Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project

"Pilot project on the Development of Mercury Inventory in the Russian Federation"

Evaluation Office of UN Environment

February 2018

Photo Credit

The picture of mercury flasks on the cover of this report is taken by COWI at the Russian mercury recovery plant Kubantsvetmet in Krasnodar, in the framework of the Arctic Council Assessment of Mercury Releases from the Russian Federation 2005. The picture was used with permission of COWI.

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Pilot project on the development of mercury inventory in the Russian Federation

Project GEF ID 5222

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Disclaimer

This report has been prepared by independent consultant evaluator **Wouter Pronk** and is a product of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment. The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Member States or the UN Environment Senior Management.

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Short biography of the consultant

Wouter Pronk is an independent consultant based in The Netherlands. Wouter Pronk holds a Master degree in Slavonic Languages and has 20 years of experience in managing environmental and capacity building projects in Eastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, India, Egypt, Vietnam and South Africa for the environmental NGOs Milieukontakt International and Green Cross Switzerland. Next to his work for both NGOs Mr. Pronk worked with two Dutch engineering companies, internationally active in soil remediation projects.

Since 2004, Mr. Pronk has been involved in POPs and soil remediation projects financed by The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FAO, UN Environment, GEF, Green Cross Switzerland, UNDP and The World Bank with a focus on awareness raising, environmental and social impact assessment and planning activities, technical capacity building, project evaluation and stakeholder involvement.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION[1]

Joint Evaluation: No

Report Language(s): English

Evaluation Type: Terminal Project Evaluation

Brief Description: This report is a terminal evaluation of a UN Environment-GEF project implemented between 2013 and 2017. The project was designed to assist Russia to build capacity and raise awareness towards the upcoming legally binding instrument on mercury, the Minamata Convention. As Russia is one of the largest emitters of mercury, dealing with mercury in Russia is considered to be one of the world priorities in the combat against the global adverse effects on human health and the environment from the chemical element. The specific project objective was to "strengthen capacity of the Russian Federation for the identification of mercury sources, quantification, analysis and monitoring of mercury releases and identification of priority actions to address mercury issues under a future global convention"

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 learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment, the GEF and their executing partner ITDP and the relevant agencies of the project participating countries.

Key words: Project Evaluation; chemicals and wastes; Russia; mercury; mercury inventory; mercury emissions; mercury reduction; sound chemical management; mercury sources; TE; Terminal Evaluation; GEF; GEF Project

[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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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

DTIE	Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (of UN Environment)
EA	Executing Agency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EO	Evaluation Office of UN Environment
GC	UN Environment Governing Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GLP	Good Laboratory Practices
IA	Implementing Agency
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
FMO	Fund Managing Officer
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment of the Russian Federation
FINGO	Scientific and Production Association
MSP	Medium Size Project
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NPMT	National Project Management Team
NSG	National Steering Groups
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PM	Portfolio Manager
PMT	Project Management Team
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTR	Project Terminal Report
RusChlor	Association of chlorine industry
SC	Stockholm Convention
SRI Atmosphere	Scientific Research Institute for Atmospheric Air Protection
Swedish EPA	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Mercury Toolkit	Toolkit for identification and quantification of mercury releases
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TET	Technical Expert Team
TM	Task Manager
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme, since 2016 abbreviated as UN Environment
UN Environment	United Nations Environment Programme
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency

Project identification table

Table 1. Project identification table[2]

Sub-programme:	Chemicals and Waste	**Expected Accomplishment(s):**	EA1 (MTS 2014-17) Enabling environment: Countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly including the implementation of related provisions of the multilateral environmental agreements
UN Environment approval date:	21 March 2013	**Programme of Work Output(s):**	524.2
GEF project ID:	5222	**Project type:**	Medium-sized Project (MSP)
GEF Operational Programme #:	CHEM-03	**Focal Area(s):**	Persistent Organic Pollutants/ chemicals
GEF approval date:	Unspecified	**GEF Strategic Priority:**	CHEM-3; Project Mana
***Expected* start date:**	April 2013	**Actual start date:**	May 2013
***Planned* completion date:**	September 2015	**Actual completion date:**	June 2017
***Planned* project budget at approval:**	US$ 4,418,969	**Actual total expenditures reported as of 31 December 2017**	US$ 4,513,340
GEF grant allocation:	US$ 1,000,000	**GEF grant expenditures reported as of 31 December 2017:**	US$ 1,000,000
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	N/A	**Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:**	N/A
***Expected* Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:**	US$ 3,418,969	**Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:**	US$ 3,513,340
First disbursement:	US$ 200,000	**Date of financial closure:**	31 December 2017
No. of revisions:	2	**Date of last revision:**	2017
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	4	**Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:**	**Last:** 6 June 2017

