a two-year calibration period and relies on the prior establishment of a water level monitoring program and on the establishment of specialized equipment to measure carbon flux. The project will try best to ensure these two systems function before the end of the project. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP Country Office Programme Officer** | Moderately Unsatisfactory | Moderately Unsatisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | This is the second PIR for this project on maximizing carbon sink capacity and conservation in the Kuan Kreng Landscape since the project started in 2016. My DO rating is different than the project manager. I have given a DO rating of Moderately Unsatisfactory (as same as the MTR rating for overall progress towards a project objective) and an IP rating of Moderately Unsatisfactory, due to risk that key expansion peat swamp protected area may not be met by project close and to implementation challenges including low disbursement rate made by the PMU and the service providers are 29% at the end of Q2 (against the approved budget of 1,376,864 USD).    Outcome 1: Expanding protection of high conservation value peat swamp forests and demonstrating their sustainable use within the broader landscape. The overall progress against the target indicators is off track. Despite the PMU made good progress for two target indicators (number of incidence of violations of NHA regulations, wildlife burning reduced), the important quantitative indicator on Peat swamp forests in KKL under protection (additional 16,346 ha) has not been highlighted in the work plan 2018-2019. For this reason, it is a high risk in deviation of this target by the end of the project. Last PIR (2018) mentioned that the PMU planned to start its feasibility study on an integrated mosaic of various appropriate land categorization and sustainable co-management regimes. The study aims to identify the high-value peat swamp forests and demonstrating their sustainable use within the broader landscape. The finding should be presented in the boundary of the 16,347 ha as a target indicator of the outcome 1. Unfortunately, this PIR (2019) cannot clearly explain a key milestone of the feasibility study that is prepared by the Local Wisdom Institute. Nevertheless, I take note from the DO progress (the 1st PB meeting 2018, PB agreed that within the project life period (26 months), having additional 16,374 ha classified under EPA is not viable.) The PMU needs to admit that this target indicator cannot be changed without a good reason. The fact is that the PB suggested the PMU keep the same target area (16,374 ha) and to find other means of protected peat swamp in accordance with IUCN category 4&5.  The following description explains the IUCN category 4. This is an example for PMU to take into consideration in response to MTR recommendation how “under protection” will be interpreted.    1. Strict Nature Reserve/Wilderness Area: managed mainly for science or wilderness protection  2. National Park: managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation  3. Natural Monument: managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features  4. Habitat/Species Management Area: managed mainly for conservation through management intervention  5. Protected Landscape/Seascape: managed mainly for landscape/seascape protection and recreation  6. Managed Resource Protected Area: managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems    Same as MTR recommendation, the PMU shall pay more attention to important aspects of its interpretation and measurement (quantitative results) if it is to be met. In doing so, I would recommend that the PMU needs to adjust their work plan in Q3,4 and shift activities from public relations to evidence-based advocacy on the various appropriate land categorization and sustainable co-management regimes focusing on a target area of 16,374 ha. (So far, there is no plan to look at feasible target sub-district, the buffer zone around KKL and the surrounding area of Song Khla Lake Basin.) The expansion of peat swamp protected area (as per 1-6 definition under IUCN category 4) shall be highlighted in the land use planning map. The landscape co-management approach needs to be visualized in different beneficial use of land e.g. community forest, production landscape, fire buffer zone, drainage system, pristine peat swamp forest, non-hunting areas, etc.    The idea to establish the 3 learning centers have emerged. It is not clearly explained in the DO progress how are these centers will promote the expansion of the peat swamp forests in KKL. However, the PMU coordinated effectively to engage a sub-district and provincial office in developing the business plan of the learning centers. This point is made reference to monitor the progress in Q4/2019.    For the indicator on “Enhanced management effectiveness at existing PAs (NHAs) and Songkhla and Kuan Kreng peat swamp landscapes as measured by METT”, the PMU's approach is to demonstrate a community-based management practice through building the capacity of 10 schools, creating a community -local government officer’s network of fire control, youth campaign, public relation in the project landscape. It is not clear from the Tracking Tool whether these project activities are fit. Also, the METT requires activities to enhance management effectiveness in all four sites. It seems to me that the PMU run activities in 2-3 sites. Finally, the prompt development of an Ecosystem Health Index (Indicator 8) is required. But the PMU hasn’t started this element yet. The PMU should carefully review MTR’s recommendation on this EHI.  