

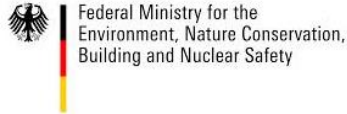
**Country Paper  
Nepal**

**Final Report**

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**Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project  
Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Mountain Ecosystems**

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**Evaluation Office of UN Environment  
May 2017**

## Preamble

This evaluation report has been produced as part of the Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project entitled Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Mountain Ecosystems, implemented in Nepal, Peru and Uganda. This report presents a country paper for the project component implemented in Nepal. Findings of this report are reflected in the main evaluation report of the EbA Mountain project. This report has been prepared by an independent consultant evaluator and is a product of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment. The findings and conclusions expressed herein, do not necessarily reflect the views of Member States of the UN Environment Senior Management, or stakeholders consulted in the preparation of this report. This report, or portions thereof, may not be reproduced without explicit written reference to the source.

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## Acronyms/Abbreviations

AAKNet	Africa Adaptation Knowledge Network
AF	Adaptation Fund
AKP	Adaptation Knowledge Platform for Asia
APAN	Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network
BMUB	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
CBA	Community Based Adaptation
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBDP	Community Based Development Project
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CC SP	Climate Change Sub-Programme
CDKN	Climate and Development Knowledge Network
CFUGs	Community Forest User Groups
DDCs	District Development Committees
DNPWC	Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation
DoF	Department of Forests
DRC	Division of Regional Cooperation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DTIE	Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
EA	Expected Accomplishment
EbA	Ecosystem Based Adaptation
ECCO	Environment and Climate Change Outlook
EF	Environment Fund (UNEP)
FPCC	Field level Project Coordination Committee
GAN	Global Adaptation Network
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GoN	Government of Nepal
ICI	International Climate Initiative (of the BMUB)
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)
LoA	Letter of Agreement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTE	Medium Term Evaluation
MTS	Medium Term Strategy (of UNEP)
MoAD	Ministry of Agricultural Development
MoFSC	Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
MOPE	Ministry of Population and Environment
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
PEB	Project Executive Board
PEI	Poverty Environment Initiative
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services

PFD	Programme Framework Document
PIMS	Project Information Management System
PMER	Panchase Mountain Ecological Region
PoW	Programme of Work
PPF	Panchase Protection Forest
PPFA	Panchase Protection Forest Area
PPFP	Panchase Protection Forest Programme
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Support Costs
QAS	Quality Assurance Section
RBM	Results-Based Management
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REGATTA	Regional Gateway for Technology Transfer and Climate Change Action (LAC region)
ROAP	UNEP Regional Office for Asia-Pacific
ROtI	Review of Outcomes to Impacts
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
SNNP	Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park
SPDEU	Strategic Planning and Development Effectiveness Unit (of UNDP Nepal)
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOC	Theory of Change
ToRs	Terms of Reference
TU-CDES	Tribhuvan University - Central Department of Environmental Science
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP EOU	United Nations Environment Programme, Evaluation Office
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VIA	Vulnerability and Impact Assessments (Climate Change)
VDC	Village Development Committee(s)
WRFD	Western Region Forest Directorate

# Nepal Country Paper

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## 1. Introduction

1. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) designed and implemented a project entitled “*Ecosystem Based Adaptation (EbA) for Mountain Ecosystems*” (hereafter called the EbA Mountain Project) in three countries (Nepal, Peru and Uganda) over a six-year period, from June 2010 to June 2016 (in Nepal the project was implemented from August 2012 to April 2016). The EbA for Mountain Ecosystems project was implemented within the umbrella EbA programme “*Support for building resilience of vulnerable ecosystems*” (Project 11.P3) during the UNEP Programme of Work (PoW) for periods 2010 - 2011 and 2012 – 2013, and as a stand-alone project during the UNEP PoW for the period 2014 - 2015.
2. This Country Paper for Nepal is a contribution towards the Terminal Evaluation of the EbA Mountain Project. The evaluation is led by the UNEP Evaluation Office (EOU) and was conducted by an independent team of evaluators between May and October 2016. The Terminal evaluation was undertaken in line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy<sup>1</sup> and the UNEP Evaluation Manual<sup>2</sup> to assess project performance and to determine the outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability.

### 1.1 Evaluation objectives and scope

3. This Country Paper for Nepal was prepared as part of the Terminal Evaluation of the EbA Mountain Project. The purpose of this Country Paper is to assess the EbA Mountain Project’s Nepal component against the key evaluation principles as presented in the evaluation Terms of Reference, namely to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. These findings will then feed into the Terminal Evaluation of the EbA Mountain Project. The analysis covers implementation of the EbA for Mountain Ecosystems project in Nepal from August 2012- June 2016. Details of the evaluation objective and scope of the Terminal Evaluation of the EbA Mountain Project are available in the main evaluation report.
4. The Nepal Country Paper is structured to mirror the main evaluation report and builds on the numerous UNEP staff and other stakeholder interviews, as well as other evidence gathered from the evaluation mission in Nepal and field visit to pilot sites in the Panchase region: Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Kaski, Parabat and Syangja Districts.<sup>3</sup> The Country Paper presents the evaluation findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations relative to the EbA Mountain Project implementation in Nepal. Included in this country analysis is a closer examination of the performance of the EbA Mountain Project components, their underlying assumptions, impact drivers and other factors that affect the performance of the project in Nepal. This is explained further in the reconstructed Theory of Change (TOC) section 2.7.
5. The evaluation at country level was guided by a set of **key questions**, based on the project’s intended general and specific objectives and outcomes:
  - i. Has Nepal incorporated EbA principles on mountain ecosystem into national planning and development policy processes (including actions focused on Panchase ecosystems to enhance resilience) as a result of the project? Have the EbA measures led to improved delivery of ecosystem services?

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationManual/tabid/2314/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Alongside visits to UNEP HQ in Nairobi, Kenya, in Nepal, a country mission was conducted in Kathmandu for discussions with project partners – UNDP, IUCN, the Ministry of Soil and Water Conservation, and the Ministry of Population and Environment. Field visits were conducted in the Panchase region, where both UNDP and IUCN implemented the project pilots.

- ii. Has Nepal incorporated EbA cost-benefit analysis principles based on evidence from interventions to inform public policy, finance processes and economic sectors as a result of the project?
- iii. Has the project enhanced the ability of decision makers in Nepal to plan and implement EbA strategies and measures at national and ecosystem level in the Panchase area of the Himalayas; Has the project led to a reduction of vulnerability to the impacts of climate change with particular emphasis on the target communities in Panchase area?
- iv. To what degree was the project successful in supporting the integration of EbA principles into good practices and recommendations for informing adaptation policies, development and financial models and plans relevant for up-scaling?
- v. To what extent has the project set the bases for scaling up the EbA approach at national, regional and global level?
- vi. To what extent was the project able to influence international discussions on EbA?
- vii. How did UNEP, UNDP and IUCN as well as the national partner governments assess the partnership and cooperation of the three implementing entities? What lessons can be learned for future collaborative projects?

## 1.2 Country paper approach and methodology

- 6. In accordance with the evaluation TOR, the country evaluation approach followed a participatory and evidence based approach, with a focus on results, learning-by-doing, and collaboration. The methodology deployed for the country paper was derived from the full EbA Mountain Project evaluation methodology that involved an inception phase, country missions and data collection phase, and analysis and the reporting phase.
- 7. Quantitative outputs were assessed against their quality and effectiveness, and their capacity to drive and sustain changes at higher level of objectives. That was possible through triangulation of information (reports, etc.) with the field visits and personal interviews with stakeholders, particularly those who have benefited from the project activities. Triangulation was also used in assessing other relevant components of the project, i.e. awareness and stakeholder participation, as well as learning and knowledge management. Whenever possible and appropriate, meetings involving different stakeholders were held and this enabled capturing a wide range of opinions and concerns related to the EbA Mountain Project Nepal component.
- 8. The main methods and tools that the evaluation team used in Nepal included the following:
  - i. Desk review: key project documentation, reports produced by the project, and information from relevant websites, among others were reviewed.
  - ii. Interviews: Face to face/telephone/Skype interviews with Project Management, Fund Management Officer, executing partners among other stakeholders.
  - iii. Country visit: Visit to the project component in Nepal and meeting with country UNDP and IUCN officials, Ministry of Soil and Water Conservation (MoFSC) and Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) officials of the Government of Nepal (GoN), regional and local government officials, as well as NGO, and community stakeholders (See Annex 2).
- 9. In addition to reflecting this overarching methodology, the Country Paper also applied a Theory of Change (TOC) approach (explained further in Section 2.7). The TOC is used in this evaluation as a tool to delineate the causal logic of the EbA Mountain Project outputs, outcomes and impacts at the country level.
- 10. The evaluation team faced some data limitations in the process of developing the Nepal Country Paper. The project was evaluated after its operations had closed, when the PMU had closed resulting in a number of project staff being unavailable for interviews and discussions.



## 2. Project Background

### 2.1. Context

11. Nepal is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate variability and climate change. Nepal's climate change vulnerability is mainly due to its geographic location, fragile ecosystems and weak socio-economic and institutional context, including increasing pressure on natural resources and land, population growth, weak governance and poverty. Nepal's entire territory is considered to be within the Himalayan regions and the country includes eight of the ten tallest mountains in the world including the world's highest peak, Mount Everest. The country's topographic extremities (mountains, hills, plateau, lowlands, have given the country extreme variations in climatic conditions - from sub-tropical variation in the lowlands to temperate in the hills, and alpine in the mountains. About 80% of the total precipitation falls during the monsoon season, from mid-June to mid-September.
12. Observed climate data indicates consistent warming and rise in the maximum temperatures at an annual rate of 0.6°C. Studies also indicate that the observed warming trend is not uniform across the country. Warming is more pronounced in the high-altitude regions compared to Terai and Siwalik regions<sup>4</sup>. Warming in the Himalayas has been much greater than the global average. With an average increase of 0.6°C between 1997 and 2000<sup>5</sup>, Nepal's Himalaya has been regarded to be highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, particularly on biodiversity (MFSC, 2009).<sup>6</sup> The predictions on impacts of such warming include vegetation shift in high altitudes, loss of species (in particular endemic species), decline of agricultural productivity, adverse impact on sustainable livelihoods of people, and water resources. The impacts of climate change are already observed in Himalayan glaciers as they are retreating rapidly.
13. Projections of future changes include an increase of mean annual temperature across the country by an average of 1.2°C by 2030, 1.7°C by 2050 and 3°C by 2100, and a 15 - 20% increase in summer precipitation throughout the country<sup>7</sup>. Recent studies by ICIMOD show that glaciers in the Dhud-Koshi sub-basin of Nepal are retreating at unprecedented rates with rates of 10 to 60m per year and, in exceptional cases, as fast as 74m per year (ICIMOD, 2007)<sup>8</sup>.
14. Mountain ecosystems are important for climate change adaptation because their integral role in hydrological cycles. This makes mountain ecosystems an important area of focus for EbA. Nepal's mountain regions are important sources of water, energy, minerals, forest and agricultural products and areas of recreation. They are storehouses of biological diversity, home to endangered species and an essential part of the global ecosystem. Mountains are also a key element of the hydrological cycle, being the source of many of the world's major river systems.
15. Though Nepal covers not more than 0.1 percent of the earth's surface, it hosts rich biodiversity because of extreme variability in the altitude between the northern and southern areas, variability in climatic conditions between the eastern and western zones of the country, and its location at the crossroads of six Asiatic floristic provinces. Some 118 ecosystems, including 35 forest types have been identified in the country. The country is part of a biodiversity hotspot, among four hotspots occurring in the Himalayan region. In terms of Global 200 Eco-regions, Nepal hosts nine important eco-regions among 60 eco-regions found in the Himalayan region<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Government of Nepal, 2010. National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA).

<sup>5</sup> Government of Nepal, 2010. National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA).

<sup>6</sup> Government of Nepal, 2009. Fourth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation.

<sup>7</sup> Government of Nepal, 2010. NAPA. Data as compared to pre-2000 baseline, based on General Circulation Models with the SRES 82 scenario.

<sup>8</sup> ICIMOD, 2007. Impact of climate change on Himalayan glaciers and glacial lakes.

<sup>9</sup> Nepal Fourth National Report to CBD. [www.cbd.int/doc/world/np/np-nr-04-en.pdf](http://www.cbd.int/doc/world/np/np-nr-04-en.pdf)

16. The impacts of climate change on Nepal's water resources, ecosystems, and consequently on local lives and livelihoods are expected to be serious. The two biggest climate change vulnerabilities are seasonal and long term water scarcity in several parts of the country, and flooding in the mountain valleys including the threats of glacial lake outburst flows and floods in the lowlands.
17. The Panchase region was selected as a project area due to its high vulnerability to climate change, related to its fragile topography, high rainfall, numerous rivers and deforestation. These increase the incidence of climate change risks such as flash floods, landslides and soil erosion which are common during the monsoon season. Climate change is already having negative impacts water resources, biodiversity and agriculture. The communities in the region are dependent on agriculture and natural resources.
18. The elevation of the Panchase area varies from 500-2,517 metres above sea level and is composed of hills and valleys of different elevation, and considerable areas with extremely steep slopes sensitive to extreme rainfall, runoff, landslides and floods. The region is situated in the centres of the Gandaki River Basin and supports three major watersheds, i.e. Modi Khola Watershed, Upper Seti Watershed, and Lower Mid-Kali Gandaki Watershed. The Panchase area is also the catchment for the Phewa Lake and the Harpan River, the main feeder river to Phewa lake originates in Panchase.
19. A total of 589 species of flora have been recorded in Panchase area including 113 species of orchids from which two are endemic to the region, i.e. *Eria pokharensis* and *E. panchanensis*, while 15 mammal species and 14 avian species have been recorded in Panchase. The Panchase Protection Forest (PPF) covers 5775.73 ha. 79% of PPF area is managed by community as community forests community groups that benefits 13,713 households while 21% forest is managed as government forest. Outside the PPF area of Panchase, one third of the Panchase area is managed by the local people as community forests (209 community groups) benefitting more than 20,503 households.
20. The projected climate change and its impacts, and extreme weather events are likely to exacerbate ecosystem degradation, increase vulnerabilities and undermine delivery of ecosystems services and livelihood improvement. This creates an urgent need to restore ecosystem health as a way of reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience of the mountain ecosystem and communities to climate change.
21. Capacity gaps for implementation of EbA exist in Nepal, including knowledge gaps and a weak policy framework. The impact of climate change on ecosystems and society is poorly understood and knowledge on how climate change uncertainty will impact is not clear. There is no clear information on ecosystem valuation, how ecosystems function and how ecosystems can be monitored in a changing climate. In addition, EbA is an emerging issue in the climate change discourse so this concept has not been adequately addressed in the current climate change policy. Thus, few, if any, demonstrated experiences in EbA approaches at the ecosystem level in Nepal necessitated strengthening capacity for policy and decision makers as well as communities to apply EbA to enable ecosystems to continually provide critical services, while also increasing the resilience of communities and their livelihoods to climate change.

## 2.2 Project objectives and components

### 2.2.1 Objectives

22. The primary goal of the EbA Mountain Project was “to strengthen the capacity of countries that are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, to build ecosystem resilience for promoting ecosystem based adaptation (EbA) options and to reduce the vulnerability of communities with particular emphasis on mountain ecosystems”.

### 2.2.2 Project Components

23. The project included 5 components: (1) Development of methodologies and tools for EbA decision making in mountain ecosystems; (2) Application of methodologies and tools at ecosystem level; (3) Implementation of EbA pilots at ecosystem level; (4) Development of business case for EbA at the national level; and (5) Development of a

learning and knowledge management framework. Although all the five components were implemented in Nepal, component 5 does not feature in project reporting at country level.

24. **Component 1: Development of methodologies and tools for EbA decision making in Mountain ecosystems.** This component was meant to provide support to develop EbA methodology, tools, and options indicators for monitoring and availing them to decision makers in project countries, including Nepal. The support included compilation of good practice EbA measures, operationalising VIA methodology adapted to include ecosystem resilience, developing mapping and scenario methodology, and developing of EbA monitoring tools for EbA management and project success.
25. **Component 2: Application of methodologies and tools at ecosystem level in the Panchase ecosystems.** Through this component, support was meant to ensure that the developed EbA methodologies and tools are applied at ecosystem level. This was to be achieved through: conducting VIA at the mountain ecosystem level engaging the relevant stakeholders taking into consideration the different climate scenarios; prioritizing EbA options through economic assessment; developing maps for spatial planning for EbA, incorporating stakeholder priorities to the spatial analysis to develop a land use plan, designing a specific implementation and action plan for EbA, and development of monitoring guidelines and baselines.
26. **Component 3: Implementation of EbA pilots in the Panchase region.** This component was meant to support piloting and demonstration of EbA practices in mountain areas. It was meant to mobilise and convene stakeholders, review existing territorial plans and identify entry points for EbA, and assess the financial costs and sources. It was also meant to conduct targeted training for relevant government and technical institutions, capturing learning from pilot projects, implementing on EbA ground actions such as ecosystem restoration, water conservation, land rehabilitation and livelihood diversification that could reduce pressures on ecosystems.
27. **Component 4: Development of business case for EbA at the national level.** This component was meant to support defining of cost co-efficients for EbA, conducting economic assessments at national sectoral level for EbA, translation of the economic assessments into policy papers that guide sector strategies and allocation of resources. It was also meant for building responsive policy, legislative and institutional frameworks to support linking ecosystems and their functions to economic growth.
28. **Component 5: Development of a learning and knowledge management framework.** This component mainly functioned at the overall EbA Mountain Project-level, but had some specific activities in Nepal. The component was meant to support efficient and systematic documentation and dissemination of knowledge products and lessons learned to all intended target groups, including fostering South-South and global collaboration. It was specifically meant for developing and maintaining information systems (web-portal and a-communique), convening regional climate change forum through Global Adaptation Network (GAN), organization of sub-regional and thematic workshops (facilitate exchange), supporting scientific assessments and synthesis of research such as VIAs, supporting review of policy, strategy, plans, institutional setup developing and maintaining good practice database, developing training modules such as those targeted at Decision Support Framework (DSF) that are applicable to EbA, and organizing training workshops particularly focused on EbA training and capacity building at various levels. The support was also meant to organize exchange visits, including supporting developing country participants in Global events, the Tenth International Conference on Community Based Adaptation (CBA10) in Bangladesh), as well as reviewing, identifying and elaborating policy options, and providing advisory support to actors on adaptation integration and convening targeted science-policy dialogues.

## 2.3 Target areas and groups

29. The EbA Mountain Project in Nepal was implemented at national, sub-national/regional, and the local/field and community levels. The project promoted nature based adaptation as an alternative to traditional adaptation. The aim was to strengthen national and local capacities to implement EbA practices in order to build the resilience of ecosystems and reduce the impact of climate change on the livelihoods of communities in the Panchase region to climate change.