[2] Data on final expenditures have been added after the evaluation period early January 2018 as they became available when the draft version of this report was discussed between the UN Evaluation Office and the evaluator.

Mid-term Review/ Evaluation *(planned date):*	N/A	**Mid-term Review[3](actual date):**	
Terminal Evaluation *(planned date):*	Apr-Aug 2017	**Terminal Evaluation (actual date):**	Apr-Oct 2017
Coverage - Country(ies):	National - Russian Federation	**Coverage - Region(s):**	Europe
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	**Status of future project phases:**	N/A

[3] This was an informal project review that was undertaken by the Task Manager

Executive summary

[1] Despite a delayed start and a series start-up problem the Project has played a key role to support the Russian Federation in the negotiation process of the Minamata Convention. In view of the serious mercury issues in Russia, significant reductions of mercury releases in the country would contribute to important reductions worldwide. As per evaluation criteria of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment, the project is reviewed in this Terminal Evaluation report against the following below highlighted priority criteria:

[2] Regarding **Strategic relevance** the "Pilot project on the development of mercury inventory in the Russian Federation" positioned its activities very well in line with preceding national, regional and international mercury initiatives and the international development of the Minamata Convention. Project stakeholders have contributed through the Project outputs and outcomes importantly towards prioritisation of sound management of mercury in the Russian Federation, plus also to the fulfilment of UN Environment's mandate and GEF strategy and priorities. The evaluation found all interviewed stakeholders and all respondents to the survey agreeing that the Project was strategically relevant for the Russian Federation.

[3] This evaluation found that in respect to the **Quality of Project design,** the Project has a comprehensive, coherent logical framework that contributes towards the Project objective in both content and process. Not all relevant stakeholders were involved in the planning of Project activities and the Project's communication and awareness raising strategy was not well connected with the planned activities. The originally planned time frame for the Project was not realistically taking into account typical Project hurdles and start-up problems.

[4] With regards to the **Nature of the External Context** it is clear that the external context was very favourable when the Project started, and the Russian Federation signed the Minamata Convention in 2014, in the second year of implementation. Future political decision making regarding Russian ratification of the Convention will have a serious impact on the outcomes of the Project.

[5] Regarding **Achievement of outputs** the Project has produced (with several delays) the programmed outputs.[4] The Peer review mechanism used can be regarded as a guarantee to assure the quality of the outputs. There is room for improvement in the functioning of this mechanism. A well implemented communication and awareness raising strategy would allow for that.

[6] Looking at the **Achievement of direct outcomes**, the evaluation has concluded that the Project has successfully produced the immediate outcomes faithful to the Project description, under reservation that not all outputs are fully finished at the time of evaluation. The combined immediate outcomes have strongly supported the Russian Federation in its preparations to join the Minamata Convention and strengthened the key stakeholders in dealing with mercury issues. Mercury releases have been identified (and described analytical Project reports that prioritise the pollution sources) using the international best practice approach of UN Environment. The results enable national stakeholders to better understand mercury risks for human health and the environment. Based on the Project experience in the Russian Federation regional colleagues in FSU countries are assisted in carrying out the Minamata Initial Assessments and other relevant mercury projects.

[4] Updates on the planning were received by the evaluator from the Executing Agency, beginning October 2017. Emails from the executing agency to the evaluator indicated completion of all Project outputs, in December 2017, when the draft of this report was being discussed between the evaluator and the Evaluation office.

