
**Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project
World Heritage Inscription Process as a Tool to Enhance
Natural and Cultural Resources Management of the Iraqi
Marshlands**

FINAL REPORT



Evaluation Office of UN Environment
November 2018



Evaluation Office of UN Environment

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Project title: World Heritage inscription process as a tool to enhance natural and cultural resources management of the Iraqi Marshlands

Project number:4010

(Date 11/18)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Terminal Evaluation was prepared for UN Environment by Dr. Walid Abed Rabboh, as an independent consultant assisted by Yousef Abed Rabboh as an assistant evaluator.

The evaluators would like to express their gratitude to all persons met and interviewed as listed in the annex, their comments, views and feedback were instrumental and contributed directly to the results and findings of this evaluation.

The reviewer(s) would like to thank the project team and in particular Ms. Diane Klaimi and Dr. Abdul-Majeid Haddad for their contributions and collaboration throughout the review process. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to all those who took time to provide comments to the draft report. The reviewer(s) would also like to thank all representatives of government, UN, NGOs and CSOs who responded to the interviews through emails, telephone and skype calls.

Special acknowledgements and thanks go to Saila Toikka and Janet Wildish from the UN Environment Evaluation Office.

The evaluating consultant hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to the successful finalisation of the current project, formulation of a next phase and to the continuous improvement of similar projects in other countries and regions.

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About the Evaluation¹

Report Language: English

Evaluation Type: Terminal Project Evaluations

Brief Description:

This report is a terminal evaluation of a UN Environment project “World Heritage inscription process as a tool to enhance natural and cultural resources management of the Iraqi Marshlands” implemented between 2009 and 2016. The project's overall development goal was to ensure sustainable development of the Iraqi Marshlands, reflecting the unique historical, cultural, environmental, hydrological and socio-economic characteristics of the area, in particular utilizing the World Heritage inscription process as a tool to develop and implement a management framework.

The evaluation sought 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. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment and main project partners keeping in mind the Green Climate Fund project proposal/concept.

Key words:

Marshlands, Iraq, World Heritage Inscription, Ecosystems, Sustainable Management, Italian Cooperation, Wetland Ecosystems, Natural and Cultural Resources Management, Transboundary Resource management, Regional Cooperation, Terminal Evaluation

¹ This data is used to aid the internet search of this report on the Evaluation Office of UN Environment Website

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ARCWH	Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
FMO	Fund Management Office(r)
GCF	Green Climate Fund
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IETC	International Environmental Technology Centre
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
IUCN/ROWA	International Union for Conservation of Nature / Regional Office of West Asia
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEA	Multi-lateral Environmental Agreement
MoHE	Ministry of Health and Environment
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
PIMS	Programme Information and Management System
PM	Project Manager
PMU	Project Management Unit
POW	Programme Of Work
ROWA	Regional Office for West Asia
SP	Sub-Programme
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States Dollar
WHC	World Heritage Convention/Centre
WHS	World Heritage Site

Table 1: Project Identification Table

UN Environment PIMS ID:	000547		
Implementing Partners	<p>External: UNESCO, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Ministry of Health and Environment (MoHE), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Water Resources (MOWR), Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW), Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities</p> <p>Internal: International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and UN Environment West Asia Office</p>		
Sub-programme:	<p>Sub-programmes (2008-2009):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Resource efficiency and sustainable production and consumption; and -Ecosystem management 	Expected Accomplishments (2008-2009) ² :	<p>B: Increased understanding and implementation by public and private sector decision-makers of sustainable consumption and production, including in sectors such as construction and tourism, and increased voluntary initiatives promoting corporate environmental responsibility, as well as prevention of and response to environmental emergencies, giving due consideration to gender issues.</p> <p>D: Improved capacity of countries and institutions, including financial institutions, to integrate ecosystem issues into consideration of their economic and trade policies and practices to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.</p>
UN Environment approval date:	August 21, 2009	Programme of Work Output(s):	2008-2009 2010-2011
Expected start date:	March 2009	Actual start date:	July 2009 (kick off meeting)
Planned completion date:	2012 (as per ProDoc) (After multiple revisions 2016)	Actual completion date:	September 2016

² Linkage to the Expected Accomplishments of 2010-2011 has also been established in the project document

Planned project budget at approval:	USD 3,597,650 (as per ProDoc) USD 2,369,061 (as per PIMS)	Actual total expenditures reported as of November 2018:	USD 2,197,316 ³	
Planned Environment Fund allocation:	USD 484,500 (in-kind UNEP support)	Actual Environment Fund expenditures reported:	Although in-kind contributions were made, no records verifying their value were made available to the evaluation.	
Planned Extra-Budgetary Financing:	USD 3,113,150	Secured Extra-Budgetary Financing:	USD 2,369,061 (Italian Government)	
		Actual Extra-Budgetary Financing expenditures reported as of 30 September 2016:	USD 2,197,316	
First disbursement:	2009	Date of financial closure:	September 30, 2016	
No. of revisions:	3	Date of last revision:	October 27, 2015	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	344	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: 15/03/2016	Next: n/a
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	Not planned	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	n/a	
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	End of the project (2016)	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	September 2018	
Coverage - Country(ies):	Iraq	Coverage - Region(s):	West Asia	
Dates of previous project phases:	"Support for Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands Project" 2004-2009	Status of future project phases:	A project proposal on climate change mitigation and adaption covering also Iraqi Marshlands is currently being prepared for Green Climate Fund.	

³ Estimated figure: no single source showing consolidated expenditure for the entire project was made available to the evaluation. The total actual expenditure figure was calculated by combining the records of actual expenditure for years 2009 -2014, inclusive, in the December 2015 budget revision and records from November 2018 of actual expenditure for years 2015 – 2018, inclusive.

⁴ These were organized back to back with coordination meetings in Amman and Bahrain when the beneficiary country was present (MOE and MOC) and were sometimes conducted remotely via skype since representatives from the UN Environment West Asia Regional Office was unable to be present in Iraq.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The World Heritage inscription process as a tool to enhance natural and cultural resources management of the Iraqi Marshland (Ahwar in Arabic) project was implemented between July 2009 and September 2016 by UN Environment in partnership and close cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in order to ensure the sustainable development of the Iraqi Marshlands and was intended to reflect a paradigm shift from ad-hoc and immediate response to a more sustainable and resilience-oriented response to crisis in a fragile environment. The inscription is considered “unprecedented” since it is the first time in the world that a World Heritage dossier is presented of mixed property and serial nomination.
2. At the national level the Ministry of Health and Environment was assigned by the Iraqi government to manage and supervise the project implementation in cooperation and coordination with the Ministry of Culture and other ministries and institutions such as Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, the Governors Offices, Municipalities and Local Councils among others.
3. This terminal evaluation sought 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. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment and main project partners keeping in mind the forthcoming Green Climate Fund project proposal/concept. No other evaluation was conducted during the lifespan of the project. The report was prepared in accordance with the UN Environment Evaluation Office guidelines and was conducted as a desk-based exercise from Amman-Jordan.
4. Despite several security and financial challenges, the project was able to enhance the capacities of the relevant institutions and personnel, improve linkages and work relations among national and international stakeholders, contribute directly to the inscription of the Iraqi Marshlands in the World Heritage List and develop the Marshlands Sustainable Management Plan.
5. It is worth noting that during the past few months, the water issue has been placed high on the political agenda between Iraq and Turkey, which in turn provides an opportunity to build on the lessons learned and adopt the recommendations derived from this evaluation in order to ensure that appropriate enough quality water is allocated to the Marshlands.
6. The total project cost as per the approved project document was USD 3.597 million. The Italian government provided finance of USD 2.369 million in cash to the project, which represents the total secured cash funding of the project. Records of expenditure show the total life of project spend as USD 2,197,316 which suggests a project budget

balance of USD 198,745⁵. No reports on this balance were provided. Expenditure records indicate project spend up to the end of December 2018, although the project's operational completion date is given as September 2016. It is unclear on what basis project funds were disbursed during this extended period.

7. In-kind contributions with a value of USD 484,500 were anticipated in the project document and evidence suggests that in-kind contributions were made by UN Environment, IUCN and the ARCWH. However, no records verifying the value of these contributions, nor their provision, were made available to the evaluation. Potentially, given the project's approved budget and the actual cash funds received, in-kind contributions could be of a total value of USD 1,400,334⁶.
8. Major factors behind the success (strengths and opportunities) are:
 - The enormous threats facing the Marshlands provoked and motivated stakeholders to give high priority to its restoration and sustainable management,
 - The priority and importance that Government of Iraq placed to the Marshlands not only due to its environmental and cultural vulnerabilities, but also to overcome the sufferings and burdens imposed on its population,
 - The unique case of combining the preservation of both natural and cultural resources encouraged stakeholders to act promptly and collectively. Furthermore, the Iraqis considered the inscription as a challenge and a matter of national pride,
 - The enabling environment for success that was created by the project such as; (i) international support, (ii) UN Environment close partnership with Iraqi institutions, (iii) UNESCO commitment to support, (iv) availability of international experts and consultants, and (v) availability of funding,
 - The felt need for training, as the inscription process required special knowledges and skills not available in Iraq at the time,
 - Involvement of specialized agencies in the training, and
 - Cooperation of Iraqi institutions in the nomination and release of the trainees and facilitation of the training events and workshops.
9. Reasons, challenges and external factors that affected the implementation (weaknesses and threats) are:
 - ISIS invasions and the drop in international oil prices,
 - Successive organizational changes in the structures of the main ministries mainly Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Cultures as both ministries were merged with other ministries,

⁵ The project team report that the project has not yet been closed financially. UN Environment recognizes 'operational completion' as being separate from 'financial closure'. During financial closure the final balances will be verified.

⁶ This calculation is made on the basis of an approved project budget of USD 3,597,650 and life of project expenditure of USD 2,197,316. The assumption is that the approved project budget was reached based on cash funding plus in-kind contributions.

- Ambiguity of the roles and responsibilities and conflict of interest among national institutions
 - Weak follow up, monitoring and supervision by the Steering Committee and UN Environment and Ministry of Health and Environment, although this was strengthened in the latter years of the project,
 - Local communities did not receive due attention, efforts to enhancing their capacities were “too little, too late”, and
 - Lack of proper funding mainly due to limited governmental funding, as a sizable share of the government budget was allocated to fighting terrorism.
10. As a result of the desk review, interviews, analysis, the consultations with the evaluation manager(s) and the project manager that took place during this evaluation, a project Theory of Change was constructed to reflect the project logic, pathways and realities including restructuring and formulation of the project outputs, outcomes, intermediate states, impact, assumptions and drivers.
11. According to the UN Environment rating scale which ranges from Highly Satisfactory down to Highly Unsatisfactory **the overall rating of the project is Satisfactory**. The ratings of the nine evaluation criteria and their sub-criteria are summarised below while more detailed assessments can be found in chapter 5 and table 12 in the main body of this report.

Criterion	Rating	Criterion	Rating	Criterion	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance	HS	D. Effectiveness	S	G. Monitoring and Reporting	U
B. Quality of Project Design	MS	E. Financial Management	U	H. Sustainability	ML
C. Nature of External Context	HU	F. Efficiency	MS	Factors Affecting Performance	MS

Conclusions

12. The project plan was very optimistic, especially when it comes to the pilot implementation of Sustainable Management Plan options. It has underestimated the time needed for the implementation and the amount of the financial resources required. Future project plans need to be realistic.
13. An efficient and effective institutional set up for the management of the Marshlands is a major ingredient and contributor to the success in implementing the Sustainable Management Plan. Financial resources that were made available to the project were limited and the annual project expenditure was around USD 350 thousand. Other than the in-kind contributions, the Government of Iraq did not allocate financial resources directly to the project budget. In future phases the larger share of finance should come from the Government of Iraq.

14. Regional cooperation, especially in achieving equitable distribution of shared water resources among the riparian countries, is key and necessary for the sustainable management of the Marshlands and the well-being of the Iraqi people.
15. The participation of the local communities was relatively weak, despite the fact that several revision documents and progress reports have emphasised its importance for the project success, ownership and sustainability.
16. The frequent organizational restructurings of the line ministries and changes of personnel i.e. focal points had a negative effect on the project performance.
17. The two key strategic evaluation questions and issues that were identified in the Terms of Reference and their respective conclusions are addressed below:

Q.1 Verify the reported and communicated project results to the greatest extent possible and establish the level of achievement in quantity and quality, as well as their utility.

18. The project was able to deliver and achieve the following results:
 - The inscription of the Iraqi Marshlands in the World Heritage list represented an unprecedented case as it was the first time a cultural and natural site had been inscribed together in one file; the decision was supported by the majority of the World Heritage Convention member states;
 - The enhancement of national human resources and institutional capacities, especially on issues related to the preparation of the file, the formulation of the SMP, lobbying and outreach;
 - The development and endorsement of the well-structured Sustainable Management Plan, which was endorsed by the Government of Iraq and its inclusion as an integral part of the inscription file. This demonstrated a good example of joint cooperation and partnership among all stakeholders;
 - Global support and coordination mechanisms were attained all through the inscription process mainly from the countries who voted for the inscription, UN Environment, UNESCO and the immediate relevant regional institutions such as IUCN/ROWA and ARCWH;
 - Routine and ad hoc implementation and monitoring continues to take place as usual by the University of Basra on water quality and archaeological monitoring and excavations, as well as biodiversity surveys and monitored oil excavations;
 - The project succeeded in acquiring global support to its objectives.

Q.2 Identify and analyse the factors driving and/or hindering the sustainability of project results

19. The sustainability of the project results is a function of the following factors, the degree of their realisation will directly impact on the sustainability of the results:
 - The commitment of the Government of Iraq to the implementation of the Sustainable Management Plan,

- Performance and efficiency of relevant institutions at national, regional (governorate) and local levels,
- Partnership and responsibility sharing with the private sector, NGOs, CSOs and local communities,
- Attention given to gender, youth, human rights, vulnerable groups and local community issues.
- Commitment of the international community to support and partner with Iraq in the implementation of the Sustainable Management Plan,
- Being able to benefit from, and build on, the partnership, experiences and good relations with UN Environment, UNESCO and other implementing partners that were established during the past 14 years of working in the Marshlands,
- Relations with neighbouring countries, mainly Turkey and Iran, are critical in this area as the Iraqi Marshlands are affected directly by the actions taken in those countries,
- The role played by the oil industry in terms of taking responsibility for, and cost sharing, the restoration, recovery and development of the Marshlands, and
- The well-being and standard of living of the people in the Marshlands i.e. provision of proper services, jobs and security, protecting their human rights and dignity and gender equity.

Lessons Learned

20. Efficient and effective project governance and appropriate institutional arrangements are major ingredients for success in achieving the objectives and the sustainability of the project results. Major lessons learned in this regard are:
 - The project plan should be realistic, mainly in relation to funds availability and time framework,
 - Role of the Steering Committee and its ownership and supervisory functions are key,
 - Monitoring plan is essential for improving and ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the project,
 - Periodic and systematic follow up, monitoring and feedback from UN Environment are prerequisites,
 - Gender and human rights issues should be given due attention all through the project life span,
 - Empowering and involving local communities, relevant Non-Government and Civil Society Organizations and groups are key and prerequisites, and
 - Strong national ownership, clear division of labour, coordination among the stakeholders, identification and empowering of a lead institution are necessary to the success of the project.

21. The inscription of the Marshlands and the endorsement of the Sustainable Management Plan are good but not enough, more importantly is the proper and timely implementation of the Sustainable Management Plan.

22. Ingredients and seeds for the sustainability and ownership should be integral parts of the project activities and interventions.
23. The present level of regional cooperation and coordination with neighbouring countries i.e. Turkey, Syria and Iran is not appropriate. Mutual cooperation among the countries of the region constitutes a pre-condition to success in the Marshlands due to the fact that actions taken in the upstream affect directly the downstream. Greater cooperation would convert challenges into opportunities and will result in a win-win case.
24. The accumulated experiences, systems, coordination mechanisms and network are good project assets and need to be benefitted from during the upcoming phase.

Recommendations

A. Recommendations addressed to UN Environment (for future phases):

Recommendation 1: Continue partnership with, and support to, the Government of Iraq during the upcoming phase of the implementation of the Sustainable Management Plan.

Recommendation 2: Put in place and maintain a) complete project documentation (narrative and financial records and reporting) and b) an effective M&E system.

Recommendation 3: Compile and build on the achievements, experiences and lessons learned that have been accumulated since 2004.

B. Recommendations to be shared by UN Environment with government counterparts:

Recommendation 4: Facilitate Sustainable Management Plan implementation process.

Recommendation 5: Allocate proper financial resources to the implementation of the Sustainable Management Plan and maximize the benefits from the existing and ongoing projects and activities related to Marshlands.

Recommendation 6: Establish a new, or strengthen the existing, capacities and authorities of one of the existing institutions to be in charge of the implementation and management of the SMP.

Recommendation 7: Facilitate cooperation with Turkey, Syria and Iran in order to ensure that enough water is coming in to the Marshlands on a sustainable basis.

Recommendation 8: Adopt and implement proper policies and strategies that ensure the efficient use and sustainable management of water resources and allow enough quality water to go in to the Marshlands.

Recommendation 9: Integrate environmental issues and considerations in the management of oil resources in southern Iraq.

C. Recommendations to be shared by UN Environment with all stakeholders:

Recommendation 10: Give due attention to the involvement and participation of the local communities and vulnerable and marginalised groups with special emphasis on gender and human right issues.

Recommendation 11: Develop the Marshlands Compact to constitute the basis for partnership and cooperation with major national, regional and international stakeholders.

1 INTRODUCTION

25. This Project “World Heritage inscription process as a tool to enhance natural and cultural resources management of the Iraqi Marshlands” is the second project implemented by UN Environment in the Marshlands. The first “Support for Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands” was implemented during 2004-2009 and constituted an ad-hoc response to Marshlands immediate needs at the time.
26. Furthermore, the Project (2009-2016) constituted a response to the high priority and urgent needs of the rehabilitation and sustainable development of Iraqi Marshlands and meant to represent a paradigm shift from the short term “quick fix” reaction to a medium term “resilience” response.
27. On 30 March 2009, the Project Approval Group in UN Environment⁷ approved the project and the UN Environment was entrusted with its implementation. The project implementation started in July 2009 and was completed in September 2016⁸ (87 months), originally the project was planned to last for 36 months.
28. Four project revisions were undertaken for the periods; (i) on 11/8/2011 to run until 11/2012 (ii) on 14/4/2013 to run until 7/2013 (iii) on 16/5/2014 to run until 9/2015 and (iv) on 27/10/2015 to run until 30/9/2016.
29. The project went through two phases, the first from July 2009 to December 2013 during which, the project was implemented by UN Environment’s Environmental and Technological Center (IETC)⁹. While the second phase started in January 2014, the management and oversight of the project during this phase was transferred to UN Environment’s Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA)¹⁰ until its close.
30. The total project cost as per the approved ProDoc was USD 3.597 million for the three years, of which UD 484,500 was anticipated as in-kind contributions from UN Environment. The Italian government provided finance of USD 2.369 million in cash to the project, which represents the total secured cash funding of the project. The evaluation was not able to confirm the value of in-kind contributions.
31. The project was approved as being aligned to two Expected Accomplishments in the 2008-2009 Programme of Work:
 - B: Increased understanding and implementation by public and private sector decision-makers of sustainable consumption and production, including in sectors such as construction and tourism, and increased voluntary initiatives promoting corporate environmental responsibility, as well as prevention of and response to environmental emergencies, giving due consideration to gender issues.

⁷ Project Approval group Decision Form

⁸ The Project TOR/project Summary

⁹ Based in Osaka/Japan

¹⁰ Based in Manama/Bahrain

- D: Improved capacity of countries and institutions, including financial institutions, to integrate ecosystem issues into consideration of their economic and trade policies and practices to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.¹¹.
32. No mid-term or other kinds of evaluation were planned for the initial 36-month duration of the project and none took place when the project implementation period was extended.
 33. This terminal evaluation was undertaken after the completion of the project during June-November 2018. As per the Terms Of Reference (TOR) of this assignment, the terminal evaluation has two primary purposes; (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment and main project partners, keeping in mind the intention of the project team to submit a concept/proposal to the Green Climate Fund.
 34. A wide range of audience will potentially benefit directly or indirectly from the results and findings of this evaluation including but not limited to the following: (i) policy and decision makers in Iraq and neighbouring countries, (ii) the implementing partners i.e. UN Environment, UNESCO, International Union for the Conservation of Nature/Regional Office for West Asia IUCN/ROWA and the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage (ARCWH), (iii) Iraqi government institutions such as Ministry of Health and Environment (MoHE), Ministry of Culture (MoC), Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), other line ministries, and the Governors in the Marshlands and (iv) the donor i.e. the Italian government.

¹¹ PIMS 2016- December –Iraq Marshlands Project 0547, Project Performance Highlights

2 EVALUATION METHODS

35. This terminal evaluation report was prepared in accordance with the UN Environment Evaluation Office guidelines¹² and was conducted as a desk-based exercise. The evaluation was conducted by the evaluation consultant Walid Abed Rabboh and the evaluation assistant Yousef Abedrabboh¹³ under the overall supervision of the UN Environment evaluation unit.
36. An in-depth and participatory evaluation approach was adopted and quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. Where possible and appropriate data and information have been triangulated and verified, in order to ensure maximum accuracy and credibility of the evaluation findings.
37. At the time of the project formulation and approval, the concept of the Theory of Change (TOC) was not being applied. An initial TOC at Design was constructed by the Evaluator during the Inception Phase of the evaluation process, based on the project documentation, further analysis and the findings of the evaluator at that time. As a result of the in-depth analysis of the project documents, the interviews conducted with the stakeholders and consultations with the Evaluation and Project Managers, the TOC at Evaluation (see figure 2) was revised and used as a basis for analysis of the project's performance.
38. Following are the evaluation methods and procedures applied:
 - Review of relevant documents and reports; (i) review of UN Environment policies, guidelines, Programmes of Work and examples of recent terminal evaluation reports, and (ii) review of the approved project document, project revisions, annual and progress reports, workshops' reports, minutes of meetings, Sustainable Management Plan and other project related technical and financial reports,
 - Interviews and consultations with wide range of stakeholders representing different governmental, UN, NGOs, CSOs, gender and vulnerable groups. Communication methods applied included, telephone and Skype calls, emails, personal meetings as illustrated under Annexes, List of People Contacted.
 - All through the evaluation process, close coordination and consultations took place with the Evaluation Manager and at a later stage with the Project Manager to discuss and clarify certain methodological and technical issues and to facilitate the evaluation process
39. The evaluator contacted around 30 persons (see List of People Contacted under Annex) and feedback was received from 19 of them. Several methods were applied to get feedback from the non-responding persons such as; sending reminders, requesting assistance/medians from certain stakeholders. Gender related questions were integrated in the evaluation questions sent to the correspondents and were raised/discussed during telephone and Skype calls. The relatively low rate of response

¹² Guidelines on the Structure of the Main Evaluation report revised 17.04.18

¹³ Special arrangement with the consultant

is attributed to changes in the contact numbers and addresses and the coincidence of the data collection time with the summer holidays.