30. At the national level, the project targeted the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) through its Department of Forests (DoF) as well as the Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) which is responsible for climate change policy and coordination in Nepal. The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) and Ministry of Agriculture Development (MoAD) were targeted to provide support in implementation at the field level through relevant departments and local government bodies. The National Planning Commission (NPC) of Nepal was expected to provide guidance and support in formulating EbA policy and strategy based on the results of the pilot. The technical officers in ministries engaged in the project were exposed to EbA practices and the benefits of their applications, and were also able to share knowledge between each other and with global partners during study tours and workshops.
31. At the sub-national level, the project intervention area was the Panchase region. The pilot sites were in the target districts of Kaski, Parbat and Syangja. The Western Region Forest Directorate (WRFD) was identified to provide supervision and monitoring of the project. Targeted also was Parliament, District Administration such as District Development Committees, Village Development Committees Local Authorities, Universities and schools.
32. At community level, the target was on village leaders, natural resource user groups such as Conservation Area Management Committees, Women's Groups, and CBOs. The communities and households, who are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, were the key beneficiaries of the project set to benefit from the EbA knowledge and practices generated through the project, as well as from improved generation of ecosystem services and livelihood improvement as a result of the EbA Mountain Project. Community groups were also key beneficiaries of the project, and were to play a major role in pilot site identification, and in piloting and implementation of EbA options at ecosystem level.

## 2.4 Milestones in project implementation in Nepal

33. Table 1 below presents the milestones and key dates in project design and implementation:

**Table 1: Milestones and key dates in project design and implementation**

Milestones	Completion dates
UNEP Project Approval Date	24 June 2010
Actual Start Date (Global)	24 June 2010
Actual start date (in Nepal)	1 August 2012
Intended Completion Date	1 December 2014
Planned Duration	30 months
Project Inception Workshop (in Nepal)	9 October 2012
Technical Completion Date	30 April 2016
Actual Completion Date	30 June 2016
Date of financial closure	30 June 2016
Terminal Evaluation completion	December 2016

## 2.5 Implementation arrangements

34. Project funding was provided by Germany's Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). In Nepal, the lead implementer of the project was the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC), Department of Forests (DoF) which worked in close collaboration with UNDP and IUCN, as well as the Western Regional Forest Directorate (WRFD) and the District Development Committees (DDCs) of Kaski, Parbat and Syangja Districts.
35. UNEP's Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) was responsible for overseeing and monitoring the project implementation process, including technical backstopping. DEPI engaged UNEP Regional Office for Asia-Pacific to execute the UNEP led components (1 and 2) in Nepal. In addition, UNEP was also expected to ensure

timelines, quality and fiduciary standards in project delivery. UNEP’s EbA Project Coordinator was responsible for project supervision.

36. MoFSC, DoF coordinated the implementation of project activities assisted by the UNDP Country Office. UNDP also has a range of expertise in different UN agencies, which can be used to strengthen the implementation of the EbA project. A Programme/Project Management Unit (PMU) was put in place at the DoF, MoFSC to coordinate the project activities. The PMU was headed by a full time National Project Coordinator. However, the project implementation was led by the National Project Director who was also the Deputy Director General /Chief of Planning Division of the DoF, MoFSC.
37. Implementation of the various project components was shared among the project partners. UNEP and its collaborating center, the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) based in Cambridge UK, provided leadership for implementation of Components 1 and 2, with support from partners. ROAP executed UNEP’s led components in Nepal, with UNDP providing overall coordination in Nepal. Both UNDP and IUCN led the implementation of the Component 3 but in different pilot sites. UNDP provided overall coordination role at the country level. UNDP also led the implementation of Component 4. Each Project Partner (UNEP, UNDP and IUCN) developed their own workplans, which had to be approved by the Project Executive Board (PEB).
38. Given the global nature of the EbA Mountain project (implemented in Nepal, Peru and Uganda), it had a global Project Steering Committee. At the national level, Nepal Project Executive Board (PEB), provided overall supervision and guidance to project implementation (see Figure 1). The Committee was multi-sectoral with representatives from the main project partners in Nepal (MoFSC, MOPE, UNEP, UNDP, IUCN) and other project implementing partners. At the regional level, a 25-member Field Level Project Coordination Committee (FPCC) chaired by the Regional Director of WRFD, was put in place to supervise and monitor pilot interventions in the Panchase region. The 25-member committee was composed of the Regional Directors of Livestock Services, Agriculture Development Directorates, Officers of the District Line Agencies (DLAs) representing forest, soil conservation, agriculture and livestock, chairpersons of Councils of Panchase, Planning Officers from DDCs, Manager of Panchase Protection Forest Area (PPFA), and representatives of Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal (FECOFUN) District Chapters and NGOs. The Field Officer of the EbA Mountain Project served as the Member Secretary of the FPCC.
39. At the local level, DLAs, Panchase Protection Forest Program (PPFP) and the Main Council and the District Chapters of the PPF were the enabling agencies that created a conducive environment for planning and piloting of EbA options, and future ownership of interventions carried out in the community. Several local NGOs and CBOs were also involved in project implementation. For example, IUCN worked with Machhapuchhre Development Organization (MDO) Nepal and Aapasi Sahayog Kendra (ASK) Nepal, to implement the project.

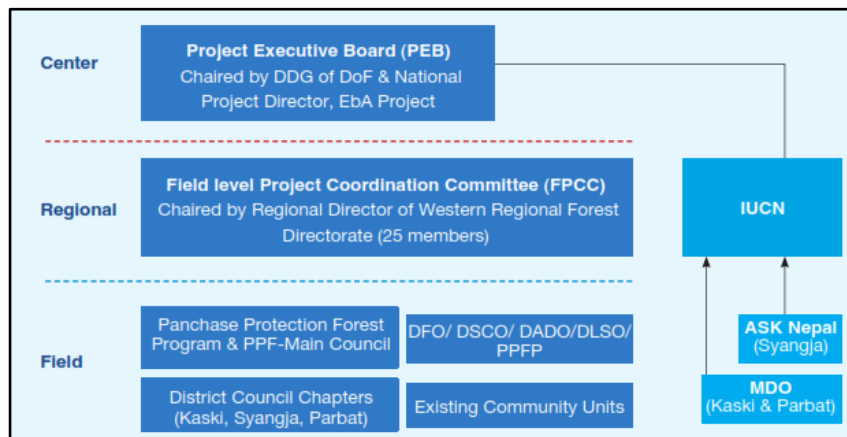


Figure 1: Project Implementation Modality in Nepal

## 2.6 Project Financing in Nepal

40. At project design, the Nepal component of the EbA Mountain Project had a total budget of USD 3,372,637. From this, the project partners' budget allocations were: UNDP - USD 1,731,733, UNEP - USD 713,296, and IUCN - USD 927,608. There was additional co-financing from UNDP - USD 147,255 and from UNDP CBDP (Community Based Development Programme) - USD 68,000, making a total budget of USD 3,587,892 (see Table 2). UNEP disbursed funds directly to the implementing partners (UNDP and IUCN). The UNEP funding was for implementing Components 1 and 2, and is not reflected in the country expenditures.

**Table 2: Project financing/budget**

Agency	Budgeted funds	Percentage (%)
UNDP (funds from UNEP)	1,731,733.00	48.27
UNEP (for Component 1)*	713,296.00	19.88
UNDP	147,255.00	4.10
UNDP/CBDP	68,000.00	1.90
IUCN (funds from UNEP)	927,608.00	25.85
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,587,892.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*Not reflected in financial reporting, making the total budget – USD 2,874,596.

## 2.7 Reconstructed Theory of Change for the Project

41. Progress made towards achievement of EbA Mountain Project objectives and impacts in Nepal was examined using the Theory of Change (TOC) approach and Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) analysis. At project design, the TOC was not part of the project. However, the revised Project Document (Project Document of the second phase) provides a TOC, but it does not cover the entire project duration. Therefore, for this evaluation, the TOC was reconstructed (see Figure 1) with a certain degree of interpretation by the evaluators. The reconstructed TOC (in Figure 1) depicts the causal pathways from outputs through outcomes over intermediate states towards impact.
42. **Stage 1:** Referring to the “objectives” statement as defined in the Project Document, the goal of the EbA Mountain Project was “to strengthen the capacity of countries that are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts to build ecosystem resilience for promoting EbA options and to reduce the vulnerability of communities with particular emphasis on mountain ecosystems”. To that end, we consider the main Project Outcome<sup>10</sup> as: “countries vulnerable to climate change impact have strengthened capacity to build ecosystem resilience through the promotion of EbA focused on mountain ecosystems”.
43. Project implementation in Nepal was geared towards building and facilitating the capacity of national and local government institutions and communities to engage in adaptive ecosystem management. Achievement of the project outcome would contribute to increased mountain ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of mountain region communities and their livelihoods to the negative impacts of climate change. This is in line with the long-term goal of the EbA “umbrella project” (11-P3) from which this project is derived. Thus, the evaluation considers the ultimate impact of the project in Nepal as “increased ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of communities in Panchase region to climate change”.
44. **Stage 2:** The broader outcome defined in the logical framework of the EbA Mountain Project is clear and can be verified by keeping track of the: (i) EbA cost-benefit plans in place at country level and are being used to influence public policy and finance processes (ii) Number of national level consultations on the development of EbA cost-benefit plans, (iii) inter-sectoral meetings held giving recommendations on inclusion of EbA into development

<sup>10</sup> Outcomes: the short to medium term behavioural or systemic effects that the project makes a contribution towards, and that are designed to help achieve the project's impacts (“the ROtI Handbook”, GEF, 2009)

planning processes and overall adaptation strategy, and (iv) integration of EbA, including cost-benefit analysis principles, into National Adaptation and other adaptation strategic documents.

45. The EbA Mountain Project logical framework (and now TOC) analysis is based on the premise that: strengthened capacity in EbA approaches and principles at country level (Nepal) will result in increased mountain ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of communities in mountain regions (Panchase) to climate change impacts.
46. The first output (Output 1.1 in Figure 1) refers to the assistance given by the project to develop EbA methodology, tools, and options indicators for monitoring and availing them to decision makers in project countries. The output was to be achieved through production of a handbook of EbA measures for mountain ecosystems providing a menu of options; mainstreaming resilience into VIA methodologies; outlining data needs, scenarios and steps for mapping; and, identifying indicators for in-country monitoring (monitoring protocol).
47. The second output (Output 2.1 in Figure 1) refers to the support given by the project for the application of EbA strategy and action plans at ecosystem level. This output was to be achieved by conducting vulnerability and impact assessments at country level; economic assessment of EbA options for each country (Nepal); spatial mapping of EbA options for the selected ecosystem; preparation of EbA proofed land use plans; and implementation of action plans.
48. The third set of outputs (Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 in Figure 1) refers to the support given by the project to pilot EbA at ecosystem level. Under this set of outputs, the project set to alleviate technical and institutional capacity deficiencies for incorporating EbA in national planning and policy processes, and implementing/piloting EbA strategies and action plans being developed in countries. This would be achieved by supporting local communities, CSOs, and other partners at the project site to implement EbA.
49. The fourth output (Output 4.1 in Figure 1) is the support given by the Project for developing Business Case for EbA at the national level. The focus was to build the capacity of target countries to utilise EbA cost-benefit analysis principles to inform public policy, planning, finance process and investment in economic sectors. This would be catalytic for incorporation of not only EbA but climate change adaptation in their national development processes. Under this output, focus was on developing guidance notes and cost-coefficients and putting in place mechanisms for sharing them with relevant governments at national level.
50. The fifth output (Output 5.1 in Figure 1) refers to the assistance given by the project to capture and disseminate knowledge products and lessons learned. Under this output, the project's assistance focused on putting in place mechanisms for knowledge management and document learning from the project ensuring that the project's knowledge products are shared nationally and internationally through various platforms such as electronic media, published papers, joint training workshops and conferences. This output was achieved through developing and maintaining information systems; convening regional climate change forum through GAN; organization workshops and visits to facilitate exchange; supporting review of policy, strategy, plans, institutional setup; developing and maintaining good practice database; developing training modules and conducting trainings; providing advisory support to actors on adaption integration and convening targeted science-policy dialogues.
51. The project's immediate Outcomes are interlinked and synergetic. For example, immediate outcome 1 (Decision makers in Nepal adopt and apply EbA methodologies and tools to make better and informed EbA decisions) is a prerequisite to achievement of immediate outcome 2: EbA methodologies and tools applied at ecosystem level. Further, immediate outcome 3 (enhanced ability of decision makers to plan, implement and monitor EbA at national and ecosystem level) builds on immediate outcomes 1 and 2. The results from EbA pilots and demonstrations would contribute to the development of a business case for EbA and evidence base from EbA cost-benefit analysis would then inform public policy and investment in EbA, thus outcomes 3 and 4 (evidence base informs public policy and investment) are also linked. Finally, outcomes 1-4 are linked to outcome 5 (increased EbA awareness and knowledge builds a case for adoption of EbA) All these were intended to strengthen the capacity of Nepal to apply EbA options to build ecosystem resilience and reduce the vulnerability of mountain communities to climate change.

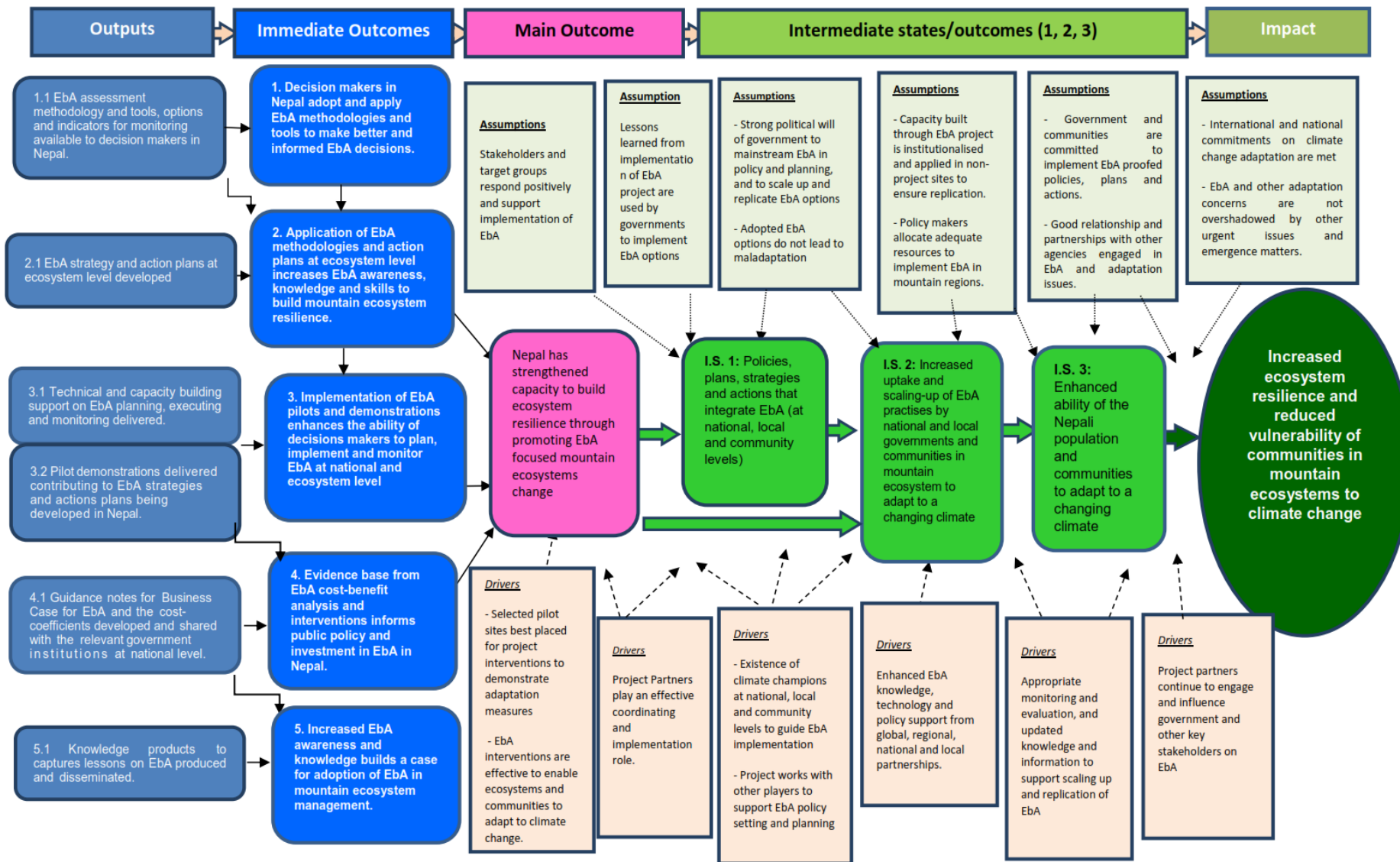


52. Emerging from the Project Document, the **key-drivers** for the delivery of the several goods and services (Outputs) are:
- i. Project Partners (UNEP, UNDP, IUCN, MoFSC and MOPE) play an effective coordination and implementation role.
  - ii. Selected pilot sites are best placed for project interventions to demonstrate EbA measures.
53. Derived from the five components each with Outputs, five immediate Outcomes would be achieved; provided that the MoFSC (DoF) will actively assume a leading role and that the main national and local stakeholders will assume their specific responsibilities in the process (institutional uptake).
54. However, the achievement of the five Immediate Outcomes identified by the EbA Mountain Project does not automatically imply that the main Project Outcome *'countries vulnerable to climate change impact have strengthened capacity to build ecosystem resilience through the promotion of EbA focused on mountain ecosystems'* is achieved. An effective coordination has to be in place in order to assemble and harmoniously implement all the functions and instruments included in the Project Document and its Logical Framework. UNEP, UNDP and IUCN have to fully play their coordination, implementation and promotion role. The national implementation/coordinating agency in Nepal (MoFSC) had to play a coordination role, while the institutional uptake by the main stakeholders had to be maintained and strengthened. The project would then be fully functional and achieve outputs and outcomes under the assumptions that:
- i. EbA interventions at ecosystem level are effective to enable ecosystems and communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
  - ii. Stakeholders and target groups respond positively, and are committed to implement EbA interventions and provide the necessary support.
55. **Stage 3:** The assessment of the TOC led to the identification of the impact pathways and specification of the intermediate states as summarized below.
56. The impact that this project intended to contribute to is "increased ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of communities in mountain ecosystems to climate change". The pathway from the project's main outcome (countries vulnerable to climate change impact have strengthened capacity to build ecosystem resilience through the promotion of EbA focused on mountain ecosystems) to the intended Impact is not a straight forward process. Intermediate states - the transitional conditions between the project's immediate outcomes and the intended impact - are necessary conditions for the achievement of the intended impact. We have identified the Intermediate States that have to be fulfilled (as shown in Figure 1), which presents our understanding of the causal logic and of the pathway from Outcome to Impact.
57. We identified three main Intermediate States (I.S.) that would lead to the achievement of the intended impacts. Assuming that the Outcome is achieved and maintained, under the **assumptions** that: Lessons learned from the EbA project are used by governments to implement EbA; and, Strong political will of governments (national and local) to mainstream EbA in policy and planning, the process will lead to "Policies, plans, strategies and actions (at national, local and community levels) that integrate EbA" (**I.S. 1**). The **key impact drivers** (external factors) expected to contribute to realisation of this I.S 1 are: Partners play their roles; existence of EbA champions at national, local and community levels; and, project works with other players to support EbA policy setting and planning.
58. Our understanding is that the integration of EbA in national development plans and climate change policies, will lead to: "Increased uptake and scaling-up of EbA practises by governments and communities in mountain ecosystem to adapt to a changing climate" (**I.S. 2**), on **assumption** that: Adopted EbA and other adaptation actions do not lead to mal adaptation; EbA capacity built through the project is institutionalised and applied in non-project sites to ensure replication; There is strong political will at national level to scale-up and replicate EbA tools and methodologies; Key stakeholders, target groups and communities in the mountain areas are supportive, and adopt EbA interventions, and; policy makers allocate adequate resources to implement EbA in mountain ecosystems. The main **impact drivers** at this stage are: effective institutions and platforms to guide implementation of EbA; EbA knowledge, technology and policy support from global, regional, national and local partnerships.