[7] Further achievement of outcomes and subsequently **Likelihood of impact** will strongly depend on the political decision whether the Russian Federation will ratify the Convention. This is an external factor that is not within the control of the Project. The Project has provided essential baseline information, based upon which, political decision makers can make a well-informed decision.

[8] With regards to the **Financial management** of the Project, this evaluation has found that in the first phase of the Project there were start-up problems and delays in reporting. These problems have subsequently been solved especially after the arrival of new management staff at UN Environment, when more time became available for guidance. Overall the evaluation has found that the Project was financially well managed. It is important to conclude that complex projects like this Project need a realistic time frame and detailed guidance from UN Environment to establish sound management and reporting practices especially in the start-up phase.

[9] The Project has demonstrated well designed **Efficiency** in making use of and following up the combined existing national and international mercury initiatives. Keeping efficiently on track with the planned time frame, proved to be difficult due to the tight Project planning. This Problem was solved after the two Project extensions were agreed to.

[10] On **Monitoring and reporting** the evaluation has found that initially the Project did not fully comply with the timelines, monitoring and reporting obligations as described in the signed PCA due to start-up difficulties and a lack of guidance from UN Environment due to personnel changes. The monitoring and reporting practice has, however, improved after the initial phase of the Project, when monitoring and reporting was carried out in a more timely fashion with adequate attention to content and detail.

[11] Regarding **Sustainability** a strength of the Project is that it provided strong support for the Russian Federation in its negotiation process for joining the Minamata Convention. The efforts of Project stakeholders to secure Project sustainability are regarded by the evaluator as satisfactory. Inclusion of awareness raising and communication activities into the planned Project activities, could have possibly further strengthened the impact of these efforts. Sustainability is, however, dependent on political decision making that is outside the Project's control and therefore not very likely.

[12] The evaluation has found that the Project dealt well with the **Factors affecting its performance.** Outcomes of earlier projects were carefully considered and used, the Project management improved after initial start-up problems and stakeholders where actively involved notably through cooperation with the skilfully communicating NGO Eco-Accord. Communication and awareness raising with the public at large were not clearly planned in the original Project design and could have strengthened the Projects possible impact. Cooperation with Eco-Accord partly compensated for that.

[13] In addition to the above highlighted evaluation criteria the Terminal Evaluation is required to analyse a set of key strategic questions highlighted below:

[14] **To what extent has the project succeeded in providing best environmental practice and guidelines for control of mercury releases in the Russian Federation?**

The Terminal Evaluation has found that the Project has succeeded well in providing the best environmental practices and guidelines for control of mercury releases in the Russian Federation. In the Mid-term review of the Project the international mercury expert Jakob Maag even characterizes the Project as the best implementation of the MIA toolkit to date.

[15] **To what extent and with what success did the project engage relevant sector players in targeted mercury reduction strategies?**

Although it can be difficult to cooperate with representatives of polluting industries in Russia, the Project was successful in the engagement of large sector players in targeted mercury reduction strategies. The Project agreements proved to be of great value for the necessary data gathering of the inventory. The partnering organisations actively facilitated dialogue with companies and assisted to get access to plants.

[16] **What is the likelihood that the National Action Plan developed through the project will succeed in bridging the gap between Russia and developed countries in its overall prevention and control of mercury pollution? What are the key factors which need to be taken into account in achieving the desired impact?**

As the Project stakeholders are not in a position to commission a Mercury National Action Plan, a draft action plan was developed to highlight what actions Russia would have to undertake once it would ratify the Minamata Convention. To achieve the desired Project impact and bridge the gap between Russia and developed countries in its overall prevention and control of mercury pollution, it is key that the country ratifies the Minamata Convention.

[17] **What lessons from The Russian Federation can be learned with regard to strategies for strengthening national capacity in mercury management and the development of national level priority actions that address global conventions including Minamata Convention on Mercury?**

As national environment authorities around the world must deal with national environmental problems that often have a global dimension, it is key that they do cooperate with international colleagues. Global conventions are an excellent form of a coordinated approach to such global problems. It is of importance to facilitate this international cooperation and experience exchange when looking for strategies for strengthening national capacities in mercury management and development of national priority action that addresses global conventions including the Minamata Convention on mercury.