40. The evaluator made it clear to respondents that confidentiality would be assured in case of sensitive data provided.
41. For the verification and triangulation of data and information, the evaluator purposely sought the response of several respondents on the same questions and statements mentioned by other respondents in addition to double checking from different sources when possible.
42. Due to the difficulty of reaching certain vulnerable groups in the Marshlands, the evaluator requested the assistance of Nature Iraq¹⁴ who has an office in the Marshlands in order to contact the representatives of such groups and get their responses on a set of questions prepared in advance by the evaluator, and
43. Specific questions were asked to specific stakeholders in order to match with their scope of work, involvement in the project implementation and potential involvement in the future interventions.
44. Major limitations faced by the evaluation can be summarized as following:
 - Limited availability of certain documents of direct relevance to the evaluation such as annual plans and budgets, project final technical and financial report covering the whole lifespan of the project, financial reports, steering committee minutes of meetings, systematic feedback and monitoring reports,
 - It is noted that some key information from the 2009-14 project implementation period was received very late (April 2019). While this information is appreciated, its late availability meant that it could not be fully integrated into the findings. As the difficulty in locating this information suggests that either a) the handover between the two implementing entities was not complete or b) the institutionalisation of project information at UN Environment is weak, the performance ratings have not been adjusted.
 - Relatively low response rate to the interviews requests see para 39 above,
 - The long time that had elapsed between the project starting date and the terminal evaluation i.e. 9 years which resulted in the inability to reach certain stakeholders and the loss of tracked information and memory of some information, and
 - The absence of the TOC at project design¹⁵ and confusion over some terminologies in addition to some lack of clarity in the TOC guidelines. For example, whether the TOC

¹⁴ Mr. Azzam Al-Wash, the Founder and CEO of Nature Iraq and Mr. Jassim Alasadi, Chibaish Office managing Director

¹⁵ A Theory of Change was not a requirement at the time this project was designed.

at Design should capture the intended causality of the intervention at the time of its formal approval or include revisions¹⁶.

45. According to the UN Environment Evaluation Office guidelines, a six-point rating scale to be applied on all evaluation criteria ranging from Highly Satisfactory (HS) to Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)¹⁷. The Evaluation Office allocates a weight out of 100 to each criterion and the final rating of the project resulted from the sum of multiplying each criterion score (1-6) by the criterion weight, then divided over 100.

3 THE PROJECT

3.1 Context

46. The Iraqi marshlands (Ahwar in Arabic) is a unique inland ecosystem in a harsh arid environment located in the southern part of Iraq within Basra, Missan and Thi-Qar governorates.

¹⁶ The UN Environment Evaluation Office recommends that a 'reconstructed' Theory of Change at Evaluation be developed in conjunction with the project team and confirmed with implementing partners during the evaluation. The Theory of Change at Evaluation aims to reflect the prevailing design and intentionality of the project at its maturity and is used as the basis for evaluating a project's performance.

¹⁷ Likelihood of Impact and sustainability are rated against a similar six-point scale using the terms Highly Likely to Highly Unlikely and Nature of External Context using a scale of 'Favorability'.

Map 1¹⁸: Location of the Iraqi Marshland



47. During the last two decades of the 20th century, the marshlands area was exposed to several damaging measures and actions that resulted in the deterioration of the environmental, hydrological, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the area.¹⁹ In 2001 the UN Environment Programme reported that 90 percent of the marshlands had been lost.²⁰
48. This has exacerbated the unemployment, poverty and illiteracy rates, in addition to limited delivery and poor quality of basic services, such as drinking water, health, sanitation, electricity, and education.
49. Major contributors to the problems facing the marshlands are; (i) measures taken by the former regime (before 2003), mainly stopping and diverting the natural flow of Euphrates and Tigris rivers from going in to the marshlands, (ii) the water control measures implemented by neighbouring countries, (iii) overuse of irrigation water in

¹⁸ The Consolidated Management Plan for the Protected Areas

¹⁹ UNEP-Support for the Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands 2004-2009.

²⁰ UNEP-Support for the Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands 2004-2009

the upper catchment, (iv) excessive use of chemicals and pesticides in agriculture and (v) oil extraction and operations.

50. Several external challenges have impacted on the project performance, mainly ISIS invasions and the drop in the oil prices, which in turn affected government priorities.

3.2 Objectives and Components

51. The overall development goal to which the project contributes to is; **“to ensure sustainable development of the Iraqi Marshlands²¹”**. The project aimed to utilize and benefit from the World Heritage inscription process outputs and outcomes as inputs to achieve sustainable management of the Marshlands.
52. The project was developed with the aim to; (i) establish a longer-term preservation and management plan of the cultural and natural heritage in the Marshlands area in accordance with the World Heritage Site Programme, (ii) identify and implement some key sustainable local area development and environmental management practices, (iii) build capacities of Iraqi staff and institutions and (iv) raise awareness among the local population to ensure their participation and ownership²².
53. As per the TOC at Evaluation the project consists of the following **four outputs**; (1) sustainable preservation and management plan based on World Heritage inscription process is developed and endorsed with full stakeholder involvement, (2) foundation and requirements for the implementation of Sustainable Management Plan are in place, (3) human resources and institutional capacities are developed to implement the sustainable management plan and (4) global and regional support and coordination mechanisms for conservation and management of Iraqi Marshlands are enhanced. In addition, **two outcomes** were formulated; (1) government institutions and local community partners’ capacities to adopt and integrate SMP and its options in the national and local strategies and plans, (2) global and regional cooperation and support to the SMP implementation maintained. More details on other components and results are in section 5.4.1
54. During the course of implementation, some changes i.e. rewording and rephrasing took place in the content of the log frame components as explained in table (3).

3.3 Stakeholders

55. Although the project document does not include a separate section on stakeholders’ analysis, yet, several stakeholders (institutions) and their roles and responsibilities in the project management and implementation have been mentioned in section 2 and section 6 of the ProDoc.

²¹ ProDoc

²² ProDoc

56. Despite the proper emphasis on gender equality issues and the identification of the specific efforts to be taken in the ProDoc, youth and other marginalized groups were not given a great deal of attention as a stakeholder group in the ProDoc. Furthermore, only one woman's NGO was listed in the institutional framework section of the ProDoc.
57. Based on this evaluation review, an assessment of the available documents and benefitting from the consultations and discussions held during this evaluation key stakeholders were categorized in eight groups (See Annex 1). Their level of interest, influence, their relevance to the evaluation and their contact details are included. The measurement scale used is High (H), Moderate (M) and Low (L).

3.4 Project Implementation Structure and Partners

58. As mentioned earlier, the project was implemented by the UN Environment in partnership and close cooperation with UNESCO. The project benefitted from the experiences and comparative advantage of two regional organizations; International Union for Conservation of Nature / Regional Office of West Asia (IUCN/ROWA) and the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARCWH), who were contracted by the project as implementing partners.
59. The Ministry of Health and Environment was assigned as the national focal point hosting the Project Management Unit (PMU), while the Ministry of Culture assumed the overall responsibility over the cultural component. All through the project life span they ensured cooperation and coordination among themselves and with other stakeholders.
60. The project cooperated with the IUCN/ROWA and the ARCWH in the implementation of a number some of its activities. A Project Steering Committee (SC) was established to oversee and guide the project work.

Figure 1: Organigram

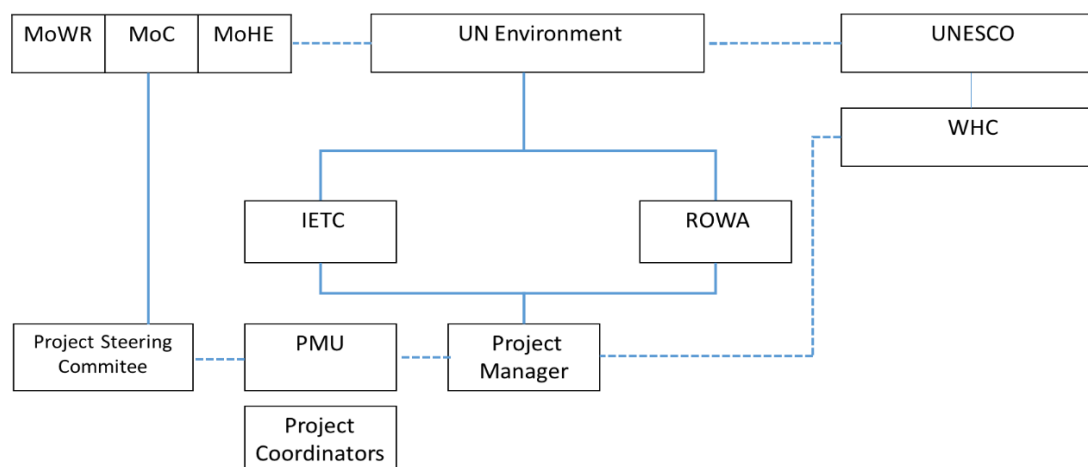


Table 2: Key Project Partners and their role in the Project Delivery and Performance

Key Project Partner	Role in Project Delivery and Performance
UN Environment and its IETC and ROWA units	Overall responsibility and supervision of the project activities, delivery and performance
UNESCO (WHC. and Iraq office)	Provided advisory services, capacity building and facilitation of the nomination file and the cultural component of the inscription process and Sustainable Management Plan
Ministry of Health and Environment	The national focal point of the project, representing the Government Of Iraq entrusted with the national overall responsibility of the coordination and management of the project activities, delivery and performance
Ministry of Culture	In charge of the cultural component of the inscription file and Sustainable Management Plan
Ministry of Water Resources	Responsible for water supply and allocations to the Marshland
Ministry of Agriculture	Responsibility over the management and provision of services to livestock, fisheries and plant production
Ministry of Foreign Affair	Political relations with regional countries and negotiations over the shared water resources
Other line ministries and public institutions	Management and service delivery of electricity, health, education, waste management, allocation of financial resources
Governors' offices in Basra, Missan and Thi-Qar	Overall responsibility for security, development and coordination within their governorates
University of Basra	Provision of technical services and capacity building mainly on issues related to water
NGOs and CSOs	Local outreach, capacity building, gender mainstreaming and equity

3.5 Changes in Design During Implementation

61. During the project implementation which lasted for 87 months, some changes in the project design took place as follows:

- The project duration was extended by 51 months, furthermore, the project received in total less than the budget that was planned for the first 36 months. Hence, the whole work plan was adjusted and some activities were moved to later times while others were cancelled,
- Output 2 was rephrased to reflect the realities of limited financial resources and delays in the endorsement of the SMP. The original output states “Sustainable preservation and management plan is implemented”. In accordance with the 2014

revision it was changed to read “Sustainable preservation and management plan implementation initiated”, and

- Consequently, outcome 2 was reworded to reflect the change in output 2. In the approved ProDoc the outcome was stated as “Environmentally sound management practices and local production/service delivery in the marshland area implemented on a pilot basis” according to 2014 revision it became “World Heritage inscription criteria integrated into national frameworks and processes in Iraq”.
62. IUCN/ROWA and ARCWH contracts were renewed to support, facilitate and finalize the inscription process and to mobilize support to Iraq when presenting the inscription file for approval.

3.6 Project Finance

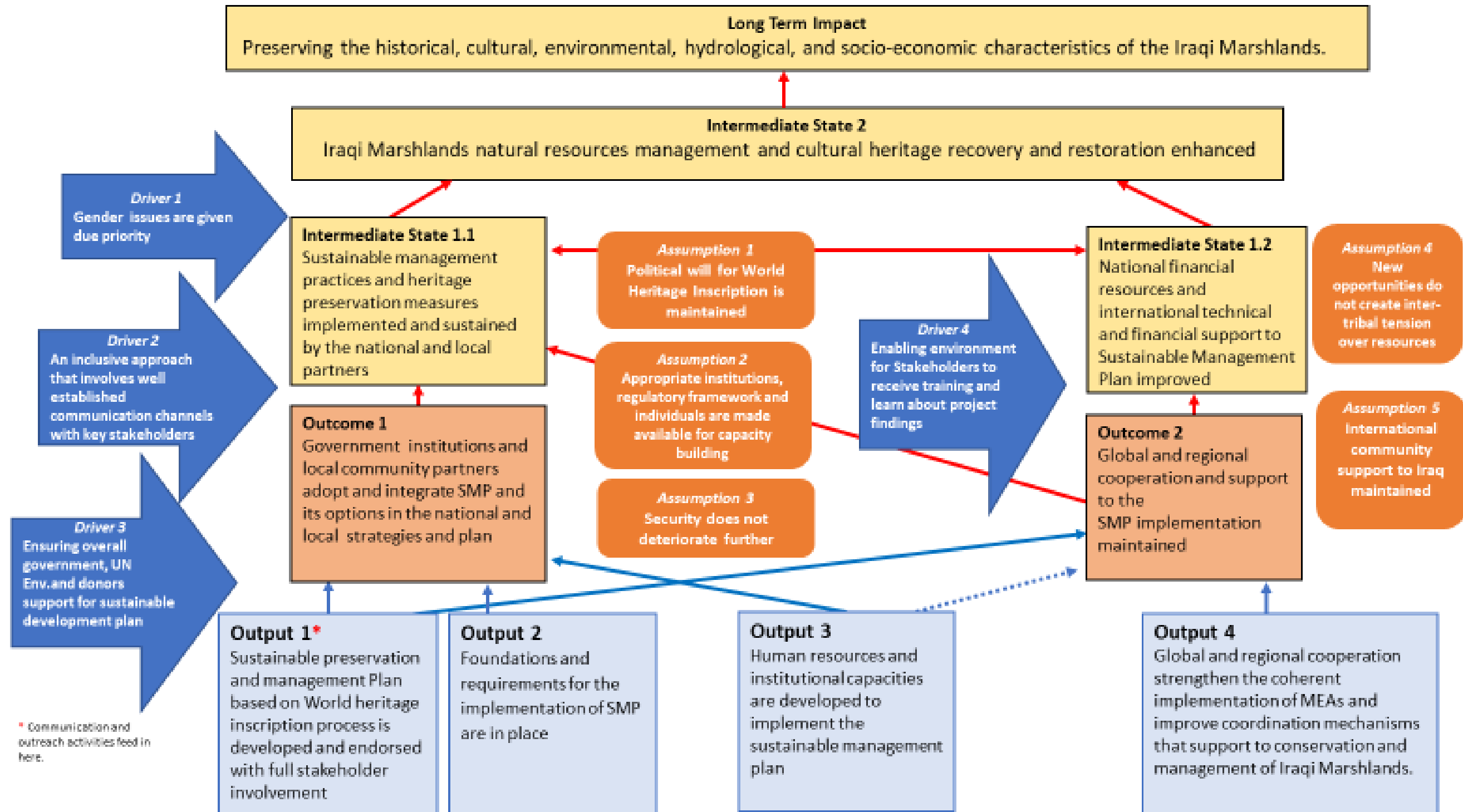
63. The total costs of the project as per the ProDoc, inclusive of in-kind contributions, is USD 3,597,650, out of which USD 2.369 million or 66% were made available through a grant from the Government of Italy.
64. In-kind contributions of USD 484,500 million were anticipated at project design stage and, although it is evident that in-kind contributions were made by UN Environment, IUCN and ARCWH, no documentation confirming these contributions was made available to the evaluation. Potentially, if one assumes that the approved project budget figure was reached, in-kind contributions could have a total value of USD 1,400,334.
65. The approved project budget anticipates project support costs of USD 358,00 over 36 months (i.e. 10%). Project support costs of USD 272,544.62 (estimated), representing 13% of the project budget, are reported as of December 2015. This December 2015 revision includes actual figures to the end of 2014 and budgeted figures for 2015 and 2016 so the project support cost figure remains an estimate. Project support costs are not clearly identified in the financial report of November 2018, which provides actual expenditure for 2015 and beyond.
66. The ProDoc, following the project design template required at that time, did not include any yearly budget details per component, nor details per output or activity. It only includes a table of budget components for the second half of 2009. The UN Environment requirements for budget presentation by results component have been strengthened since this project was designed.

4 THEORY OF CHANGE

67. While reconstructing the TOC, the evaluator reviewed the ProDoc, project revisions and other related documents in addition to integrating his own findings and judgments built on the feedback received from interviewed stakeholders.
68. It is noted that the ProDoc i.e. the logframe and project revisions did not include drivers, intermediate states or impact statements *per se*, as the theory of change was not required by and was not in use by UN Environment at the time of project design.
69. Having said that, the ProDoc and the revisions contained several statements that contributed to the formulation of the results chain. The project encompasses four components, as stated in the project document:
- **Component 1:** Preservation and management plan development towards World Heritage inscription,
 - **Component 2:** Preservation and management plan implementation,
 - **Component 3:** Capacity building and awareness raising, and
 - **Component 4:** International cooperation
70. The components mentioned above were worded as summaries of the outputs described in the logical framework. While the project document did not identify outcomes *per se*, it can be assumed that the following two statements at the top of the intervention logic column in the project logframe represent the outcomes of the project at design ;(i) government institutions and local community partners endorse sustainable management plan options, developed in line with the World Heritage inscription requirements, and (ii) environmentally sound management practices and local production/services delivery in the Marshlands area implemented on a pilot basis.
- 71.
- 72.
73. Table 3 depicts the changes in the logframe and the new elements of the TOC statements and explains the justification for the changes.
74. The ProDoc logframe has identified **four outputs**, which have been restructured in the TOC to better reflect the project realities; (1) sustainable preservation and management Plan based on World heritage inscription process is developed and endorsed with full stakeholder involvement, (2) foundation and requirements for the implementation of SMP are in place, (3) human resources and institutional capacities are developed to implement the sustainable management plan and (4) global and regional support and coordination mechanisms for conservation and management of Iraqi Marshlands are enhanced.

75. The successful delivery of the four outputs, which in turn depends on the materialization of the assumptions and the drivers, is expected to result in two outcomes: (1) government institutions and local community partners adopt and integrate the Sustainable Management Plan and its options in the national and local strategies and plans, and (2) global and regional cooperation mechanisms and support to the Sustainable Management Plan implementation maintained.
76. The following three intermediate states are expected to materialize, but only if the assumptions and their respective drivers materialize: 1.1. Sustainable management practices and heritage preservation measures implemented and sustained by the national and local partners; 1.2. National financial resources and international technical and financial support to Sustainable Management Plan improved and 2. Iraqi Marshlands natural resources management and cultural heritage recovery and restoration enhanced.
77. Finally, the impact to which the project is expected contribute to is “Preserving the historical, cultural, environmental, hydrological, and socio-economic characteristics of the Iraqi Marshlands”.
78. For the outcomes, intermediate states and impact to materialize, the following assumptions were identified as prerequisites to the successful realization of the project results: (1) political will for World Heritage Inscription is maintained; (2) appropriate institutions, cooperation mechanisms, regulatory framework and individuals are made available for capacity building; (3) Security does not deteriorate further; (4) New opportunities do not create inter-tribal tension over resources and (5) international community support to Iraq maintained.
79. The assumptions are expected to be facilitated and influenced by the following drivers: (1) gender issues are given due priority; (2) an inclusive approach that involves well established communication channels with key stakeholders; (3) ensuring overall government, UN Environment and donors support for sustainable development plan and (4) enabling environment for stakeholders to receive training and learn about project findings.

Figure 2: Theory of Change at Evaluation



4.1 Theory of Change paths and logic from outcomes to impact

80. If the Sustainable Management Plan (SMP) and the foundations and requirements for its implementation are in place and the human resource and institutional capacities are developed to implement the SMP, then government institutions and local community partners will adopt and integrate the SMP and its options in the national and local strategies and plans.
81. By the same token, global and regional cooperation and support to the SMP implementation will be achieved as a result of delivering the SMP development in addition to enhancing global and regional cooperation, which aims at improving coordination mechanisms, facilitating the coherent implementation of MEAs and providing support to conservation and management of Iraqi Marshlands. In addition, developing systemic human resources and institutional capacities will also contribute (to a lesser extent) to successful SMP implementation.
82. If government institutions and local community partners adopt and integrate SMP and its options in the national and local strategies and plans and if global and regional cooperation and support to the SMP implementation is maintained, then sustainable management practices and heritage preservation measures will be successfully implemented and sustained by the national and local partners.
83. Furthermore, the maintenance of global and regional cooperation and support to SMP will result in the realization of the improvement of national financial resources and international technical and financial support to the SMP. Furthermore, as an effect of the implementation and sustainability of sustainable management practices and heritage preservations, measures by the national and local partners and the improvement of national financial resources and international technical support the SMP, Iraqi Marshlands natural resources management and cultural heritage recovery and restoration will be enhanced.
84. Consequently, the enhancement of Iraqi Marshlands' natural resources management and cultural heritage recovery and restoration will contribute to achieving the preservation of the historical, cultural, environment, hydrological and socio-economic characteristics of the Iraqi Marshlands.
85. All assumptions and drivers are interlinked and affect all outcomes, intermediate states and impact.
86. Preserving the historical, cultural, environmental, hydrological and socio-economic characteristics of the Iraqi Marshlands' realization is conditional on the implementation of other projects and interventions by local, regional, national and international institutions, in addition to this project's interventions and results.