59. Increased uptake and scaling up of EbA by government and communities in mountain ecosystem to adapt to a changing climate will lead to: “Enhanced ability of the population and communities in mountain regions and countries to adapt to a changing climate” **(I.S. 3)**. The **drivers** at this level are: existence of EbA champions at local and national level to guide EbA implementation; and, enhanced EbA knowledge, technology and policy support from global, regional, national and local partnerships. The **assumptions** are that: governments and communities are committed to implement EbA proofed plans, policies and actions; adopted EbA and other adaptation actions do not lead to maladaptation; and, good relationship and partnerships with other agencies dealing in EbA and climate change adaptation issues.
60. Finally, under the **assumptions** that: International and national commitments on climate change adaptation are met. EbA and other adaptation concerns are not overshadowed by other urgent issues and emergency matters in countries; the Project Impact “Increased ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of communities in mountain ecosystems to climate change” can be achieved. This will be **driven** by: project partners continue to engage and influence government and other key stakeholders on EbA; and, appropriate monitoring and evaluation and updated knowledge and information to support replication and up-scaling of EbA.

Figure 1: Theory of Change – Outputs to Impact Analysis



## 3. Evaluation Findings

### 3.1 Strategic Relevance

#### 3.1.1 Relevance to national development and environmental needs and priorities

61. The project addresses Nepal's climate change adaptation needs. Nepal is among the Least Developed Countries (LDC), with a GDP per capita of USD 710, aspiring to achieve a Middle-Income Status (MIS) by 2022.<sup>11</sup> A heavy dependence on agriculture and tourism makes Nepal's economy sensitive to climate change. A heavy dependence on agriculture and natural resources means that livelihoods of Nepal's population are particularly vulnerable to climate variability and change. Ecosystem degradation is highly visible and is worsened by climate change, and this compromises the ability of ecosystems to deliver ecosystem services. Moreover, vulnerability to climate change is exacerbated by problems of food insecurity, poverty, weak institutions and a rapidly growing population.
62. Nepal lacks adequate adaptive capacity to reduce climate change vulnerabilities. Particularly lacking is capacity to undertake vulnerability and impact assessments on vulnerable ecosystems and developing appropriate response measures. Thus, the EbA project was relevant to Nepal's climate change needs and priorities for strengthened adaptive capacity. Implementation of EbA practices is crucial to developing appropriate and effective capacity to build resilience and reduce vulnerability while at the same time promoting sustainable development in the country.
63. The Sustainable Development Agenda of Nepal (SDAN) was one of the first policy documents, formulated in 2003, that identified the need to address climate change in Nepal. The agenda draws upon and is in conformity with the longer-term goals envisaged in the Ninth and Tenth Plans, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the Millennium Development Goals, and commitments made by the country in terms of various international instruments including the UNFCCC. The SDAN recognizes that only vigorous economic growth can provide Nepal with the means to withstand and adapt to the effects of a changing climate.
64. The EbA project was aligned to country's Three Year Plan (TYP) for the period 2010/11-2013/14, which was aimed at promoting green development, making development activities climate-friendly, mitigating the negative impacts of climate change and promoting adaptation. The key expected outcomes of the TYP were to prepare and implement a national framework on climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction, poverty reduction and to promote pro-poor environment initiatives. The project was also relevant and aligned to the priorities of the framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Nepal for the period 2008-2012 and UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) for the period 2008-2012.
65. During implementation, the EbA Mountains project remained relevant to Nepal's development objectives as indicated in the 13th TYP for 2013/14 – 2015/16 oriented towards attaining middle income status, achievement of MDGs, promoting sustainable development, adapting to climate change and alleviating poverty by promoting a green economy. The project implementation also remained consistent with the Nepal Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014-2020) that emphasizes biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience as keys to national prosperity. The expected improved capacity to implement EbA practices, resulting from this EbA Mountain Project, will enable Nepal to contribute more effectively to increased adaptive capacity and assist Nepal to fulfil its obligations under UNFCCC, including implementation of Nepal's Nationality Determined Contributions (NDC) and the Paris Climate Change Agreement.
66. By building the resilience of ecosystems and communities to climate change, the project's activities supported Nepal in attainment of MDG 1 and 7 (eradicating poverty and ensure environmental sustainability). Upon the expiry of MDGs in 2015, implementation of the EbA project now contributes to Nepal's achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically: SDG13 - taking urgent action to combat climate change and

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<sup>11</sup> Government of Nepal, 2013. An Approach paper to the 13<sup>th</sup> Plan (FY 2013/2014-2015/2016)

its impacts; SDG15 protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainable management of forests, combating desertification, and halting and reversing land degradation and halting biodiversity loss ; SDG1 – ending poverty in all its forms everywhere; and SDG 2 – ending hunger, achieving food security and nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

67. The EbA project is relevant to Nepal's NAPA which recognizes that Nepal's high vulnerability to climate change is due to the country's fragile topography, deforestation and eroded soils. The project used nature based solutions to address Nepal's climate risks and disasters especially landslides and flash flood hazards.
68. The project was implemented in the Panchase region, selected because of its high vulnerability to climate change impacts, especially landslides, flash floods and soil erosion.<sup>12</sup> Changes in weather patterns, perceived to be linked to longer term climate change, have caused considerable losses of livelihood assets of the communities in the region, particularly among the poor and marginalized groups. However, the capacity to increase ecosystem and community resilience at the local levels is limited. Stakeholder consultations were conducted at the Panchase region to identify the project sites, interventions and beneficiaries. An area encompassing three sub-watersheds (Harpan, Rati and Andhi) in the districts of Kaski, Parbat and Syangja were identified using participatory VIA.

### 3.1.3 Gender balance

69. A gender-sensitive and social inclusion approach was deployed during implementation of the EbA Mountain project in Nepal. Both women and men benefited from the capacity building initiatives, ecosystem restoration, water harvesting, land rehabilitation and livelihood diversification interventions.
70. The EbA Project emphasized women's participation and social inclusion while identifying participants for decision making, trainings and orientation programs and other EbA implementation initiatives geared towards strengthening the ecosystem resilience of Panchase region. Two of major partners included Panchase Mahila Sanjaal- Chitre (PMSC) and Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) in the field.
71. About 42% of the participants in EbA capacity development trainings were women. Three women empowerment trainings were undertaken to engage women in natural resource conservation, in which members of the PMSC and members of the CFUGs in Khaula and Pakuwa in Parbat district participated. The capacity development trainings also involved the disadvantaged and socially excluded members of the PMSC to promote plantation of multiple-use Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) as the Amriso grass along with providing them capacity enrichment trainings to plant, manage, harvest and process the Amriso grass. It is expected that when the multi-purpose species planted in the area mature, they will be able to generate additional source of income for the women and their household. Trainings were also provided to groom both men and women as micro-entrepreneurs of NTFPs and agro-based products through business and commercialization trainings along with linking them to the Parbat District Micro- Entrepreneurs Group Association (DMEGA-Parbat). The members also prepared a 'Business Plan' for Amriso with support from DMEGA-Parbat.
72. Among the 24 thesis research grants provided to graduate students of Tribunal University – Central Department for Environmental Science (TU-CDES), 46% of the grantees were female researchers from TU-CDES and Institute of Forestry. Their research topics include climate change and adaptation, valuation of ecosystem goods and services of Panchase, conservation of PPF, invasive species and vulnerability assessment to climate change. Similarly, eight students were offered community work research that focused on investigating the market links and promotion of NTFPs and roadside greenery promotion to landslides and earthquake assessment, drinking water and sanitation and river bank conservation through plantations. Five of the community work research grants were awarded to female students.
73. Women were among the beneficiaries of EbA interventions. For example, 42% of the participants in ecosystem restoration interventions were women from targeted communities. Approximately 50% of beneficiaries were women and they benefitted directly from the water conservation efforts such as water source protection and

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<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, 2010. Climate Change Vulnerability Mapping for Nepal.

conservation ponds in their communities. Women participation represented approximately 36% of both skill and knowledge based trainings. Three specific trainings under the livelihood diversification interventions targeted women of disadvantaged and socially excluded groups, in which they composed 65% of the participants.

74. With the support of implementing partner (PPFP), three eco-clubs were formed and out of the 120 students who participated in the eco-clubs, 60 (50%) were female students. Similarly, to strengthen the eco-clubs and engage them pro-actively in EbA initiatives in their community, 37 students (12 female) and 12 teachers (2 female) participated in the EbA orientation workshop as eco-club coordinators.

### 3.1.4 Human rights based approach (HRBA)

75. Though human rights were not the primary focus of the project intervention, the project intervention theory considered human rights issues i.e. principles of inclusion, participation, fairness in design and implementation. The project targeted the most vulnerable ecosystems in Nepal in which the poorest communities live and derive ecosystem services (including food and water) and livelihoods. By reducing the vulnerability of the poor communities, the project promoted inclusive development.
76. The design and implementation of the project in Nepal observed the tenets of human rights. For instance, project beneficiaries participated in the selection and design of project sites and activities that are beneficial to them and there was timely remuneration for completed work. There were no cases of human rights violations. The project results contributed to achievement of the rights to food through addressing land degradation with strategies like soil and water conservation which increased land productivity providing more food.
77. Implementation of the project also contributed to achievement of the right to good education and improved health through promoting income generating activities like bee keeping, increased tree planting of indigenous tree species which generated higher incomes for the farmers, providing for the needs of children to go to school. For the women and men involved in these incomes generating activities, their rights to decent employment as a source of livelihood were also fulfilled.

**The overall rating for project relevance is “Highly Satisfactory”**

## 3.2 Achievement of outputs

### 3.2.1 Component 1: Development of methodologies and tools for EbA decision making in mountain ecosystems

78. Implementation of Component 1 was led by UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC).
79. **Output 1.1 - EbA assessment methodology and tools, options and indicators for monitoring available to decision makers in Nepal.** Under this output, UNEP-WCMC developed a customized tool for VIA focusing on understanding the vulnerability of communities in project pilot sites to the loss of ecosystem services as a result of changes in ecosystem functioning through climate change impacts, as well as an understanding of their adaptive capacity and how this could be enhanced. The following outputs were achieved in Nepal:
80. **EbA and ecosystem resilience guidance:** A paper was produced that provides guidance on effective country level application of the ecosystem resilience concept during implementation of the EbA project. The paper which was launched at UNFCCC COP17 in Durban, South Africa in 2011, was used by the Nepal project team to raise awareness of factors that affect the management and resilience of mountain ecosystems.
81. Based on improved understanding of factors affecting ecosystem management and building resilience, a baseline study<sup>13</sup> was conducted to provide information on socio-economic factors, ecosystems and ecosystem

<sup>13</sup> Government of Nepal/UNDP, 2015. Baselines and socio-economic survey of the EbA project area.

services and climate change adaptation in 17 VDCs of Panchase. In addition, a report - *Preliminary Identification of Essential and Desirable Ecosystem Services in the Panchase Area of Nepal*<sup>14</sup> - was also produced that identifies key ecosystems and ecosystem services of Panchase, and how the ecosystems are being used.

82. **Handbook of EbA measures (EbA menu of services):** UNEP prepared hand book entitled *A Review and Compilation of Good Practices*<sup>15</sup>, based on field, desk review and compilation of EbA good practices from global and national literature. The identified menu was shared among key stakeholders in Nepal and was used to finalise the potential EbA options for application in Nepal.
83. **Methodologies and tools for EbA design and implementation:** A comprehensive VIA study was conducted for the Panchase Mountain Ecological Region (PMER) that outlined the vulnerability of ecosystems and communities of 17 VDCs.<sup>16</sup> The VIA report categorized PMER into 13 sub-watersheds and recommended six thematic EbA options for piloting and implementation in the sub-watersheds.
84. **Monitoring Tools for EbA:** UNEP-WCMC developed guidelines for implementation of EbA. The guidelines included, among others a M&E framework with performance indicators defined in consultation with national partners in Nepal, Peru and Uganda. Based on the global guidelines, a M&E framework for Nepal was prepared in a participatory manner. The M&E framework uses an integrated approach with indicators (ecological, economic, social and institutional) to measure the outcomes and impacts of the EbA activities in the Panchase<sup>17</sup>.
85. However, the project implementation was affected by delays in the delivery of outputs under this component (EbA tools and methodologies). The delays were due to three factors: First, the delay by BMUB to disburse funds to UNEP which delayed the start of the project altogether – the funds were received by UNEP in 2011. Secondly, the partnerships involved and the need for engagements at country level necessitated preparation of country specific ProDocs. The ProDocs had to be presented to specific governments for approval before the project could be launched at country level. To that end a Nepal ProDoc was developed, approved and the project started in January 2012.
86. Thirdly, while initially the plan was for UNEP WCMC to undertake initial VIAs in the mountain regions of the respective countries, governments in target countries (in this case GoN) decided on the specific locations (Panchase region). This necessitated a change in direction/strategy on the part of UNEP & WCMC. A combination of the above factors thus delayed commencement of VIAs which in turn delayed implementation of components 2 and 3 in Nepal. The delay, in a way, affected the envisaged step-wise/logical implementation of the subsequent components as discussed in Sections 3.5.2 – timeliness, 3.6.1 preparation and readiness, and 3.6.2 project implementation and management.

**The evaluation rating on the delivery of outputs related to this Component is “Moderately Satisfactory”**

### 3.2.2 Component 2: Application of methodologies and tools at ecosystem level.

87. **Output 2.1 - EbA strategy and action plans at ecosystem level developed.** In Nepal, the following outputs were achieved.
88. **VIA study and adaptation plan:** A comprehensive VIA report for PMER was produced. The report outlines the vulnerability of ecosystems, ecosystems services and community livelihoods to both climatic and non-climatic changes in PMER. Six EbA options to improve resilience of both agents and systems of PMER were established

<sup>14</sup> UNEP, 2013. Preliminary identification of essential and desirable ecosystem services in the Panchase area of Nepal, Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA).

<sup>15</sup> Joshi D., 2013. EbA in mountain ecosystems in Nepal: a review and compilation of good practices. Community Resource management Centre (CRMC).

<sup>16</sup> Dixit A., Karki M., & Shukla, A., 2015. Vulnerability and impact assessment for adaptation planning in Panchase mountain ecological region, Nepal.

<sup>17</sup> UNEP, 2015. Monitoring and evaluation framework with indicators for EbA in PMER.

through a shared learning dialogue<sup>18</sup> process aimed towards both adaptation and mitigation, as factors that could build the resilience of the PMER and local communities.

89. Based on the VIA, an Atlas of PMER was produced. The Atlas highlights the climate change vulnerabilities of the region.<sup>19</sup> In addition, an adaptation plan for the 13 sub watersheds in PMER was prepared<sup>20</sup>. Out of the 13 sub-watersheds, three priority sub-watershed (Harpan, Rati and Andhi) were selected and thoroughly analyzed. Project used a similar approach to analyse and develop similar action plans for remaining 10 sub-watersheds with suggested EbA measures.
90. **Research and supplementary studies:** Sector-wise studies were conducted on: the status of forest ecosystems of Panchase, eco-tourism and homestay development and of rangeland, analysis of value chain of NTFPs; and analysis of the three sub-watersheds prioritized for piloting of EbA in Panchase in relation to climate induced hazards. Led by the WRFD, a detailed analysis of siltation of Phewa Lake was undertaken and ecosystem based treatment measures were designed to protect the lake<sup>21</sup>.
91. The project engaged leading research institutions like the Institute of Forestry (IoF) and Tribhuvan University - Central Department of Environmental Science (TU-CDES) to address research gaps on ecosystem based approaches and development of EbA knowledge base. Different trainings, workshops and seminars were conducted by TU-CDES at which EbA knowledge was disseminated.
92. EbA curriculum/syllabi were designed and introduced in Bachelor of Science programmes in different academic institutions. The knowledge products and lessons learned from implementation of the EbA project in Nepal were used to inform the curriculum development and review of environment related programmes at TU-CDES. Moreover, research grants were provided to 32 students who produced theses. The research was intended to provide understanding in the science of EbA sectors and ecosystem based approach to activities implemented in the field.
93. **EbA Framework for Panchase:** A framework to guide the application of EbA options in Panchase region was prepared. The framework is based on consolidation of EbA options prioritized for the Panchase region. In addition, sectoral studies were undertaken to address the EbA knowledge gaps through consultations at national and sub-national levels.

The evaluation rating on the delivery of outputs related to this Component is “Highly Satisfactory”

### 3.2.3 Component 3: Implementation of EbA pilots at ecosystem level

94. **Output 3.1 Technical and capacity building support on EbA planning, executing and monitoring delivered.** Implementation of this component was based on outputs of components 1 and 2. Both UNDP and IUCN led interventions at the pilot sites in collaboration with local communities in the Panchase region.
95. **Capacity of local stakeholder:** A FLPC was formed to coordinate and supervise implementation of EbA options at ecosystem level. The committee was chaired by the Regional Forest Director of the WRFD. Members of the committee included representatives from the government line agencies (forest, soil conservation, agriculture, and local development), NGOs and Chairperson of the Councils of the PPF. EbA Project facilitated the Panchase Protection Forest Program to form the Panchase Main Council and three District Councils for Kaski, Parbat and Syangja of PPF.

<sup>18</sup> Shared-Learning Dialogue is an approach that allows iterative process of engaging stakeholders and actors to discuss issues and come up with suggestions /recommendations.

<sup>19</sup> Dixit A., 2015. Climate change vulnerabilities and EbA: Atlas of Panchase mountain ecological region, Nepal.

<sup>20</sup> UNEP/ISET, 2015. Ecosystem based climate adaptation planning at sub-watershed level in Panchase mountain ecological region, Nepal.

<sup>21</sup> UNDP/GoN, 2015. Development of ecosystem based sediment control techniques and design of siltation dam to protect Phewa Lake. Summary report.