[18] International cooperation to strengthen the national capacity for sound management of chemicals is of utmost importance for Russia. Especially when this Project started in 2012, there was a strong interest to cooperate with the international community on the issue of mercury among key governmental stakeholders, NGOs, academia and the business sector. Continuation of GEF funding is seen by Project stakeholders as an important mechanism to enable this cooperation.

Резюме проекта (Russian translation of the Executive summary)

[1] Несмотря на отложенный старт и целый ряд проблем на начальном этапе, данный Проект сыграл ключевую роль в оказании поддержки Российской Федерации в переговорном процессе по Минаматской Конвенции. Учитывая серьезность проблем ртутного загрязнения в России, значительное сокращение поступления ртути окружающую среду с выбросами, сбросами и отходами в стране способно внести значительный вклад в их сокращение во всем мире. В соответствии с критериями оценки Управления по оценке Программы ООН по окружающей среде (ЮНЕП) данный Проект рассматривается в отчете об «Окончательной оценке» в соответствии со следующими основными критериями:

[2] В отношении **стратегической значимости** «Пилотного проекта по составлению кадастра ртутных загрязнений в Российской Федерации», можно отметить, то он реализовывался в полном соответствии с предшествующими национальными, региональными и международными инициативами по ртути, а также с реализацией Минаматской Конвенции в глобальном масштабе. Заинтересованные стороны посредством достигнутых в ходе проекта результатов внесли вклад в процесс определения приоритетов рационального регулирования ртутных загрязнений в Российской Федерации, и способствовали выполнению мандата ЮНЕП, а также стратегии и приоритетов Глобального Экологического Фонда (ГЭФ). Оценка показала, что все опрошенные заинтересованные стороны и все респонденты опроса согласились с тем, что Проект является стратегически значимым для Российской Федерации.

[3] В отношении **качества структуры проекта** можно отметить, что он обладает всеобъемлющей, согласованной и логически-выверенной структурой, которая способствует достижению целей Проекта как с точки зрения содержания, так и с позиции организации процессов. Однако, не все соответствующие заинтересованные стороны были вовлечены в планирование деятельности по Проекту, а стратегия коммуникации и повышения информированности не была в достаточной степени связана с запланированными мероприятиями. Первоначально запланированные сроки реализации Проекта оказались нереалистичными, поскольку не учитывали типичные для такого рода проектов препятствия и проблемы, свойственные их начальному этапу.

[4] Что касается **внешнего контекста**, совершенно очевидно, что внешний контекст оказался очень благоприятным в период начала реализации Проекта, и Российская Федерация подписала Минаматскую Конвенцию в 2014 году во время второго года реализации Проекта. Предстоящее принятие политических решений в отношении ратификации Россией Минаматской Конвенции окажет серьезное влияние на результаты Проекта.

[5] Что касается **достижения результатов**, данный Проект позволил получить предполагаемые результаты (с некоторыми отставаниями по срокам).[5] Используемый механизм экспертной оценки можно рассматривать как гарантию обеспечения качества полученных результатов. В то же время, существуют

[5] Обновления по планированию были получены оценщиком из Агентства-исполнителя, начиная с октября 2017 года. Письма от агентства-исполнителя к оценщику указали на завершение всех выводов Проекта в декабре 2017 года, когда проект этого отчета обсуждался между оценщиком и Отделом Управления по оценке Программы ООН по окружающей среде.

возможности для улучшения работы этого механизма. Это возможно осуществить с помощью хорошо реализованной стратегии коммуникации и повышения информированности.

[6] Рассматривая **достижение непосредственных результатов**, в процессе оценки был сделан вывод о том, что ходе Проекта были успешно получены непосредственные результаты, достоверные с позиций описания Проекта, с той оговоркой, что не все результаты были полностью подготовлены к моменту проведения оценки. В своей совокупности полученные результаты оказали Российской Федерации серьезную поддержку в ее подготовке к присоединению к Минаматской Конвенции и укрепили позиции ключевых заинтересованных сторон в отношении проблематики ртутных загрязнений. С использованием наилучших международных передовых практик ЮНЕП были идентифицированы источники высвобождений ртути (также были подготовлены аналитические отчеты по проекту, в которых были указаны приоритеты источников загрязнения). Полученные результаты позволили национальным заинтересованным сторонам лучше осознать риски ртутных загрязнений для здоровья человека и состояния окружающей среды. На основе опыта Проекта, полученного в Российской Федерации, будет оказано содействие и помощь региональным коллегам из стран бывшего СССР в проведении первоначальных оценок по Минаматкой Конвенции и другим соответствующим проектам по ртути.