Table 3: Changes in the Log-frame Elements

Original statement as in the ProDoc.	Statement in the reconstructed TOC	Justification for revision/ change
<p>Output 1</p> <p>Sustainable preservation and management Plan based on World heritage inscription process is developed with full stakeholder involvement</p>	<p>Sustainable preservation and management Plan based on World heritage inscription process is developed and endorsed with full stakeholder involvement</p>	<p>The word endorsed has been added to better reflect the case as the SMP was endorsed during the project life span</p>
<p>Output 2</p> <p>Sustainable preservation and management plan is implemented.</p> <p>This output was amended in the project revision in 2014 to read²³;</p> <p>Sustainable preservation and management plan implementation initiated</p>	<p>Foundation and requirements for the implementation of SMP are in place</p>	<p>The implementation of the SMP was not possible to initiate, as it was endorsed shortly (two weeks) before the project termination. Furthermore, the financial resources were exhausted by the time. Therefore, the project has concentrated its efforts towards preparing the enabling environment for the implementation of the SMP</p>
<p>Output 3</p> <p>Human and institutional capacity is developed to implement sustainable management plans</p>	<p>Human resources and institutional capacities are developed to implement the sustainable management plan</p>	<p>Adjusted for clarity and to reflect that there is only one SMP</p>
<p>Output 4</p> <p>Global support and coordination for conservation and management are maintained</p>	<p>Global and regional cooperation strengthen the coherent implementation of MEAs and improve coordination mechanisms that support conservation and management of Iraqi Marshlands</p>	<p>This output was reworded to reflect the great importance of regional cooperation mainly in relation to equitable and fair sharing of shared water resources to the success of the SMP implementation and to reflect the results of the efforts exerted by the project in this regard.</p>

²³ Template of 11/5/2014 project Revision

Original statement as in the ProDoc.	Statement in the reconstructed TOC	Justification for revision/change
Outcome 1 Government institutions and local community partners endorse sustainable management plan options, developed in line with the world heritage inscription Requirements	Government institutions and local community partners' capacities to adopt SMP and its measures are integrated in the national and local strategies and plans	As mentioned above the plan was endorsed as a result of the project interventions, so the outcome has been amended to reflect the immediate outcome of outputs 1, 2, and 3
Outcome 2 Environmental sound management practices and local production services delivery in the Marshlands are implemented on pilot basis. This outcome has been changed in the project 2014 revision to be: World Heritage inscription criteria integrated into national frameworks and processes in Iraq	Global and regional cooperation and support to the SMP implementation maintained	The new outcome 1 includes the integration and adoption of the SMP options in the national and local strategies and plans. Therefore, this outcome was revised to reflect the impact at regional level and be closely related to the immediate results of delivering outputs 3 and 4
Assumptions		
Participation of suitable community groups and institutions is facilitated for pilot projects and community initiative planning, implementation, and follow-up activities		This assumption is not valid as it is more of activity/output nature than assumption
Security does not deteriorate further.		No changes
Political will for the World Heritage Inscription is maintained	Political will to support SMP implementation maintained	The inscription was done, so the assumption has been reworded to reflect the new phase of implementation
	International community support to Iraq maintained	This is a necessary assumption especially during the implementation phase
Appropriate institutions and individuals are made available for capacity building	Appropriate institutions, regulatory framework and individuals are made available for capacity building	Legal and regulatory frameworks should be stressed despite the fact it could be part of the institutions

Original statement as in the ProDoc.	Statement in the reconstructed TOC	Justification for revision/ change
New opportunities do not create inter-tribal tension for resources	New opportunities do not create tribal tensions	The tension might be inter, intra or even with other organizations. Furthermore, reasons for tension are not limited to resources but could be due to other reasons such as provision of services, new jobs.... etc.
Drivers		Justification for revision / change
Ensuring overall government, UN Env. and donors support for sustainable development plan		The ProDoc didn't include drivers
An inclusive approach that involves well established communication channels with key stakeholders		Same as above
Gender issues are given due priority		Same as above
Positive climate and proper networking for knowledge and experience exchange institutions		Same as above
Enabling environment for Stakeholders to receive training and learn about project findings		Same as above
Intermediate states		Justification for revision / change
1.1 Sustainable management practices and heritage preservation measures implemented and sustained by the national and local partners		The ProDoc didn't include intermediate states
1.2 National financial resources and international technical and financial support to Sustainable Management Plan improved		Same as above
2. Iraqi Marshlands natural resources management and cultural heritage recovery and restoration enhanced		Same as above
Impact		Justification for revision / change
Preserving the historical, cultural, environmental, hydrological, and socio-economic characteristics of the Iraqi Marshlands.		The ProDoc didn't include impact

5 EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.1 Strategic Relevance

5.1.1 Alignment with UN Environment strategic priorities

87. At the time of approval, the project complied with the UN Environment policies, strategies and programme of work as explained in table (3) below:

Table 4: Project Compliance with UN Environment Guiding Documents

UN Environment Mission and Mandate ²⁴	Medium Term Strategy	Programme of Work
<p>Mission; To provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and people to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.</p> <p>Mandate; Keeping the world environmental situation under review; Catalysing and promoting international cooperation and action; Providing policy advice and early warning information based upon sound science and assessments;</p> <p>Facilitating the development, implementation and evolution of norms and standards and developing coherent inter-linkages among international environmental conventions;</p> <p>Strengthening technology support and capacity in line with country needs and priorities</p>	<p>MTS²⁵</p> <p>Focuses on six thematic priorities, out of which the following four are of close relevance to the project:</p> <p>Climate change Sustainable management of ecosystems Environmental management Resource efficiency</p>	<p>POW²⁶</p> <p>1. SP4, Expected accomplishment B: Increased understanding and implementation by public and private sector decision-makers of sustainable consumption and production.</p> <p>2. SP4, Expected accomplishment D: Improved capacities of countries and institutions</p>

²⁴ <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment>

²⁵ Mid-Term Evaluation of UNEP's Medium-term Strategy 2010 - 2013

²⁶ UNEP Programme of Work 2008-2009

88. Despite the consecutive reviews, extensions and re-planning of certain activities that occurred between 2012 and 2016, the intended results stayed in harmony and aligned with the successive strategic priorities (2010-2013, 2014-2017 and 2018-2021 Medium Term Strategies and their Programmes Of Work.
89. Furthermore, the project aligned strongly with Bali Strategic Plan especially outputs 3 and 4 through providing support to the national agencies in order to improve their capacities and efficiencies in providing services and performing their tasks and responsibilities and to cope better with the international agreements, protocols and strategies such as CBD, WHC, Ramsar, UNFCCC and MDGs/SDGs.
90. Further, and in line with South-South Cooperation, the project has benefitted from experience and expertise in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Bahrain, Qatar and other countries from the south either by visits, conducting certain activities in those countries or working with experts from the south.

Alignment with UN Environment strategic priorities is rated **Highly Satisfactory**

5.1.2 Alignment with donor strategic priorities

91. At the time of the project approval, the project was in full alignment with Italian aid and cooperation policies and priorities. The top two priorities for Italian cooperation were i. Agriculture and food security ii. Environment, landscape and natural resource management and with the seventh priority related to the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage²⁷. Moreover, Iraq was ranked as the top recipient country of Goss ODA among the countries receiving Italian Official Development Assistance (ODA) which reached USD 429 million in 2009, followed by Afghanistan with USD 92 million²⁸.

Alignment with donor strategic priorities is rated **Highly Satisfactory**

5.1.3 Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities

92. The project complied with two of the four pillars of the National Development Strategy (NDS) which constituted the Government Of Iraq development

²⁷ DGCS (2009a), Italian Development Co-operation 2009-2011: Programming Guidelines and Directions, supplement to a Dipco n.13 (9 April 2009), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome

²⁸ Efforts and policies of bilateral donors, Italy bilateral ODA, DCR/OECD2011

framework at the time of project approval; (i) Strengthening the foundation for economic growth and (ii) Improving the quality of life²⁹. This, in addition to several statements in the strategy, related to project objectives and results such as, supporting tourism, rural development, institutional capacity enhancement, local area development, agriculture, food security and water.

93. The new National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2022 includes four objectives within the Environment Sustainability Chapter, the third objective is of close relevance to Marshlands “Protecting, restoring and sustaining the use of terrestrial ecosystems”. Fifteen measures have been identified in the NDP to achieve the third objective, out of which three are of immediate relevance to Marshlands; (i) implementation of the Marshlands rehabilitation programme, (ii) implementation of the National Committee Plan for the Marshlands and (iii) execution of health projects in the Marshlands. This demonstrates the strong ownership by GOI³⁰.

94. Article 33³¹ of the Iraqi constitution stipulates the following:

- Every individual has the right to live in a safe environment,
- The state undertakes the protection and preservation of the environment and biological diversity.

95. The 2007 International Compact with Iraq (ICI) included several issues of relevance such as supporting the efforts to implement the international conventions, agreements, protocols and treaties.

96. The Iraq UN Common Assistance Strategy (UNCT) 2008-2010 under agriculture and food assistance sector “a consolidated land and water management policy and a comprehensive approach to resolve trans-boundary water and environmental issues”. Furthermore, UNCT identified environment as one of the cross-cutting issues to be considered and addressed in all UN interventions in the country, in addition, environmental degradation was identified as one of the major causes of poverty and unemployment.

The relevance of the project to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities is rated Highly Satisfactory .
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²⁹ Iraqi national Development Strategy 2007-2010

³⁰ Iraqi national Development Plan 2018-2022

³¹ Constitution of Iraq 2005

5.1.4 Complementarity with existing interventions

97. This project has largely built on, and benefited from, the former Marshlands project that was implemented by UN Environment during 2004-2009 which responded to the immediate needs of Marshlands at the time.
98. At the same time, several projects and activities covering Marshlands were implemented by different agencies such as:
- The Local Area Development Programme (LADP); this project covered six governorates in Iraq of which Basrah, Missan and Thi-qar (the Marshlands governorates) were targeted, total budget was around USD 30 million for the period 2007-2010, UNDP,
 - A special UNCT task force “Iraqi Marshlands and UN Support” was established to ensure alignment and harmony of interventions related to Marshlands,
 - The Sustainable Strategic Development Plan and the Unified Plan for Marshlands were developed in 2009, UNDP,
 - Organizational support to the State Ministry for Marshlands 2008-2011 implemented by UNDP, and
 - Decision support system for water resources planning in Iraq 2009-2013 Italy/UNDP.

The project complementarity with existing interventions is rated **Satisfactory**.

5.2 Quality of Project Design

99. A detailed assessment of the project design quality was conducted in the inception report and the Project Design Quality rating matrix was attached to it.
100. It is worth noting that the project was formulated in accordance with the guidelines and procedures applied in 2009, while this evaluation is based and in line with the present guidelines and requirements. Therefore, the ranking of some criteria/sub-criteria which were not required at the design stage, has been affected.
101. Project design main strengths were:
- Benefited from experiences from previous interventions and integrated lessons learned from them,
 - Close partnership and division of labour with other specialized agencies such as UNESCO and IUCN,
 - Alignment with the prevailing strategies and plans at national, regional and international levels,

- Gender issues were tackled properly,
- The ProDoc includes clear and comprehensive project background, World Heritage inscription process and impacts on poverty and gender equality,
- The ProDoc includes a thorough institutional framework analysis despite the fact there was no proper description of the steering, oversight and management structure that are considered prerequisites for sustainability, transparency and ownership, and
- Clear communication, public information and outreach interventions and requirements are described.

102. While the project main weaknesses at design were:

- The project budget does not include details on the whole life span of the project. It only covers 2009 budget as per the table attached to the ProDoc,
- Lack of proper identification/ consultations and analysis of certain stakeholders representing local communities and gender groups,
- Issues related to human rights and vulnerable groups were not tackled
- Lack of M&E plan, SMART indicators and outcomes,
- Weak intervention logic,
- Risks, challenging operational factors and mitigation strategies are not identified, and
- Requirements for sustainability and replication of the results and achievement are lacking.

The Quality of project design is rated Moderately Satisfactory

5.3 Nature of External Context

103. The project has been affected to different degrees by the following external factors and events:

- Deterioration of security situation in Iraq has had its toll on the project, as well as:
 - (i) reduced focus on and prioritisation of the Marshlands,
 - (ii) limited the financial resources allocated to development as most of Iraqi budgets went on increasing security,
 - (iii) negative effects on people's security and mobility and
 - (iv) disenabled environment for investment and reconstruction.
- Volatile political situation, resulted in serious challenges that have negatively affected all aspects of life including:

- (i) the efficiency and performance of Iraqi institutions that resulted from the successive change in decisions makers and leadership in the ministries and
- (ii) the frequent institutional restructuring as was the case in the establishment of the State Ministry of Marshlands in 2007 and its cancellation in 2012, the establishment of the Ministry of Environment in 2007 and its merger with the Ministry of Health in 2015 and the merger of the Ministry of Culture with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in 2015, and
- Frequent droughts, dust storms and high temperatures which impacted directly and negatively on the amount and quality of water coming in to the Marshlands.

The external context of the project is rated Highly Unfavourable .

5.4 Effectiveness

104. The project was extended 4 times as explained in chapter 1, reasons for the delays in delivering the outputs vary from the volatile security conditions, weak coordination (mainly among Iraqi institutions) and limited availability of financial resources, mainly due to the shrinkage in the government financial resources as a result of the additional financial burdens resulted from combatting terrorism in Iraq.
105. This evaluation assesses the delivery and achievements of the outputs and results as stipulated in the original ProDoc, the project revisions and the reconstructed Theory of Change.
106. It is worth noting that some activities continued to be implemented after the operational completion of the project in September 2016 such as; (i) the roundtable meeting in Amman in February 2017, (ii) MOHE staff visit to Lebanon in April 2017 and (iii) Steering Committee meeting in Amman in February 2017.
107. The project aimed to utilize, and benefit from, the World Heritage inscription process to achieve sustainable management of natural and cultural resources of the Marshlands.

5.4.1 Delivery of outputs

108. The delivery of four outputs has been evaluated when possible in terms of quantity, quality, time framework and ownership.
109. Outputs have been assessed against the indicators assigned to each output as stated in the project revisions, mainly 2014 and 2015 revisions.

110. Each output evaluation includes; a summary assessment table, the output activities, achievements, reasons behind success/no success in addition to evaluator's comments.

Table 4: Summary Assessment of Output 1

Output	Indicators and Targets	Summary Assessment
Output 1: Fully delivered		- The nomination file was prepared/completed in 2013
As in the ProDoc		
Sustainable preservation and management plan based on the World Heritage inscription process is developed with full stakeholder involvement (as in the ProDoc)	- Completion of the World Heritage nomination file for the Iraqi Marshlands as mixed heritage including the SMP, with the full endorsement by the Iraqi Government and WHC (Target: one nomination file with SMP)	- The SMP was finalized in in September 2015 -Iraqi Government endorsed the SMP and it was integrated in the file two weeks before Istanbul WHC meeting in July2016 -Iraqi Marshlands were inscribed during WHC meeting in Istanbul
As in the TOC		
Sustainable preservation and management Plan based in World heritage inscription process is developed and endorsed with full stakeholder involvement	- WHC meeting approval - Number of stakeholders participating that endorse the management plan (Target: 100%; Baseline 0)	-Most relevant stakeholders participated actively in accordance with their respective responsibilities and mandates except local communities and gender groups whose participation was not appropriate - This is well evidenced by the fact that more than 120 signatures were obtained. Government institutions were able to work as one during major steps in the process.

111. Five activities were identified in order to ensure the delivery of this output:

- Provide assistance to the State Party (i.e., Iraqi institutions) during the process of nomination of properties for inscription on the World Heritage List (lead: UNESCO),
- Evaluate management practices being implemented in existing relevant World Heritage sites, focusing on sites within the region, those with similar ecosystems, and those in other developing countries, with particular emphasis on mixed sites,
- Provide support to establish and maintain a network of institutions involved with marshland preservation and the management and inscription process, including local, governorate, and national institutions,
- Conduct data collection and analysis necessary for natural resource and cultural heritage management plan establishment, and

- Conduct regular marshland monitoring programmes, including water quality and quantity, biodiversity, and human activities (lead: UNEP).

112. Major achievements towards delivering this output were:

- Three technical baseline reports for cultural and natural heritage management produced,
- National Protected Area and Parks initiative launched by the Iraqi Government and supported by the project,
- Four technical reports for natural and cultural values of the Iraqi Marshlands produced,
- First draft of Nomination File completed,
- Second draft of World Nomination File completed,
- Final draft of World Heritage Nomination file completed,
- Communication and outreach material for local communities' consultations completed,
- Management plan of the property incorporating local community and local authority engagement drawn up,
- Management plan including institutional management reviewed with relevant ministries,
- Government officials and management staff were introduced to the sustainable management of integrated cultural and natural components of the SMP, and
- Community and global support to the SMP improved as a result of the media campaign.

113. The inscription file and the formulation of the SMP are the major outputs in this project, their successful delivery demonstrates the determination and willingness of MOHE and MOC, UN Environment, UNESCO and the international community, i.e. Italian Government and other relevant regional institutions, to work together to preserve and sustainably manage the Iraqi Marshlands natural and cultural resources.

114. Major delays have occurred in delivering this output, originally the file should have been developed in the first phase. The field inspection by ICOMOS was delayed by one year (Oct 2015) due to the security situation in Iraq³². There is no evidence to suggest that the national workshop to launch the SMP in 2015 materialized.

115. The participation of stakeholders (both men and women) is well evidenced by the fact that over 120 approval signatures of the SMP were obtained from various meetings, and workshops/consultations which were gathered by the

³² Logframe

UN Environment national consultant³³, discussed in several high-level meetings i.e. the meeting of the UN Environment Executive Director with high level Iraqi government representatives and the workshops held specifically for this purpose at national and governorates levels.

116. Some key stakeholders such as Ministry of Water, local communities, NGOs and CSOS had minimum participation in the preparation of the file and the SMP.

117. The SMP, which was prepared by IUCN/ROWA and ARCHW under the overall supervision of UN Environment in cooperation with UNESCO, is a well prepared and detailed document with generic interventions that can serve as examples. However, it lacks specific and detailed programmes and projects that can be integrated in the national plans and which, in turn, would constitute the basis for generating international support.

118. A wide range of beneficiaries, including women, have benefitted from being involved in the process at different stages, mainly the counterparts from the MOHE and MOC, in addition to staff from other ministries and institutions, local authorities, NGOs, CSOs and local communities. This is well demonstrated in their participation in the meetings, workshops, consultations and through learning by doing as they were introduced to new concepts, appropriate methodologies, preparation of technical reports, coordination mechanisms and management procedures.

119. The ownership of the SMP by the Government of Iraq and other stakeholders was very evident all through the formulation and endorsement process. They were able “to act and deliver as one” in this case, despite the overlaps, ambiguities and conflict of interests among them.

120. Several reasons were behind the success in achieving this output include:

- The Iraqis considered the inscription process as a challenge and an issue of national pride and duty, as it would set a worldwide precedent,
- The accelerated rate of deterioration of the environmental, cultural and socio-economical situations in the Marshlands provoked and motivated stakeholders to give high priority to its restoration and sustainable management, and
- The enabling environment for success was in place such as international support, UN Environment close partnership, UNESCO commitment to support, availability of international experts and consultants and availability of funding.

121. Factors that affected the delivery of this output negatively were:

³³ Project report January-June 2016

- The consecutive delays in the implementation of activities, as this output was planned to be delivered in Feb. 2012, while the draft was prepared in 2014, finalized in 2015 and endorsed in July 2016.
- The volatile security situation, and
- Conflict of interest within and among Iraqi institutions

Table 5: Summary Assessment of Output 2

Output	Indicators and Targets	Summary Assessment
Output 2: Partially delivered	- Number of tools and options for ecosystem management and cultural management, in line with the World Heritage Operational Guideline for the local officials and communities (Target:10)	- Actual operationalization of the plan did not materialize, although some ongoing activities related to monitoring practices were sustained and improved by guidance from project teams.
As in the ProDoc Sustainable preservation and management plan is implemented	-A comprehensive long-term conservation and management plan for the proposed World Heritage property is operational incorporating community participation and consultations with clear roles and responsibilities (Target: 1; Baseline: 0)	- The SMP emphasizes the importance of the community participation and consultations. Moreover, it includes clear delineation of roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders.
As in revision 2014 Sustainable preservation and management plan implementation initiated		
As in the TOC Foundations and requirements for the implementation of SMP are in place		

122. Four activities were identified in order to ensure the delivery of this output:

- Analyse current and future options for sustainable ecosystem utilization and impacts on preservation, including local product development, industrial activities including tourism, agriculture and aquaculture, construction using native materials, and others; analyse income and job opportunities generated in other world heritage sites and identify possibilities for the area. (Lead: UN Environment)³⁴,
- Implement a pilot project on community-wide ecosystem management and cultural preservation, including sustainable tourism, incorporating environmentally sound practices,

³⁴ Mentioned in the work plan not in the logframe

- (iii) Support small-scale community level initiatives to introduce preservation and management options for natural and cultural resources, and
- (iv) Provide advice and assistance to establish a centre for Marshland Ecosystem and Natural Resource Management, which will serve as an anchor institution for natural resource preservation efforts in the southern governorates.

123. It is worth noting that this output was subjected to several changes as explained in table (3) and has been reworded again in the TOC to reflect the realities of the project.

124. Major achievements towards delivering this output were:

- Three preliminary community meetings with local stakeholders organized,
- Core experts selected to draft the management plan and nomination file,
- Gaps were identified by the core national and international experts to complete the nomination file,
- National Red list Assessment Process initiated to support the biodiversity values,
- National Red list Assessment for the selected species in the Marshlands areas completed
- Implementation plan for the SMP including an Institutional framework for the Iraqi Marshlands completed,
- Monitoring Programme for SMP developed including Risk Management Plan,
- Additional government staff trained on monitoring tools of the SMP,
- MOU was signed with Iran on the margins of Istanbul WHC meeting, and
- A project proposal was prepared by UN Environment to support GOI in the upcoming phase.