96. Capacity enhancement trainings were conducted that targeted officials and technical staff of the regional offices of forests, agriculture and livestock and district line agencies, members of the Councils of the PPF, user groups of community forest, water and agriculture, women groups, and community based institutions/social networks. Capacity enhancement trainings were packaged into two aspects: (i) knowledge-based training to raise awareness and orientation on climate change and adaptation; and (ii) skill-based trainings to enhance the capacities of the communities on management of forests, NTFPs, eco-clubs as well institutional development including Councils of PPF and women groups. A total of 6,159 participants were engaged in the trainings of which 41% were women.
97. Knowledge based capacity building programs involved training, awareness and workshops on climate change, community forest management, open grazing and soil conservation to enhance the capacity of local stakeholders and community groups. Among the 2,211 participants in the trainings, 43% were women representing CFUGs, women groups, and members of the Panchase Councils.
98. Skills based trainings focused on enhancing the capacity of implementing partners and beneficiaries. Trainings were conducted on forest management, soil conservation, open grazing, improved fodder, NTFP management and livestock rearing. Institutional strengthening including good governance, women empowerment and training of trainers were conducted. A total of 3,948 persons participated in the trainings, and 42% of the participants were women.
99. Exposure visits were organised aimed at enhancing the EbA knowledge and capacities of technical officers of government line agencies and Councils of PPF, CFUGs, homestay operators, and women groups. 232 participants were involved in the seven theme-based exposure visits, and 34% of the participants were women.
100. **Output 3.2 EbA strategy and actions implemented at ecosystem level.** Under this output, ‘no regret’ EbA interventions were initiated in 2013 and piloted based on best practices and technical know-how on climate change and its impacts to forest, land, soil, water and agricultural ecosystems and community livelihoods. The initiation of EbA measures was necessitated by delays in delivering outputs under components 1 and 2 (VIA tools and reports).
101. In 2014, based on the options identified by VIA study of Panchase, EbA Guidance Framework for piloting EbA in the Panchase was produced. The guidance framework prioritised a thematic approach to piloting EbA in three sub-watersheds of Panchase vis – Harpan, Rati and Andhi.<sup>22</sup> Four EbA thematic options were prioritised: (i) ecosystem restoration (forest, rangeland, agroforestry), (ii) water conservation, (iii) land rehabilitation, and (iv) livelihood diversification focusing on promotion of NTFPs and ecotourism development.
102. **Ecosystem restoration:** Forests are credited for ensuring a reliable provision for food, medicines and clean water for societies and they are the adobe for conserving biodiversity. Forests are also used to control soil erosion, utilized open area, and promoting greenery and to control open grazing different tree species i.e. fodder or multiple-use tree species in the project area planted at different project sites.
103. More than 54,500 multiple-use trees and NTFPs species planted in degraded and fallow lands in 65 Ha and benefitting 2496 households. Plantations of fodder species such as Raikanhyo, Nimaro, Badahar was high along with local native species such as Uttis (*Alnus nepalensis*), Chilaune (*Schima wallichii*) and Paiyu (*Prunus cerasoides*). In addition, native species like Champ (*Michelia champaca*) and Loth Salla (*Taxus wallichina*) that are threatened were planted along with NTFP species such as Timur (*Zanthoxylum alatum*) and Amriso (*Thysanolaen maxima*) in public, private and community areas of Panchase.
104. Six tree nurseries were established with the capacity to produce 60,000 seedlings of in-demand fodder trees, NTFP species and threatened local native species. Chiraito and Timur nurseries were also established in Ramja and Chitre of Parbat district to meet the demands of local communities in NTFP farming by Shree Siddha Baraha and Falgu CFGU with technical support from PPF. More than 26,000 seedlings of multiple-use trees were also distributed to support agroforestry practice in fallow lands, which further supported the establishment of two nurseries with the capacity to produce more than 20,000 seedlings of NTFPs and multiple use species in accordance with the demand of the community.

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<sup>22</sup> UNDP/GoN, 2015. Piloting EbA in Nepal. Framework for EbA interventions in Panchase.



105. **Water conservation:** Water is vital for societies and ecosystems resilience but the changing climate is affecting current and future agriculture and water availability in the Panchase. The project engaged in activities that enhance water harvesting, increase water infiltration in soil, and support efficient use of water for agriculture and human consumption.
106. About 31 traditional water sources were conserved using natural resources as well as construction of water collection tanks to store water during the rainy season and supply it during dry seasons. The renovation and construction of water sources has benefitted more than 1,542 households. About 35 conservation ponds were constructed/ renovated in the Panchase to store water for domestic animals (especially buffaloes) but the ponds also provided a water source for agriculture downstream. More than 1,800 households have benefited from the conservations ponds and more than 150 ha of agriculture land has been in irrigated using water from the ponds during the dry seasons.
107. **Land rehabilitation:** The project engaged in land rehabilitation efforts. This included restoration and rehabilitation of fallow and degraded lands through tree planting, as well bio-engineering activities to protect land vulnerable to climate induced hazards such as flash floods, soil erosion, and landslides. Land rehabilitation and protection efforts were geared at gully erosion control, stream bank protection, river bank conservation (development of green belt and drain construction). Bio-engineering interventions were applied in 72 vulnerable sites protecting 120ha. In addition, plantations have been undertaken to supplement and strengthen the engineered structures along the river banks. In all, 2,496 households benefited from the land rehabilitation interventions.
108. **Livelihood diversification:** The project supported livelihood diversification and improvement interventions in communities of Panchase that could reduce pressure on ecosystems and increase adaptive capacities and build resilience. These interventions included: (i) promotion of NTFPs, ecotourism, and farming and animal husbandry.
109. A detailed assessment of the value chain of five prominent/high value NTFPs was conducted towards their commercialisation.<sup>23</sup> Amriso or Broom Grass, Chiraito and Timur were identified and heavily promoted amongst the CFUGs, Panchase Protection Forest Program and the women Groups for farming through seedling distribution. Panchase Mahila Sanjaal Chitre (PMSC) planted more than 1,500 species of Amriso, 100 species of Timur and other fodder species in a 5-ha plot degraded shrub land leased from a private farmer. In our opinion, however, it is not justifiable to use project funds to lease and rehabilitate private land, which in any case could have been degraded by overuse/misuse.
110. Besides providing seedlings, the EbA Project also provided technical training on management, harvesting and process of Amriso to the members of the PMSC. For sustainability purpose, EbA Partnered with District Micro-Enterprise Development Association (DMEGA)- Parbat and Micro Enterprises Development Programme Area Program Support Office (MEDEP-APSO) to provide skill based training on commercialization and market linkages of Amriso while the VDC Office of Chitre has iterated its commitment to support the women entrepreneurs. A business plan for Amriso was also prepared as an outcome of the training.
111. Panchase is an important ecotourism destination because of its scenic beauty/view and biodiversity. The project supported eco-tourism development through homestay improvement. Communities were trained in homestay operations and facilitated to register themselves as homestays with the prominent homestay villages including Bhadaure, Sidhane, Chitre, and Arthar Dandakharka. The project also established a homestay operator's network to ensure better communication amongst homestays. In addition, the EbA Project provided support towards the establishment of the Adaptation Learning Resource Center and information center at the Panchase Peak.
112. **Farming and Livestock Husbandry:** Open grazing was identified as one of the problems causing ecosystem degradation in the Panchase region. To reduce open grazing and land degradation while at the same time maintaining livestock rearing among the Panchase communities, 365 livestock farmers (and members of agriculture groups) in Kaskikot, Bhadaure, Ramja and Arthar were trained on improved grass plantation and

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<sup>23</sup> UNDP/GoN, 2013. Value Chain Designing of Potential Non-Timber Forest Products of Panchase Protection Forest Area. Final Report. November 2013.

management, silage techniques, livestock rearing practices and rangeland management practices. Fodder species were also promoted to mitigate open grazing practices in the region.

113. Other livelihood improvement interventions were supported: improved cook stoves, mushroom growing, bee keeping, zero grazing especially in IUCN operated areas. However, these were not entirely new initiatives established by the project in the region. Interviews with communities indicated that these initiatives were already in existence before the commencement of the project, but the project scaled them up. Moreover, for most of these there is no direct link with EbA but were just incentives for participation in the project activities.

**The evaluation rating on the delivery of outputs related to this Component is “Highly Satisfactory”**

### 3.2.4 Component 4: Business case for EbA at the local and national levels developed

114. **Output 4.1 Guidance notes for Business Case for EbA and the cost-coefficients developed and shared with the relevant governments at national level.** In Nepal, achievement of this output required availing adequate information to key government stakeholders and building their capacity to plan, implement and monitor EbA actions.
115. **Business case developed for EbA in Nepal:** A Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) approach was applied to that confirmed the cost-effectiveness of the EbA approaches piloted in Panchase. A review of existing economic assessment methodology and tools for EbA was prepared based on consultation with the EbA Global Team and contextualized for Nepal.
116. A CBA of NTFPs Amriso (*Thysanolaena maxima*) or Broom Grass and Timur (*Zanthoxylum alatum*) was conducted to determine their contribution to building ecosystem and community resilience to the impacts of climate change.<sup>24</sup> In addition, a CBA was applied to the bio-engineering or grey-green structures implemented by EbA project to understand their contributions towards ecosystem restoration, conservation of ecosystem services and mitigating the impacts of climate induced hazards<sup>25</sup>. The analyses determined that both interventions are effective and viable. The CBA results were used for building a case for public sector financing for EbA and for integration of EbA in national and sectoral policy.
117. The project produced global publication ‘*Making the Case for Ecosystem-based Adaptation*’<sup>26</sup>. The publication was launched at a side-event at COP21 in Paris, France in November 2015. Hard copies were distributed through the implementing partners’ regional and national offices. The publication provides content on making the case for: (i) multiple benefits of EbA; (ii) economic case for EbA; (iii) policy change for EbA; (iv) financing EbA; and (v) opportunities and challenges on scaling up and scaling out EbA.
118. **Capacity development of Government Agencies.** Two training of trainers were conducted which put in place a core of trainers in EbA. A Comprehensive Capacity Development Plan was prepared and used to enhance the capacity of government technical staff. The Plan identified the training needs and stakeholders that needed training at the local level, district, regional and national level, and implementing partner contributing towards to CD activities.
119. Capacity development programmes involved study tours, training, workshops and interaction and coordination meetings. Technical and field staff of the district line agencies and councils participated in exposure, experiential learning opportunities and technical trainings. A five-day VIA training workshop was conducted that involved local resource persons and key stakeholders of PMER.

<sup>24</sup> UNDP/GoN, 2015. Non-Timber Forest Products and Their Role in Ecosystem and Community Resilience. Cost Benefit of Analysis of NTFPs. Based on Cost Benefit Analysis Case Study prepared by Dr. Keshav Raj Kanel for the EbA Nepal Project.

<sup>25</sup> UNDP/GoN, 2015. Grey Green Structures as Treatment to Climate Induced Disasters: A Cost Benefit Analysis of Grey Green Structures. Based on Cost Benefit Analysis Case Study prepared by Dr. Keshav Raj Kanel for the EbA Nepal Project.

<sup>26</sup> UNDP, 2015. Making the case for EbA: The global EbA programme in Nepal, Peru and Uganda.

120. **Incorporation of EbA Measures into Select Sectorial Policies and Strategies:** The EbA Project supported the DoF to prepare the Protection Forest Directive.<sup>27</sup> In addition, EbA Project supported the DoF, PFPF and the Councils of PPF to review of the five-year PPF Management Plan. Recommendations have been made for integration of the EbA approach and measures in implementation of the plan.
121. Technical assistance was provided to the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) put in place by the MoFSC. The working group is chaired by the Chief of the REDD Implementation Center. Lessons learned and best practices from the EbA project were shared with the CCWG. This has resulted in the integration of EbA options in policy 6 of the Forest Policy 2071<sup>28</sup>.
122. TU-CDES tested the VIA on the sub-watershed of the Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park (SNNP). Based on the impact analysis conducted, TU-CDES revised SNNP management plan and made recommendations for integration of EbA. A task force was then put in place by the Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) to review the revised SNNP management plan provided by TU-CDES.
123. A nine member EbA Technical Committee (TC) was formed under the leadership of the Joint Secretary of MoFSC to spear head the mainstreaming EbA into sectoral policies, plans and strategies. The multi-sectoral committee is composed of Under Secretaries of different departments under the MoFSC i.e. DoF, REDD Implementation Centre, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management, DNPWC, as well as Under Secretaries from National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture Development.

**The evaluation rating on the delivery of outputs related to this Component is “Highly Satisfactory”**

### 3.2.5 Component 5: Development of a learning and knowledge management framework

124. **Output 5.1- Knowledge products to capture lessons on EbA produced and disseminated:** The EbA project was expanded in early 2014 to include a component on Learning and Knowledge Management. To that end, UNEP revised the project in 2015 to include Component 5. Several activities were implemented at the global and country level that supported documentation and dissemination of knowledge products and lessons learned and fostering of South-South and global collaboration.
125. Three EbA policy briefs were prepared that captured the lessons learned on implementation of EbA, opportunities for financing and way forward for EbA in Nepal. The policy briefs were shared in different forums and workshop held nationally and internationally, and generated policy level discussion on the cost-effectiveness of EbA. In addition, four success stories were produced focusing on the EbA project themes in Nepal – ecosystem restoration, water conservation, land rehabilitation and capacity development.
126. A global publication on EbA titled *‘Making the Case for Ecosystem Based Adaptation: The Global Mountain EBA Programme in Nepal, Peru and Uganda’*<sup>29</sup>, was launched at the COP21 EbA side event in Paris – France. The side event organized by the UNDP Global Team and was attended by the Nepal, Peru and Uganda COP 21 delegations and Friends of EbA (FEBA) globally. The Joint Secretary of MoSTE represented Nepal at the side-event.
127. The global UNDP programme team supported the Nepal country team in producing a series of Photo Essays documenting key EbA initiatives, achievements and lessons learned. These essays are being showcased on the UNDP Exposure Site and UNEP websites as an improvement in the ecosystem based adaptation strategy to climate change. Four EbA for mountain ecosystems photo essays on Nepal were produced on the UNDP-ALM website and

<sup>27</sup> The Directive is undergoing review at the MoF and MoFSC.

<sup>28</sup> UNDP, 2016. EbA in mountain ecosystems in Nepal: Project completion report

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.pnuma.org/cambio\\_climatico/publicaciones/UNDP\\_\(2015\)-Mt\\_EbA\\_report\\_FINAL2\\_web\\_vs\(041215\).pdf](http://www.pnuma.org/cambio_climatico/publicaciones/UNDP_(2015)-Mt_EbA_report_FINAL2_web_vs(041215).pdf)

had been viewed 70,185 times<sup>30</sup>. The photo essays have also been translated into Nepali and published online on the website as well<sup>31</sup>.

128. The project supported the development of a Conservation Education Curriculum (CEC), in close coordination with the PFPF, Councils of PPF and with inputs from the teachers of the high schools in Panchase. The finalized CEC has been handed over to IUCN for publication. IUCN and other partners will use the curriculum as a guiding (training) material beyond the project life time. Training sessions using the curriculum are planned (outside the scope of the EbA project) for principals and teachers (mostly, science teachers) who are involved with eco-club activities.
129. The project produced two documentary films on EbA. The films are in Nepali language to communicate the lessons learned from the EbA project. An EbA radio broadcasting program 'Panchase ko Serofero' was used to raise EbA awareness and knowledge. It broadcasted through 'Radio Barahi -99.2 Mhz in Kaski, Syangja FM 89.6 and Radio Shaligram 100.6 Mhz.
130. Based on consultation with local stakeholders, government line agencies and with support from the WRFD, a Adaptation Learning Resource Center was established in Bhanjyang of Kaski District to disseminate information about EbA and conservation of Panchase. The EbA project has provided technical and financial support for the establishment of the resource center. The Centre is managed by the Main Council of the PPF. The Resource Center will be equipped with all knowledge documents related to EbA including academic research work, data on EbA activities, and maps.

**The evaluation rating of the delivery of outputs related to this Component is "Satisfactory"**

**The overall evaluation rating of the delivery of outputs is "Highly satisfactory"**

### 3.3 Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results

#### 3.3.1 Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed Theory of Change

131. The evaluation of effectiveness is based on the extent to which the immediate outcomes were achieved, especially keeping in view the reconstructed TOC for the project.

**Immediate Outcome 1: Decision makers adopt and apply EbA methodologies and tools to make better and informed EbA decisions.**

132. The project was successful in enhancing the capacity of Nepal's decision makers at the MoFSC, MoPE, WRFD and Districts to adopt and apply EbA methodologies and tools to make better and informed climate change adaptation decisions. The logframe indicator for measuring achievement of this was '*Number of EbA related guidance materials available on mountain ecosystems of Nepal*'.

133. The VIA methodology was used to conduct a participatory VIA study in the PMER, through which climate change vulnerability hot spots in the region i.e. three sub-watersheds (Harpan, Rati and Andhi) were prioritized for piloting EbA options under the EbA project. In addition, a handbook that documents EbA good practices in Nepal was used by decision makers to select and implement appropriate EbA options in the pilot sites in the Panchase region.

**Immediate Outcome 2: Application of EbA methodologies and action plans at ecosystem level increases awareness and knowledge of EbA principles and approaches.**

134. The project was successful in applying EbA science – the EbA tools and methodologies, and action plans at ecosystem level in Panchase region of Nepal. The application of the methodologies and tools increased stakeholders' and decision-makers' awareness and knowledge of EbA principles and approaches. The logframe

<sup>30</sup> UNDP, 2016. EbA in mountain ecosystems programme. UNDP narrative report to UNEP – 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

<sup>31</sup> UNDP, 2015. EbA in Mountain ecosystems in Nepal. Project completion report

indicator for measuring the achievement of this outcome was *'landscape level management plan with EbA options'*.

135. The application of VIA methodology in Panchase, the capacity enhancement trainings conducted, the exposure visits conducted provided a foundation for the preparation of thirteen sub-watershed adaptation action plans for the entire Panchase Mountain Ecological Region (PMER). Three sub-watersheds action plans, for the prioritised sub-watersheds, are being implemented. The VIA methodology and tools have been validated tested in SNNP in the integration of EbA into the management plan of the national park.

**Immediate Outcome 3: Implementation of EbA pilots and demonstrations enhances the ability of decision makers to plan, implement and monitor EbA at national and ecosystem level.**

136. In the perspective of this project, increasing ecosystem resilience and reducing communities' vulnerability to climate change in the pilot area was highly dependent on the implementation of the EbA pilots and demonstrations at ecosystems level. The logframe indicators for measuring the achievement of this outcome included: (i) *total landscape area where EbA is being implemented through community participation, and (ii) number of communities and households benefitting from adoption of EbA.*

137. Based on EbA framework and VIA recommendations, the EbA interventions implemented in the project site were categorized into four major themes, namely: i) ecosystem restoration ii) water conservation, land rehabilitation and livelihood diversification. Communities are actively participating in forest conservation, and this is slowly building ecosystem resilience. Land rehabilitation interventions are succeeding in reducing gully erosion, controlling slides and protecting river banks. Moreover, communities are also actively participating in the use of NTFP to support income generation. Water Conservation interventions have increased water availability for domestic use and for animals use during the dry seasons.