For the indicator on “Area of peat swamp forests in Kuan Kreng landscape under participatory community forestry management plans or co-management”, the PMU has prepared a case study from Kanthulee peat swamp management. The case study can be a key milestone to help the project achieve in outcome 1. However, there is no evidence of this case study prepared.    Outcome 2: Implementing technologies to avoid peat swamp forest degradation and restore degraded peat swamps forests. The DO progress against the four target indicators is ready for a kick to start the carbon monitoring and water retention mechanism in Q3 and continue in Q4. The co2 emission data collection process from sampling plots has been designed. With this reason, I view that this outcome is on track. However, there is a big challenge in managing the equipment in forest areas versus uncontrol factors (flood, animal, fire). There might be a high risk in CO2 monitoring in Q3,4. Adaptive management should be initiated. Also, the reforestation takes more than a year for measurable carbon sequestration. However, this indicator has been changed by the PB in 2018. The target of 129,000 tCO2eq from carbon sequestration will be measured over 20 years rather than at the end of the project. I view that the PMU can set up the system and test running during the project timeframe. The monitoring methodology and guidelines will be certainly used in 2020 by the academic institute and beyond. The quantitative data of carbon sink can be measured by the academic institutes after the project end.    For water control measure, it is good to start the engagement the Royal Irrigation Department and the Fire Control Unit to participate in the modeling. (water usage VS retention) for peat swamp forest in KKL. The PMU has worked in the right direction. By the end of the project, I view that the PMU can advocate the authorities to maintain at least for 25% of the area (1,150 ha) the water level will never drop more than 20 cm below (target indicator).      Outcome 3: Improving policies, standards, and enforcement mechanisms for conservation and sustainable use of peat swamp forests. This outcome is partially on track. The indicators of the two outputs (Working Group formed by Year 1, and Criteria and methodology endorsed by Year 2 and includes ecological criteria) has been functioned and established respectively. But, the other two indicators (current and comprehensive listing of peatlands status, functions, services (based on the above criteria) is slightly delayed. The National Peat Swamp Inventory has been carried out by the Prince Songkla University (PSU). There are challenges in the application of the Peat Swamp inventory criterion between the PSU's study VS the Ramsar guideline. With intervention from the IP (ONEP), the PSU uses a mixture of suggested criterion from both methods. List of peat swamps in Thailand has been identified and reviewed (25 peat swamps).  The peats land inventory will be completed by April 2020. Then, the PSU can use the aggregated result of each outcome to develop the Peat Swamp Management Strategy. General information on peat swamps status is drafted.    b) Implementation progress    For IP rating, a cumulative General Ledger (GL) delivery against expected delivery as of this year (30 June) is only 29.64%, equivalent to the Cumulative disbursement $955,841. I have given an IP rating of Moderately Unsatisfactory. It is mainly due to the two reasons; i) improper work plan ii) contract management inefficiency.    For improper work plan, the current budget plan (annual and multi-year work plan) are designed for many small activities such as staff travel, meetings, local workshops, but the aggregated budget of these activities are large. This amount will be sum up in Q4/2019. There is no significant budget for land-use planning knowledge product (under Outcome 1) that is very important information for making a proposal to the decision-maker for conserving of 154,363 ha (target) as the above description on IUCN category 4. For PMU activity alone, the accumulated expenditure at the end of Q2 is 393,653 USD. The cash advance in Q3 is 393,723 USD. By the end of Q3, the PMU would spend around 71% of the total budget approved by the Project Board (1.1 million USD). This is my optimistic view. But, it would be less than 71% if the PMU cannot improve their management efficiency and effectiveness. The total fund allocation for 2019 (ASL) is 1,376,864 USD approximately. Of this ASL, the activities managed by the two service providers are 290,000 USD approximately.    For contract management inefficiency, the disbursement rate from the two service providers is behind the payment schedule. It is because of the delay work of the contractor managed by both PMU and UNDP. For UNDP managed contract, there is a delay from the ONEP side in reviewing the progress report of output 3.3, 3.4 under Outcome 3 managed by the Prince Songkla University. This is due to the technical advisory meeting is time consumed. As such, the approve for release payment has been delayed. Adaptive management to be discussed with ONEP.    The major delay is in financing administration between the PMU and its service providers (Kasetsart University) under the implementation of outcome 2. Although the new service providers (a communication team and the Peat Swamp National Strategy Development Team) have brought on board in January 2019, the PMU cannot collaborate with them effectively. As such, there was redundancy of activities implemented by the PMU and the service providers such as communication materials, website, Facebook, media trip. Also, several meetings in the focus 3 sub-districts are relatively high. This DO and IP rating view reflected the need to redesign the work plan in Q3, Q4 2019 to increase management efficiency of the project implementation, especially on Outcome 2.  