125. Due to the shortage of time between the endorsements of the plan, World Heritage Center decision and the closure of the project, in addition to fact that the project financial resources were exhausted, the pilot implementation did not materialize.

126. Through the support of the project, routine and ad-hoc implementation and monitoring continued to take place as usual by the University of Basra on water quality, archaeological monitoring and excavations, biodiversity surveys and monitoring oil excavations.

127. Several reasons were behind the limited delivery of this output including:

- Delays in the development and endorsement of the SMP as it was endorsed in July 2016,

- Delays in the inscription process, World Heritage Center decision was taken in July 2016,
- Lack of proper funding mainly due to limited governmental funding, as sizable share of the government budget was allocated to fighting terrorism in addition to the drop in the oil prices,
- Weak and uncoordinated monitoring and supervision, and
- Successive changes in the government policies and the restructuring of the major institutions involved such Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Culture.

128. The Government Of Iraq expressed its commitment to the implementation of the SMP as stipulated in the new National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 - 2.22 section 3 of the Environment Sustainability Chapter 10, identifies four objectives, the third objective is of close relevance to Marshlands “Protecting, restoring and sustaining the use of terrestrial ecosystems”.

129. Fifteen measures have been identified in the NDP to achieve the third objective, out of which three are of immediate relevance to Marshlands as explained in section 5.1.3. This demonstrates the strong ownership and willingness of the Government Of Iraq to proceed in the implementation of the SMP.

Table 6: Summary Assessment of Output 3

Outputs	Indicators and Targets	Summary Assessment
<p>Output 3: Partially delivered</p> <p>As in the ProDoc Human and institutional capacity is developed to implement sustainable management</p> <p>As in the TOC Human resources and institutional capacities are developed to implement the sustainable management plans (as in the TOC).</p>	<p>- Number of communities involved in capacity building training (Total: 50 communities; Baseline: 0)</p> <p>- Core experts for the world heritage site management identified and trained (Total: 2 core Iraqi experts; Baseline: 0)</p>	<p>- 60 persons have participated in capacity building activities</p> <p>- Some delays occurred in implementing actions capacity building mainly those related to the SMP</p> <p>- Very limited number of communities participated in the capacity building</p> <p>2 core experts received training</p>

130. Four activities were identified in order to ensure the delivery of this output:

- (i) Raise capacity of Iraqi institutions and individuals on the following aspects of preservation and management of natural and cultural heritage:
 - Institutional frameworks and practices for sustainable management,
 - Data collection and analysis needed for the conservation and management plan establishment and implementation,
 - Local level initiatives on marshland management and sustainable ecosystem utilization,
 - Inscription Process of World Heritage Center,
 - Management of World Heritage Site, and
 - Organization of secondary training on the above subjects inside Iraq.
- (ii) Provide training and curriculum development support in the fields of cultural restoration, ecosystem management, archaeology, and tourism development to Iraqi educational institutions (lead: UNESCO),
- (iii) Share lessons learned from the process of WHS submission within Iraq to provide information and guidance on other potential sites for WHS inscription (lead: UNESCO), and
- (iv) Develop programmes for school pupils on the Marshlands that feature ecological, cultural, and historical importance of the area, including teaching materials and field visits (lead: UNESCO).

131. The following has been achieved towards the delivery of this output:

- Two introduction trainings on World Heritage Nomination completed,
- A study tour conducted,
- One training on drafting the World Heritage Nomination file organized,
- Two trainings for the protected area management organized,
- Final review of the nomination file conducted under the guidance of international experts,
- One training for Red-list assessment organized,
- Final consultation workshop of the World Heritage nomination file organized,
- Technical report documenting lessons learned from the nomination file and process for capacity building report on capacity building needs assessment for the long-term sustainable management plan were prepared,
- Capacity building workshops/consultations with local authorities and local communities completed,

- Capacity building workshops/consultations on the SMP with 6 local authorities and with 50 local communities completed in the later stages of the project and reported, and
- Human and institutional capacity assessed and action plan for sustaining result discussed with partners

132. Without the proper training and capacity building activities provided by the project, it would have been more difficult to achieve the project results.

133. Since the inception of this project, several important events and activities covering a wide range of subject matters took place and achievements were made in relation to this output as mentioned in the above paragraph.

134. Local communities did not receive due attention earlier in the project and efforts to enhancing their capacities to ‘implement sustainable management’ were perceived to be “too little, too late”.

135. The lack of workshop evaluations, especially by the participants at the end of the workshop and later by their relevant institutions, has limited the evaluator’s judgement on the quality of training. The opinions of the persons interviewed regarding the quality of training ranged between good and excellent.

136. Reasons behind the achieved successes are:

- The felt need for training as the inscription process required special knowledges and skills,
- The project continued the support to, and provision of, the enabling environment and requirements for training and capacity building,
- Involvement of specialized agencies in the provision of training, and
- Cooperation of Iraqi institutions in the nomination and release of the trainees and facilitation of the training events and workshops.

Table 7: Summary Assessment of Output 4

Output	Indicators and Targets	Summary Assessment
Output 4: Partially delivered As in the ProDoc Global support and coordination for conservation and management are maintained. As in the TOC	Number of international/regional partners involved (10 partners involved).	The following international and regional organizations were directly involved: UN Environment and its IETC and ROWA units UNESCO headquarter/WHC and Baghdad office IUCN/ROWA and the headquarters/ICOMOS

Output	Indicators and Targets	Summary Assessment
Global and regional cooperation to improve coordination mechanisms, facilitate the adoption of MEAs and support to conservation and management of Iraqi Marshlands is enhanced		ARCWH/Bahrain

137. Three activities were identified in order to ensure the delivery of this output:

- (i) Build and maintain international support for the conservation and management of the Iraqi Marshlands heritage, such as inclusion of natural and cultural heritage management concepts and practices into existing and new international technical assistance initiatives and donor coordination,
- (ii) Report on the progress of the Marshland preservation and management practices in the international arena, including cultural restoration, Iraqi reconstruction, transboundary water resource management, and sustainable tourism development, and
- (iii) Support a pilot study of hydrological and ecological functions of the Iraqi Marshlands (such as an upstream area), and share the results to inform management practices of the Gulf (downstream area)

138. The following has been achieved towards the delivery of this output:

- Kick-off meeting between UNEP-UNESCO organized with Iraqi stakeholders,
- Several side events during the Convention on Biodiversity-Conference of Parties
- One international assessment activity launched,
- Donor coordination meeting organized,
- Two international assessment activities completed,
- Global comparative analysis on natural and cultural values completed and incorporated into the World Heritage nomination file,
- International side event at the World Heritage Convention Meeting in Doha/Qatar was conducted to promote World Heritage Convention file,
- International side event at the World Heritage Convention Meeting in Germany to promote the World Heritage file,
- World Heritage nomination criteria integrated into national frameworks and synergies with biodiversity and related MEAs,
- An assessment of the WH file is conducted and shared by ARCWH/IUCN, and

- A Series of meetings with UNESCO and GOI organized to discuss options to involve more partners in supporting the initiative.

139. The project succeeded in acquiring global support to its objectives, this is well demonstrated by the following:

- The WHC Decision number 40COM3B16 in Istanbul inscribing the Iraqi Marshlands and the fact that the decision was supported by 18 out of the 21 member states of WHC, despite the recommendations of the WHC advisory bodies (ICOMOS/IUCN) to defer the file for further evaluation, constitutes a major achievement,
- During the visit of the UN Environment Executive Director to Iraq in May 2017 and his visit to the Marshlands, the Executive Director expressed willingness and readiness of UN Environment to continue and expand its support, cooperation and partnership with Iraq in improving environment in general and the implementation of the SMP in particular,
- The wide media coverage of the inscription decision and the world-wide praise of the process as an unprecedented case that can be followed and replicated by other countries,
- The inscription process and project efforts were presented in several side events such as CBD-COP10, WHC meeting in Qatar and WHC meeting in Germany.

140. Major reasons behind the success can be attributed to the following:

- The enormous threats facing the Marshlands heritage and eco-systems which attracts the attention and support of the international community,
- The unique case of combining the preservation of both natural and cultural resources and heritage encouraged stakeholders to act promptly and collectively, and
- The priority and importance that GOI places to the Marshlands not only due to its environmental and cultural vulnerability but also to overcome the sufferings and burdens imposed on its population.

141. No proper targeting of gender, vulnerable and marginalized groups in the project activities and outputs.

The overall achievement of the four outputs is rated Satisfactory
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5.4.2 Achievement of direct outcomes

142. The evaluation of the direct outcomes assesses the extent to which the two outcomes identified in the ProDoc and in the reconstructed TOC have been achieved and the extent to which the drivers and assumptions were realistic

and in place. This analysis is very much related to, and informed by, the analysis and findings of the previous section.

143. Five assumptions and four drivers were identified as prerequisites to the successful realization of the project results (see table 2, chapter 4).
144. It is fair to believe that most assumptions have held to different degrees. The security situation has deteriorated, especially as a result of ISIS invasions, but the Marshlands governorates have not been affected directly. While the situation in Baghdad was affected heavily which contributed to the delays of implementing certain activities.
145. The only driver that was not realized is the one related to the priority to be accorded to gender issues. Despite the fact that gender was emphasised in the ProDoc and the SMP, participation of different gender groups in the project activities was limited.
146. It is worth noting that all assumptions and drivers are interlinked and affect all outcomes, intermediate states and impact

Outcome 1: Government institutions and local community partners adopt and integrate SMP and its options in the national and local strategies and plans. (Outcome partially achieved)

147. As shown in the TOC diagram, this outcome is a result of delivering outputs 1, 2 and 3. The Marshlands has been inscribed in the WHC list despite the considerable delays. It is worth noting that some of the SMP suggested interventions are already under implementation by several national institutions. The SMP and its options were widely disseminated through workshops, media, side events at the national, regional and international platforms.
148. Due to the fact that the actual implementation of the SMP options didn't take place, replication of options was not possible, yet several experiences, acquired knowledges, new methodologies and procedures that have been gained and applied by the project have been benefitted from and replicated by different stakeholders. The integration of the SMP in the new NDP 2018-2022 is very strong evidence that the Government Of Iraq is adopting the implementation of the SMP.
149. The UN Environment Executive Director's visit to Iraq and the Marshlands and the results of the visit, mainly in regard to the SMP, are important milestones and results of the project efforts³⁵.

³⁵ Mission of the Executive Director to Iraq 21-23 May 2017, summary Action Items

150. It is worth mentioning that some of the activities continued after the project reached operational completion as mentioned in section 5.4.1

Outcome 2: Global and regional cooperation and support to the SMP implementation maintained. (Outcome fully achieved)

151. Outputs 4 and 1 contributed directly to the achievement of this outcome while output 3 contributed indirectly and to a lesser extent in achieving this outcome.

152. It is evident that concerted efforts have been exerted to enhance institutional and human resource capacity and to gain global support to the Marshland as explained in the former delivery of outputs section 5.4.1.

153. The following has resulted mainly due to project interventions:

- Global and regional support and coordination were attained all through the preparation of the file, formulation of the SMP and their endorsements, mainly from the UN Environment, UNESCO and the immediate relevant regional institutions such as IUCN and ARCWH,
- The success in building national consensus and overcoming institutional conflicts of interest especially before and during the Istanbul meeting,
- The voting result in the Istanbul World Heritage Convention meeting on the inscription of the Iraqi Marshlands reflects the solidarity and support of the global community. The decision was adopted by 18 out of 21-member countries,
- The quality of the SMP and the active role played by regional institutions and national stakeholders in its formulation, leadership and management would not have been possible without the efforts of the project in improving the efficiencies of the relevant institutions,
- Implementing partners have contributed in-kind to supporting some of the institutional and human resources capacity building activities, and
- The fact that UN Environment has prepared a project proposal to continue the support to the implementation of the SMP is strong evidence of the continued interest of the international community in the implementation of the SMP.

154. The successes in achieving this outcome can be attributed to the following:

- The fact that Marshlands has been inscribed as a unique case,
- Ownership of the Government Of Iraq through including the SMP in the new NDP,
- Joint and coordinated efforts of the national, regional and international community,
- Enhanced institutional and personnel capacities.

155. The realization of this outcome has been negatively affected by the following:

- Successive organizational changes in the structures of the main ministries mainly Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Cultures as both ministries were merged with other ministries,
- Conflict of interests among line ministries and institutions,
- Shortage of funding, and
- Weak follow up and monitoring by the Steering Committee and MOHE.

156. The role of the project and the support of UN Environment were essential in the realization of the outcomes especially during the second phase of the project starting in 2014.

Based on the above the achievement of the outcomes of project interventions is rated **Satisfactory**.

5.4.3 Likelihood of impact

157. This section of the evaluation assesses the likelihood of the intended positive impacts becoming a reality.³⁶ The pathway from the project outcomes to the intermediate states and then to the project intended impact are depicted in the TOC diagram.

158. Again, the ProDoc did not include an impact statement per se, yet the reconstructed TOC benefitted from contents of the overall goal and objectives in the ProDoc when formulating the impact.

159. The TOC identified three intermediate states (identified in table 3) that were expected to materialize as a result of the outcomes' achievements:

- As discussed in section 5.4.2 most assumptions and drivers materialized, with the exception of the security assumption and the driver related to gender priority.
- Regarding IS 1.1, the implementation of sustainable management practices and heritage preservation are ongoing activities. The project has contributed to a certain extent to this through the work with the University of Basra and support to the Ministry of Culture.
- As for IS 1.2, originally the project planned budget was around USD 3.597 million, while the actual budget received mounted to USD 2.369 million out of which around 66% came from the government of Italy.
- As a result of the additional financial burden on the government budget due to the huge costs of the fight against terrorism and the decrease in the oil prices, the government did not allocate proper financial resources to the project.

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- The results of IS 1.1 and IS 1.2 have directly impacted on realizing IS 2. So far, the major contributors to IS 2 were the capacity development and global and regional support activities. The materialization of this intermediate state will be more evident as SMP starts being implemented.
- In light of the fact that the war against terrorism came to an end and recovery of the economy is expected, there are good reasons to believe that the Government Of Iraq will allocate appropriate funding to the SMP implementation and contribute to its sustainability.
- Global and regional technical and political support were ensured all through the inscription process. During the upcoming phase of the implementation of the SMP, it is realistic to believe that the intermediate states will hold and will be realized.
- As has been mentioned earlier in this report, the SMP was endorsed and constituted an integral part of the inscription file, moreover, the Government Of Iraq integrated the SMP in its present NDP 2018-2022. This is clear evidence that the SMP is well adopted by the Government, but it is still to be proved by the allocation of the appropriate and needed financial resources from the national budget and the due technical and financial support from the international community.

160. The likelihood of long-term impact depends very much on the realization of realistic and attainable assumptions that are out of the project control. It is not easy nor precise to assess the effects of the project in the longer-term, but the results of project intervention contributed positively to a certain degree in preserving the Marshlands resources. Moreover, and when considering that the impact will not result from the project interventions only but also from other present and future interventions that are/will contribute to the achievement of the impact, then the possibility of impact realization becomes higher.

The likelihood of the impact is rated **Likely**.

5.5 Financial Management

161. The project's financial information is presented in the Project Identification Table (Table 1), the section on Project Finance (see section 3.6) and in Table 8 and Table 9, below. The direct, indirect and in-kind contributions of organizations other than the Italian Government are not valued, accordingly not included in the project budget and expenditures which adds to the ambiguity of financial information.

162. No final financial statements on the planned and actual project costs per activity, output, year and source of funding for the full project life were made

available to the evaluator³⁷ and figures have been consolidated by combining data from different documents to gain an overall picture of the financial status of the project.

163. During the life of the project USD 2.369 million or 66% of the planned budget was provided by the Government of Italy and combined documents show that USD 2,197,316.79 of this was expended between 2009 and the end of 2018. This suggests an unspent balance of USD 198,745, for which no documentation was made available.

164. UN Environment recognises an operational completion and a financial closure date for its projects. The only expenditure that should take place between the two time points is for the project Terminal Evaluation. The financial report of November 2018 shows expenditure during the years 2017 and 2018 although the reported operational completion date is September 2016. It is not clear on what basis further expenditure was made after operational completion.

165. Survey responses indicate that in the last two years of the project (i.e. 2015 and 2016) funds were received to a total value of USD 425,000. However, the records of November 2018 show a total expenditure of USD 362,676.41. The lack of complete financial documentation and annual reporting make it difficult for this evaluation to provide any further insight into the phasing of project funding vis-à-vis its expenditure. Incomplete record keeping and/or reporting weaken the transparency and accountability of the project's financial management.

166. It is noted that considerable institutional memory and documentation was lost due to a computer malfunction. However, an adequate back up system should have been in place for key information, such as financial records³⁸. During the evaluation the Evaluation Manager extracted some documents from the Project Information Management System (PIMS), but a more comprehensive institutional record should have been available.

167. The financial reports provided present information by administrative components such as Personnel, Sub-contracts, Training etc. UN Environment templates and systems did not require the presentation of budgets by any results category, such as outputs or outcomes, at the time of project design, but this should be considered in any future project designs. The current financial management system now supports such results-oriented budget presentation.

³⁷ The Evaluation Manager requested all financial information to be provided to the evaluation team and the evaluation team requested the same through several communications with the project management, but unfortunately very little was made available.

³⁸ The Project Team note that UN Environment transitioned from one financial management system (IMIS) to another (UMOJA) during the life of this project. The importance of back-up systems and complete financial records stands.

168. The scattered nature of financial records, subsequent gaps in information and the lack of a complete set of annual reports raises a number of concerns, namely: a lack of transparency in record keeping; weak financial accountability and a limitation to the extent with which financial information can be interrogated to gain deeper insight into the project's performance and the standards by which it was managed.

Table 8: Project Financial Management

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
Completeness of project financial information:		U	
Provision of key documents to the evaluator (based on the responses to A-G below)		U	
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	No	No detailed co-financing and project cost's tables provided at design
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA).	Partially	Some agreements with implementing partners were not made available (or were provided during the final circulation of this report).
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind).	No	In-kind contributions could not be verified.
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Partially	No single source was provided for the life of the project. A combination of documents were retrieved from different sources, with varying information for 2014 ³⁹ . Budget and expenditure reports are organised by

³⁹ The December 2015 revision document records actual expenditure for 2014 as USD 91,150.55 and the November 2018 summary report records no actual expenditure for 2014 but commitments of USD 87,119.55. In this evaluation the expenditure from the December 2015 revision document has been used in expenditure calculations.

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
			administrative component and not by results categories. ⁴⁰ The financial report of November 2015 does not conform to any standard format or use of financial categories (e.g. 'released budget')
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (where applicable).	Not applicable	
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	Partially	Annual and periodic reports to UN Environment and donors including financial status are not complete.
Any gaps in terms of financial information that could be indicative of shortcomings in the project's compliance with the UN Environment or donor rules		Yes	
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the evaluation process		MS	
Communication between finance and project management staff ⁴¹		U	
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.			The following suggest that <i>little awareness</i> ⁴² of the financial status vis-à-vis the project's performance was possible: Scattered financial records. Lack of/gaps in annual reports. Limited transfer of information between
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.			
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.			

⁴⁰ At the time of project design this was not required but should be considered in future phases.

⁴¹ The institutional memory was lost, accordingly, most parts of the project finances and financial management history were not available.

⁴² For example, the Progress Report of Jan – June 2016 has no financial information.

Financial management components:	Rating	Evidence/ Comments
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		DTIE and ROWA when project management roles changed. In addition, files lost when computer crashed when there should have been a more comprehensive backup system.
Overall rating	U	

Table 9: Summary Project Financial Status

Year	Planned (USD)	Actual Expenditure (USD)	% Actual/Planned
2009	445,012	216,902	48.5
2010	Not known	352,975	
2011	398,505 ⁴³	395,975	
2012	186,673	213,835	
2013	762,293	564,721	
2014	281,091	91,151	
2015	338,210.14	70,955.54	
2016	142,086.20	219,309.47	
2017	Not known	62,344.03	
2018	Not known	10,067.37	
Total	3,597,650 <i>(total taken from project document – this is not the sum of this column)</i>	2,197,316	61

Project financial management, based on the incomplete financial documentation that was made available to the evaluation, was poor and rated **Unsatisfactory**

⁴³ Budgeted figures for 2011-2013 were provided during the final circulation of the report and are added here for completeness of this table, although the whole report was not revised to include these figures elsewhere.

5.6 Efficiency

169. In accordance with OECD/DAC⁴⁴ definition, this evaluation assesses the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This includes both the cost effectiveness and timeliness of project execution⁴⁵. As per the TORs, cost-effectiveness is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve its results at the lowest possible costs i.e. best value for money, while timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to the expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently
170. It is worth noting that the project duration was extended from 36 months to 87 months while the actual funding did not exceed 67 % of the originally planned budget for the first three years.
171. Despite the work achieved during the first five years, most of the tangible results were achieved in the last two years of the project life span i.e. completion of the file, finalization and endorsement of the SMP and the inscription decision. Some of these delays and corresponding low spend are due to the challenging context in which the project operated.
172. As discussed in section 5.4 and despite the major achievement in inscribing the Iraqi Marshlands in the World Heritage List, major delays in achieving certain activities and accordingly their related outputs have materialized. This is well demonstrated by the fact that the inscription was late by around 40 months, moreover, the implementation of the pilot activities was very limited to continuation of the routine and quality monitoring activities.
173. Due to the; (i) delays occurred in the first phase, (ii) the consecutive extensions in the project duration and (iii) the minimal implementation of pilot activities, the project actual expenditure per activity/output has changed in favour of personnel and sub-contracting components in order to enable preparing the file, the SMP and to complete the inscription process.
174. The costs of the project extensions were made available from: (i) the three instalments that were paid by the Italian Government after the end of the originally planned duration i.e. Feb. 2012, which constituted more than 50% of the total project actual costs, (ii) the savings that resulted from the limited implementation of the original output 2 activities and (iii) some unstated costs from UN Environment, UNESCO, IUCN and ARC-WH.
175. The original timeframe and budget were not realistic simply because the pilot implementation of certain options and measures requires more time and

⁴⁴ OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee

⁴⁵ Evaluation Terms Of Reference

money, realizing that the preparation of the inscription file and the SMP alone required double the time and consumed all the money.