138. More than 7,000 households in Panchase (ecosystem restoration – 575, water conservation – 3,342, land rehabilitation – 258, and livelihood diversification - 1,771) were direct beneficiaries of the project interventions and their adaptive capacity has been increased. There is also a reported decline in open grazing in the region where the project was piloted, which is reducing land degradation. For example, a discussion with communities of Chitre VDC of Parbat district, the communities reported a 70% decline in open grazing, realized from project support that encourages planting of fodder trees/crops and ecosystem restoration.

139. The success of the project in raising awareness of EbA and climate change at national level, LGs and communities has resulted in change in attitudes by communities towards adaptation and sustainable farming. The findings of a study conducted by the UNDP Nepal's Strategic Planning and Development Effectiveness Unit (SPDEU) to assess the effectiveness of the EbA project in Panchase indicate that the project was successful in capacity enhancement<sup>32</sup>. About 77% of the respondents indicated that they registered benefits from participating in the capacity enhancement trainings and implementation of the EbA options. The study foresees long-term benefits demonstrated by increased understanding of EbA by community groups, the positive attitude of community and implementing partners towards application EbA approach to build resilience (particularly its income diversification and water conservation efforts). The communities also indicated that they find EbA options viable in the long-term though they indicated sustaining the options in the short term. In addition, the study observes that EbA provided a platform, available in the medium to long-term, for engaging in climate change action and potentially integrating EbA into national and local policies.

140. Training of local communities and exposure visits involving community groups and decision makers were effective in ensuring the take-off of EbA project interventions. However, this evaluation does not find the livelihood diversification interventions that the EbA project engaged in the pilot sites novel (especially, improved cook stoves, mushroom growing, bee-keeping, livestock grazing, tree planting and agroforestry). The evaluation neither finds the interventions, climate resilient techniques or EbA practices. Many actors, especially NGOs (including Ask Nepal, MDO Nepal) were engaged in similar livelihood projects in the region before the commencement of this project.

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<sup>32</sup> UNDP, 2015. EbA capacity development assessment. Strategic planning and development effectiveness unit, Nepal – November 2015.

141. Nonetheless, the contribution of the livelihood interventions to the project success cannot be understated. While they may not be convincingly labelled ‘climate resilient techniques’, let alone EbA interventions, the livelihood improvement and incentive schemes put in place drivers that catalysed achievement of the EbA project outcomes. They served the purpose of securing early community buy-in and making the case for ‘no regret’ adaptation measures during project implementation, before the full scale of EbA benefits could be realized. Above all, livelihood improvement projects reduce poverty levels, increase adaptive capacities and reduce pressures on ecosystems.
142. The support provided by the project to establish an Adaptation Learning Resource Centre in Bhanjyang, Kaski District is very instrumental in enhancing continued climate change and EbA learning. The centre is already equipped with some EbA knowledge products. The Centre is managed by the PPF Main council. Once made fully operational, the Resource Centre will be used for collection, documentation, and dissemination and demonstration of lesson learned and best practices.

**Immediate Outcome 4: Evidence base from EbA cost-benefit analysis and interventions informs public policy and investment in EbA in mountain countries.**

143. The project was successful in using EbA CBA and economic incentives to make case for adoption of EbA in the mountain ecosystems in Nepal. The indicators selected for measuring achievement of this outcome include: *(i) analysis of business case for EbA for mountain ecosystems, and (ii) number of government agencies promoting EbA through policy, plans and programmes.*
144. The EbA CBA and policy analysis study results and the global EbA publications were able to build a case for EbA application at global, national and local levels. In Nepal, the results of the CBA proved the cost-effectiveness and viability of EbA options, and is being used to build case for adoption and replication of EbA in Nepal and to integrate EbA in national and sectoral policies.
145. To drive mainstreaming of EbA in Nepal’s national and sectoral policy, a high-level technical committee was formed under the (MoFSC). The multi-sectoral committee - composed of instrumental GoN ministries and agencies, including departments under MoFSC (Forests, National Park, Soil Conservation and Watershed Management and REDD Center), the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment and Ministry of Agriculture Development - identified some pathways for integrating EbA into national and sectoral policies. EbA has also been integrated into Nepal’s Forest Sector Strategy (2015-2025), which is a national policy instrument
146. The EbA Task Force formed under the DNPWC has succeeded in integrating EbA approaches into the management plan of SNNP. In addition, the EbA project provided support for review of the Protective Forestry Directive (integrated EbA in the directive) which is now pending approval by Cabinet. The project team (UNDP and IUCN) provided inputs for integrating EbA in Section 6 of the Forest Policy 2071.
147. However, achievement of outcome 4 was greatly affected by an earthquake that occurred in Nepal in April 2015. The earthquake shifted attention of Nepal’s policy and decision makers as well as communities from the EbA project as they had to attend to the aftermath of the earthquake. This delayed completion of the CBA study, and the policy dialogues and discussions with the relevant Ministries.

**Immediate Outcome 5: Increased EbA awareness and knowledge builds a case for adoption of EbA in mountain ecosystem management.**

148. The project was successful in increasing EbA awareness and documenting the project results, practices and lessons learned, which are building a case for adoption of EbA locally, nationally and globally. Documentation and knowledge management of EbA approaches in Nepal have been undertaken in close coordination with the Global Knowledge Manager to produce country document. The indicator selected for measuring achievement of this outcome was *‘EbA knowledge products, exchange and sharing lessons learned’*.
149. The generation of different communication materials and sharing and dissemination of the materials using different fora (media, websites, stakeholder forums, conferences and workshops) strengthening communication,

knowledge sharing, and more active cooperation among various climate change stakeholders. The implementation of the projects has led to the formation of the Friends of EbA (FEBA) network globally that enable the sharing of Nepal's EbA results with the local and global EbA community. COPs are also opening avenues for sharing EbA results and lessons beyond the implementing countries.

150. The publication of Conservation Education Curriculum targeting youth groups for awareness and education on conservation, forest management, climate change and ecosystem based adaptation (in Nepali language) is instrumental in increasing EbA awareness and knowledge in Nepal. The establishment of the Adaptation Learning Resource Center in Panchase as an information center in the region is generating awareness of local biodiversity, climate change, forest management as well as documentation of all project related publications.

**The evaluation rating for overall achievement of Outcomes is "Satisfactory"**

### 3.3.2 Likelihood of impact using the Review of Outcomes to Impact (ROtI) approach

151. The likelihood of impact (to increase the resilience of ecosystems and reduce the vulnerability of communities in the Panchase region to climate change) depends on several external factors and conditions moving toward the higher-level objectives of the results chain. It is assessed in terms of the extent to which change is happening along the project results chains from immediate outcomes over the main outcome and intermediate states towards impacts, based on the reconstructed TOC (Section 2.7).

152. The projects intended outcomes were achieved and were designed to feed into Nepal's continuing processes on development, natural resources management and climate change adaptation. Partners such as UNDP, IUCN, MoFSC, MOPE, WFRD and the Districts and VDCs in Panchase region are well placed to facilitate uptake of project outcomes into these processes. However, no provisions were made within the project (design and implementation) to allocate responsibilities after project funding (end), and there was no exit strategy. **Rating of progress towards Outcomes is "A".**

153. Progress has been made to move towards intermediate states that is likely to translate into impact - increased ecosystem resilience and reduced community vulnerability as discussed in Section 3.3.1 (achievement of direct outcomes). The measures have started but have not yet produced significant results, but the benefits will be evident over the long-term. The increased EbA capacity to plan, implement and monitor EbA implementation at ecosystem level and the partnerships built are likely to translate into increased application of EbA. In addition, the country and community ownership and driven-ness of the project results is likely to increase investment in EbA. Follow up projects/interventions and financing are needed to drive/scale up the project results to impact. Though EbA project supported the preparation of (and integration of EbA) Protection Forest Directive, and review of PPF Management plan and the SNNP Management Plan (and integration of EbA in the two management plans) EbA is not yet fully integrated into national development policy and planning processes. **Rating of progress towards the Intermediate States is "C".**

154. The overall aggregate rating for this project is "AC". Considering the high level of ownership of the project results at national, regional, district and community levels, the partnerships built and institutionalisation of the project's achievements, a notation "+" is also attributed, producing a final rating "AC+". The Project, with an aggregated rating of AC+ can be rated as "Likely" to achieve the expected Impact. A further discussion and justification of the rating is presented below.

155. The project assumes that strengthening the capacity of vulnerable countries to promote EbA options for mountain ecosystems will lead to the desired impact of "increased ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of communities in mountain ecosystems to climate change". As already indicated in section 2.7, this is not an entirely correct assumption. There are many intermediate states and intervening variables between strengthening the capacity to apply EbA options, and increasing ecosystems and community resilience to climate change.

156. According to the results framework in the reconstructed TOC, the three intermediate states are: (i) Plans, strategies and actions that integrate EbA; (ii) Increased uptake and scaling-up of EbA practises by governments and



communities in mountain ecosystem to adapt to a changing climate, and; (iii) Enhanced ability of the population and communities in mountain regions and countries to adapt to a changing climate.

157. In terms of perceived likelihood of impact, the project beneficiaries and community groups in project pilot sites indicated a likelihood of impact based on the benefits of the implemented EbA options in delivery of ecosystem services and livelihood improvement. The EbA capacity development study conducted by UNDP at the end of the project found out that 77% the beneficiaries had acquired knowledge and skills to apply EbA and were willing to continue the practices.
158. Given that (i) EbA methodologies and tools were developed and are available for use in future programmes (ii) an economic case was successfully made for investing in EbA, (iii) capacity was built at national, regional, local community groups to apply EbA measures, (iv) EbA was integrated in forest policy (v) an adaptation resource centre was put in place in the region to scale up EbA lessons and application, (vi) an EbA syllabus was developed and integrated into environmental programmes at TU-CDES, (vii) EbA training manuals were developed (in Nepali language), and (viii) the project documented knowledge products and lessons learned, the project achievements are likely to progress to impact.
159. However, the project had little influence on policy but given that high level multi-sectoral technical committee was put in place tasked to integrate EbA in national and sectoral policy and that an economic case was made for investment in EbA, there is a likelihood that EbA will be integrated in Nepal's national and sectoral policy and planning process.
160. This evaluation finds that some livelihood diversification interventions deployed by the project are not linked to EbA – including farming and livestock husbandry, bee-keeping, improved cook stoves – and have no direct link to building ecosystem and increasing community resilience to climate change, because they were not climate proofed before their implementation. In our view, these are the 'business as usual' livelihood improvement interventions that were being implemented in the Panchase and Nepal in general long before the EbA Mountain Project was launched, and yet vulnerability of communities and ecosystems to climate change vulnerabilities, was high. Thus, they cannot be taken 'climate resilient techniques' per se, but as incentives that facilitated create community buy-in for the EbA project.
161. With the end of the project support there is risk that some livelihood improvement may not be sustained and communities could engage in activities that negatively impact ecosystems in order to support their livelihoods. It was reported during group discussions with the WRFD that value addition and scaling up of income generation activities supported by the project, such as tea/coffee growing, bee-keeping and broom grass planting has not yet been realized because the interventions are not commercialized. It is thus crucial that avenues are put in place to concretise and sustain them as way of reducing pressure on ecosystems and diversifying livelihood assets in the medium to long-term.
162. Nonetheless, some livelihood diversification approaches, such as promotion of NTFPs e.g. broom grass, and ecotourism development have a link to EbA and are 'no-regret adaptation options' that could in themselves drive achievement of ecosystem and community resilience. Moreover, they are a source of income and can enhance individual and community financial capital which can potentially provide an avenue for financing EbA at community levels and could thus drive implementation of EbA options to higher levels.
163. There is evidence of a reduction in the impact of floods, landslides and droughts in the area where the EbA options were piloted - ecosystem restoration, land rehabilitation and water conservation interventions. Siltation of the Phewa Lake is reducing. However, the adoption of the EbA options piloted/demonstrated under the project is still limited to the project sites within a few communities and thus needs to be rolled out/replicated in other communities, districts, mountain areas and other vulnerable ecosystems in the whole country.
164. Although the project built EbA capacity and a case for investment in EbA at national and local levels, many other factors come into play before the enhanced EbA capacities can be translated into improved resilience of ecosystems and reduced vulnerability of communities to climate change. As we go higher in the TOC, the assessment becomes more theoretical and speculative i.e. attribution by tracing back change to the project's specific outputs beyond immediate outcomes becomes increasingly difficult, verging on the impossible at intermediate state and impact levels. Additionally, the vast number of actors and ongoing interventions in the



Panchase (on climate change adaptation, livelihood improvement, and ecosystem management) and the country at large makes it difficult to attribute progress towards building resilience and reducing vulnerability to any one intervention (this EbA Mountain Project).

165. Nevertheless, the project's legacy and achievements provide a very strong foundation on which to continue to build ecosystem and community resilience to the impacts of climate change. By raising awareness and confidence in EbA, proving the viability and sustainability of EbA options, building the capacity of project partners and beneficiaries to plan and implement EbA, creating EbA champions at national and local levels, and creating the political buy-in and support for EbA, the project was successful in influencing the necessary drivers that are catalytic to the adoption and scaling up and drive it to impact, while at the same time delivering multiple co-benefits, helping avoid mal-adaptation and contributing to 'no regrets' approach to address climate change.
166. The effective documentation of EbA knowledge products, as well as communication and information sharing mechanisms put in place is likely to drive the project outcomes to impact through sharing of lessons learned. Therefore, whereas many other factors need to come into play before the piloted EbA options can be translated in increased climate resilience, the project's ability to prove the viability of EbA in Panchase and building a case for its integration into national, sectoral and local development policy and financing processes indicates a high likelihood of impact. Implementation of EbA is likely to attract private, public and foreign funding that could scale up and replicate EbA options, which in the end could reduce climate vulnerability in Nepal.

**The evaluation rating for the likelihood of achieving impact is "Likely"**

## 3.4 Sustainability and Replication

### 3.4.1 Socio-political sustainability

167. The partnership created between UNEP, UNDP, IUCN, MoFSC, MoPE, WRFD, Districts and NGOs involved in project implementation enabled project ownership and political support. This partnership and network is highly likely to continue beyond the project's life span. With the MoFSC (DoF) as the lead implementing partner and the WRFD and Districts as local partners, the EbA interventions implemented became government owned (national and sub-national) and are likely to become part of the national and local development policy and planning priorities. The project was able to generate high political support and buy-in at the national and sub-national levels and commitment to up-scale the project achievements in the medium to long-term which are beginning to emerge.
168. The project was implemented with stakeholders participating actively in all activities including: vulnerability assessment, selection of pilot sites, prioritisation of EbA options, as well as in piloting of on-the-ground EbA interventions. The participatory approach deployed by the project provides a framework for continued resource mobilization and implementation of EbA activities in the country. Chances of sustainability are high given the integration of EbA in development and programmatic plans and capacity building of the government and local communities
169. The project's achievements have been found to be beneficial to the districts and communities, and have subsequently resulted in increased ownership of results and contribution to socio-political sustainability of the project results. Evaluation respondents noted that the key strengths of the EbA approach was its emphasis on addressing the needs of the community and the ecosystem to reduce climate change vulnerability and increasing climate resilience. The respondents described the EbA results achieved as 'holistic' and 'highly sustainable'.
170. The project achieved its objective of influencing national and local policy and planning, as sectoral and district policymakers and technical staff who were involved developing EbA action plans, and integration of EbA in forestry sector policies and plans. Given that, climate change is integrated into Nepal's development framework – the Nepal's 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Three Year Plans – there is a policy framework at national level to sustain the project's achievements and lessons learned beyond the project expiry period is in existence. The EbA committees and taskforces formed through the project support – the PPF Main Council and Districts level councils for Kaski, Parbat and Syangja Districts and the multi-sectoral EbA technical committee at national level will remain in place long

after the expiry of the project, and are instrumental in driving scaling up of EbA in Nepal's institutions at all levels. Therefore, the developed and piloted EbA tools, approaches and interventions are highly likely to remain relevant to Nepal's future development agenda.

171. The project deployed a highly participatory approach in design and implementation. The piloted project interventions at the ecosystem level were needs driven and implemented by districts, communities and individual farmers. This ensures a high level of sustainability and absorption of adaptive capacity in the medium and long-term. The involvement and formation of community groups enhances the socio and economic dimensions of the project results as the built networks will continue beyond the expiry of the project. The involvement of the NGOs and CBOs (for example Ask Nepal and MDO Nepal) is an entry point to engaging the networks in building climate resilience in Nepal.
172. At the local level, sustainability has been evaluated and is found likely due to the following factors: the high demand for land rehabilitation, water conservation and livelihood diversification among communities which will increase agricultural productivity, food security and raise household incomes. However, if no follow up activities to sustain project achievements until benefits are realised, the poor communities could revert to unsustainable ecosystem utilization practices. Political changes/strife could also negatively affect the sustainability of the projects results in the medium to long-term.

**The rating for the socio-political sustainability element is "Likely"**

### 3.4.2 Sustainability of Financial Resources

173. While the project achieved a lot in building the capacity of decision makers at national and sub-national levels to plan, implement and monitor EbA, the continuation of project results, especially scaling up of EbA options in pilot sites and replicating them in other areas in the Panchase region and other mountain regions in Nepal may require further financial support. The much-needed support should build on the capacity built implement the piloted EbA options outside the pilot areas, involving more national and local partners, and scale up dissemination of EbA knowledge products to build a case for its adoption in the whole country. While the GoN is committed to allocating some resources in its budget to scale up EbA in Panchase, the resources may be inadequate to drive full implementation of EbA options.
174. One opportunity is that EbA is one of priorities in Nepal's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC). The country commits itself, through its INDC, to mainstream EbA in environment development programmes<sup>33</sup>. Nepal is in the process of accreditation to the GCF, and this funding, once accessed, could be used to continue and scale-up project activities. Above all, financial sustainability is assured through the harvested political will, support of government and inclusiveness of all major stakeholders, especially the western region, districts and community groups.
175. The GoN resources, through the annual budget, will continue to be allocated to MoFSC, MoPE, WRFD, PFPF to sustain running costs of the established EbA pilots. For example, the MoFSC has allocated additional NRs. 2,000,000 (about USD 200,000) to support the activities implemented by the EbA project in the financial year 2016/2017 (these are additional funds to its usual program budget allocation). The DoF has also allocated budget to the sub-watersheds where the EbA project was piloted to extend implementation of EbA options to other VDCs that were not part of the pilots. While these budget allocations are significant in showing the GoN commitment to scaling up EbA, there are too small to sustain the project achievements.
176. Successful implementation of the EbA project in Nepal, especially building an economic case for EbA is already attracting EbA programmes and projects in Nepal. For examples, a four-year project entitled "EbA approach to adaptation: strengthening evidence and informing policy" is set to be implemented in Nepal by IIED, UNEP-WCMC

<sup>33</sup> GoN, 2016. Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC). Submitted to UNFCCC in February 2016. Ministry of Population and Environment.

from November 2015 – July 2019. Another three-year EbA project has also been approved by BMUB and will be implemented in Nepal by The Mountain Institute (TMI) and IUCN from January 2017 to December 2019. Another landscape project – Chitwan-Annapurna Landscape (CHAL) provides potential for sustaining the EbA achievements because EbA has been integrated in its new strategy.