[7] Дальнейшее достижение результатов и последующая **вероятность оказания влияния** будет в значительной степени зависеть от политических решений в отношении ратификации Минаматской конвенции со стороны Российской Федерации. Это внешний фактор, который находится за пределами компетенции Проекта. Проект предоставил основную базовую информацию, на основе которой может быть принято взвешенное решение.

[8] С точки зрения **финансового управления** Проектом, оценка показала, что на начальном этапе реализации Проекта имели место определенные проблемы с началом деятельности и возникали задержки в предоставлении отчетности. Эти проблемы впоследствии были решены, особенно после того, как в ЮНЕП был привлечен новый управленческий персонал, и появилось больше времени для осуществления методического руководства. В целом, оценка показала, что финансовое управление проектом осуществлялось на должном уровне. Важно подчеркнуть, что для комплексных проектов, аналогичных рассматриваемому Проекту, необходимо устанавливать реалистичные сроки и обеспечивать подробное методическое руководство со стороны ЮНЕП для обеспечения рационального управления и предоставления отчетности, особенно на первоначальном этапе.

[9] Проект продемонстрировал хорошо спланированную эффективность в использовании и соблюдении существующих как национальных, так и международных инициатив в области ртутных загрязнений. Эффективное соблюдение запланированных сроков оказалось затруднительным из-за слишком напряженного графика реализации Проекта. Эта проблема была решена после того, как были согласованы два периода продления сроков реализации Проекта.

[10] В отношении **мониторинга и отчетности**, оценка показала, что первоначально Проект реализовывался не полном соответствии со сроками и обязательствами по мониторингу и отчетности, установленными в подписанном соглашении по проекту. Это произошло из-за трудностей со стартом проекта и отсутствием методического руководства со стороны ЮНЕП по причине кадровых изменений. Тем не менее,

ведение мониторинга и отчетности нормализовалось после завершения первоначального этапа Проекта, то есть мониторинг и отчетность стали проводиться более своевременно, с должным вниманием к содержанию и деталям

[11] В том, что касается обеспечения **устойчивости**, то одна из сильных сторон Проекта заключается в том, что он оказал серьезную поддержку Российской Федерации в процессе переговоров о присоединении к Минаматской Конвенции. Усилия заинтересованных сторон Проекта по обеспечению устойчивости рассматриваются стороной, проводящей оценку проекта как удовлетворительные. Если бы в запланированные мероприятия по Проекту были включены меры по повышению информированности и коммуникации, то это могло бы, возможно, привести к еще более существенным результатам от этих усилий. Однако, устойчивость зависит в первую очередь от принятия политических решений, которые находятся вне зоны компетенции Проекта и о них нельзя говорить с большой вероятностью.

[12] Оценка показала, что в ходе Проекта удалось хорошо воспользоваться **факторами, влияющими на его эффективность**. Результаты предыдущих проектов были тщательно рассмотрены и использованы, управление Проектом улучшилось после преодоления первоначальных проблем с началом работы и участием заинтересованных сторон, которые оказались активно вовлечены в реализацию благодаря сотрудничеству с профессионалами из НПО «Эко-Согласие». Коммуникация и повышение уровня информированности общественности в целом не были четко спланированы на первоначальном этапе. Если бы это было не так, то возможное влияние Проекта могло быть более значительным. Сотрудничество с Эко-Соглашением частично компенсировало недостатки первоначального этапа.