176. Proper follow up and monitoring from both UN Environment and MOHE and the enforcement of the Steering Committee roles and responsibilities would have facilitated and expedited the pace of work, avoided the relatively long extensions and ultimately would have resulted in better value for the money.

177. The project has benefitted from, and built on, the Marshlands previous project implemented by UN Environment during 2004-2008, this is mainly demonstrated in the adoption of the same management structures of the former Marshlands project, utilizing the Marshlands Information Network (MIN) and using the former project website, in addition to benefitting from the Post Conflict and Disaster Management Branch initiative on capacity building.

178. Iraq's bio capacity by person has been decreasing from -1.2 GHA⁴⁶ in 1985 to -1.8 GHA in 2014 according to the Global Footprint Network⁴⁷, the project contributed positively to minimizing environmental footprints through; (i) improving awareness of the stakeholders to environmental sustainability issues, (ii) putting in place proper medium- and long-term plans and (iii) attracting regional and international attention and support to the sustainable management of the Marshlands.

179. Reasons for the project extensions were to; (1) compensate for the delays in the inscription process and the formulation and endorsement of the SMP that resulted from the changes in the political scene, volatility of the security situation, frequent institutional restructurings and changes in the project counterparts and (2) seek additional finance as the financial resources that were available during the originally planned duration of the project which is 36 months were USD 1.87 million only, and (3) complete the uncompleted activities and tasks.

The efficiency of the project is rated **Moderately Satisfactory**⁴⁸.

5.7 Monitoring and Reporting

180. This section will assess the monitoring and reporting at three levels:

⁴⁶ Global Hectare

⁴⁷ [National Footprint Accounts 2018 edition \(Data Year 2014\)](#); building on World Development Indicators, The World Bank (2016); U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization.

⁴⁸ In accordance with the UN Environment Evaluation Office evaluation criteria matrix, the fact there were two extensions of more than one year, the project should be rated as 'Moderately Unsatisfactory'. It has been adjusted to 'Moderately Satisfactory' in light of the 'Highly Unfavourable' external context.

5.7.1 Monitoring design and budgeting

181. Despite the fact that the ProDoc included a section on monitoring and reporting stating that reporting, accounting and auditing of the project would be conducted according to standard UN Environment procedures, yet there is no proper and sound monitoring plan.
182. The ProDoc identified indicators only at outcome level and their means of verification, the indicators are not SMART⁴⁹ as they don't identify specific targets, and accordingly there was no disaggregation by gender, vulnerability or marginalization.
183. According to the ProDoc an annex including the overall project budget specified by categories on yearly basis should be attached, the evaluator was not able to find such table, the only annex attached to the ProDoc is the budget for 2009 which includes a budget item for monitoring and evaluation without a sub-item for monitoring and reporting, the only budget sub-item exists is for the evaluation.
184. The project work plan identifies the starting and ending dates of the activities for the first 36 months it also identifies the lead institution for each activity.
185. The project revisions identified the indicators, targets, baselines and milestones for the outputs and outcomes but again yearly specified budgets for outputs and activities were not included.
186. Detailed project costs are not available; hence it is not possible to accurately define how the project managed to compensate for the additional management cost during the extended period of 51 months.

<p>The appropriateness of the monitoring design and budgeting is rated Unsatisfactory.</p>

5.7.2 Monitoring of project implementation

187. A monitoring plan was not included in the original ProDoc nor in any of the revisions. Accordingly, no specific budget for monitoring was allocated in the budget.
188. No mid-term evaluation was conducted because it was not originally planned. This is despite the relatively long life of the project and the challenges it faced during its implementation.
189. The project revisions and progress reports include information on achievements against outputs and outcomes, in addition to suggestions to

⁴⁹ SMART is a commonly used abbreviation standing for: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-Bound.

improve and overcome challenges. Some quality assurance and reviews of the technical reports prepared by other implementing partners were undertaken. Yet the progress reports were not systematic without proper financial reporting.

190. Despite ongoing communication between the project and the MoHE, the absence of a proper and systematic monitoring that is aligned with UN Environment monitoring guidelines and procedures has negatively impacted not only on the project performance and efficiency but also on this evaluation.

Monitoring of project implementation is rated Unsatisfactory .

5.7.3 Project reporting

191. Several reporting modalities were used by the project including the following:

- Periodic reports were submitted by the project management covering different periods, so despite the fact that there were annual progress reports for some years, no proper annual reporting comparing the achieved with the planned activities, their costs, reasons for deviations, lessons learned and recommendations were made available to this evaluation,
- The project revisions' documents included information on the achievements and progress in the project implementation and reasons behind the delays in addition to justification for the extension.
- The project team provided considerable documentation describing the project's activities, particularly in its latter years. Several documents and information were made available at a late stage of the evaluation (April 2019 during the circulation of the final draft). The difficulty in obtaining this information suggests it was not well institutionalised.

192. No financial reports detailing the planned allocations and the actual expenditures per activity/output/annum were made available to the evaluation.

193. The project final report that summarizes the accumulative achievements, results, costs, issues, challenges and recommendations over the whole lifespan of the project is not available, the last project progress report covers the period January 2014-June 2016 only and it lacks any financial information.

194. The evaluator was not able to track feedback comments from UN Environment, the Steering Committee and/or MOHE on the reports provided by the project. Due to the lack of project database and documentation and/or nonexistence of such feedbacks or responses.

195. The evaluator was not able to access regular progress and status reports that were delivered to the Government of Italy and the feedback from Italian side

on them. It is noted however, that some reports were provided at a very late stage in the evaluation process (April 2019).

196. All in all, several reports were available covering most implementation periods, but the reporting was not systematic, did not apply proper reporting guidelines and lacked major financial information.

197. It is worth noting that the evaluator did not have access to the UN Environment information system PIMS.

Project reporting is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory .

5.8 Sustainability

198. For the purposes of this evaluation, sustainability is understood as the probability of direct outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention.⁵⁰ This section discusses and assesses the factors that might have affected, both positively or negatively, the persistence of the project's achievements and direct outcomes as related to the following aspects:

5.8.1 Socio-political sustainability

199. The following are key prerequisites enabling social and political factors to achieve the sustainability of the direct project outcomes:

- Maintenance of political will, prioritisation and commitment accorded by the Government of Iraq to the preservation and development of the Marshlands,
- Regional cooperation with neighbouring countries i.e. Turkey, Syria Iran and Kuwait,
- Security situation stability,
- Commitment of the government to put in place the conducive institutional structures that ensure maximum support and harmony in order to restore and sustain the natural resources and cultural heritage in the Marshlands, and
- Commitment from the government and its institutions to partnership with private sector and civil society organizations and provision of due support to issues related to gender, human rights and vulnerable groups.

200. The present financial challenges facing Iraq, mainly due to the decline in oil prices, the reconstruction costs of the infra-structure and the rehabilitation of the new environmental hot spots resulted from the war on terrorism, have and

⁵⁰ Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference of this project

will inevitably affect the pace of development and sustainability of efforts in the Marshlands.

201. Concerted efforts need to be in place in order to raise the awareness of politicians, decision makers and the international community to the importance of the implementation of the SMP as a major requirement and opportunity for the sustainability of the marshland resources that might be forgone if timely action is not taken as some damages are approaching irreversible stage. This is an uncompromisable right of future generations and a global wealth.

The socio-political sustainability is rated **Moderately Likely**.

5.8.2 Financial sustainability

202. Financial sustainability is a function of several factors that will positively or negatively contribute to the availability of financial resources required as mentioned in the earlier sections.

203. The sustainability of what has been achieved so far and any future achievements as a result of the SMP implementation is dependent mainly on the Iraqi government's allocation of the required financial resources in the short, medium and long term to the implementation of the SMP and to ensure the sustainability of its outcomes

204. The UN Environment newly prepared project proposal will, if implemented, contribute positively to financial sustainability.

The financial sustainability is rated **Moderately Likely**.

5.8.3 Institutional sustainability

205. Issues related to Marshlands are multidisciplinary and multi-institutional as it is closely related to different subject matters including but not limited to; environment, water, culture, agriculture, service delivery, infrastructure, politics, economy and social issues.

206. Accordingly, and as explained in chapter three of this report, several government, NGO, CSO, local community, private sector, international and regional institutions and groups are involved directly or indirectly in the Marshlands.

207. The high natural and socio-economic vulnerability and fragility of the Marshlands require an efficient and effective institutional set up that can promptly and appropriately respond to the ad-hoc, short, medium- and long-term needs of the Marshlands and its people. In addition to properly monitor and evaluate plans, programmes and projects.

208. The enabling legal framework, policies and procedures and availability of proper financial and human resources are major pillars and prerequisites for good governance.
209. Furthermore, issues related to people's and local community empowerment, gender equity, human rights, partnership with private sector and civil society organizations, accountability and transparency have not been given due attention. Knowing that they constitute major requirements for vibrant and efficient institutions that need to be in place in order to manage the restoration, development and sustainability of the Marshland.
210. The project has supported several institutional and human resources development efforts concentrating on issues tailored to the management and facilitation of the inscription process and development of the SMP. The sustainability of the efficient and effective performance of institutions dealing with the Marshlands depends not only on the availability of the needed financial resources but also on the will and commitment of the Iraqi government to put in place robust institutional framework.
211. In this regard, UN Environment has prepared a project proposal to be presented to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) that will bridge the gap between the present situation and the proper implementation and sustainability of the SMP options.

The institutional sustainability is rated **Likely**.

5.9 Factors Affecting Performance

5.9.1 Preparation and readiness

212. This project has succeeded another project that was implemented in the Marshlands by UN Environment during 2004-2009, so it has built on, and benefited from, the former Marshlands project, and also from involving major stakeholders mainly from the public sector, but it did not give due attention to involving local communities in its design. Please see sections 5.2, 5.4.1, 5.5 and 5.6.

The rating for preparation and readiness is Moderately Satisfactory

5.9.2 Quality of project management and supervision

213. Despite the fact that a Steering Committee was established to oversee the management and performance of the project, yet it was not functioning properly. UN Environment has assigned a project manager all the time assisted by Iraqi technical and support staff.

214. Further, the project contracted two regional partners to provide technical support to the project. The quality of the project management, supervision and the performance of the implementing partners was acceptable. Please see sections 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6.

The quality of project management and supervision is rated Moderately Satisfactory

5.9.3 Stakeholders participation and cooperation

215. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation were inconsistent and fluctuated mainly due to the frequent changes in the institutional structures and personnel and due to the conflicting interests among national institutions. The project management team tried to improve this situation by facilitating communication and consensus building in order to minimize the impact of these sensitive issues on its performance.

216. The involvement of major stakeholders such as local communities, gender and vulnerable groups was not given enough attention. Please see sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.4.2, 5.4.3, 5.6, 5.8.3

Participation and cooperation of stakeholders is rated Moderately Satisfactory

5.9.4 Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

217. The ProDoc did not include any mention of human right issues and international declarations. Furthermore, the improvement of human rights was not directly targeted by the project. Gender equality issues were given due attention in the project document, yet, improving gender inequalities during the project implementation was not given due attention. Please see sections 5.2, 5.4, 5.7.3 and 5.8.3.

The rating of responsiveness to human rights and gender equity is Moderately Unsatisfactory.

5.9.5 Country ownership and driven-ness

218. This varies across the project - in some cases it was highly satisfactory as was the case before and during the inscription meeting, while in other cases it was highly unsatisfactory mainly when it comes to financial allocations by the Government Of Iraq. Please see sections 5.1, 5.4.3, and 5.8.3.

The rating for country ownership and driven-ness is Satisfactory.

5.9.6 Communication and public awareness

219. Communications were intensified shortly before and during the inscription process, but were moderate all through the rest of the project life. Please see sections 5.4.2 and 5.8.3.

The rating for communication and public awareness is Satisfactory.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

220. At the time when the project was launched, its interventions were urgently needed due to the enormous threats and challenges facing the Marshlands and endangering the sustainability of its resources.

221. The project plan was very optimistic, especially when it comes to the pilot implementation of the SMP options. It underestimated the time needed for implementation and the amount of financial resources required. Future project plans need to be more realistic.

222. Adaptive planning was undertaken, but only as a result of project revisions.

223. Efficient and effective institutional set up for the management of the Marshlands is a major ingredient and contributor to the success in implementing the SMP.

224. Financial resources that were made available to the project were limited, the annual project expenditure was around USD 350,000 i.e. the budget was spread thin. Other than the in-kind contributions i.e. staff time and logistic support, the Government Of Iraq did not allocate financial resources directly to the project budget. During the upcoming phase a much greater share of the financial cost should come from Government Of Iraq.

225. The additional management and administrative costs resulting from the extensions were made available from savings made mainly from the limited implementation of output 2 and the unstated contributions from UN Environment and other implementing partners.

226. Regional cooperation, especially in achieving the equitable distribution of shared water resources among the riparian countries, is key and inevitable for the sustainable management of the Marshlands and the wellbeing of the Iraqi people.

227. The participation of the local communities is essential, despite the fact that several revision documents and progress reports have emphasised its importance for the project's success, ownership and sustainability, yet, not much has been done in this regard.

228. The frequent organizational restructurings of the line ministries and changes of personnel i.e. focal points had their toll on the project performance.

229. Despite the relatively long duration of the project, no mid-term evaluation was conducted.

230. As explained in chapter 5 and in table 12 in this section below, the project has delivered most of its outputs and results with different degrees of success.

231. Major factors behind the success (strengths and opportunities) are:

- The enormous threats facing the Marshlands provoked and motivated stakeholders to give high priority to its restoration and sustainable management,
- The priority and importance that the Government Of Iraq placed on the Marshlands, was not only due to its environmental and cultural vulnerabilities, but was also intended to overcome the sufferings and burdens imposed on its population,
- The unique case of combining the preservation of both natural and cultural resources encouraged stakeholders to act promptly and collectively. Furthermore, the Iraqi authorities considered the inscription as a challenge and a matter of national pride,
- The enabling environment for success that was created by the project such as; (i) international support, (ii) UN Environment's close partnership with Iraqi institutions, (iii) UNESCO commitment to support, (iv) availability of international experts and consultants, and (v) availability of funding,
- The felt need for training, as the inscription process required special knowledge and skills not available in Iraq at the time,
- Involvement of specialized agencies in the training, and
- Cooperation of Iraqi institutions in the nomination and release of the trainees and facilitation of the training events and workshops.

232. Reasons, challenges and external factors that affected the implementation (weaknesses and threats) are:

- ISIS invasions and the drop in international oil prices,

- Successive organizational changes in the structures of the main ministries mainly Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Cultures as both ministries were merged with other ministries,
- Ambiguity of the roles and responsibilities and conflict of interest among national institutions,
- Weak follow up, monitoring and supervision by the Steering Committee and UN Environment and MoHE, although this was strengthened in the latter years of the project,
- Local communities did not receive due attention, efforts to enhancing their capacities to implement sustainable management were “too little, too late”, and
- Lack of proper funding mainly due to limited governmental funding, as a sizable share of the government budget was allocated to fighting terrorism,

233. The two key strategic evaluation questions and issues that were identified in the Terms Of Reference and their respective conclusions are addressed below:

Q.1 Verify the reported and communicated project results to the greatest extent possible and establish the level of achievement in quantity and quality as well as their utility

234. The project was able to deliver and achieve the following results:

- The inscription of the Iraqi Marshlands in the World Heritage list represented an unprecedented case as it was the first time a cultural and natural site had been inscribed together in one file; the decision was supported by the majority of the World Heritage Convention member states. This was despite the recommendation of the WHC advisory bodies (ICOMOS/IUCN) to defer the file for further evaluation,
- The enhancement of national human resources and institutional capacities especially on issues related to the preparation of the file, the formulation of the SMP, lobbying and outreach,
- The development of a well-structured SMP, its endorsement by the Government Of Iraq and its inclusion as an integral part of the inscription file,
- Global support and coordination mechanisms were attained all through the inscription process mainly from the countries voted for the inscription, UN Environment, UNESCO and the immediate relevant regional institutions such as IUCN/ROWA and ARCWH,
- The MOU with Iran that was signed in the margins of WHC meeting,
- The success in building national consensus over the issues related to the inscription process in addition to the development and endorsement of the SMP, this is well demonstrated before and during Istanbul meeting,

- The voting results in Istanbul WHC meeting on the inscription of the Iraqi Marshlands reflect the solidarity and support of the global community. The decision was adopted by 18 out of 21-member countries,
- The active role played by the national stakeholders in the formulation and preparation of the file and the SMP, leadership and management were not possible without the efforts of the project in improving the efficiencies of the relevant institutions,
- IUCN has contributed to financing some of the institutional and human resources capacity building,
- Routine and ad-hoc implementation and monitoring continues to take place as usual by the University of Basra on water quality and archaeological monitoring and excavations as well as biodiversity surveys and monitored oil excavations,

235. The project succeeded in acquiring global support towards its objectives, this is well demonstrated by the following:

- The WHC Decision number 40COM3B16 in Istanbul adopting the World Heritage inscription of the Iraqi Marshlands,
- During the visit of the UN Environment Executive Director to Iraq and his visit to the Marshlands, the Director expressed willingness and readiness of UN Environment to continue and expand its support, cooperation and partnership with Iraq in improving environment in general and the implementation of the SMP in particular,
- The wide media coverage of the inscription decision and the world-wide praise of the process as an unprecedented case that can be followed and replicated by other countries,
- The inscription process and project efforts were presented in several side events such as CBD-COP10, WHC meeting in Qatar and WHC meeting in Germany.

Q.2 Identify and analyse the factors driving and/or hindering the sustainability of project results

236. The sustainability of the project results is a function of the following factors, the degree of their realisation will directly impact on the sustainability of the results.

- The commitment of the Government of Iraq to the implementation of the SMP which requires the following, among others;
 - The inclusion and integration of SMP components in the national policies, strategies and plans,
 - Allocation of enough and appropriate funds to the implementation of the SMP,
 - Prioritisation of the SMP support when negotiating with donors, UN agencies and regional organizations,

- Enforcement and development of the enabling legal, regulatory and institutional framework.
- Performance and efficiency of relevant institutions at national, regional (governorate. and local levels) this includes;
 - Provision of capacity development to different stakeholder institutions and personnel,
 - Putting in place clear, transparent and stable mechanisms and modalities and avoiding the frequent changes in the institutional restructurings and persons in charge,
 - Clear delineations of roles and responsibilities among the stakeholders.
 - Proper identification and documentation of experiences, indigenous knowledge and lessons learned.
- Cooperation and coordination among the national relevant ministries, environment, water resources, culture, mining, agriculture is critical to implement the SMP.
- Partnership and responsibility sharing with the private sector, NGOs, CSOs and local communities,
- Attention given to gender, youth, human rights, vulnerable groups and local community issues.
- Commitment of the international community to support and partner with Iraq in the implementation of the SMP,
- Building on the partnership, experiences and good relations with UN Environment, UNESCO and other implementing partners that were established during the past 14 years of working in the Marshlands,
- The relations with neighbouring countries mainly Turkey and Iran as the Iraqi Marshlands are affected directly by the actions taken in those countries,
- Oil industry responsibility and costs sharing of the restoration, recovery and development of the Marshlands, and
- The wellbeing and standard of living of the people in the Marshlands i.e. provision of proper services, jobs and security, protecting their human rights and dignity and gender equity.

237. It is worth noting that the SMP was formulated in 2014 and as time goes, some suggested interventions, their time framework and costs are not appropriate.

238. Based on the evaluation assessment and findings, and the rating of the individual criteria the overall ratings of the project is **Satisfactory**.

Table 10: Summary of Evaluation Rating

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance		HS
1. Alignment to MTS and POW	Fully in line with MTS 2006-2009 and POW 2008-2009 and UN Environment vision and mandate	HS
2. Alignment with donor strategic priorities	Well aligned with Italian cooperation two top priorities i.e. food security. At the same time Iraq was categorized among the priority 1 countries of Italian Cooperation in the 2009-2011 Programming Guidelines and Directions.	HS
3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	The project complied with two of the four pillars of the National development Strategy (NDS) 2007-2010, article 33 of the Iraqi constitution, The 2007 International Compact with Iraq (ICI), Iraq UN Common Country Strategy 2008-2010 and The Iraq UN Common Assistance Strategy (UNCT) 2.8-2010	HS
4. Complementarity with existing interventions	Largely built on and benefited from the former Marshlands project implemented during 2004-2008 and complemented several projects and activities implemented by different agencies in the Marshlands.	S
B. Quality of Project Design	The project design coped with the requirements at the time, yet certain aspects such as indicators, proper financial information and intended results were not there and were not addressed in later project revisions.	MS
C. Nature of External Context	The project was affected heavily by ISIS invasion to sizeable parts of the country and the decrease in oil prices	HU
D. Effectiveness⁵¹		S
1. Delivery of outputs	Outputs 1,3 and 4 were delivered satisfactory while the delivery of output 2 was constrained	S
2. Achievement of direct outcomes	Direct and immediate outcomes were achieved to a great extent	S
3. Likelihood of impact	It is not easy to quantify or to objectively judge the project effects on the impact, but it can be the project has and will continue to positively impact the preservation of natural, cultural and socio-economical aspects of the Marshlands	L
E. Financial Management		U

⁵¹ Where a project is rated, through the assessment of Project Design Quality template during the evaluation inception stage, as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context, ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together.