177. There are also two other EbA related projects being implemented in Nepal: (i) the Global Project executed by China Special Climate Fund – EbA South funded by GEF to assist developing countries to implement EbA South-South cooperation - through developing EbA portal/knowledge networks and demonstrating EbA interventions; and, (ii) the LCDF project (GEF) – EbA in rangelands in Nepal (has not yet started) but builds on lessons learned from the EbA mountain project.
178. The benefits of implementing EbA options are long-term. Thus, communities in Panchase will take a much long-term to realise full benefits from ecosystem restoration, land rehabilitation and water conservation and yet the project has already ended. The challenge now is to maintain the pilots until the benefits are realised. This requires follow up funding, otherwise there is a risk that the benefits could be lost. Though there is a cost recovery mechanism by engaging in livelihood improvement projects, this mechanism is not itself adequate to reduce pressure on ecosystems. Therefore, the sustainability of the successful piloted EbA interventions will depend on their ability to generate monetary benefits (the incentive to keep them going) which will depend on continued access to technical advice and inputs and some additional funding.
179. Some communities have started initiatives to enhance the sustainability of water source protection through establishment of a trust fund. There has been an old practice by the communities in Panchase where each household contributes NR. 10 (USD 1) monthly to maintain water sources. In addition, the benefits obtained from the community forests and resource centre are directly owned by the communities themselves, which is the great incentives that has been place for the communities to protect the forest. Nonetheless, follow up funding should explore avenues for establishment of trust funds, community conservation funds and Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) which could sustain enhance community financial capital to drive achievements and to impacts – provide alternative livelihoods that reduce pressure on ecosystems and increase ecosystem resilience.
180. Notable during project implementation was of a budgetary and co-ordination mechanism to implement EbA options identified by the studies conducted on Panchase through the EbA project. While most of the project activities could be continued by the PFPF and GoN, there is a need of clear cut co-ordination mechanism among local, district and regional government line agencies. A follow up phase/projects should allocate funds to strengthen coordination of different institutions and agencies to scale up EbA in Nepal.
181. This evaluation finds that unless a follow up phase/project is designed to ensure financial sustainability to up-scale and replicate the project achievements, there is a risk that some interventions (especially ecosystem restoration, land rehabilitation and water conservation) could be lost.

**The rating for the financial sustainability element is “Moderately Likely”**

### 3.4.3 Sustainability of Institutional Frameworks

182. The project was designed with a strong capacity building focus as well as broad stakeholder participation and consultation so that project activities can be continued beyond the period of BMUB support. Along the way partnerships were built between UNEP, UNDP and IUCN one hand (the IAs) and the MoFSC and the pilot districts. MoUs were signed and implemented and these partnerships can be built upon to enhance the sustainability of the project results.
183. In the evaluators’ assessment, the coordination and management role played by MoFSC (DoF) and more especially the PMU, in administering, overseeing and implementing all project activities was essential in driving the project to deliver outputs and achieve outcomes. Without the exemplary effective and efficient coordination, the project activities could not possibly continue. The Project also enhanced coordination and capacities of partners and stakeholders at the national, regional, district and community levels to effectively network and support the implementation of each other’s mandates.

184. During the implementation of the project, Adaptation Learning Resource Centres were put in place in the Panchase which strengthen the climate change institutional set up of the districts. The Resource Centre will continue to promote climate change learning and knowledge disseminations for a long time after the expiry of the project. The implementation of project under MoFSC, MOPE, WFRD, PFPF, Districts and VDCs also enhances institutional sustainability.

**The rating for the institutional sustainability element is “Likely”**

### 3.4.5 Environmental sustainability

185. By restoring degraded land, ecosystems and watersheds, the project is building the resilience of ecosystems which will enhance the delivery of ecosystem services to the communities. However, the threats of population pressure and poverty could increase pressure on natural resources and ecosystems, and this could potentially undermine ecological sustainability. In particular, poverty reduction, through livelihood diversification, is essential for reducing communities’ dependence on ecosystems and natural resources for their livelihoods. These will enhance restoration of degraded ecosystem as well as the integrity and resilience of ecosystems to continue providing ecosystem services to the population and communities under a changing climate.

186. Based on community needs, the NGOs involved in the project (IUCN, Ask Nepal and MDO Nepal) have indicated they will continue environmental management and climate change interventions in Panchase region. The scaling up of activities on water resource management by the NGOs will enhance environmental sustainability. The project has strengthened the DoF, WFRD and PFPF to continue forest protection programmes in Panchase region taking climate change into consideration. In addition, community forest programmes have been supported to continue forest conservation through CFUGs. District line agencies (forests, agriculture, livestock rearing) will continue efforts to reduce siltation in Phewa Lake and enhance harvesting of water resources for agriculture and livestock.

187. However, the EbA project focused on mountain ecosystems and only on the Panchase region. There are many other vulnerable ecosystems especially in the Himalayan mountain region and other regions (forests, rangelands, river basins etc). Ensuring environmental sustainability requires implementation of EbA in other mountain and hilly ecosystems and other degraded and vulnerable ecosystems.

188. Project sustainability could be affected by other emergencies and re-occurring disasters. For example, the April 2015 earthquake shifted attention priorities of Nepal’s decision makers and communities to deal with the effects of the earthquake. Such To that end, EbA and climate change adaptation may not be a priority of government and communities.

**The rating for the environmental sustainability element is “Likely”**

**The overall evaluation rating for sustainability is “Moderately Likely”**

### 3.4.5 Catalytic Role and Replication

189. The partnerships built by the project between UNEP, UNDP, IUCN, MoFSC, Western region, Districts, Ask Nepal, MDO Nepal, NGOs/CBOs, communities and farmers groups and media have put in place a critical mass that has elevated EbA to higher levels and could trigger implementation of EbA in other areas outside the project pilot sites.

#### Incentives

190. Livelihood diversification programmes and implementation of ‘no-regret adaptation’ interventions provided an incentive to communities to engage in project activities. Additionally, the communities and individual farmers are able to earn incomes from livelihood improvement projects supported by the project. These played a crucial role

locally in strengthening the adoption of EbA options and supporting ecosystem restoration, land rehabilitation, and water conservation in pilot sites and could be used to replicate and up-scale project results.

### **Institutional changes**

191. The government officials and communities whose capacity has been enhanced by the project will remain in place to implement and scale up EbA activities after the expiry of the project. The setting up of Adaptation Learning Resource Centre, backed by the development of EbA tools, methodologies and application guidelines will enhance scaling up and replication of EbA in the institutions of Nepal. The tools and methodologies will continue to be used by Nepal institutions to conduct climate change impact analyses and enhancing EbA capacity. The various EbA committees and taskforces were formed at national and subnational levels are instrumental in driving scaling up of EbA in Nepal's with in institutions.
192. In addition, key agencies and institutions were involved in the design and implementation of the project – MoFSC, MoPE, National Planning Commission, DoF, WRFD, Districts, universities, NGOs. These institutions now recognise the need for and benefits of applying EbA for increased climate change resilience. Their capacity has also been built to implement EbA. The involvement of districts, VDCs and community groups, coupled by preparation of sub-watershed adaptation action plans has also contributed to institutionalization of EbA at the regional and local levels (the plans are owned by institutions). These institutions and stakeholders actively support project implementation and are committed to scaling up and replicating lesson learned and best practices.

### **Policy changes**

193. The project has raised EbA awareness among policy and decision makers at national, regional and local levels. The increased awareness has catalysed the integration of EbA in the Protection Forest Directive, the five year PPF Management Plan, the SNNP Management plan and integration of EbA in environment curriculum in universities. Moreover, EbA is integrated in Nepal's INDC that was submitted to UNFCCC in February 2016<sup>34</sup>. These achievements are catalytic to driving EbA scale-up and replication. Therefore, although the EbA project did not succeed in influencing the integration of EbA in national and sectoral policies and plans during its life time, the setting up a national multi-sectoral technical committee tasked to integrate EbA in national development policy and integration of EbA in the INDC are main achievements as they are drivers to policy change. Moreover, the GoN has already started to allocate resources in its budget to scale-up EbA options in Panchase region (see section 3.4.3 sustainability of financial resources). Above all there are indicators for political buy-in and country ownership of the EbA project result to catalyse climate change response in Nepal.

### **Catalytic financing**

194. The project received funding from BMUB through UNEP to implement its activities. No co-financing was provided by the GoN and local communities in the Panchase region. However, the GoN has allocated some resources for scaling up of EbA activities in the Panchase region, but these resources should be supported by additional funds (see section 3.4.2).

### **Champions to catalyse change**

195. The project has created EbA champions at global, national and local levels. The WRFD, PFPF-Main Council, District Council Chapters, and community groups involved in piloting EbA options reach deeper into the rural agrarian communities and ecosystems that are most vulnerable to droughts, floods, landslides and erosion. The increased confidence in EbA tools and approach, effectiveness of the piloted EbA interventions, and effective communication and dissemination channels are catalytic and could champion innovations in adaptation that can translate into increased community and ecosystem resilience. The political buy-in and increased awareness of policy and

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<sup>34</sup> GoN, 2016. Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC). Submitted to UNFCCC in February 2016. Ministry of Population and Environment.

decision makers in Nepal to plan, implement and monitor EbA at ecosystem level, and the willingness to design and implement EbA proofed policies and plans are drivers to increased preparedness to climate change. However, the championing of EbA and climate compatible development in general will largely depend on integration of EbA in national development policy and plans and securing climate finance to scale up project results.

## Replication

196. A VIA was conducted for the entire PMER and a Climate Change Vulnerability Atlas developed for the entire region and adaptation action plans prepared for the other 10 sub-watersheds in the PMER. The results of the CBA study proved the costs-effectiveness, viability and sustainability of EbA options. The project has therefore put in place drivers for replicating the EbA project results in the entire Panchase region. Nonetheless, there are other vulnerable mountain ecosystems (the entire Himalayan mountain region) and other ecosystems including forests, rangelands river basins and urban areas, with which the project did not engage with. However, having an impact requires that the approach is replicated and up-scaled over sufficiently large areas, considering the geographic scale at which climate change impacts are likely to be experienced.
197. The project was successful in creating EbA awareness and knowledge however, replication would require further effort in mainstreaming EbA into national and sectoral policy and planning frameworks, a target that the project did not meet.
198. The EbA approach appears suitable for replication because it proposes simple nature based solutions. By succeeding in developing and applying EbA tools and methods, piloting EbA options, developing and sharing knowledge products, the EbA project has provided an example that could be replicated, but there is no evidence, at least at the time of the evaluation, of the approach being replicated elsewhere.
199. However, the achievements of the pilot project do not necessarily mean that the EbA lessons and best practices can easily be transferred elsewhere, as there are many challenges in adapting to climate change<sup>35</sup>. Among such challenges are the high variability of environmental and socio-economic conditions, fragility of ecosystems, population pressure and high dependence on ecosystems, weak infrastructure, resource constraints, high poverty and deteriorating livelihoods. Other emergencies (environment, disasters, politics or otherwise) can affect replication - for example, the occurrence of the April 2015 earthquake affected project implementation. Moreover, EbA interventions involving ecosystem restoration, water conservation and land rehabilitation are expensive and laborious, and alternative livelihoods are needed when the ecosystem and land rehabilitation is going on. Further, many farming communities are highly risk averse, which further limits their ability to accept adaptation measures such as irrigation, tree planting and agroforestry, changing crop varieties and planting patterns. They often prefer strategies with less risk but lower yields.
200. To promote replication, the outputs of the project and lessons learned should be made easily available, including to local communities in their own languages, and capacity building extended to other key stakeholders and other communities. It was realised from the project that documentary films developed are most effective in the transmission of knowledge and good practice to stakeholders of all categories. In addition, more concise technical documents are relevant to technical implementing entities and researchers.

**The project's catalytic role and replication is rated as "Moderately Satisfactory"**

## 3.5 Efficiency

### 3.5.1 Cost effectiveness

201. Whereas no cost-effective measures are mentioned in the ProDocs, several measures to promote cost-effectiveness were adopted during implementation:

<sup>35</sup> Waithaka et al (eds). 2013. East African Agriculture and Climate Change: A Comprehensive Analysis. IFPRI, Washington. DC.

- i. Partnerships: Harnessing the comparative advantage of the partners and establishment of strategic partnerships with key organizations who already had a strong track record of experience in climate change adaptation in the country;
- ii. Site selection: Pilot sites were selected in areas where potential partners, GoN, WRFD were already conducting relevant projects and programmes;
- iii. Building on the past and ongoing programmes of partners and utilization of existing institutional structures at national and sub-national levels (like the MoFSC, DoF, WRFD, District Council Chapters, VDCs, Community Units) programmes, information, equipment and data sets.

202. However, the selection of pilots in areas where GoN and partners were already working, could also mean that the project 'went for low hanging fruits' instead of trying to promote EbA in locations where this would have required starting from the beginning, but would have made a bigger difference at the end.

203. Project financial disbursement and reporting mechanisms were not uniform between UNDP and IUCN. UNEP disbursed funds directly to UNDP HQ and IUCN HQ which in turn disbursed funds to their Nepal Country Offices.

204. Both IUCN and UNDP Nepal Country Offices reported timeliness in funds disbursement from UNEP which helped project implementation to remain on track. The only delay in funds disbursement was experienced by UNDP at the beginning of the project caused by the delay by UNEP to complete deliverables under Component 1, which in effect delayed the commencement of the project in Nepal.

205. The management costs, mainly composed of project staff, travel and administrative support, remained low as compared to the total project budget. The DoF and District technical staff who worked on the project provided in kind contribution (labour) to the project which increased cost-savings.

206. This evaluation finds that the cost efficiency was good which resulted in small cost – big impact, supported by the high level of ownership.

### 3.5.2 Timeliness

207. Substantial effort went into the design process of the project. Both global and Country ProDocs were prepared. The global project was approved by UNEP in June 2010 and global implementation begun later in the same month. Project implementation in Nepal begun in January 2012 almost two years late. The planned project duration was 48 months, expected to be completed by 31 December 2014. The project under-went a major revision in 2015, that added Component 5 and the project period was extended to 30 April 2015. The main project activities were completed (over 90%) by 31 December 2015.

208. As discussed in Section 3.2.1, the project experienced significant delays in implementation caused by UNEP's delay in delivering EbA tools and methodology under Component 1, which then affected the implementation of the project as a whole due to the envisioned sequential implementation of project activities. Indeed, IUCN started to implement livelihood improvement projects dubbed as 'no-regret' adaptation action in the Panchase region as early as 2012, even before the VIA were conducted. In 2013, the project partners in a meeting held in Uganda agreed to start implementation of 'no-regret' adaptation activities before the VIA and identification of EbA practices. However, our opinion is that even the implementation of 'no-regret' pilot projects should have been informed by a VIA so as to avoid maladaptation. Nonetheless, the 'no-regret' pilot activities presented a learning experience for the project and could be used to inform all subsequent activities.

209. Whereas the project started almost two years late, to a large extent project work was expedited and most outputs were achieved. There were also some delays in putting in place a PMU. Thus, in some cases, targets were not fully achieved on time, but this was not entirely within the means of the project implementers in Nepal to manage. The MTR also identified these delays. The project implemented the MTR recommendations which fast tracked project activities to completion. Because of the late start, the project duration was extended to allow project implementation and completion of crucial activities that were still ongoing. It is the view of this evaluation that the project managed to overcome early delays in the launch of implementation and the timeliness in achievement of results was largely a result of PMU's effective and efficient management style.



210. Despite the delays in implementing Component 1, the management response at UNEP was efficient and instrumental towards timely achievements of project objectives and outcomes. The disbursement of funds was immediate once funding and reporting was approved and as at 31 December 2015 UNEP had disbursed all the funds (100%) to partners. The PEB and Field Level Technical Committee meetings placed great emphasis on timely implementation of the project activities as contained in the ProDoc and work plan. There have been no cases of none performance from partners.

**The overall rating for efficiency is “Satisfactory”**

## 3.6 Factors affecting performance

### 3.6.1 Preparation and readiness

211. The Nepal ProDoc had a well-designed log-frame with indicators and targets. The implementation strategy was realistic and appropriate to achieve the stated outputs and outcomes. The project built strong linkages with other ongoing and planned initiatives which built a strong foundation for implementation.

212. Project stakeholders at the national and local levels were adequately identified in the ProDoc, the most vulnerable communities highly dependent on the Panchase ecosystems for food security and livelihoods were identified as the main stakeholders. Therefore, planning and implementation of project activities focused on vulnerable communities as well as policy and decision makers at the national and local governments. Details on stakeholder participation are provided in section 3.6.3.

213. The choice of implementing and executing partners, based on their respective competencies, contributed to the successful implementation of the project. The lead implementing agencies (UNEP, UNDP and IUCN), the executing agency (MWE) in partnerships with districts as well as implementation and institutional arrangements were clearly described in the ProDoc. Local partners for the demonstration projects were identified in consultation with the relevant Government Ministries, Districts and local communities.

**Overall, the project preparation and readiness was rated as “Moderately Satisfactory”**

### 3.6.2 Project implementation and management

214. At the national level, the MoFSC (DoF) coordinated project implementation. The PMU, based at the DoF, acted as a Secretariat for coordinating project implementation. A full time National Programme Coordinator was put in place to manage the project and he reported to the Deputy Director General of DoF who also acted as the National Project Director. The project management structure was very clear, and management was stable with roles and responsibilities clearly defined and understood.

215. Each project implementing partner (UNEP, UNDP and IUCN) appointed a project focal person to handle all matters relating to the project within the respective agency. The ROAP Climate Change Coordinator based in Bangkok, Thailand acted as the UNEP’s project focal point in Nepal. But given that UNEP does not have Country Office in Nepal, the ROAP was assisted by UNDP focal person. At the district level, the District Natural Resource officers (DNROs) were the Project focal persons. UNDP put in place a Field Office in the Panchase region based at Pame, Kaski District to manage field level operations and monitor project implementation. IUCN on the other implemented through Ask Nepal and MDO Nepal and did not have a field level office.

216. A Project Executive Board (PEB) was the highest body to guide and supervise project implementation. The PEB was multi-sectoral with representation from MoFSC, MoPE, Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD), UNDP, UNEP, IUCN and German Embassy in Kathmandu. At the regional level, a Field Level Project Coordination was also put in place to supervise and monitor project implementation. The PPF – Main Council and District Council Chapters, and Community Groups created enabling ground for project implementation.