[13] В дополнение к указанным выше критериям оценки необходимо провести «Окончательную оценку» для того, чтобы проанализировать целый ряд ключевых стратегических вопросов, перечисленных ниже:

[14] **Насколько в ходе реализации Проекта удалось использовать наилучшие экологические практики и методики контроля за высвобождениями ртути в Российской Федерации?**

«Окончательная оценка» показала, что в ходе проекта удалось добиться применения наилучших экологических практик и рекомендаций по контролю за источниками высвобождения ртути в Российской Федерации. В среднесрочном обзоре по Проекту международный эксперт по ртути Якоб Мааг даже охарактеризовал этот Проект как наилучший пример использования инструмента Первичной оценки в рамках Минаматской конвенции по ртути (MIA) на сегодняшний день.

[15] **В какой степени и с каким успехом в ходе проекта удалось привлекать соответствующих игроков сектора к целевым стратегиям сокращения ртутных загрязнений?**

Несмотря на то, что сотрудничество с представителями загрязняющих отраслей промышленности в России, ответственных за ртутное загрязнения, может оказаться непростым делом, проект оказался успешным с точки зрения привлечения крупных игроков к участию в целевых стратегиях по сокращению ртутных загрязнений. Соглашения по проекту подтвердили свою важность для целей сбора данных необходимых для составления кадастра ртутных загрязнений. Партнерские

организации также активно содействовали диалогу с компаниями и помогали получить доступ на производственные площадки.

[16] **Какова вероятность того, что Национальный план действий, разработанный в рамках Проекта, сможет преодолеть разрыв между Россией и развитыми странами в ее общей предотвращении и борьбе с ртутными загрязнениями? Каковы ключевые факторы, которые необходимо учитывать при достижении желаемого эффекта?**

Поскольку заинтересованные стороны проекта не имеют полномочий на то, чтобы самостоятельно определить Национальный план действий по ртути, был разработан проект плана действий, указывающий, какие конкретно действия Россия должна предпринять после того, как она ратифицирует Минаматскую Конвенцию. Для достижения предполагаемого влияния Проекта и преодоления разрыва, существующего между Россией и развитыми странами в деле предотвращения и борьбе с ртутным загрязнением, вопрос ратификации страной Минаматской Конвенции имеет ключевое значение.

[17] **Чему можно научиться на опыте Российской Федерации в отношении стратегий усиления национального потенциала в области регулирования выбросов ртути и разработки приоритетных действий на национальном уровне, направленных на соблюдение требований глобальных конвенции, включая Минаматскую Конвенцию по ртути?**

Поскольку национальные органы, занимающиеся вопросами охраны окружающей среды во всем мире должны заниматься национальными экологическими проблемами, которые часто обладают глобальной значимостью, важно, чтобы в своей деятельности они сотрудничали со своими зарубежными коллегами. Глобальные конвенции являются прекрасной формой скоординированного подхода к решению подобных проблем глобального масштаба. Важно содействовать этому международному сотрудничеству и обмену опытом при поиске стратегий усиления национального потенциала в области регулирования ртутных загрязнений и разработки национальных приоритетных мер, направленных на присоединение к глобальным конвенциям, включая Минаматскую Конвенцию по ртути.

[18] Международное сотрудничество в целях усиления национального потенциала в области рационального регулирования химических веществ имеет первостепенное значение для России. В особенности, когда этот проект только начинался в 2012 году, со стороны ключевых правительственных заинтересованных сторон, НКО, научных кругов и делового сектора возник большой интерес к сотрудничеству с международным сообществом по вопросу ртутных загрязнений. Продолжение финансирования ГЭФ рассматривается заинтересованными сторонами Проекта как важный механизм, позволяющий данному сотрудничеству реализоваться.

1. Introduction

[19] This is a Terminal Evaluation report for the UN Environment GEF project entitled – "Pilot Project on the Development of Mercury Inventory in the Russian Federation" (hereinafter referred to as the "Project"). The GEF project ID of the Project is 5222. The Project was funded through the Global Environment Facility and adheres closely to the GEF Focal Area Strategy CHEM 3: Pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction. The Project was approved by UN Environment on 21 March 2013 and was designed to contribute to the UN Environment Chemicals and Waste Branch 524.2 Programme of Work (2014-2017). After approval, the Project started off in May 2013 and was completed on 30 June 2017.