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
1. Completeness of project financial information	Using the Evaluation Office matrix for establishing ratings, less than 50% of the expected financial information was made available to the evaluation. What was made available came from scattered sources and raised questions about: a) the basis of expenditures made during 2017 and 18 after the project's operational closure in December 2016; b) the status of unspent funds and c) gaps in financial information that undermine the triangulation of data relating to the phasing of funding vis-à-vis expenditure. ⁵²	U
2. Communication between finance and project management staff	There is a lack of evidence of the effective transfer of information between managing units with UN Environment (DTIE and ROWA). Proper annual reports and feed-back on them were not made available to the evaluation suggesting little shared awareness of the financial situation vis-à-vis project performance. The loss of information due to a computer malfunction exacerbated the weak institutional memory/documentation and indicates the lack of an adequate back up system for project information beyond that stored on the Project Information Management System (PIMS).	U
F. Efficiency	The project has been extended several times mostly due to reasons behind the control of the project, moreover there were no SMART indicators nor yearly plans or itemized budgets to appropriately and objectively assess the efficiency	MS
G. Monitoring and Reporting		U
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	No proper monitoring plan nor budget were there	U
2. Monitoring of project implementation	Some monitoring activities took place during implementation but were not structured well	U
3. Project reporting	Several annual and progress reports are available but not made in a systematic manner	MU
H. Sustainability (the overall rating for Sustainability will be the lowest rating among the three sub-categories)		ML
1. Socio-political sustainability	Socio-political conditions are improving slowly but steadily which in turn contribute to the	ML

⁵² Reports of funds to a value of USD 425,000 being received during the last two years of the project (i.e. 2015 and 2016) could not be verified and are not consistent with the total expenditure during 2015-2018, inclusive, of USD 362,676.41 (November 2018 document)

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
	sustainability of the outcomes and achievements of the implementation and results of the SMP	
2. Financial sustainability	The Marshlands have been included in new NDP plan and accordingly resources are expected to be made available for its management. This is in addition to contributions that will come from the international community.	ML
3. Institutional sustainability	Relevant Iraqi institutions have gained appropriate support and experience during the project time on issues related to Marshlands' preservation and development which will contribute positively to the sustainability of institutional performance.	L
I. Factors Affecting Performance ⁵³		MS
1. Preparation and readiness	This project has built on, and benefited from, the former Marshlands project, and also from involving major stakeholders, but it did not give due attention to involving local communities in its design.	MS
2. Quality of project management and supervision ⁵⁴	The quality of the project management, supervision and the performance of the implementing partners was acceptable.	MS
3. Stakeholders participation and cooperation	Stakeholders' participation and cooperation were inconsistent and fluctuated mainly due to the frequent changes in the institutional structures and personnel and due to the conflicting interests among national institutions. The project management team tried to improve this situation by facilitating communication and consensus building in order to minimize the impact of these sensitive issues on its performance. The involvement of major stakeholders such as local communities, gender and vulnerable groups was not given attention.	MS
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	No mention was made of human right issues and international declarations. Furthermore, the improvement of human rights was not directly targeted by the project. Gender equality issues were given due attention in the project document, but little has been done towards improving gender inequalities.	MU

⁵³ While ratings are required for each of these factors individually, they should be discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting issues as they relate to other criteria. Catalytic role, replication and scaling up should be discussed under effectiveness if they are a relevant part of the TOC.

⁵⁴ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping provided by UN Environment, as the Implementing Agency.

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	This varies across the project - in some cases it was highly satisfactory as was the case before and during the inscription meeting, while in other cases it was highly unsatisfactory mainly when it comes to financial allocations by the Government of Iraq.	S
6. Communication and public awareness	Communications were very effective and apparent during the inscription process, but were moderate all through the project life.	S
Overall Project Rating		S

6.2 Lessons Learned

239. Efficient and effective project governance and appropriate institutional arrangements are major ingredients for the success in achieving the objectives and the sustainability of the project results. Major lessons learned in this regard are:

- (i) The project plan should be realistic mainly in relation to the availability of funds and time framework. In this case the budget was small and time was short,
- (ii) Role of the Steering Committee and its ownership and supervisory functions were weak,
- (iii) Monitoring plan is essential for improving and ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the project,
- (iv) Periodic and systematic follow up, monitoring and feedback, identification of lessons learned and proper documentation are key,
- (v) Gender and human right issues should be given due attention all through the project life span. Empowering and involving relevant NGO and CSO organizations and groups in the Marshlands are key and prerequisite, and
- (vi) Strong national ownership and clear division of labour, coordination among the stakeholders, a lead institution and an effective steering committee with proper financial and managerial authority are necessary to the success of the project.

240. The inscription of the Marshlands and the endorsement of the SMP are a good start but are not enough to achieve the desired changes, more important is the proper and timely implementation of the SMP.

241. Ingredients and seeds for the sustainability and ownership should be integral parts of the project activities and interventions.

242. Regional cooperation and coordination with neighbouring countries i.e. Turkey, Syria and Iran are condition precedent and key to success in the Marshlands due to the fact that actions taken in the upstream affect directly the downstream. Cooperation will convert challenges into opportunities and result in a win-win-win case.

243. The accumulated experiences, systems, coordination mechanisms and networks are good project assets and need to be benefitted from during the upcoming phase.

6.3 Recommendations

244. In light of the analysis, results, conclusions and lessons learned of this evaluation, following are the major evaluation recommendations:

a. Recommendations addressed to UN Environment (for future phases):

Recommendation 1: Continue partnership with and support to Government Of Iraq
UN Environment needs to sustain and develop its support to relevant Iraqi institutions during the upcoming phase in order to:
(i) maintain and sustain the institutional achievements such as the expertise, systems, coordination mechanisms, networks and knowledge base, (ii) provide technical assistance, managerial support and quality assurance during the upcoming phase of the SMP implementation, (iii) improve coordination and cooperation among relevant Iraqi institutions, (iv) adopt and implement the MEAs such as CBD, WHC, SDGs and UNFCCC and to facilitate regional cooperation on transboundary environmental issues, (v) bridge the gap between now and the launching of the SMP and to expedite the adoption and implementation of this evaluation recommendations, (vi) strengthen and integrate the human rights and gender related issues in the environmental planning, implementation and M&E activities in the Marshlands in special and in Iraq in general and (vii) assist in attracting funding to the implementation of SMP and other environmental projects and activities.
Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report Sections 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.8.1, 5.8.2, 5.8.3, 5.9, 6.1 and 6.2
Action: UN Environment to start a dialogue with relevant Iraqi institutions to provide support to SMP implementation activities in order to set the stage for a proper and smooth implementation of the SMP.

Recommendation 2: Put in place and maintain a) complete project documentation (narrative and financial records and reporting) and b) an effective M&E system.
Reporting, documentation, monitoring and evaluation are essential management instruments and tools. The project performance in this regard was relatively weak which in turn has negatively affected the efficiency and effectiveness of the project and constituted a challenge to this evaluation. This includes both narrative and financial records and reporting.

<p>UN Environment should work with relevant Iraqi institutions to ensure that in the upcoming stage an effective monitoring system is established in order to improve transparency and accountability of the information. Such a system should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in harmony and can talk with other systems at sectoral (ministerial) national (Ministry of Planning and /or Prime Minister Office. and UN Environment PIMS system, • Adapt state of the art approaches and procedures in IT and Result Base Management, • Be simple (user friendly) and smart, and • Be hosted and owned by a government institution.
<p>Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 5.1, 5.4.2, 5.7, 5.8.3 and 6.2</p>
<p>Action: Put the establishment of a documentation and M&E system at the top of agenda as a Pre-SMP implementation activity.</p>

<p>Recommendation 3: Compile and build on the achievements, experiences and lessons learned that have been accumulated since 2004.</p>
<p>UN Environment has accumulated rich experience working in the Marshlands and Iraq since 2004 in terms of policies and strategies, legal and regulatory framework, institutions and who is who in addition to the technical and professional experiences gained since then. Adding this to the UN Environment global mandate and experience qualify UN Environment to be the main agent of technology transfer, innovation and transformation in addition to providing policy advice, capacity development and project management in Environment and related fields.</p>
<p>Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 5.4.2, 5.6 and 6.2</p>
<p>Action: Document the experiences and lessons learned from working in the Marshlands.</p>

b. Recommendation addressed to the Government of Iraq:

<p>Recommendation 4: Facilitate SMP implementation process.</p>
<p>A lot of damage has already been done to the Marshlands with incoming water declining at alarming rates, exacerbating the degradation of the Marshland's natural and cultural resources. GOI needs to <i>act now</i> before it is too late and damage becomes irreversible. Delays in and postponements of the SMP implementation will only complicate the situation and add to the costs of rehabilitation and development.</p>
<p>Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.6, 5.8.1 and 5.8.3</p>
<p>Action: Issue a high-level decision on the launching of SMP implementation.</p>

<p>Recommendation 5: Allocate proper financial resources to the implementation of the SMP.</p>
<p>In light of the urgency, GOI needs to accord high priority to the implementation of the SMP by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocating emergency budget at short term,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate efforts and support UN Environment to seek financial resources to support SMP implementation, • Assign a fixed item in the GOI annual development budget for the Marshlands, and • Assign special budget in the relevant governorates' budgets. • Take stock of existing GEF, Ramsar and other organisations' interventions of relevance to Marshlands
Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report:5.8.2, 5.9.5, 6.1 and 6.2
Action: Relevant line ministries in cooperation with UN Environment to launch awareness campaign targeting parliamentarians, Ministry of Finance, other decision makers and opinion influencers i.e. media in order to ensure that enough financial resources are available to the implementation of the SMP at short, medium and long term.

Recommendation 6: Establish a new or strengthen the capacities and authorities of one of the existing institutions to be in charge of the implementation and management of the SMP.
Issues related to SMP are multidisciplinary and multi-institutional in nature. Overlaps and conflicts among immediate line ministries do exist and will affect negatively any future work. Therefore, a new entity needs to be established or one of the existing institutions to be strengthened and entrusted with the following: (i) the responsibility of the restoration and development of the Marshlands, (ii) have full administrative and financial autonomy, (iii) be under the authority of the prime minister or one of his deputies in order to minimise the conflict of interest, overlaps and duplication and (iv) its main offices be in the Marshlands with a liaison office in Baghdad.
Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report:5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.8.1, 5.8.3 and 6.2
Action: A decree from the Prime Minister to be issued.

Recommendation 7: Facilitate cooperation with Turkey, Syria and Iran in order to ensure that enough water is coming in to Marshlands on sustainable basis.
Being at the downstream (recipient) of the Euphrates and Tigris waters, the Marshlands is affected directly by the measures taken in the upstream countries i.e. Turkey, Syria and Iran. It is becoming urgent to start a mutual negotiation that result in a fair deal and equitable sharing of water resources guided by the good will of the riparian countries and international agreements and protocols. In this regard the services of an honest broker/mediator might be needed.
Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 5.8.1, 6.1 and 6.2
Action: Relevant ministries in cooperation with UN Environment and other relevant UN agencies to raise this important and sensitive issue at the highest level in the government and to agree on a road map or strategy to guide the process.

Recommendation 8: Adopt and implement proper policies and strategies that ensure efficient use and sustainable management of water resources and allow enough quality water to go in to the Marshlands.

The over and misuse of water resources within Iraq is another contributor to the Marshlands problems. Concerted efforts need to be exerted in order to ensure that available water is used in the most efficient and sustainable manner. Again, this is an issue of national interest and concern, therefore the relevant line ministries, farmers, local communities and other stakeholders should be engaged in the preparation, adoption and implementation of a national sustainable water management strategies and plans taking in consideration the water needs of Marshlands in terms of quantity and quality.

Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 3.1, 5.8.3 and 6.1

Action: Prepare detailed TORs, the strategies and plans for IWRM of the Marshlands

Recommendation 9: Integrate environmental issues and considerations in the management of oil resources in southern Iraq.

Environmental considerations are not given enough attention by the oil extraction companies active in the Marshlands and southern Iraq which have negative impact on all aspects of live i.e. human, animal, plant, water, soil, air among others. An environmental assessment of the oil industry is key to the sustainable management of the Marshlands that need to be conducted soonest in order to minimise the damages and negative impact of oil industry.

Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 3.1 and 6.1

Action: Conduct a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the oil sector in southern Iraq.

c. Recommendations addressed to all stakeholders:

Recommendation 10: Give due attention to the Involvement and participation of the local communities and vulnerable and marginalised groups with special emphasis on gender and human right issues.

Little attention has been given to local and marginalized people in the Marshlands during the project life span, undermining their important role to the success of the implementation, ownership and sustainability of interventions, achievements and results. It is of great importance give due attention to issues related to human rights and gender equality by enhancing the capacities of relevant institutions and individuals and to equip them with appropriate tools and means to perform their tasks and duties in most efficient manner. Furthermore, farmers and water user associations should be empowered.

Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 5.8.3, 5.9.3, 5.9.4, 6.1 and 6.2

Action: Relevant institutions to stress local communities' engagement and to integrate human rights and gender equality issues in all activities and interventions related to SMP implementation.

Recommendation 11: Develop the Marshlands Compact
A Compact for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of the Marshlands " <i>Marshlands Compact</i> " to be reached and agreed upon between Iraq and the international community preferably with the involvement of Turkey, Syria and Iran to reflect the shared commitment to Marshlands developments, allocation of the needed financial resources and the provision of the enabling and conducive environment for the implementation and sustainability of efforts and results.
Relevant Statements in the Evaluation Report: 5.4.2, 5.8.1, 6.1 and 6.2
Action: In cooperation with regional and international community, initiate work towards the preparing the Marshlands Compact.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Stakeholder Comments (not fully addressed within the text)

COMMENT	EVALUATION CONSULTANT RESPONSE	EVALUATION OFFICE RESPONSE
<p>Additional documents relating to project budgeting and correspondence with funding partners were supplied by Michiko Ota, Budget Assistant 2009-14) during the circulation of the final draft.</p>	<p>The provision of documentation has been noted at points in the text where it refers to missing information.</p>	<p>Despite requesting all financial and donor information throughout the evaluation process, some documentation was only received at the very end of the process during the circulation of the final report. This information has been forwarded to relevant staff within UN Environment to ensure it is properly stored.</p> <p>As this information was not readily available (suggesting either a weak handover between managing entities or gaps in the institutionalization of records), performance ratings were not affected.</p>
<p>Azzam Alwash, Nature Iraq</p> <p>1- I understand the need for working with and through the Iraqi government but I think the role of the local communities and their representatives should be put on a higher priority level. Without</p>	<p>1- I believe that the importance of the local communities' participation is given appropriate attention all</p>	<p>The lessons learned and recommendations were reviewed by the evaluation consultant.</p>

<p>local support all the decisions of Baghdad are meaningless on the ground.</p> <p>2- Higher emphasis on the need to help Iraq and Turkey to come to an agreement on water issues. I know that this year has been a good water year (despite the alarming rise of water in Musil dam and what that represents in danger) and the marshes are reflooded. However the natural floods that drove the biodiversity function of the marshes have been eliminated. We need to add to the requirement of the agreement between turkey and Iraq a provision to allow for the creation of a mechanical flood in the late winter as both countries prepare themselves for the spring melt of the snow pack to release as much water as possible and direct it to the marshes to create a sort of flood in an attempt to replicate the natural process.</p> <p>3- Iraq needs to develop the marshes as a tourist destination to provide a source of income for the locals other than dependence on the the over harvesting of the natural resources. Currently I believe the practice is unsustainable.</p> <p>4- Oil companies should be engaged and should be encouraged to allow their workers to visit the marshes on weekly basis and create a bond between the foreign workers and the locals. Currently they visit with heavy security which alienates the locals.</p>	<p>through the report. Some emphasis has been added in lessons learned and recommendations.</p> <p>2- This is well covered and contained in recommendation 7. The detailed issues will be identified and raised during the negotiation sessions on bi-lateral and regional levels.</p> <p>3- The project has dealt with tourism in activities 1 and 2 of output 1, activity 2 of output3 and activity 2 of output 4. Furthermore, the SMP includes details on promotion of the Marshlands as sustainable tourism and visitation site.</p> <p>4- <i>The role played by the oil industry in terms of taking responsibility for, and cost sharing, the restoration, recovery and development of the Marshlands</i> was identified as one of the major factors for the sustainability of the project. Moreover, recommendation 9 is tackling issues related to oil industry. As for the weekly visits of the staff without security escorts, I think this is an issue that depends on the security policies of the responsible institutions and security situation in the field.</p>	
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Annex 2: List of People Contacted

Name	Organization	Tele/Skype	Email	In person
Saila Toikka	UN Environment	x	x	-
Janet Wildish	UNEnv	x	x	-
Diane Klaimi	UNEnv	x	x	-
Abdul-Majeid Haddad	UNEnv/ROWA	x	x	x
Hassan Partow	UN Env		x	x
Andreas Lueck	UNESCO/Iraq	x	x	x
Mechtild Rössler	UNESCO/WHC	-	x	-
Alessandro Balsamo	UNESCO/WHC	-	x	-
Ryuichi Fukuhara	Former PM	x	x	-
Michiko Ota	Budget Assistant	x	x	-
Ali Al Lami	Former National PC		x	-
Mudhafer Salim	Former National Consultant PC	x	x	-
Qahtan Al Abeer	MOC/Basra	x	x	--
Yousef Muaed	MOHE	x	x	-
Azzam Al Wash	Nature Iraq	x	x	x
Jassem	Nature Iraq	x	x	-
Hani Al Shaer	IUCN/ROWA	x	x	x
Muhamad Al Kanaani		x	x	-
Laith Shubbar		x	x	-

Annex 3: Evaluation Findings Bulletin



The World Heritage inscription process as a tool to enhance natural and cultural resources management of the Iraqi Marshland Project was implemented between July 2012 and September 2016 by the UN Environment through in partnership and close cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in order to ensure sustainable development of the Iraqi Marshlands.



The total project cost as per the approved project document was around USD 3.597 million for the three years. The Italian government provided finance of around USD2.369 million in cash to the project, which presents the total secured cash funding of the project.



EFFICIENCY

The project has been extended for several times mostly due to reasons behind the control of the project, moreover there were no SMART indicators nor yearly plans or itemized budgets to appropriately and objectively assess the efficiency.



SUSTAINABILITY

Socio-political conditions are improving slowly but steadily which in turn contribute to the sustainability of the outcomes and achievements of the implementation and results of the SMP. Moreover, the Marshlands has been included in the new NDP plan, accordingly resources will be made available. This in addition to contributions that will come from the international community.

Through the project, Iraqi relevant institutions have gained appropriate support and experience during the project time on issues related to Marshlands preservation and development which will contribute positively to the sustainability of the institutional performance.



RELEVANCE

At the time of approval, the project complied and aligned with the UN Environment Mid-term Strategy and programme of work and other related policies and agreements. Moreover, the project was in line with the top two priorities for Italian cooperation; i. Agriculture and food security, and ii. Environment, landscape and natural resource management and with the seventh priority related to the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage.

The project complied with two of the four pillars of the National Development Strategy (NDS) which constituted the GOI development framework at the time of project approval; (i) Strengthening the foundation for economic growth and (ii) Improving the quality of life. This in addition to several statements in the strategy related to project objectives and results such as, supporting tourism, rural development, institutional capacity enhancement, local area development, agriculture, food security and water. The project was in harmony and in complementarity with existing interventions in the Marshlands.



EFFECTIVENESS

Outputs 1,3 and 4 were delivered satisfactory while the delivery of output 2 was constraint furthermore, the direct and immediate outcomes were achieved to great extent.

It is not easy to quantify or to objectively judge the project effects on the impact, but it can be concluded that the project has and will continue to positively impact the preservation of natural, cultural and socio-economical aspects of the Marshlands.



LESSONS LEARNED

1. Efficient and effective project governance and appropriate institutional arrangements are major ingredients for the success in achieving the objectives and the sustainability of the project results. Major lessons learned in this regard are:

- i. The project plan should be realistic mainly in relation to funds availability and time framework, the budget was small and time was short,
- ii. Role and ownership of the line ministries and the Steering Committee and its ownership and supervisory functions are key.
- iii. Periodic and systematic follow up, monitoring and feedback from UN Environment are prerequisites, and
- iv. Gender and human right issues should be given due attention all through the project life span.

2. The inscription of the Marshlands and the endorsement of the Sustainable Management Plan are good but not enough, more importantly are: the proper and timely implementation of the Sustainable Management Plan.

3. Ingredients and seeds for the sustainability and ownership should be integral parts of the project activities and interventions.

4. Regional cooperation and coordination with neighbouring countries i.e. Turkey, Syria and Iran are condition precedent and key to success in the Marshlands.

5. The accumulated experiences, systems, coordination mechanisms and network are good project assets and need to be benefitted from during the upcoming phase.

Annex 4: Terms of Reference

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary⁵⁵

UN Environment PIMS ID:	000547		
Implementing Partners	<p>External: UNESCO, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Ministry of Environment (MoE), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Water Resources (MOWR), Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW), Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities</p> <p>Internal: International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and UN Environment West Asia Office</p>		
Sub-programme:	<p>Subprogrammes (2008-2009):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Resource efficiency and sustainable production and consumption; and -Ecosystem management 	Expected Accomplishments (2008-2009) ⁵⁶ :	<p>B: Increased understanding and implementation by public and private sector decision-makers of sustainable consumption and production, including in sectors such as construction and tourism, and increased voluntary initiatives promoting corporate environmental responsibility, as well as prevention of and response to environmental emergencies, giving due consideration to gender issues.</p> <p>D: Improved capacity of countries and institutions, including financial institutions, to integrate ecosystem issues into consideration of their economic and trade policies and practices to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.</p>
UN Environment approval date:	August 21, 2009	Programme of Work Output(s):	2008-2009 2010-2011
Expected start date:	March 2009	Actual start date:	July 2009 (kick off meeting)
Planned completion date:	2012 (as per prodoc) (After multiple revisions 2016)	Actual completion date:	September 2016

⁵⁵ Source: prodoc, unless otherwise stated

⁵⁶ Linkage to the Expected Accomplishments of 2010-2011 has also been established in the project document

Planned project budget at approval:	3,597,650 USD (as per prodoc) 2,369,061 USD (as per PIMS)	Actual total expenditures reported as of 28/03/2018 ⁵⁷ :	2,270,000 USD	
Planned Environment Fund allocation:	484,500 USD ⁵⁸ (in-kind UNEP support)	Actual Environment Fund expenditures reported as of [date]:	To be confirmed during the evaluation phase	
Planned Extra-Budgetary Financing:	3,113,150 USD	Secured Extra-Budgetary Financing:	To be confirmed during the evaluation phase	
		Actual Extra-Budgetary Financing expenditures reported as of [date]:	To be confirmed during the evaluation phase	
First disbursement:	???	Date of financial closure:	September 30, 2016	
No. of revisions:	3?	Date of last revision:	October 27, 2015	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	3-4 ⁵⁹	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: 15/03/2016	Next: n/a
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	not planned	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	n/a	
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	End of the project (2016)	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	September 2018	
Coverage - Country(ies):	Iraq	Coverage - Region(s):	West Asia	
Dates of previous project phases:	“Support for Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands Project”	Status of future project phases:	A project proposal on climate change mitigation and adaption covering also Iraqi Marshlands is currently being prepared for Green Climate Fund.	