217. A MTR was completed in January 2015 and it rated project progress as likely to achieve the project results, but noted that many project activities were behind schedule. The MTR made several recommendations to improve project performance and all of them were implemented.
218. Both UNEP and UNDP assigned Project Managers, who guided project implementation. The Project Managers understood the project well and worked excellently with the DoF/MoFSC and the PMU. Annual work plans were reviewed and adjusted as needed in consultation with partners to ensure that all activities were completed and outputs achieved. Generally, activities were well-managed, with responsibility and transparency at all levels.
219. The existence of two main project implementing partners in Nepal - UNDP and IUCN was beneficial to achieve synergetic. However, the two institutions received funding from UNEP through their HQ and so there was no integrated management and reporting, which complicated financial reporting and constrained flexibility. At the start of the project, the two implementing partners had separate reporting systems. Thus, implementation of the project was complicated due to different reporting and M&E mechanisms that were not only time and resource consuming and delayed decision making. This was later harmonised and an integrated reporting and M&E mechanism put in place through the PMU.
220. The different partners/stakeholders' roles and mandates often delayed implementation of activities, especially where partners thought that they were the "actual" or "lead" implementers. Thus, decision making was complicated because for each decision, the three agencies had to first agree which took a lot of time. Project implementation challenges were also experienced arising from variations in operational systems between UNDP and IUCN. The operational procedures of IUCN (an INGO) were more flexible and community driven compared to those of the UNDP (UN agencies).
221. Procurement in terms of equipment and consultancies was managed by the Procurement Section of UNDP. The administrative process at UNDP sometimes resulted in delayed procurement of essential services but this did not significantly affect the achievement of project outputs and outcomes.
222. Though the delays in delivering outputs under component 1 (EbA tools and methodologies) affected the logical flow in implementation of some project components, the project largely followed the course that had been set out for it in the ProDoc. Despite the initial delays and management challenges encountered, the evaluation team concludes that project management was effective and efficient, with no major problems reported by the executing partners. Where management challenges were encountered adaptive management and flexibility were applied to bring back the project implementation to course. The role of the PMU, in particular, was praised by the PEB members interviewed. It is the view of the evaluation team that the DoF, UNDP and the PMU were effective and efficient in implementing the project.

**The project's performance in implementation and management is rated as "Satisfactory"**

### **3.6.3 Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships**

223. The project deployed a participatory approach involving key stakeholders and communities. During the definition of priorities, UNDP actively engaged the GoN and civil society in the entire project preparatory process. A workshop was conducted that enabled partners to understand and agree on a common logical framework and implementation strategy and an M&E framework. Throughout the implementation of the project, stakeholder participation remained high (in scoping, inception, VIA, CBA, action planning, training and information sharing workshops, exchange and learning tours etc). Workplans were developed and agreed upon by all the parties and progress was shared within the country on a quarterly basis through quarterly review meetings.
224. Bottom-up planning was deployed to select pilot sites and priority EbA actions for implementation. Based on the findings of the VIA and EbA menu services, CBO and CFUGs prepared plans and presented them in the meetings. The plans were passed by the Field Level Technical Coordination Committee (chaired by WFRD) with active involvement of District Development Committees and were finally approved for implementation through PMU. The PPF – Main Council and District Council Chapters directly participated in project implementation, more precisely in selection of pilot sites, mobilising communities and capacity enhancement trainings. District Councils

chapters worked as links between grass root communities and the technical advisory committee members, this was instrumental in identifying grass-root problems for the project support. Different district line agencies (agriculture, forestry, water, livestock, transport etc.) were engaged and worked together as a team, and this ensured diversity of technical expertise supporting EbA implementation. Annual regional and district workshops were conducted to oversee the progress of the project activities

225. The project involved NGOs and CBOs. IUCN worked with Ask Nepal and MDO. The NGOs were selected because they had worked in the Panchase region in the fields of integrated community development and community environment conservation for over 20 years. Moreover, Nepal's policy emphasised the need to work with local NGOs in implementation of development programmes.
226. Respondents interviewed during the evaluation mission, in particular the VDC officials and community members, were appreciative of the project implementation model – in planning, implementation and monitoring – as key factor behind the success of the project. Three respondents from Parbat District noted that they participated in joint monitoring visits. Four respondents from Syangja Districts noted the high cooperation and participation of local institutions such as CFUGs as having been critical for the effective and successful implementation of the project.
227. The combination of partners was effective and efficient, with each partner making important contributions towards different project components and outputs. Based on interviews and examination of the progress reports and project accomplishments, it was clear that there was reasonably good collaboration among the partners and especially engagement with stakeholders at the districts and communities throughout the duration of the project. In summary, communication and engagement strategies were vitally important elements of all project activities.
228. Gender issues were taken into consideration in project implementation. The trainings conducted by the project were gender sensitive. The findings from the interviews with community group members, and documented in the PIRs indicate that training of women has enhanced their basic capabilities and self-confidence to counter and challenge existing disparities and barriers against them. Community groups supported by the project had membership and leadership composed of both men and women whose management skills were enhanced.
229. Private sector engagement in the project design and implementation was however very limited. While this can be attributed to the fact that the private sector does not have any incentives to engage in EbA, there is no indication that the project partners attempted to mobilise and incentivise private sector engagement. However, the private sector has a role to play and a lot to gain from improved delivery of ecosystem services that result from EbA application including: reduced flood risks, clean water supply, energy supply and improved soil fertility. For example, the private companies dealing in coffee in the region could have been interested in the EbA initiatives that increase coffee production and improve the coffee value chain.

**Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships is rated "Highly Satisfactory"**

#### 3.6.4 Communication and public awareness

230. The project team did a great job in engaging with key institutional stakeholders, through effective communication and public engagement nationally and internationally. Outcome 5 of the project was devoted to increasing EbA awareness and documenting of good practices and lessons learned, and knowledge management. To that end, this evaluation finds that effective communication and raising public awareness were a priority of the project.
231. A range of communication materials were prepared (materials, tools, study reports, policy briefs and training materials) and public awareness workshops convened and demonstrations held. Some of these materials are uploaded on the websites (<https://ebaflagship.unep.org>) and many others are yet to be made publicly available. The involvement of the media, regular meetings of partners and key stakeholders, training of district officials and communities ensured that information about project results and progress were communicated and this kept the partners highly engaged.

232. The project put in place an Adaptation Learning Resource Centre in Bhanjyang, Kaski District to disseminate information, knowledge products and lesson learned from the EbA project and to act as adaptation training and demonstration centre. Two documentary films were developed which will serve as lesson learned for further activities addressing EbA and climate change adaptation in general. EbA photo essays were generated and posted on the Global UNDP and UNEP websites.
233. Several forums were used to popularise EbA and mobilise stakeholders - including conferences, workshops and media (radio and TV shows). At the global level, the Friends of EbA (FEBA) network was formed and created an avenue to share the Nepal project results with the global EbA community. During the UNFCCC COP21 in Paris EbA Day side-events were held on December 5 and 8 (also known as FEBA days) to highlight and promote the importance of EbA as an effective means towards enhancing human climate resilience as a part of adaptation negotiation and planning processes<sup>36</sup>. In addition, the Nepal EbA team project participated in CBA10 Conference held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in April 2016 - at which presentations of EbA knowledge products was made. Other key dissemination of lessons workshop held were (i) EbA Kathmandu Conference held on 1 April 2016; (ii) the EbA closing workshop in Kathmandu held on 18 April 2016; (iii) Asia Pacific Forestry Week on 22-26 February 2016; and (iv) the EbA Global Learning and Technical Workshop in 2013, 2014 and 2015 and (v) EbA learning was shared in Workshop on Ecosystem based Adaptation to Climate Change Promoting Resilience to Ecosystems and Societies, Tbilisi, Georgia in April 2016.
234. Regular and clear communications between the project team (at the PMU), project partners, and beneficiaries ensured that progress was on track. Clear communication also helped to manage 'unrealistic' expectations of the project stakeholders.

**The project's performance on communication and public awareness is rated "Highly Satisfactory"**

### 3.6.5 Country ownership and driven-ness

235. Country ownership and driven-ness was an integral part of the project from the time of conceptualization to implementation. The evaluation mission and documentation review confirm that the ownership was high because the project is highly relevant to Nepal's environment, climate change, and development priorities and plans as outlined in the section 3.1: relevance. Moreover, the project was linked to MDGs (and now the SDGs), UNDAF and UNDP CPAP, and sought to ensure environmental sustainability, develop a global partnership for development and promote sustainable development which are priorities for Nepal.
236. The project was designed and implemented in partnership with the GoN, with the DoF in the MoFSC as the lead implementation agency. The PEB was chaired by the Deputy Director General of DoF and had representation from MoFSC, MoPE and MoAD. At the regional level, a FPCC hosted by the WFRD supervised and monitored field level project implementation. This provided an enabling environment and ownership of the project and the interventions implemented. Evidence of country ownership and driven-ness is also provided by the complementarity of the EbA project to GoN priorities in the NAPA. Given that Nepal co-sponsored UNEA 1/8 resolution on EbA, is an indication that the EbA project was country driven.
237. All the project institutions and stakeholders in Nepal were nationals, except for UNEP, UNDP and IUCN. The involvement of national and local technical experts (in DoF, MoFSC, MoPE, WFRD, TU-CDES, the Districts, local NGOs and Consultants) in the scientific work also promoted country ownership. Joint decision making was depicted right from work plan development to approval. The national counterparts and other implementing partners agreed on annual and quarterly plans and budgets and carried out joint M&E missions and shared roles in implementation of priority activities recognizing and maximizing on their strengths. The high rating of effectiveness was mainly due to the very good engagement at the district and community levels, and ownership at both the national and district levels.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.iucn.org/theme/ecosystem-management/our-work/ecosystem-based-adaptation-and-climate-change/friends-eba-feba>

238. The contextualisation and piloting of EbA tools and approaches, and particularly conducting of a participatory VIA and action planning ensured ownership of the outputs at national, regional and local levels. In addition, identification of pilot sites, beneficiaries and prioritisation of EbA options was participatory. The capacity building activities based on the capacity needs of stakeholders, generated ownership of the project by the main stakeholders.
239. It was obvious to the evaluators that the MoFSC and GoN in general were fully supportive of the project during its implementation and are committed to incorporating the results in national programmes. In fact, all national and local stakeholders interviewed expressed interest in a follow up phase.

**Country ownership and driven-ness is rated “Highly Satisfactory”**

### 3.6.6 Financial planning and management

240. Financial planning and management was consistent with UNEP’s procedures. UNEP received project funds totalling to USD 15,046,897 from BMUB and made disbursements to implementing agencies for the execution of specific activities. Nepal’s project budget allocation was USD 2,874,596. As at 30 June 2016, the total project expenditure in Nepal was USD 2,798,334 (97.4% of the budget). IUCN had already spent all the budgeted funds (100%) while UNDP had expenditure was 95.6% of the allocated funds (remaining with a balance of USD 76,252). The UNEP budget component (USD 713,296) is not included in this reporting. Co-financing from UNDP and UNDP/CBDP was USD 215,255 but there was no co-financing for the EbA project from GoN. Project expenditures were in line with the planned budget. The total project expenditure by partners is indicated in the table 3.

**Table 3: Summary project expenditure in Nepal**

Agency	Budgeted funds	Actual expenses	Percentage
UNDP (funds from UNEP)	1,731,733.00	1,655,481.00	95.60
UNDP	147,255.00	147,255.00	100.00
UNDP/CBDP	68,000.00	68,000.00	100.00
IUCN (funds from UNEP)	927,608.00	927,608.00	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,874,596.00</b>	<b>2,798,344.00</b>	<b>97.35</b>

241. Three project/budget revisions were carried out, the latest in May 2014. A no-cost extension was granted to the project up 30 June 2016 to complete project activities<sup>37</sup>. Financial records at UNEP were maintained by a Fund Management Officer (FMO) who also provided oversight on the funds administration. According to the FMO, this project was ‘uneventful’ in terms of the financial aspects, indicating that there were no irregularities and problems. In Nepal, financial records were kept by the PMU based at DoF with technical assistance from UNDP Nepal. Financial Audits in Nepal were conducted annually by independent audit firms (S.R. Pandey & Co Chartered Accountants and N Bhattarai & Co Chattered Accountants. There is evidence that PMU responded to audit queries and implemented the audit recommendations.
242. The long turn-around time for payments for project activities were caused by procurements and accountability caused delays. This was overcome by utilizing NGOs and CBOs to implement activities. A no-cost extension period was subsequently obtained to finalize the work and most of the project results were eventually attained.

<sup>37</sup> The legal closing date for the EbA Mountain project was June 30, 2015, but the technical closing date was December 31, 2015. However UNEP activities and expenditures did not close on time primarily due to delay of some activities.

243. The project partners (UNDP and IUCN) received funds separately from UNEP through their HQs, and operated separate financial management systems. Thus, another challenge emerged - lack of flexibility in decision making on financial matters. For example, there was no flexibility in reallocating resources from the project components implemented by UNEP, UNDP or IUCN. With each project partner operating separate financial reporting systems, final planning and management was complicated as two financial reports had to be prepared and submitted to each of the agencies' HQ. Generally, the PMU was not engaged in IUCN financial matters.

**Overall the rating for project financial planning and management was "Satisfactory"**

### 3.6.7 Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping

244. The ProDoc stated that the project would be implemented by UNEP, UNDP and IUCN. In UNEP, DEPI was responsible for the project, i.e. overseeing and monitoring the project implementation process as per UNEP rules and procedures, including technical back-stopping. UNEP worked closely with UNDP, IUCN and MoFSC (the EA). A Project Manager was designated from UNEP to provide oversight and accountability during the life of the project. The UNEP Task Manager was highly regarded by the project management team.

245. As part of its supervision and backstopping role, UNEP closely monitored project progress and regularly communicated with partners to provide guidance and ensure that any challenges were addressed. The Task Manager (TM) visited the project sites in Nepal and during the visit also attended a PEB meeting. This participation in meetings enhanced interactions and access to first-hand information from the project partners and beneficiaries, which contributed to project implementation and achievement of results. Where not present, UNEP was represented by UNDP, which is a resident agency in Nepal and available to provide project supervision and backstopping in case major issues in project implementation and execution were encountered.

246. DoF, MoFSC and other local project partners greatly appreciated the role of the PMU and involvement of the UNDP Energy, Environment, Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management Unit in Nepal who assisted with the implementation and reporting. Project supervision was also provided by the PEB, FPCC which met regularly. The PEB provided important strategic guidance to the project management team. Over the course of the project, a good rapport and mutual trust was developed between the PEB, FPCC and the project management team.

**Overall the rating for UNEP/UNDP supervision and backstopping was "Highly Satisfactory"**

### 3.6.8 Monitoring and evaluation

#### Monitoring and Evaluation design

247. The Country ProDoc had a logframe (results framework) with indicators and targets for each expected outcome, all aligned to the global ProDoc and log-frame. The country log-frame A work plan is provided in the ProDoc that indicates activities, outputs and timelines.

264. Both the global and Nepal's ProDocs include M&E plans and budgets. The ProDocs also made provision for independent mid-term and terminal evaluations. A provision was included in the ProDoc for an independent terminal evaluation to be conducted towards the end of the project. Periodic monitoring of progress was conducted through site visits and annual progress review reports.

**The M&E design is rated as "Satisfactory"**

#### M&E plan implementation

248. The M&E system put in place was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives throughout the project implementation period. The PMU operationalized the M&E system. M&E was conducted through PEB meetings, FPCC meetings, procurement committee meeting, annual audits, and visits

to project sites by project teams. Regular technical monitoring was carried out by UNDP Nepal Country Office (through the Programme Analyst for the Energy, Environment, Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management Unit), PMU, MoFSC team and District teams.

249. Joint monitoring team visits to the project sites were conducted by government, UNDP, IUCN, PMU, WRFD and the district leadership. Annual monitoring and review of the EbA project was done by members of the FPCC led by the Regional Forest Directorate (WRFD). District technical teams, District Councils, and the PPF - Main Council were also involved in monitoring project activities. High level visits to Panchase area were organised to highlight the contribution of EbA in Panchase. The visits also acted as platforms for sharing EbA and knowledge and to fast track the completion of the Panchase Forest Directive.

250. A MTR was conducted in January 2015, and it made several recommendations for improvement of project implementation. This evaluation confirms that the MTR recommendations were fully implemented and this put the project back on track to realise high achievement of project outputs and outcomes.

251. However, project reporting tended to be concentrated on activities and outputs. The project monitoring system did not fully support measuring results at outcome level. In addition, the project did not have a M&E staff at the PMU for monitoring project progress, reporting and documenting knowledge products and lessons learned. The availability of a dedicated M&E staff at UNDP SPDEU ensured regular monitoring of progress against indicators and reporting. UNDP's SPDEU conducted studies to assess the impact of the EbA project. An analysis of the impact of capacity development trainings was conducted at the end of the project in 2015.

**The M&E plan implementation is rated as "Satisfactory"**

## 4. Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

252. The project was relevant in the context of (i) national development plans and climate change policies and actions that integrate EbA; (ii) increased uptake and scaling-up of EbA practises by national and sub-national governments and communities in mountain ecosystem to adapt to a changing climate; and, (iii) enhanced ability of the population and communities in mountain regions and countries to adapt to a changing climate. As described in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, the evaluation found the project highly relevant to GoN and sub-national and local environment and development priorities for the Panchase region.
253. The project was successful in strengthening the capacity of the national and sub-national governments, WRFD, VDCs and communities in Panchase to apply EbA approaches. A VIA was produced and used to identify and pilot EbA options, and CBA conducted that confirmed the viability and sustainability of EbA options. Above all the necessary human capacity was built at all levels and institutional mechanisms (EbA proofed sectoral policies) created to support EbA. The project deployed capacity building approaches that were based on learning by doing and demonstrations in the pilot sites.
254. The project worked directly with the national, regional, district and community stakeholders, trained key stakeholders on EbA, piloted and demonstrated EbA options at ecosystem level, and used participatory methods to communicate and disseminate EbA lessons learned. In addition, the project raised EbA awareness and knowledge among policy and decision makers and the wider public. Due to the project interventions, EbA has been integrated into the reviewed Protection Forest Directive, PPF management plan, and the SNNP management plan. In addition, a high level multi-sectoral national EbA Technical Committee was put in place to spearhead the integration of EbA in national and sectoral development policies and plans.
255. Based on the VIA, at local level, adaptation action plans were developed for the 13 sub-watersheds in the Panchase and three plans (Harpan, Rati and Andhi) were implemented by the project through ecosystem restoration, water conservation, land rehabilitation and livelihood diversification interventions (discussed in section 3.2.3). These are beginning to translate into increased resilience of ecosystems and communities to a changing climate. The project has succeeded in putting in place drivers (integration of EbA in Nepal's INDC, putting in place an EbA Technical Committee, reviewed forest and national park management plans, allocation of financial/budget resources for EbA, enhanced capacity by technical staff and decision makers and political will) that will continue application of EbA to reduce the vulnerability of the communities to the impacts of climate change.
256. Moreover, the project has promoted partnerships and dialogue at the community, district, regional and national levels involving both the technical and political arms of government. This has fostered collaboration in sharing of EbA information and lessons learned, ownership of the results of the project, and above all the integration of the Protective Forest Directive and forest management plan. These are critical for enhancing EbA implementation, scaling up and replication. All these are key drivers towards the intermediate state. Based on the ROTl analysis, the overall likelihood that the intended impact will be achieved is rated on a six-point scale as 'likely'.
257. While the targets set by project at design were achievable in the planned budget and time frame, realising ecosystem resilience and reducing climate change vulnerability can only be achieved in the long-term with continued effort and financing. Therefore, while the project achieved almost all the outputs and outcomes, significant uptake of the lessons learned and best practices will require a follow up phase or project. The follow-up activities should focus on (i) increase EbA awareness, knowledge and skills beyond the pilot sites to all sub-watersheds in Panchase, which requires extensive communication and dissemination of EbA project results not only in Panchase but the whole of Nepal, (ii) deeper and direct involvement of more national and local partners in implementation, and taking as step further to mainstream EbA into national and sectoral development policy and planning.
258. The overall impact from the outcomes and intermediate states is increased ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of communities in Panchase region to climate change. The desired impact of increased ecosystem



resilience and reduced vulnerability of communities in Panchase region to climate change is likely to be achieved based on the RoTI assessment. The EbA tools, methodologies and options were developed, applied and piloted and found to be cost-effective. The target of increasing institutional and community capacity to apply EbA to adjust adaptation practices to a changing climate was to a greater extent achieved. The combined effect of ecosystem restoration, water conservation and land rehabilitation and livelihood improvement are contributing to increasing preparedness to climate change risks, more especially floods, droughts and landslides in the Panchase region of Nepal. With increased uptake and scaling-up of EbA options in Panchase and putting in place enabling policies and plans would contribute to increased ecosystem and community resilience.