The MTR team considers that some important social and environmental risks could have been addressed in more detail in the environmental and social screening assessment in the project document, and that some of these may have become more significant since commencement. In particular, there are significant risks from changing land use and drainage programs for irrigation that may adversely affect peat swamp condition, yet these were not identified in the project document and the MTR team is not aware of specific mechanisms in place to address these risks.  For project management efficiency, I observed that PMU is based in Bangkok where the key influencers to the project achievements are based in Nakhon Sri Thammarat. It would be better if the key project personnel will be based in Nakhon Sri Thammarat for improving management efficiency (cost saving, good people connectivity, planning, and organizing outputs) of the project team (PMU and all). It would be good if the PMU works in focus on the key process towards the target indicators of each outcome, rather than participating in a single meeting and travel activities. This approach can reduce the travel cost of project personnel. The saving budget can be allocated more to the substantive elements of the project. For example, the feasibility study on an integrated mosaic of various appropriate land categorization and sustainable co-management regimes should be a high-quality report in both Thai and English. This will be a key knowledge product from the project that can be translated into the communication story for decision-makers and the general public.    Besides, the PMU cannot prepare the quarter/annual event calendar. Without this, it is hard to get full participation from all project team (UNDP, Communication team-Wisdom Vast, ONEP, Prince Songkla University, Kaset Sart University, Local Wisdom Institutes, other service providers).    My recommendations:  1. The PMU will review the efficiency and effectiveness of the current plan of activities and personnel against the target indicators of each outcome. This is to make synergy with the other service providers.  2. The PUM should review the current EHI from China as an example.  3. The PMU should make clear operation plan of the 3 newly established learning centers in Q3 and invest budget for communication work on these 3 centers.  4. The PMU should discuss openly with their partners (Kasetsart University) to deploy and adaptive management for Outcome 2 as soon as possible. The adaptive approach shall be presented to the Project Board in September.  5. The PMU should facilitate the reviewing process of ONEP in order to keep on track on the progress of Outcome 3.  6. The PMU should be able to deliver the draft Kuan Kreng Landscape Integrated Management Plan (Outcome 1) at the end of Q4. The written plan/document should be presented to the project board in Q1/2020 so that the Project Board will guide Prince Songkla University to incorporate the landscape plan into the national peat swamp strategy timely.  7. The PMU and UNDP will prepare a revised Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) assessment for the project, which includes mitigation measures for identified risks. | |
| **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** | Moderately Unsatisfactory | Moderately Unsatisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | This is the second PIR for this multi-focal area project aiming to conserve significant peat swamps in south-eastern Thailand for biodiversity and carbon sequestration benefits. The project had a challenging inception period due to changes in implementation arrangements, and while implementation is now underway on-the-ground there are still challenges with achievement of some project targets and in delivering annual work plans. For this reason, progress towards development objective (DO) and implementation progress (IP) are both assessed as ‘moderately unsatisfactory’. This is the same as the ratings given by the UNDP Country Office and Project Manager.    PROGRESS TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES (DO)  With project activities only commencing in the past year, there is mixed progress reported against the objective and the project’s three outcomes. These are reported by the PM as ‘off track’ with much detailed reporting in the DO progress tab, although this is not always well-synthesized to allow easy understanding of progress. The likely shortfalls in achieving targets are reflected in my DO rating of ‘moderately unsatisfactory’. At this stage some targets are likely to only be met with significant shortcomings (e.g. at Objective, Outcome 3), which could be minimized through effective adaptive management including review of the results framework following the MTR and careful technical reinterpretation of indicators for peat swamp management.  The core objective indicator is the area of peat swamp under effective management. How the project will measure ‘effective management’ needs reinterpretation based on the government’s changed policy on EPA establishment. The target area will be achieved through an integrated mosaic of appropriate land categorization and sustainable co-management regimes. However, the monitoring and measurement of this indicator is not yet clear, and therefore it is uncertain if the target area of almost 150,000 ha will be under effective management by project close. Further attention is needed on defining the monitoring and reporting for this indicator. While many project activities are detailed under the DO progress tab in this PIR, ‘effective management’ is not clearly defined and nor are project impact areas reported.  