Project Rationale

1. The Iraqi Marshlands, located in South-Eastern Iraq bordering Iran, has been recognized as one of the World's most significant wetland ecosystems. This area is considered to have unique historical, cultural, environmental, hydrological, and socio-economic characteristics. These wetlands were severely damaged during the previous regime (until 2003) and were

⁵⁷ estimate

⁵⁸ To be confirmed during the evaluation

⁵⁹ These were organized back to back with coordination meetings in Amman and Bahrain when the beneficiary country was present (MOE and MOC) and were sometimes conducted remotely via skype since representatives from the UN Environment West Asia Regional Office was unable to be present in Iraq.

contaminated with pesticides, untreated industrial discharges and other wastewater. The Iraqi Marshlands also suffered from salinization of the drying surface.

2. The protection of human health and livelihoods and the preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity of the wetlands has been a national priority since the post-conflict reconstruction period. The previous UN Environment project supporting environmental management of the marshlands was implemented in 2004-2008⁶⁰ focusing on short to medium-term interventions for post-conflict re-construction. At the end of this previous project it was concluded that further assistance and international cooperation for the long-term sustainable management of the Iraqi Marshlands was needed. This new project, currently being evaluated, was designed in 2008, when Iraq was in the process of transitioning from the reconstruction period to the re-development phase. The project is based explicitly on the lessons from the previous project and aims to address the longer-term development needs of the Marshlands.

3. The Iraqi Ministry of Culture had listed the Iraqi Marshlands (Marshlands of Mesopotamia)⁶¹ on the national Tentative List for the World Heritage sites already in 2003. The new project was introduced to support the Government of Iraq in the World Heritage inscription process as a means to preserve the Iraqi Marshlands.

4. In 2008 the marshlands area was continuing to suffer from limited basic services, such as drinking water, sanitation, and education, while economic activities in this area were limited, small-scale and local. While the project was designed in the context of the World Heritage programme, which prioritizes the preservation and management of natural and cultural sites and does not directly promote tourism or economic activities, it was also seen as having a potential impetus to improve the living conditions of the local population and to provide sustainable income generating opportunities.

5. The uniqueness of the Iraqi Marshlands as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is its recognition as a mixed - natural and cultural – heritage site. At the time of the project development, among the 878 properties inscribed by the World Heritage Committee on the World Heritage List, only 25 were mixed sites and 174 natural sites worldwide (UNESCO, 2008). In the Arab states, out of 65 World Heritage sites only 1 in Algeria was a mixed site. As such, there was a heightened interest and urgency to establish and improve management practices of locations with mixed heritage in the Arab region as well as globally.

Project Objectives and Components

6. The project was developed with the aim to: establish a longer-term preservation and management plan of the cultural and natural heritage in this area in accordance with the World Heritage Site programme; identify and implement some key sustainable local area development and environmental management practices on a pilot basis; and to build capacity and raise awareness among the local population to ensure their participation for the site preservation, environmentally sound development in the rural areas, and ecosystem management.

7. The overall development goal of the project at the design was to *ensure sustainable development of the Iraqi Marshlands, reflecting the unique historical, cultural, environmental,*

UN Environment project : Support for Environmental Management Of the Iraqi Marshlands,
PIMS ID 547

The uniqueness of this nomination is that the Marshlands are recognized as a mixed, natural and cultural, heritage site.

hydrological, and socio-economic characteristics of the area, in particular utilizing the World Heritage inscription process as a tool to develop and implement a management framework.

8. As per the original project document the project was to:
 - a) Establish a long-term preservation and management plan of the cultural and natural heritage of the Iraqi Marshlands area utilizing the World Heritage inscription process as a tool.
 - b) Ensure sustainable socio-economic development practices that reflect the natural and cultural conditions of the Iraqi Marshlands, as described in the plan.
 - c) Build capacity and to raise awareness among the local population as well as national, governorate, and local institutions in order to encourage their participation for the site preservation, and management framework operations.
 - d) Raise recognition of the importance of the Iraqi Marshlands within the international community to support equitable use and sustainable development of the area.
9. The original project design was planned around four components:

Component 1: Preservation and management plan development towards World Heritage inscription. The main purpose of this component was assisting the national counterparts in the World Heritage nomination process⁶², including developing a site management plan covering both the natural and cultural components

Component 2: Preservation and management plan implementation. The purpose of this component was to identify and implement community level pilots.

Component 3: Capacity building and awareness raising. This component was design to target institutional and human capacity building, emphasizing aspects of preservation and management of natural and cultural heritage.

Component 4: International cooperation. The purpose of this component was to maintain relations and connection with the relevant international arena.

Executing Arrangements

10. The project was implemented by UN Environment's International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC)⁶³ of Economy Division (previously Division of Industry and Economy [DTIE]), under overall supervision of the Division Director. Following the project revision in 2014 the project management and oversight was moved from IETC to UN Environment West Asia Office⁶⁴.

11. The project has cooperated with UNESCO's World Heritage Centre as well as country and regional centers. The project has also worked closely with IUCN since 2009. The project coordinated with multiple Iraqi Ministries related to environmental protection at national and sub-national level.

Project Cost and Financing

12. Table 2 below presents the planned project budget at design for the planned project duration of 36 months.

⁶² Actual inscription of the Iraqi Marshlands took place in 2016

⁶³ Based in Osaka, Japan

⁶⁴ Based in Manama, Bahrain

Table 2. Project budget at design⁶⁵

	USD
Cost to the Trust Fund – Government of Italy	418,100
Cost to the Cooperating Agency/Supporting Organization	n/a
Total cost to be fundraised	2,695,050
Total cost of the Project (cash)	3,113,150
In-kind Contribution (UN Environment)	484,500
Total cost of the project	3,597,650
Programme Support cost (PSC 13%)	358,150
Total with PSC	3,955,800⁶⁶

Implementation Issues

13. The project was revised several times in order to keep it relevant to the country partners. The 2014 ⁶⁷ revision was due to changes in the management structure (implementation was moved to UN Environment West Asia Office) and an increase in the amount of secured funds. This revision included adjustments of some project outputs aiming to further support the World Heritage inscription process with outreach and awareness activities. The project was further extended (no-cost) in 2015 with an additional 15 months (until September 2016). The need for this most recent extension was justified by the challenges caused by the security situation; changes in the key project focal points; and limited delivery of the government co-financing.

14. The final progress report (June 2016) discusses similar challenges related to project implementation. These include communication issues between UN Environment and other project partners, delays in capacity building activities, changes in project focal points and a lack of national co-financing.

15. The overall security situation in Iraq is a challenge and needs to be considered in evaluation preparations and throughout the process as well as during the evaluation analysis/reporting. The implementation context will be reflected under the evaluation criterion 'Nature of External Context'.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Key Evaluation Principles

16. Evaluation findings and judgements should be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the evaluation report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

17. **The “Why?” Question.** As this is a terminal evaluation and projects targeting the Iraqi Marshlands in the future are likely to be initiated, particular attention should be given to

⁶⁵ Figures in the original project document don't sum up (figures are adapted in this table). Need to be clarified in the evaluation

The sum does not match with the figures provided in the prodoc. The figures are to be clarified in the evaluation phase.

⁶⁷ Project revision dated 16/5/2014

learning from the experience. The evaluation will consider lessons and recommendations that could be applied in the context of a new project concept developed for the Green Climate Funds (by UN Environment). Nevertheless considering UN Environment's limited capacity to operate at country level, communication of the findings and lessons to other potential players will also be considered (GIZ, UNDP, FAO, bilateral partners). Therefore, the "Why?" question should be at the front of the consultants' minds all through the evaluation exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultants need to go beyond the assessment of "what" the project performance was, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of "why" the performance was as it was. This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

18. **Baselines and counterfactuals.** In attempting to attribute any outcomes and impacts to the project intervention, the evaluators should consider the difference between *what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project*. This implies that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions, trends and counterfactuals in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. It also means that there should be plausible evidence to attribute such outcomes and impacts to the actions of the project. Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions, trends or counterfactuals is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the evaluators, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the evaluator to make informed judgements about project performance.

19. **Communicating evaluation results.** A key aim of the evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UN Environment staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the evaluation process and in the communication of evaluation findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all evaluation deliverables. Draft and final versions of the main evaluation report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Evaluation Manager. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The Evaluation Manager will plan with the consultant(s) which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key evaluation findings and lessons to them. In this case the key audiences for the findings will be identified in early stages of the evaluation and a conference call to discuss the key evaluation findings will be organized in draft report stage.

Objective of the Evaluation

20. In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy⁶⁸ and the UN Environment Programme Manual⁶⁹, the Terminal Evaluation (TE) is undertaken at completion of the project 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. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment and main project partners keeping in mind the Green Climate Fund project proposal/concept.

⁶⁸

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

⁶⁹ http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf . *This manual is under revision.*

Key Evaluation Questions

21. The evaluation will address the **strategic questions and issues** listed below while covering the evaluation criteria described in section 10 of these TORs (especially under the Sustainability criterion). These are questions and issues of interest to UN Environment:

- (a) **The evaluation should verify the reported and communicated project results to the greatest extent possible and establish the level of achievements in quantity and quality as well as their utility.** (Effectiveness)
- (b) **The key in this evaluation is to identify and analyse the factors driving and/or hindering the sustainability of project results. Particular attention should be paid to the following aspects:**
 - (i) The evaluation should establish to what extent the resources and processes are in place to support the actual implementation of the Consolidated Management Plan (CMP)⁷⁰, which was identified as a key issue for the World Heritage inscription process. Insights into the kind of additional support the Government of Iraq would require should also be given. (Evaluation Recommendation)
 - (ii) To what extent are other key stakeholders (such as NGOs and local communities, relevant ministries, neighbouring countries and international partners) likely to engage in the implementation of the CMP, or by other means support the sustainable management of the site? (Sustainability, stakeholder participation, country ownership)
 - (iii) To what extent can the future endeavours of UN Environment (i.e. new project concept, support office in Iraq) further support the maintenance of the project outcomes? (Evaluation Recommendation)

Evaluation Criteria

22. All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria and a link to a table for recording the ratings is provided in Annex 1). A weightings table will be provided in excel format (link provided in Annex 1) to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the delivery of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The evaluation consultants can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

Strategic Relevance

23. The evaluation will assess, in line with the OECD/DAC definition of relevance, 'the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor'. The evaluation will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UN Environment's mandate and its alignment with UN Environment's policies and strategies at

⁷⁰ "Consolidated Management Plan of The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities" [Property Nominated by the Government of Iraq in January 2014 for Inscription on the World Heritage List]

the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

i. *Alignment to the UN Environment strategic priorities*

24. The evaluation should assess the project's alignment with the Medium-Term Strategy⁷¹ (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW. As the project went through several extensions and revisions, the evaluation will also briefly establish to what extent

25. In addition, the evaluation will assess project's alignment with UN Environment strategic priorities including the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building⁷² (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries.

ii. *Alignment Donor Strategic Priorities*

26. An assessment will be made concerning the project alignment with the strategies of Italian government considering its funding to the project.

iii. *Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities*

27. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of Iraq as well as any sub-national priorities. This includes joint UN programming in Iraq (including UN development assistance framework – UNDAF for 2011-2014) as well as relevant national strategies (see also ProDoc). The evaluation will also identify relevance to regional priorities as applicable to this project.

iv. *Complementarity with Existing Interventions*

28. An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project mobilization, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (being implemented by other agencies) that address similar needs of the communities/stakeholders affected by Iraqi Marshlands. In this case One UN programming in Iraq should be considered, including UN Development Assistance Frameworks. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UN Environment's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Country ownership and driven-ness

⁷¹ UN Environment's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UN Environment's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UN Environment's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes.

⁷² <http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf>

Quality of Project Design

29. The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template (see annex 1) during the evaluation inception phase, ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established. This overall Project Design Quality rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item B. In the Main Evaluation Report a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage is included, while the complete Project Design Quality template is annexed in the Inception Report.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

C. Nature of External Context

30. At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval in the country/region. This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context due to a negative external event that occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

Delivery of Outputs

31. The evaluation will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs (*products, capital goods and services resulting from the intervention*) and achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc) and formal revisions made during project implementation (considering project extensions and revisions of outputs in 2014 and 2015). Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, reformulations may be necessary in the reconstruction of the TOC. In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The delivery of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality. The assessment will also consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their delivery. The evaluation will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision⁷³
-

⁷³ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UN Environment.

Achievement of Direct Outcomes

32. The achievement of direct outcomes (*short and medium-term effects of the intervention's outputs; a change of behaviour resulting from the use/application of outputs, which is not under the direct control of the intervention's direct actors*) is assessed as performance against the direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed Theory of Change⁷⁴. These are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of project outputs. As in 1, above, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of direct outcomes is necessary. The evaluation should report evidence of attribution between UN Environment's intervention and the direct outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UN Environment's 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the direct outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Communication and public awareness

i. Likelihood of Impact

33. Based on the articulation of longer term effects in the reconstructed TOC (*i.e. from direct outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact*), the evaluation will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long-term impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available in Annex 1 and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment Decision Tree' (Also in Annex 1). Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from direct outcomes to impacts, taking account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

34. The evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects. Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ UN Environment staff are currently required to submit a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any changes made to the project design. In the case of projects pre-dating 2013 the intervention logic is often represented in a logical framework and a TOC will need to be constructed in the inception stage of the evaluation.

⁷⁵ Further information on Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards (ESES) can be found at <http://www.unep.org/about/eses>

35. The evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role or has promoted scaling up and/or replication⁷⁶ as part of its Theory of Change and as factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact.

36. Ultimately UN Environment and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-term or broad-based changes. However, the evaluation will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the high level changes represented by UN Environment's Expected Accomplishments, the Sustainable Development Goals⁷⁷ and/or the high level results prioritised by the funding partner.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management)
- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Country ownership and driven-ness
- Communication and public awareness

E. Financial Management

37. Financial management will be assessed under two themes: completeness of financial information and communication between financial and project management staff. The evaluation will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output level and will be compared with the approved budget.

38. The evaluation will assess the level of communication between the Project Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

39. In keeping with the OECD/DAC definition of efficiency the evaluation will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. Focussing on the translation of inputs into outputs, cost-effectiveness is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. Timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The evaluation will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The

⁷⁶ *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. *Scaling up* is often the longer term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.

⁷⁷ A list of relevant SDGs is available on the EO website www.unep.org/evaluation

evaluation will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

40. The evaluation will give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. The evaluation will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UN Environment's environmental footprint.

41. The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. As management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to implementing parties.

42. Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)
- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders participation and cooperation

G. Monitoring and Reporting

43. The evaluation will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting.

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

44. Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART⁷⁸ indicators towards the delivery of the projects outputs and achievement of direct outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation. The evaluation will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for mid-term and terminal evaluation/review should be discussed if applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

45. The evaluation will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups in project activities. It will also consider how information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

iii. Project Reporting

46. UN Environment has a centralised Project Information Management System (PIMS) in which project managers upload six-monthly status reports against agreed project milestones. These PIMS reports and documentation in PIMS will be provided to the evaluation consultant. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will

⁷⁸ SMART refers to indicators that are specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-specific.

be supplied by the project team. The evaluation will assess the extent to which both UN Environment and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g disaggregated indicators and data)

H. Sustainability

47. Sustainability is understood as the probability of direct outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved direct outcomes (ie. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of direct outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

48. The evaluation will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of project direct outcomes, and particularly of future implementation of the Sustainable Management Plan (SMP). It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government (i.e. key ministries) and other stakeholders (such as NGOs and local communities to extent possible) to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained. (see also strategic questions in paragraph 26). Under Socio-political sustainability the evaluation will also consider to what extent the Iraq conflict and security situation will likely affect the sustainability of the project outcomes.

ii. Financial Sustainability

49. Some direct outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other direct outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained.

50. The evaluation will also assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. For instance in case of this project the evaluation needs to assess to what extent the benefits deriving from Consolidated Management Plan (CMP) of Marshlands require further funding, and if so to what extent it has been secured (or is likely to be secured).

51. The evaluation needs to consider the role of newly planned UN Environment project in terms of the financial sustainability; to what extent is it likely that the future project will further sustain these project outcomes?

iii. Institutional Sustainability

52. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. **in Iraq** are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure. In

particular, the evaluation will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts of the project are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined)
- Communication and public awareness
- Country ownership and driven-ness

Factors and Processes Affecting Project Performance

[These factors are rated in the ratings table, but are discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above.]

i. Preparation and Readiness

53. This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (ie. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The evaluation will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular the evaluation will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. *(Project design is included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality, overlap with project design aspects to be avoided).*

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

54. The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of project management/supervision role of the UN Environment Teams (UNEP IECT and ROWA) with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including role of Project Steering Committee etc.); communication and collaboration with UN Environment colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

55. This section will also consider the performance of the implementing partners (IUCN, UNESCO, Arab Regional Center for World Heritage, Ministry of Environment) in delivering the project results.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

56. Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered encompassing 1) all project partners, with a role in delivering project outputs and 2) target users of project outputs and 3) any other collaborating agents external to UN Environment.

57. The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of the project communication and consultation with different stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between different stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups should be

considered. As this evaluation will be conducted without a field mission the evaluation will aim to utilize secondary data to assess stakeholder participation in the field.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

58. The evaluation will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UN Environment's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment.

59. In particular the evaluation will consider to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration the following groups in Iraqi Marshlands: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

v. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

60. The evaluation will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government and public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, ie. either a) moving forwards from outputs to direct outcomes or b) moving forward from direct outcomes towards intermediate states (as per the reconstructed Theory of Change). The evaluation will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices. This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long term impact to be realised. This ownership should adequately represent the needs of interest of all gendered and marginalised groups.

vi. Communication and Public Awareness

61. The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The evaluation should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

62. This Terminal Evaluation will be an independent validation of the project results, aiming to establish key lessons and recommendations to be utilized in the course of the on-going/future projects concerning Iraqi Marshlands.

63. The evaluation will utilize both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods as appropriate and possible to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts.

64. Considering a) the security situation in Iraq, b) nature of this project and c) access to well documented project materials it is **not necessary nor feasible to conduct an evaluation mission to Iraq**. Instead an extensive desk review and interviews of key project stakeholders over phone and Skype will be the main data collection approaches (online survey/questionnaires will be also considered).

65. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with key persons at UN Environment and promotes information exchange throughout the evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings.

66. The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:

(a) A **desk review** of:

- Relevant background documentation, inter alia
 - Documentation concerning the previous Marshlands projects implemented by UN Environment in Iraq (final reports and terminal evaluation in 2011)
 - Relevant documentation concerning the World Heritage inscription process (inscription documentations; evaluations and submissions related to this project, UNESCO guidelines etc)
 - Documentation of other relevant UN projects implemented in the area
- Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;
- Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, steering committee meeting minutes, meeting minutes of other relevant meeting, training and capacity building agendas, participation lists and reports, other evidence available in PIMS and
- Project outputs: such as Sustainable Management Plan (CMP)
- Other relevant material provided by the project team or stakeholders

(b) **Interviews** with:

- UN Environment Project Manager (PM) (Missions to ROWA in Bahrain is under consideration)
- Ministries of Agriculture, Water, Planning, Oil (all relevant ministry level representatives)
- Governorates
- Project management team;
- UN Environment Fund Management Officer (FMO);
- UN Environment Sub-Programme (SP) Coordinator (1. Ecosystems Management and 2. Disasters and Conflicts sub-programmes);
- Project partners, including but not limited to IUCN, Arab Regional Center for World Heritage, UNESCO

(c) **Surveys** [to be considered in the inception phase]

Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

67. The evaluation team will prepare:

First deliverable:

- **Evaluation Plan** containing a) a brief data collection and analysis plan (2-3 pages) covering the main evaluation criteria from A to H (see Section 10 of these TORs) considering different stakeholder groups and b) discussion on evaluation limitation
- **Assessment of project design quality** (see Annex 1 for a template)
- **Reconstructed Theory of Change** of the project (first version), containing 1-2 pages of narrative description plus a diagram (see Annex 1 for guidance) and tables as needed

Second deliverable:

- **Draft Evaluation Report:** containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the evaluation findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table (see links in Annex 1).

Third deliverable:

- **Final Evaluation Report:** as above (draft evaluation report) the addressing Evaluation Office, Project team and stakeholder comments.
- **Evaluation Bulletin:** a 2-page summary of key evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations for wider dissemination through the website.

68. **Review of the draft evaluation report.** The evaluation team will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Evaluation Manager will share the cleared draft report with the Project Manager, who will alert the Evaluation Manager in case the report contains any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Manager will then forward revised draft report (corrected by the evaluation team where necessary) to other project stakeholders, for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Evaluation Manager for consolidation. The Evaluation Manager will provide all comments to the evaluation team for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

69. Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the evaluation consultants and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final evaluation report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and the Evaluation Manager on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The Evaluation Office ratings will be considered the final ratings for the project.

70. The Evaluation Manager will prepare a **quality assessment** of the first and final drafts of the main evaluation report, which acts as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants. The quality of the report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in template listed in Annex 1 and this assessment will be appended to the Final Evaluation Report.