259. Long term impacts are likely to accrue if implementation of EbA forms part of a wider framework for Nepal's adaptation planning and sustainable development. The early successes of the pilots showcase the project's concrete, on-the ground achievements, which will be instrumental in promoting further stakeholder buy-in and acceptance by households, communities and local governments of EbA practices.
260. Prospects for sustainability of project outcomes are likely with respect to three factors (i.e. socio-political, institutional and environmental), and less likely for financial sustainability. Availability of financial resources will be instrumental to drive up-scaling and replication. Though Nepal has integrated EbA in INDC, allocated some financial resources to scale up EbA in Panchase and is committed to integrated EbA in national and sectoral policy, national resources may not be adequate to up-scale and replicate the project achievements. Nonetheless, there are several ongoing and planned initiatives in climate change adaptation supported by both the GoN, bilateral and multilateral donors that provide some opportunities for sustaining project outcomes through uptake. Additionally, the socio-political situation and institutional frameworks are conducive to sustain project outcomes.
261. The evaluator, when visiting the project sites, found that there was considerable enthusiasm and drive to move the project's results forward and that country ownership was very strong. The partnerships forged and high stakeholder participation was considered by the respondents and evaluator alike to be great achievements. Engagement of national and local stakeholders at all levels and alignment of the project goals with national and local priorities and needs with respect to climate change adaptation was instrumental in promoting a high level of country ownership and driven-ness.
262. Project implementation was generally cost-effective. This was achieved through establishing strategic partnerships and selection of pilot and demonstration sites in areas with ongoing projects and programmes, involving local communities and NGOs in implementation and utilization of existing institutions, structures and information. However, achievement of project outputs was less timely given the delays in delivering EbA tools and methodologies and VIAs which delayed the logical and sequential implementation of the projects components.
263. The project had multiple implementation partners, a multi-sectoral PEB and FPCC, and engaged many partners and stakeholders at global, national and local levels. This helped build and strengthen partnerships and an institutional framework for EbA. It also directly helped institutions to overcome some capacity barriers (DoF, MoFSC, WRFD, PFPF, and districts) and create opportunities for mainstreaming EbA into national and sub-national planning process.
264. The project performed well on M&E. The project design had a log-frame with SMART indicators and clear targets. Significant efforts and resources were committed by the PMU and project partners to M&E. Technical backstopping was provided by the UNDP Country Office. Monitoring and reporting the progress of the project and documenting lessons learned and best practices was well conducted. A MTR was successfully conducted and the recommendations implemented.

## 4.2 Lessons Learned

265. The following key lessons learned emerged in the implementation of the project (not arranged in any order of priority):



266. **Take into account local contexts:** The project analysed the climate change impacts and vulnerabilities and developed a scientific approach for EbA. The EbA tools and methodologies and options developed and piloted took into account local contexts of Panchase region and integrated indigenous knowledge into the planning and implementing EbA options (see section 3.3.1 – Achievement of outcomes – immediate outcomes 1 and 5). Therefore, successful implementation of EbA not only requires a strong scientific base but also needs to be guided by participatory VIAs that integrate local socio-economic contexts and risks to ensure sustainability and impact.
267. **Building evidence base is critical for uptake of EbA options:** The EbA project was successful in building evidence for EbA application in Nepal. This resulted in increased confidence in the contribution of EbA in building climate change resilience in the country which in turn generated policy discussions with key ministries and local governments in the Panchase region. (see sections 3.1.4 relevance to national development and environmental needs and priorities; 3.4.5 catalytic role and replication). Therefore, evidence base is crucial for successful implementation of EbA and integrating it in policies and plans at national and sub-national levels.
268. **Partnerships and stakeholder engagement:** The project was successful because it was country-owned and driven, aligned to the country's climate change and development needs and priorities, and implemented with the existing national and sub-national institutional frameworks. This ensured strong coordination and management mechanism and understanding of community contexts and vulnerabilities (Section 3.1.4 - relevance to national development and environmental needs and priorities). Therefore, engagement of a cross-section of stakeholders at national and sub-national levels, that includes the communities and beneficiaries is important for building partnerships that enhance the design and successful implementation of EbA projects. Adaptive capacity cannot be built without partnerships and stakeholder participation.
269. **Building capacity through 'learning by doing' and demonstration:** A major approach to the EbA project's capacity building was 'learning-by-doing' that involved pilots and demonstrations. The learning approach directly involved national and sub-national technical staff and political leaders, extension workers, communities and community user groups in piloting and demonstration of EbA actions which translated into a strong sense of local ownership. (see sections 3.1.4 relevance to national development needs, 3.2.3 Component 3 – implementation of EbA pilots at ecosystem level, and 3.2.5 Component 4 – EbA learning and knowledge management). Therefore 'learning-by-doing' capacity building approach is a win-win approach that result in greater ownership of project results and impact, and should be promoted in project design and implementation
270. **Project design and implementation:** The project budget (USD 3.5 million) and duration (four years) was not adequate or realistic for the comprehensive implementation of activities. The project was also complex with multiple partners delivering different outputs, using diverse approaches and activities. The deign envisaged sequential (step-wise) arrangement of the components, with the implementation of some components (outputs) packages dependent on the results of preceding activities (scientific tools and methodologies). This is not optimal in a project of short duration, as delays in delivery of outputs in some components affect other components (see sections: 3.2.3 - achievement of outputs under component 3; 3.5.2 timeliness; 3.6.1 – preparation and readiness; and, 3.6.2 – implementation and management). Project design, particularly in climate change adaptation, needs to be realistic in terms of time and resources, especially in view of the number of factors and uncertainties that come into play. Where possible projects should be designed in such a way that generation of science and application are separate projects.
271. **Harmonised reporting systems by partners:** While the involvement of multiple implementing partners (UNEP, UNDP and IUCN) was advantageous utilizing the comparative advantages of the different partners, partners had different reporting mechanisms (including financial reporting) that complicated project management. This was time and resource consuming. In addition, complications were also experienced in decision making and adaptive management (flexibility), especially regarding to financing (see sections 3.6.2 project implementation and management, 3.6.6 financial planning and management). Therefore, implementation of projects with more than one implementing partners, though beneficial, requires harmonization of reporting and financing systems so that there is single harmonised reporting system to ease project management and decision making.
272. **Incentives are crucial:** The project involved incentives especially focused on livelihood diversification. These proved to be effective in reducing pressure on ecosystems. Therefore, incentive scheme are key entry points for

promoting EbA option and could be very effective if they are integrated in project design, implemented in a participatory manner.

236. **Communication and knowledge management:** The project produced some documentary films that showcased, among others the project achievements. In addition, most project materials were translated in Nepali language and made available to the wider public. The project’s knowledge products demonstrate lessons learned. Therefore, documentaries (films) with innovative and concrete activities are an effective mechanism for demonstration and transmission of knowledge and good practice to stakeholders of all categories.

### 4.3 Recommendations

273. Based on the evaluation findings, three several recommendations have been made. The recommendations look ahead to the post-project period and development and implementation of other UNEP projects and sustaining the results of the EbA project in Nepal. Apart from UNEP, the recommendations are targeted at UNDP, IUCN, GoN, WRFD, and the local governments in the Panchase region.

274. **Recommendation 1.** The project has created a considerable interest and confidence in EbA and has generated useful lessons and best practices that can be scaled up and replicated (Sections 3.3.2 - Likelihood of impacts, and 3.4.5 - Catalytic role and replication). However, the project activities were limited to three sub-watersheds in Panchase region and involved a few partners. Thus, EbA awareness and knowledge is still limited to a few partners, and beneficiaries in a few sub-watersheds and VDCs. Successful uptake of EbA and building mountain ecosystem resilience in Nepal will require follow-up activities to communicate and disseminate EbA lessons learned and replicate EbA options outside the pilot sites in Panchase and the Himalayan region. Such follow-up activities may require a follow-up phase and funding.

275. **Recommendation 2.** It is recommended that UNEP, UNDP and GoN increase efforts to disseminate the lessons learned and knowledge products generated by the project in Nepal, including to other relevant ongoing and planned projects. Wide dissemination of the projects knowledge products can be done through their respective networks and other means, which should be given high visibility at appropriate forums. The appropriate materials should be translated into local languages and made easily available to local communities and development agents in Nepal. Additionally, some technical reports should be simplified as far as possible and translated into Nepali to facilitate their use by managers and decision-makers and for uptake into policy processes.

276. **Recommendation 3.** For UNEP to improve timeliness in delivering the scientific tools that are to be applied by other partners at country level, science and application projects should be designed separately. By doing so, piloting and application project can start when the scientific tools and methodologies are already developed for application.

### 4.4 Summary of ratings

277. Ratings for the individual criteria are given in Table 4. The overall rating for this project country component based on the evaluation findings is “Satisfactory”.

**Table 4: Summary of Evaluation criteria, assessment and ratings**

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
A. Strategic relevance	The project’s goal, objective and components are highly aligned to Nepal’s development, environment and climate change needs and priorities. These issues include the NAPA, TYP, Climate Resilient Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the PFPF.	3.1.1 and 3.1.2	Highly Satisfactory

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
B. Achievement of outputs	The project worked directly with the national, sub-national and community stakeholders, trained key stakeholders on EbA, piloted and demonstrated EbA options at ecosystem level, and used participatory methods to communicate and disseminate EbA lessons learned. Almost all the outputs were satisfactorily achieved based on the log-frame indicators. The technical outputs for all components were of a high quality. Outputs on outcome 2 on developing EBA action plans at ecosystem level, outcome 3 on implementation of EbA pilots at ecosystem level and outcome 4 on building evidence base for EbA were exceptionally achieved.	3.2	Highly Satisfactory
<b>C. Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results</b>			
1. Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed TOC	Project monitoring did not adequately support documenting evidence at outcome level. However, direct outcomes of the project were achieved. The project was successful in strengthening the capacity of the national and sub-national governments, VDCs and CFUGs in the Panchase region to apply EbA approaches. A VIA was produced and used to identify and pilot EbA options, and CBA conducted that confirmed the viability and sustainability of EbA options. The necessary human capacity was built at relevant levels and institutional mechanisms (Protective Forest Directive, PPF and SNNP management plans, EbA Technical Committee etc.) created to support EbA. The project deployed capacity building approaches that were based on learning by doing and demonstrations in the pilot sites. In addition, the project raised EbA awareness and knowledge among policy and decision makers and the wider public.	3.3.1	Satisfactory
2. Likelihood of impact using ROTl approach	The project outcomes achieved have implicit forward linkages to intermediate states and impacts. Considering the high level of ownership of the project results at national and sub-national levels there is likelihood of impact. However, a follow up phase/project may be necessary. Due to the project interventions, EbA has been integrated in the INDC, and the reviewed Protective Forest Directive and the PPF and SNNP management plans. In addition, adaptation action plans were developed for the 13 sub-watersheds in Panchase. Three of the developed action plans were implemented through ecosystem restoration, land rehabilitation and water conservation interventions (section 3.2.3). Even though, EbA is not yet integrated in national and sectoral development policy, the project has succeeded in putting in place drivers that will lead to policy change and reduce the vulnerability of the communities to the impacts of floods, droughts and landslides, and improve community livelihoods. Moreover, the project has promoted partnerships and dialogue at the community, district, regional and national levels involving both the technical and political arms of government. This has fostered collaboration in sharing of EbA information and lessons learned, ownership of the results of the project. These are critical for enhancing EbA implementation, scaling up and replication. All these are key drivers towards the intermediate state and contributing to increasing preparedness to climate change risks and flood disasters. The implementation of EbA tools and approaches are contributing to increased ecosystem and community resilience	3.3.2	Satisfactory

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
D. Sustainability and replication			Moderately Likely
1. Socio-political sustainability	The project was implemented in a participatory manner and succeeded in getting political buy-in and ownership. It generated considerable social and political support at national, regional and community levels. It has also built case for EbA that is already influencing policy. The socio-political environment is conducive to sustaining the project outcomes.	3.4.1	Likely
2. Financial resources	The GoN has begun to allocate some financial resources in the budget to scale up and replicate project results. However, the allocated funds are inadequate to effectively upscale and replicate EbA interventions, which could undermine sustainability. Thus, there may be need for follow up phase/funding to build EbA awareness and knowledge and to replicate EbA options outside the pilot sites. Such follow up activities should involve more local partners. More effort is needed to complete integration of EbA in national and sectoral development policy.	3.4.2	Moderately Likely
3. Institutional framework	The project has built strong partnerships at global, national regional, district and community institutions. There was a lot of engagement with NGOs and CFUGs. Strengthening the capacity of MoFSC, DoF, WRFD, Districts, VDCs and community groups will ensure the continuation of project outcomes i.e. VIA, CBA, and implementing EbA options and livelihood improvement interventions.	3.4.3	Likely
4. Environmental sustainability	Identification and implementation of EbA options, including ecosystem restoration, land rehabilitation and water conservation promotes environmental sustainability. Up-scaling and replicating EbA approaches and options will greatly promote environmental sustainability in the whole of the Panchase region. However increased pressures on natural resources and ecosystems could potentially undermine ecological sustainability. Some external factors, like the April 2015 earthquake and other emergencies, can also undermine sustainability.	3.4.4	Likely
5. Catalytic role and replication	The project has raised EbA awareness and increased confidence in application of EbA options. The implementation of sub-watershed management, ecosystem restoration, and no regret adaptation action in communities has demonstrated the benefits of promoting EbA for increased resilience. The project produced a number of lessons and best practices as well as tools and documentaries that will potentially facilitate replication. Long term impacts are likely to accrue if implementation of EbA forms part of a wider framework for Nepal's adaptation planning and sustainable development. The early successes of the pilots showcase the project's concrete, on-the ground achievements, which will be instrumental in promoting further stakeholder buy-in and acceptance by households, communities and local governments of EbA practices.	3.4.5	Moderately Satisfactory
E. Efficiency	Though the project experienced delays in its initial stage, remedial measures were put in place after that fast tracked the project implementation. Project activities were low cost and in this sense the programme was very cost-effective. This was achieved through establishing strategic partnerships through MoUs, selection of pilot and demonstration sites in	3.5	Satisfactory

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
	areas with ongoing projects and programmes, involving local communities in implementation and utilization of existing institutions, structures and information.		
F. Factors affecting project performance		3.6	
1. Preparation and readiness	The project readiness in Nepal experienced initial delays because a country ProDoc had to be developed and UNEP delayed delivery of EbA tools and methodologies	3.6.1	Moderately Satisfactory
2. Project implementation and management	The implementation approach was highly effective and the project ran fairly smoothly. Adaptive management measures were taken when needed to ensure that the project remained on track. However, complications in implementation arrangement created by having a number of implementing partners (UNEP, UNDP and IUCN) which operated different reporting mechanisms put enormous pressure on the project team and undermined flexibility. The project had multiple implementation partners, had a multi-sectoral PEB and FLPC and engaged many partners and stakeholders at global, national and local levels. This helped build and strengthen partnerships and an institutional framework for EbA. It also directly helped institutions to overcome some capacity barriers (MoFSC, DoF, WRFD, Districts, VDCs) and this creates opportunities for mainstreaming EbA into national and sectoral policy development and planning process.	3.6.2	Satisfactory
3. Stakeholders participation, cooperation and partnerships	A participatory approach was used, and wide range of stakeholders, from communities to districts, regional and national government were involved in selection of pilot sites and project implementation or were targeted for capacity building. Participation of CBOs and NGOs was high. Considerable effort went into participatory action planning and implementation of EbA practices on the ground.	3.6.3	Highly Satisfactory
4. Communication and public awareness	Significant effort went into raising public awareness and knowledge and mobilising stakeholders to implement project activities. A range of communication materials were prepared including learning briefs, policy briefs, guidelines, documentaries and training materials. Public awareness workshops were convened and demonstrations of EbA practices conducted. An Adaptation Learning Resource Centre was put in place. Information sharing platforms were put in place to disseminate project achievements and success stories. Clear communication between PMU, partners and beneficiaries played a role in the project's success.	3.6.4	Highly Satisfactory
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	The project responded to country needs for reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience. As a result, there was considerable enthusiasm and drive to move the project's results forward and country ownership was very strong. The partnerships forged and high stakeholder participation were great achievements. Engagement of national and local stakeholders at all levels and alignment of the project goals with national and local priorities and needs with respect to climate change adaptation was instrumental in promoting a high level of country ownership and driven-ness.	3.6.5	Highly Satisfactory
6. Financial planning and management	Financial planning and management was in accordance with UNEP's requirements. Project expenditure was in line with the budget. Though financial reporting was good, UNDP did not spend all the funds allocated. In addition, the project	3.6.6	Satisfactory

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
	partners (UNDP and IUCN) operated separate financial reporting to UNEP. IUCN financial reporting was not through the PMU.		
7. Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping	Both UNEP and UNDP played a very commendable role in supervision and backstopping with great team commitment. No major issues in project implementation and execution were encountered.	3.6.7	Highly Satisfactory
8. Monitoring and evaluation	The overall rating on M&E is based on rating for M&E Implementation.	3.6.8	Satisfactory
i. M&E design	The Nepal ProDoc was well developed. The project had a log-frame with SMART indicators and targets. However, outcome level indicators were not quantified,	3.6.8	Satisfactory
ii. M&E plan implementation	There was regular monitoring of progress, reporting and documenting lessons learned. A MTR was conducted and recommendations implemented.	3.6.8	Satisfactory
<b>Overall country component rating</b>			<b>Satisfactory</b>