There is mixed but generally positive progress towards Outcome 1 indicators. METT scores for Thale Noi and Bor Lor NHA show improvement since baseline and targets appear within reach. METT targets will not be met for the two proposed EPAs as the project cannot support their establishment. There is no clear data reported to show how the target of an additional 16,347 ha will be brought ‘under protection’ by project close – this indicator also needs further attention to clarify how protection will be interpreted under the revised project context. Data on violations in NHA do not show clear progress towards targets and further attention on community education, compliance and enforcement looks needed to achieve targets. Conversely, there is an observed reduction seen in the area burned through wildfires, assisted by the project’s support to 42 local forest fire management voluntary groups, training of forest fire management units (itself an indicator, where good progress is shown) and associated fire awareness-raising campaigns with local communities. The project has commenced efforts to improve peat swamp co-management mechanisms with stakeholders and targets relating to 435 ha under improved participatory management plans and an additional 1,500 ha under co-management appear within reach by project close. No progress has been made on the emplacement of an ecosystem health index (EHI) monitoring system. There is already an institutionalized EHI system in place in China through the UNDP-GEF wetlands program and the PMU should review these processes to confirm the potential for that system to be adopted for Thailand.  Outcome 2 appears the most challenging at this stage and was assessed as ‘unsatisfactory’ by the MTR. The MTR reported significant challenges under this outcome including the achievement of project GHG emissions targets (aligned to the CCM and SFM STAR allocations). These targets all depend upon the implementation of water table management across 4,600 ha. While foundational data collection and modelling is underway (as reported in the DO progress tab), there is not yet any progress on the mechanism to deliver the targeted changes in water levels, putting targets at risk of not being achieved. Local restoration efforts are now underway, with progress reported in establishing community nurseries and engagement of local farmers in agroforestry – these efforts will help support progress towards the reforestation carbon sequestration target, although it still appears highly ambitious. Careful review of the indicators and targets under Outcome 2 is needed as part of the MTR management response to confirm they remain achievable and appropriate for the project. Specific recommendations on indicators were provided in the MTR report.  Under Outcome 3, work is now underway that will contribute to all targets including cross-sectoral coordination and development of criteria for assessment of peat swamps status, a peat swamps inventory, and a national strategy for peat swamps. Except for the cross-sectoral landscape working group that is already established, progress towards targets is in the early stages. However, with work underway by RECOFTC and the Prince of Songkhla University they remain on track to be achieved by project close. A key issue here is to identify how the different pieces of work interact and to make sure they remain aligned as they are completed. The importance of this coordination and to improve interaction between the different responsible parties is noted in the UNDP CO assessment.  Unclear interpretation of indicators and lack of clear monitoring data is making progress towards some targets unclear and subject to interpretation. Further attention should be placed on M&E design and implementation, including through assessment of needed results framework changes arising from the MTR (see recommendations).    IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS (IP)  After long inception delays, project implementation is now well underway led by RECOFTC as core Responsible Party including project management functions. Despite this clear progress there are still some remaining challenges with implementation, including low delivery, M&E weaknesses and insufficient coordination, that overall justify the rating of ‘moderately unsatisfactory’. This is an improvement from last year’s PIR which gave an IP rating of ‘unsatisfactory’ and the efforts of RECOFTC and UNDP CO to get implementation underway are recognized. The MTR gave a project implementation rating of ‘moderately satisfactory’ – I do not feel that this rating can be given for the PIR this year due to the low recorded delivery.  The PMU, within RECOFTC, is now operational and engaging well with local stakeholders. Further capacity appears needed on M&E, to clarify indicators and reporting and put in place more effective monitoring arrangements for future PIRs. This could be part-time or specialist consultant support. With RECOFTC as Responsible Party the PMU takes on project management requirements under UNDP-GEF. These responsibilities for the PMU to follow up on UNDP-GEF requirements (e.g. tracking tools, SESP, PIR) need to be clearly defined and additional training provided as needed.  Annual work plan (AWP) implementation has been impacted by delays with finalizing contracts and deliverables with responsible parties (e.g. Kasetsart University, Prince Songkhla University). Delivery for 2018 was at a low 38%, further compounding the delivery lag resulting from the disrupted inception. General ledger expenditures were $369,000 compared to approved annual budget of $1,038,702. For 2019, an ambitious delivery target of $1.7 million has been set. At mid-year, 28% of this has been delivered, and it looks challenging for the full AWP to be implemented. As assessed by the UNDP CO, 2019 delivery might meet 70% of AWP under best scenarios. To support timely delivery the UNDP CO should continue to conduct quarterly three-way meetings with RECOFTC and ONEP to discuss progress with AWP implementation to maintain the enhanced attention on delivery. A coordination mechanism should also be established between the different responsible parties (e.g. RECOFTC, Kasetsart University, Prince of Songhkla University, Wisdom Vast) to ensure that technical work is completed in an aligned fashion and that efforts are not duplicated. This will help address UNDP CO comments on insufficient coordination and ensure timely receipt of appropriate quality technical products.  