71. At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a **Recommendations Implementation Plan** in the format of a table, to be completed and updated

at regular intervals by the Project Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six monthly basis.

The Evaluation Consultant

72. For this evaluation, one Evaluation Consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager Salla Toikka in consultation with the UN Environment Project Manager, Fund Management Officer and relevant Sub-programme Coordinators of the Ecosystem Systems, Disasters and Conflict and Resource Efficiency sub-programmes. The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the evaluation. It is, however, the consultants' individual responsibility to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence and any other logistical matters (visas and immunizations in case of travel) related to the assignment. The UN Environment Project Manager and project team will provide support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

73. The Evaluation Consultant will be hired for a time period of 15 April, 2018 to 15 Sep, 2018 and should have: an advanced university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area; a minimum of 20 years of experience in international development context ; knowledge of ecosystems and natural resources management approaches; demonstrated understanding of evaluation approaches (such as Theory of Change); preferably experience of project and programme implementation in a conflict setting; proficiency in Arabic is required, along with excellent communication and writing skills in English; and where possible, knowledge of the UN system, specifically of the work of UN Environment.

74. In close consultation with the Evaluation Manager, the Evaluation Consultant will be responsible for the overall management of the evaluation and timely delivery of its outputs, data collection and analysis and report-writing. More specifically:

Inception phase of the evaluation, including:

- preliminary desk review and introductory interviews with project staff;
- Prepare project design assessment
- draft the reconstructed Theory of Change of the project and discuss it with project team;
- prepare the evaluation plan and schedule;
- develop the desk review and interview protocols as required;

Data collection and analysis phase of the evaluation, including:

- conduct further desk review and in-depth interviews with project implementing partners and project stakeholders; ensure independence of the evaluation and confidentiality of evaluation interviews.
- regularly report back to the Evaluation Manager on progress and inform of any possible problems, issues or delays encountered and;
- keep the Project Manager informed of the evaluation progress and engage the Project Manager in discussions on emerging findings throughout the evaluation process;

Reporting phase, including:

- draft the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that the evaluation report is complete, coherent and consistent with the Evaluation Manager guidelines both in substance and style;

- liaise with the Evaluation Manager on comments received and finalize the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that comments are taken into account until approved by the Evaluation Manager
- prepare a Response to Comments annex for the main report, listing those comments not accepted by the Evaluation Consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection; and
- prepare a 2-page summary of the key evaluation findings and lessons;

Managing relations, including:

- maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence;
- communicate in a timely manner with the Evaluation Manager on any issues requiring its attention and intervention.

Schedule of the Evaluation

75. The table below presents the tentative schedule for the evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Inception meetings with Evaluation Manager and Project manager	By April 15
Evaluation plan, TOC, and project design review drafts submitted to Evaluation Office	May 15
Telephone interviews, surveys, in-depth desk review and evaluation analysis	June 15
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	July 15
Draft Report shared with UN Environment Project Manager and team	August 15
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	September 15
Final Report	September 30

Contractual Arrangements

76. Evaluation Consultants will be selected and recruited by the Evaluation Office of UN Environment under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UN Environment/UNON, the consultant(s) certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project’s executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

77. Fees will be paid on an instalment basis, paid on acceptance by the Evaluation Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

78. Schedule of Payment for the [Consultant/Team Leader]:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Evaluation plan, TOC, and project design review	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report	40%

79. Fees only contracts: Air tickets will be purchased by UN Environment and 75% of the Daily Subsistence Allowance for each authorised travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel will only be reimbursed where agreed in advance with the Evaluation Manager and on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

80. The consultants may be provided with access to UN Environment’s Programme Information Management System (PIMS) and if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluation report.

81. In case the consultants are not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by the UN Environment Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Director of the Evaluation Office until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UN Environment’s quality standards.

82. If the consultant(s) fail to submit a satisfactory final product to UN Environment in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultants’ fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard.

Annex 5: Consultants' CVs

Walid Abed Rabboh (Ph.D.)

Lead Evaluator

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Freelance Consultant Dec. 2017- Current

Director, Regional Institute for Studies and Capacity Development Feb. 2018 - Current

International Consultant- UNEP/ROWA Formulation of ROWA 2030 Vision April 2015

Member of the UNCC/GoJ Advisory Committee For the Environmental Compensations to Jordan 2010-present

Senior Coordinator-UNDP/Jordan Oct. 2013 –Nov. 2017

Secretariat of the “Jordan Response for Syria Crisis Platform”

- (i) Support the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the Jordan Response Plans to Syria Crisis;
- (ii) Support the elaboration of the plans outlining the Jordan’s humanitarian and resilience response for the Syria crisis;
- (iii) Support and enhance the capacities of the line ministries and task forces in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness;
- (iv) Support the Jordan Response Platform to the Syria Crisis;
- (v) Support to overall coordination

Director General, Horizon for Sustainable Development Aug.2006 -2013

Horizon is a private enterprise, established in Ramallah/ Palestine and working in other countries in the region, mainly in the fields of agriculture, food security, environment, water and institutions development. Its major fields of work are:

- Formulation of policies, strategies, plans and projects.
- Institutional and human resources capacity development
- Moderation, mentoring and facilitation of group work and workshops
- Poverty alleviation and income-generation.
- Management and execution of projects and interventions.
- Advisory services.
- Monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.
- Empowerment of private sector, farmers’ organizations and civil society.
- Support decision makers, and decision-making processes at the macro- and micro-level.

Minister of Agriculture, Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Feb 2005 – Mar. 2006

Special Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture (PNA) May 2004 – Feb. 2005

Chief Technical Advisor (UNDP) Jul. 2003 - May 2004
(Institutional Reform and Capacity Building in Agriculture)

Chief Technical Advisor (UNDP/FAO) 1999 - 2003

(Capacity Building in Agricultural Policy Analysis & Planning Project
in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGs))

Chief Technical Advisor (UNDP) 1998-1999

(Agricultural Research and Extension Project in the WBGs)

Several key positions in the Ministry of Agriculture/Jordan

Director, Administrative Development & Training Department 1996 - 1998

Director, Agricultural Economics and Policy Department 1993 - 1996

Director, Agricultural Policy Department 1991 - 1993

National Coordinator of Agricultural Policy 1990 - 1991

& Head of the International Cooperation Division

Director, Offices of Monitoring and Evaluation 1989 - 1990

& Training and Administrative Development

Yousef Abed Rabboh

Assistant Evaluator

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PROGRAMME OFFICER CARITAS SWITZERLAND

Jun. 2018 – Current

1) Needs Assessment and Project Design

2) Project Set-up

3) Project Implementation

4) Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

1. Ensured Caritas Switzerland M&E regulations are adhered to.
2. Prepared new tools and templates and revise existing ones related to ensuring high standards of M&E (e.g. Progress, quality, relevance and impact monitoring) in cooperation with the managers
3. Assisted in the provision of necessary training to local staff and implementing partners on M&E and related tools and templates
4. Prepared M&E plans and assist local implementing partners in setting up M&E structures
5. Prepared terms of reference for internal and external consultants, experts and evaluations
6. Assisted in tracking assigned project progress, status and implementation quality (including field trips as necessary) based on the project work plans
7. Identified best practices and map lessons learned; formulate and share lessons learned and best practices with the supervisor.
8. Assisted in the review of project financial and narrative reports and the monitoring of project expenses.

REGIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (RICD)

Programmes Coordinator / Assistant Evaluator (Part-time)

Feb. 2018 - Current

Currently assisting in evaluating development projects, specifically the theory of change at the inception phase and at the evaluation phase, in addition to the stakeholder analysis and creating different data collection tools for evaluation purposes.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (USAID - MESP)

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Sep. 2017 – Apr. 2018

(Equivalent to 2 years USAID MEL Experience)

Jordan MESP is addressing the persistent shortage of qualified M&E professionals through the development of a 3-month rapid Apprenticeship Program in Monitoring and Evaluation, managed by USAID/Jordan. The program provides targeted skills training courses for Jordanian young professionals and prepares them to join the M&E community within the development sector.

Throughout the program, participants take part in intensive classroom courses, complimented by practical, on-the-job training with USAID's implementing partners.

The program covered the following modules:

- Introduction to M&E and Project Cycle
- Planning for and Management of M&E
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

Programme Assistant

Sep. 2014- Sep. 2017

Function A: REPORTING, MONITORING AND CONTROL

- Review and enforce inclusion of quality control mechanisms in response strategies, project designs and implementation plans.
- Provide feedback on quality control plans as a component of proposals submitted by partners.
- Providing technical assistance to design and write-up assessments, surveys, desk reviews and other research initiatives.
- Act as a focal point; responsible for reporting all resilience and refugee based activities on the relevant reporting systems (JORISS, ACTIVITYINFO) while coordinating closely with relevant programme / project staff.

Function B: PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT TO THE SOCIO / ECONOMIC PORTFOLIO

- Organizing regular and ad-hoc meetings for the Portfolio; preparation of minutes and summaries of actions to be taken; tracking of progress on planned issues; follow-up with focal points.
- Supporting in updating data relevant to the Portfolio area of work and compile background material for briefing sessions including project inventory records.
- Establishing and maintaining a proper filing system for the portfolio documents.

Function C: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, RECRUITMENT, AND PROCUREMENT SUPPORT

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

Governance and Socio Economic Portfolio Intern

Mar. 2014- Sep. 2014

HORIZON FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Research Assistant

Sep. 2011 – Mar. 2014

Annex 6: References

Approved Project Document, Un Environment, 2009

Guidelines on the Structure of the Main Evaluation report revised 17.04.18

Terminal Evaluation of the First Marshlands Project UNEP 20

The Consolidated Management Plan for the Protected Areas

UNEP-Support for the Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands 2004-2009

Mid-Term Evaluation of UNEP's Medium-term Strategy 2010 – 2013

UNEP Programme of Work 2008-2009

Italian Development Co-operation 2009-2011: Programming Guidelines and Directions, supplement a Dipco n.13 (9 April 2009), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome

Efforts and policies of bilateral donors, Italy bilateral ODA, DCR/OECD2011 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee

Evaluation Terms of Reference, Evaluation Office of the UN Environment, March 2018

National Footprint Accounts 2018 edition (Data Year 2014); building on World Development Indicators, The World Bank (2016); U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization.

UN Environment/ Evaluation Office documents, guidelines and templates

Several projects progress and annual reports

Project Financial Tables

Latest terminal evaluation Reports issued in 2018

Annex 7: Assessment of the Quality of the Evaluation Report

World Heritage inscription process as a tool to enhance natural and cultural resources management of the Iraqi Marshlands

All UN Environment evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report) and is dependent on more than just the consultant's efforts and skills. Nevertheless, the quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to evaluation consultants, especially at draft report stage. This guidance is provided to support consistency in assessment across different Evaluation Managers and to make the assessment process as transparent as possible.

	UN Environment Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Substantive Report Quality Criteria		
<p>Quality of the Executive Summary:</p> <p>The Summary should be able to stand alone as an accurate summary of the main evaluation product. It should include a concise overview of the evaluation object; clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope; overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria (plus reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report); summary of the main findings of the exercise, including a synthesis of main conclusions (which include a summary response to key strategic evaluation questions), lessons learned and recommendations.</p>	<p>Final report: Complete and concise summary</p>	5
<p>I. Introduction</p> <p>A brief introduction should be given identifying, where possible and relevant, the following: institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, regions/countries where implemented) and coverage of the evaluation; date of PRC approval and project document signature); results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. Expected Accomplishment in POW); project duration and start/end dates; number of project phases (where appropriate); implementing partners; total secured budget and whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, part of a synthesis evaluation, evaluated by another agency etc.)</p> <p>Consider the extent to which the introduction includes a concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings?</p>	<p>Final report: All elements covered adequately.</p>	5
<p>II. Evaluation Methods</p>	<p>Final report: All elements covered adequately.</p>	5

<p>This section should include a description of how the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>⁷⁹ was designed (who was involved etc.) and applied to the context of the project?</p> <p>A data collection section should include: a description of evaluation methods and information sources used, including the number and type of respondents; justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation; details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.).</p> <p>Methods to ensure that potentially excluded groups (excluded by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation) are reached and their experiences captured effectively, should be made explicit in this section.</p> <p>The methods used to analyse data (e.g. scoring; coding; thematic analysis etc.) should be described.</p> <p>It should also address evaluation limitations such as: low or imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; extent to which findings can be either generalised to wider evaluation questions or constraints on aggregation/disaggregation; any potential or apparent biases; language barriers and ways they were overcome.</p> <p>Ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected and strategies used to include the views of marginalised or potentially disadvantaged groups and/or divergent views.</p>		
<p>III. The Project</p> <p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Context</i>: Overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses). • <i>Objectives and components</i>: Summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders</i>: Description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners</i>: A description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Preparation of the report was hampered by some missing financial information and donor communication. Some of this was provided very late, during the final circulation of the report but the utility of revising the whole report was low. The late provision of the material is noted in appropriate places.</p>	<p>4</p>

⁷⁹ During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Design* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions). During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Changes in design during implementation:</i> Any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing:</i> Completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing 		
<p>IV. Theory of Change</p> <p>The TOC at Evaluation should be presented clearly in both diagrammatic and narrative forms. Clear articulation of each major causal pathway is expected, (starting from outputs to long term impact), including explanations of all drivers and assumptions as well as the expected roles of key actors.</p> <p>Where the project results as stated in the project design documents (or formal revisions of the project design) are not an accurate reflection of the project's intentions or do not follow OECD/DAC definitions of different results levels, project results may need to be re-phrased or reformulated. In such cases, a summary of the project's results hierarchy should be presented for: a) the results as stated in the approved/revised Prodoc logframe/TOC and b) as formulated in the TOC at Evaluation. <i>The two results hierarchies should be presented as a two column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'.</i></p>	<p>Final report: TOC well articulated based on considerable contributions from project team members.</p>	6
<p>V. Key Findings</p> <p>A. Strategic relevance:</p> <p>This section should include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UN Environment's mandate and its alignment with UN Environment's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. An assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups should be included. Consider the extent to which all four elements have been addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Alignment to the UN Environment Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) vi. Alignment to UN Environment/ Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities vii. Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities viii. Complementarity with Existing Interventions 	<p>Final report: Complete and concise section</p>	5
<p>B. Quality of Project Design</p> <p>To what extent are the strength and weaknesses of the project design effectively <u>summarized</u>?</p>	<p>Final report: Good summary of strengths and weaknesses.</p>	5

<p>C. Nature of the External Context For projects where this is appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project’s implementing context that limited the project’s performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval), and how they affected performance, should be described.</p>	<p>Final report: Complete and concise section.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>D. Effectiveness (i) Outputs and Direct Outcomes: How well does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the a) delivery of outputs, and b) achievement of direct outcomes? How convincing is the discussion of attribution and contribution, as well as the constraints to attributing effects to the intervention. The effects of the intervention on differentiated groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation, should be discussed explicitly.</p>	<p>Final report: All elements covered adequately.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>(ii) Likelihood of Impact: How well does the report present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact? How well are change processes explained and the roles of key actors, as well as drivers and assumptions, explicitly discussed? Any unintended negative effects of the project should be discussed under Effectiveness, especially negative effects on disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>Final report: This section benefits from the project having been completed some time ago. An appropriate method is followed.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>E. Financial Management This section should contain an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed ‘financial management’ table. Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff <p>5</p>	<p>Final report: <i>(if this section is rated poorly as a result of limited financial information from the project, this is not a reflection on the consultant per se, but will affect the quality of the evaluation report)</i> See above, late information provided.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>F. Efficiency To what extent, and how well, does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency under the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Implications of delays and no cost extensions</i> • <i>Time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe</i> • <i>Discussion of making use of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc.</i> 	<p>Final report: All elements covered adequately.</p>	<p>5</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the management of the project minimised UN Environment's environmental footprint. 		
<p>G. Monitoring and Reporting</p> <p>How well does the report assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring design and budgeting (including SMART indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.) Monitoring of project implementation (including use of monitoring data for adaptive management) Project reporting (e.g. PIMS and donor report) 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements covered adequately. The difficulty in addressing gender in an evaluation unless a project has addressed it, is noted.</p>	5
<p>H. Sustainability</p> <p>How well does the evaluation identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved direct outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-political Sustainability Financial Sustainability Institutional Sustainability 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Complete and concise section.</p>	6
<p>I. Factors Affecting Performance</p> <p>These factors are not discussed in stand-alone sections but are integrated in criteria A-H as appropriate. Note that these are described in the Evaluation Criteria Ratings Matrix. To what extent, and how well, does the evaluation report cover the following cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation and readiness Quality of project management and supervision⁸⁰ Stakeholder participation and co-operation Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity Country ownership and driven-ness Communication and public awareness 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Concise section.</p>	5
<p>VI. Conclusions and Recommendations</p> <p>i. Quality of the conclusions: The key strategic questions should be clearly and succinctly addressed within the conclusions section.</p> <p>It is expected that the conclusions will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect them in a compelling story line. Human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention (e.g. how</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The conclusion covers the strategic questions and all necessary elements in a concise style.</p>	5

⁸⁰ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UN Environment.

these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) should be discussed explicitly. Conclusions, as well as lessons and recommendations, should be consistent with the evidence presented in the main body of the report.		
ii) Quality and utility of the lessons: Both positive and negative lessons are expected and duplication with recommendations should be avoided. Based on explicit evaluation findings, lessons should be rooted in real project experiences or derived from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future. Lessons must have the potential for wider application and use and should briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful.	Final report: Lessons are appropriately framed.	4
iii) Quality and utility of the recommendations: To what extent are the recommendations proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results? They should be feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when. At least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UN Environment interventions, should be given. Recommendations should represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations.	Final report: Recommendations reflect the Evaluation Consultants good knowledge of the context. The challenge of drafting recommendations for national entities is noted. The Evaluation Office recommends formulating these as UN Environment passing on the recommendation to the appropriate officer as this is the action that can be monitored for compliance	5
VII. Report Structure and Presentation Quality		
i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?	Final report: The report is complete.	5
ii) Quality of writing and formatting: Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information? Does the report follow Evaluation Office formatting guidelines?	Final report: The report is written in a concise style throughout.	5
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		5

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.

At the end of the evaluation, compliance of the evaluation process against the agreed standard procedures is assessed, based on the table below. *All questions with negative compliance must be explained further in the table below.*

Evaluation Process Quality Criteria	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Independence:		
1. Were the Terms of Reference drafted and finalised by the Evaluation Office?	Y	

2.	Were possible conflicts of interest of proposed Evaluation Consultant(s) appraised and addressed in the final selection?	Y	
3.	Was the final selection of the Evaluation Consultant(s) made by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
4.	Was the evaluator contracted directly by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
5.	Was the Evaluation Consultant given direct access to identified external stakeholders in order to adequately present and discuss the findings, as appropriate?	Y	
6.	Did the Evaluation Consultant raise any concerns about being unable to work freely and without interference or undue pressure from project staff or the Evaluation Office?		N
7.	If Yes to Q6: Were these concerns resolved to the mutual satisfaction of both the Evaluation Consultant and the Evaluation Manager?	-	-
Financial Management:			
8.	Was the evaluation budget approved at project design available for the evaluation?	Y	
9.	Was the final evaluation budget agreed and approved by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
10.	Were the agreed evaluation funds readily available to support the payment of the evaluation contract throughout the payment process?	Y	
Business:			
11.	If a Terminal Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within the period of six months before or after project operational completion? Or, if a Mid Term Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within a six-month period prior to the project's mid-point?		N
12.	Were all deadlines set in the Terms of Reference respected, as far as unforeseen circumstances allowed?	Y	
13.	Was the inception report delivered and reviewed/approved prior to commencing any travel?	-	
Project's engagement and support:			
14.	Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and identified project stakeholders provide comments on the evaluation Terms of Reference?	Y	
15.	Did the project make available all required/requested documents?		N
16.	Did the project make all financial information (and audit reports if applicable) available in a timely manner and to an acceptable level of completeness?		N
17.	Was adequate support provided by the project to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Y	
18.	Was close communication between the Evaluation Consultant, Evaluation Office and project team maintained throughout the evaluation?	Y	
19.	Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately discussed with the project team for ownership to be established?	Y	
20.	Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and any identified project stakeholders provide comments on the draft evaluation report?	Y	
Quality assurance:			
21.	Were the evaluation Terms of Reference, including the key evaluation questions, peer-reviewed?	Y	
22.	Was the TOC in the inception report peer-reviewed?	Y	
23.	Was the quality of the draft/cleared report checked by the Evaluation Manager and Peer Reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments?	Y	
24.	Did the Evaluation Office complete an assessment of the quality of both the draft and final reports?	Y	
Transparency:			
25.	Was the draft evaluation report sent directly by the Evaluation Consultant to the Evaluation Office?	Y	

26.	Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) of the cleared draft report to the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and other key internal personnel (including the Reference Group where appropriate) to solicit formal comments?	Y	
27.	Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) appropriate drafts of the report to identified external stakeholders, including key partners and funders, to solicit formal comments?	Y	
28.	Were stakeholder comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the Evaluation Office	Y	
29.	Did the Evaluation Consultant(s) respond to all factual corrections and comments?	Y	
30.	Did the Evaluation Office share substantive comments and Evaluation Consultant responses with those who commented, as appropriate?	Y	

Provide comments / explanations / mitigating circumstances below for any non-compliant process issues.

<u>Process Criterion Number</u>	<u>Evaluation Office Comments</u>
<u>11</u>	The evaluation was initiated much later than the Evaluation Office prefers. This was partly related to the challenges in finding a suitable consultant.
<u>15 and 16</u>	Financial information and documents with the donor were only received during the circulation of the final draft in April 2019. This suggests the handover between management entities was incomplete or the institutionalization of information is not complete. The late provision of information is noted in appropriate places within the text and the performance ratings did not require adjustment.
<u>20</u>	The Sub-Programme Coordinator post was vacant during the commenting period for this report.