The MTR report recommended that ONEP consider requesting a 12-month extension. It looks clear based on current delivery that the project will struggle to disburse the remaining 70% of funds by operational close in June 2020. The potential extension request should be discussed at the Project Board as part of the MTR management response, and if supported by ONEP, a formal request letter should be provided to UNDP CO prior to the end of 2019 so that this can be submitted to UNDP-GEF Executive Coordinator and assessed on the merits of the extension in strengthening project impact. The inception delays following ProDoc signature have greatly restricted the intended implementation timeframe and made the range of project interventions and targets very ambitious as reported by the PM in this PIR.  Project adaptive management is effective and needs to be continued to adjust project strategy following the MTR, particularly for Outcome 2 on carbon sequestration of peat swamps. The MTR was completed relatively early in an adaptive response to the inception delays to confirm that the project strategy remains appropriate and identify needed course corrections. The MTR management response is now being prepared by the PMU and will be presented to the Project Board in September. Some proposed changes to the results framework are expected as part of the management response and these – and the management response actions – should be completed as soon as possible to give the PMU and other project partners clarity on priority activities and targets for the remainder of the project period. Risk management is otherwise effective and there are no critical risks reported.  The project has not completed a gender analysis and while some activities are mentioned in the gender section of this PIR (e.g. gender-sensitive community forest management plans, engagement of women in livelihood development for ecotourism and NTFP production), gender mainstreaming impact could be enhanced by the completion of a targeted gender analysis to identify key opportunities to integrate gender mainstreaming into project activities. This was recommended by the RTA in the last PIR but has not been completed. If multiple gender mainstreaming activities are already identified and proposed, this task could be completed by the PMU by consolidating the current proposed efforts into a summary gender mainstreaming plan.  Project attention to safeguards can be improved through a revision of the SESP. During a monitoring mission in late 2018 the RTA provided a recommendation that the SESP needed to be updated based on risks that were not captured at CEO Endorsement stage. These new and escalated risks are reported in this PIR, however the SESP has not yet been revised detailing these risks and identifying management responses. The SESP revision should be completed by the PMU and UNDP CO as a priority and provided to the RTA for clearance ahead of signature by UNDP CO.  A communications specialist (Wisdom Vast) has been engaged to advise on project communications. Despite these efforts only just commencing there are already good media/social media references to the project, including engagement of local media and youth groups. These efforts provide a good basis for further project communications as activities roll out and project impact is seen on the ground. Some communication roles and responsibilities need to be clarified, as reported by the MTR.  Overall, RTA recommendations from PIRs have not been being fully addressed. The UNDP CO is asked to include these in regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms with the PMU to allow better tracking and monitoring of responses. The actions arising from the MTR management response can also be included in this reporting once the management response has been finalized and approved by the Project Board and RTA.    RECOMMENDATIONS  I have the following recommendations to further improve performance, many of which were included in the MTR report finalized during this reporting period:  1) Finalize the MTR management response as soon as possible and secure approval from Project Board and RTA; 2) Consider appropriate changes to the project results framework on the basis of reported progress and MTR recommendations and provide revisions for clearance of Project Board and RTA; 3) Recruit additional M&E support for the PMU to strengthen project M&E against indicators and confirm monitoring approach for indicators and targets (including any changes adopted post-MTR); 4) Continue regular UNDP CO/RECOFTC meetings to maintain enhanced focus on delivery/AWP implementation and to prepare for/avoid implementation bottlenecks. This should also include coordination between different responsible parties and discussion on how technical efforts can be aligned and duplication of effort avoided; 5) Conduct a targeted gender analysis and/or summarize proposed activities on gender mainstreaming into a gender mainstreaming plan if interventions are already clear; 6) Review and revise the project SESP to account for new and escalated risks and management responses and provide the draft SESP for RTA review and clearance; 7) Incorporate recommendations from PIR/MTR into quarterly monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure that recommendations are captured and responses tracked. | |

# Gender

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

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

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

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

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| **Atlas Gender Marker Rating** |
| **GEN1:** some contribution to gender equality |

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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.** |
| Not applicable. |

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| **Please specify results achieved this reporting period that focus on increasing gender equality and the empowerment of women.**    **Please explain how the results reported addressed the different needs of men or women, changed norms, values, and power structures, and/or contributed to transforming or challenging gender inequalities and discrimination.** |
| The CF committee recognizes the role of women in the design and implementation of CF management plans. Inputs from both women and men lead to improved local livelihoods and also defined and clear roles and responsibilities.  Gender-sensitive CF management plans lead to improve local livelihood and also define gender’s roles and responsibilities. Working with 10 local schools, the project organized a youth camp for 210 students aiming to reduce the violence from the conflict in particular family through peat swamps conservation and awareness-raising program. The community engagement process enhances the visibility of women's roles in the village and/or community forest in planning and implementation.    Women are the most frequent users of peat swamps, especially for harvesting and processing of krajood (Lepironia articulate) from peat swamps as raw materials for their livelihoods. Each of the 11 villages in the Kreng sub-district has a women’s group for krajood processing, and some villages have more than one group.  The project has identified alternative livelihood activities such as ecotourism and non-timber forest production, in which women’s role is clearly specified. The project plan to work closely with the women group on these alternative livelihood options. Women’s groups will be trained on the necessary skills to perform these roles. |

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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 worked with local media through communication development workshop. Participants consist of 37 participants ( Male 14 Female: 23)  The project is supporting the development of 3 CF management plans to ensure local women’s roles and interests are reflected in these. The project also supports women ‘s empowerment within CF committees, ensuring the participation of women representatives participating in project workshops on CF management (e.g. 162 participants [Male: 83 Female: 79]) |

# 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.** |
| The flood way construction of Nakhon Si Thammarat City Project led by the Royal Irrigation Department has key implications on water management in the KKL. In response to the floodway construction of Nakhon Si Thammarat City Project, the project will support and provide project information to the relevant agencies, and also link the information to the water management model. |

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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.** |
| Yes |

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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.** |
| An ongoing land conflict may create different perceptions among stakeholders with whom the project is working.The project has supported a dialogue forum to help create mutual understanding with different stakeholders. |

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| **SESP:** [4951\_Annex 11\_Environmental and Social Screening.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4951/213704/1717677/1724229/4951_Annex%2011_Environmental%20and%20Social%20Screening.docx)  **Environmental and Social Management Plan/Framework:** *not available* |
| **For reference, please find below the project's safeguards screening (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) or the old ESSP tool); management plans (if any); and its SESP categorization above. Please note that the SESP categorization might have been corrected during a centralized review.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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

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| **If yes, please upload the document(s) above. If no, please explain when the required documents will be prepared.** |
| The project is asked to revisit its SESP in light of the new/escalated risks. This is pending and to be completed by end 2019. |

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

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

# Communicating Impact

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| **Tell us the story of the project focusing on how the project has helped to improve people’s lives.**  **(This text will be used for UNDP corporate communications, the UNDP-GEF website, and/or other internal and external knowledge and learning efforts.)** |
| The Kuan Kreng landscape (KKL) in southeastern Thailand contains the country’s second largest peat swamp forest area. The peat swamps provide many ecosystem services ranging from livelihoods for local communities, acting as a rainwater and runoff reservoir, buffering from the impact of rains and floods, acting as a natural sediment filter before waters drain into Songkhla Lake, being a major store of carbon, and harboring important biodiversity including a number of globally threatened species. By some estimates, however, about 65% of the KKL remains under constant threat of degradation from various threats with the primary one being converted to oil palm cultivation and associated drainage and forest fires. The area of natural peatlands that harbor biodiversity and sequester carbon is being reduced. The long-term solution is to change the trajectory of baseline approaches and facilitate a transformative shift from unsustainable to the sustainable and integrated use of peat swamps in Thailand. The project is undertaking three components: the first focusing on improving effective protection of remaining natural peat swamp forests in the KKL; the second helping to implement innovative approaches to avoid drainage and restore peat swamps; and the third helping to improve national strategies for land use in peat swamps. In doing so it will improve the status of indicator species in KKL, demonstrate good peat swamp forest management practices, maintain the carbon pool, reduce emissions from peatlands, enhance institutional capacity to account for GHG emission reduction and increase in carbon stocks, and develop a national strategy to guide the management of peat swamps.  In conclusion, the project is helping to improve local people’s lives as given below;  ● Relationships between the government and local communities  ● Ensuring sustainable resource management practices within the protected area and adjacent  ● Youth members play roles in supporting peat swamps conservation and sustainable livelihood development through youth group engagement and local curriculum  ● Optimized use of forest resources from good community forest management practice |

**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.** |
| So far, the communication team (Wisdom Vast Company Limited-a service provider) has highlighted the beneficial use of peat swamp in a sense of social-economic development opportunity of KKL communities. For example, the Krajood basket/bag (wickerwork) has been sold via the online market “Farmsuk”, operated by the top mobile operator namely AIS. The QR quote has been created for all products from Peat Swamp. The customer will be informed about the project and the need to protect peat swamp via QR quote. Link: http://www.ais.co.th/farmsuk/  Media trips have been completed in July. The 30 participants from central and local media (TV, publishers, online media, radio) participated in the trip and promoted the project via their channel. The Wisdom Vast will provide a link and/or newspaper clipping in Q3. The media network for Peat Swamp has been created over media trips. They can create greater impact from the project in 2020.  In addition, the project has been promoted on June 5 in association with World Environment Day. The article was published in the major media in Thailand. Please see below.  1. Daily News  https://www.dailynews.co.th/article/713072  2. Matichon Online  https://www.matichon.co.th/local/quality-life/news\_1525421  3. Kom Chad Luek  http://www.komchadluek.net/news/regional/374461  4. Manager Online  https://mgronline.com/politics/detail/9620000053684  5. News M Thai  https://news.mthai.com/general-news/735945.html  6. INN News  https://www.innnews.co.th/crime/news\_411121/  7. Thairath  https://www.thairath.co.th/news/local/bangkok/1585026  A group of local media and reporters support the project by having different communication products targeting for landscape stakeholders on roles of peat swamps in contributing carbon sinks and local livelihood development. Youth groups and community volunteers produced video clips and movies related to peat swamps by using mobile phones. These stories have been shared on local television channels, Facebook, and YouTube.  FB : https://www.facebook.com/prukuankreng/  Website : https://prukuankreng.org/  FB : Rak Pru Kruan Kreng youth group  https://www.facebook.com/%E0%B8%8A%E0%B8%A1%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%A1%E0%B9%80%E0%B8%A2%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%A7%E0%B8%8A%E0%B8%99%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%81%E0%B8%A9%E0%B9%8C%E0%B8%9B%E0%B9%88%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%9E%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%B8%E0%B8%84%E0%B8%A7%E0%B8%99%E0%B9%80%E0%B8%84%E0%B8%A3%E0%B9%87%E0%B8%87-448420652358166/  Project Brochure : https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1adpZpd4NRZzKPD2-jivcUumJPcJV1bTT  Banner, Roll-up https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1adpZpAd4NRZzKPD2-jivcUumJPcJV1bTT  NoteBook : https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1adpZpAd4NRZzKPD2-jivcUumJPcJV1bTT |

# 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?** |
| No |

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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?** |
| No |

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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:** [4951\_CEO ER\_Thailand Peatswamp\_REVISED\_2Dec14\_For Financial Clearance.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4951/213704/1676706/1676987/4951_CEO%20ER_Thailand%20Peatswamp_REVISED_2Dec14_For%20Financial%20Clearance.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.** |
| As per the ProDoc, all stakeholder listed is a member of the Project Board. Last year, the new stakeholders were engaged as a Responsible Party as well as the Service Providers. However, some stakeholders on the ProDoc haven’t been actively engaged in the project implementation. These are:  - Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior is missing in the project implementation.  - Public Organizations (CBOs, CSOs)- The Love Homeland Association (located in ChianYai District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province) supports community-based natural resource management practices in Cha-uat and Baan Tul Sub-Districts (both in Cha-uat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province). The Association will provide support for coordinating and facilitating local participation and implementation of the project.  - Department of Agriculture Extension (DOAE)  - Land Development Department (LDD)  - Agriculture Land Reform Office (ALRO)  UNDP will encourage the Responsible Party to engage the aforementioned agencies. |

# 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.