[20] The Project was designed to assist Russia to build capacity and raise awareness towards the upcoming legally binding instrument on mercury, the Minamata Convention. As Russia is one of the largest emitters of mercury, dealing with mercury in Russia is considered to be one of the world priorities in the combat against the global adverse effects on human health and the environment from the chemical element. The Russian Government has recently shown a great interest in better understanding the impacts of mercury on public health and the environment through renewed policy and legislation. However, prior to 2000 consolidated data on mercury containing products, consumption and releases and its subsequent impacts on human health and the environment were not available. The Project expected to provide: (a) the first full national inventory on mercury in the Russian Federation, using the updated UN Environment Toolkit 6 for identification and quantification of mercury releases (2012); and (b) the first National Action Plan on mercury management with specific action plans for key sectors, based on the results of the inventory. Russia's co-financing for the Project and for the activities related to mercury management identified by the Project were expected to add to the adoption of new regulatory elements towards a sound management of mercury required for the medium and long term.

[21] The Project originally planned for a 24-month implementation period. However, since additional time was needed for communication with stakeholders, funds transfer, completion of reporting and translation of documents, a no cost extension was granted. During Project Revision[7] it was agreed to finalise the Project in August 2016. Later the Project close was further extended to June 2017 to allow for the completion of pending activities, effectively extending its duration to a 48-month implementation period. A final Steering Group Meeting was carried out from 6 to 8 June 2017 in Moscow to review the Project deliverables, disseminate its successes and lessons learned and plan for follow-up activities related to mercury in the Russian Federation.

[22] The total budget (US$) based on GEF allocation is US$ 1,000,000. The total Secured Medium-Size Project co-financing is US$ 3,418,969.

[23] The Project was implemented by UN Environment and executed by Scientific Research Institute for atmospheric air protection (SRI Atmosphere) on behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation (MNRE). Main Project partners comprised of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian Chlor-alkali Association (RusChlor), All Russian Thermal Engineering Institute VTI, Scientific Centre "Synthesis", Eco-Accord NGO, US EPA, Swedish EPA and Federal Environmental Agency UBA (Germany).

[6] In the Russian Federation, nearly all of the ten categories and 44 sub-categories indicated in the UNEP Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases are present.

[7] Project Revision signed on 21 August 2015

[24] The key purpose of this Terminal Evaluation is to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements and to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through lessons learned. The key intended audience for the findings of this report is UN Environment and the main project partners.

2. Evaluation methods

2.1. Overview

[25] The Terminal Evaluation is carried out by an independent consultant under the responsibility of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment (Nairobi) in consultation with the Task Manager (Geneva) and guided by UN Environment's Evaluation Policy and the UN Environment Programme Manual.

[26] The Terminal Evaluation has the purpose of 1) Accountability: objectively assessing the results generated by implementing the Project's activities against the expected results in alignment with UN Environment's results-based management requirements; 2) Learning: contributing to operational improvement while building ownership, identifying good practices, and promoting the use of those practices within future programme planning, design, and implementation.

[27] The overall approach to the evaluation is bounded by the scope set out within the Terminal Evaluations ToR that in turn uses established evaluation criteria grouped within six categories. In the report, the evaluator will provide ratings for these evaluation criteria, together with a brief justification cross-referenced to the findings in the main body of the Report, following this 6-point scale: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and Impact is rated on a 'likelihood scale' from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU).

2.2. Data collection and analysis

[28] The findings reported in this Terminal Evaluation are based on the Evaluation Matrix and related Key Questions, formulated in the Evaluation Framework. The Evaluation Framework, in turn, was based on the Evaluation Criteria and Scope presented in the ToR (Please see Annex 1) and the original Project intervention logic (Log frame).

[29] As a method for data gathering the Terminal Evaluation makes use of Project documents and reports, targeted face to face interviews in Moscow at the Final Steering Group Meeting in June in Moscow and telephone and e-mail interviews with key Project stakeholders for validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. Next to these communications a small, six-question survey was sent in July 2017 to key Project stakeholders, with whom the evaluator did not manage to hold an interview during the Final Steering Group Meeting in Moscow. Using the above mentioned six category evaluation criteria enabled the consultant to score the responses to the questions and find an indication of how the Project and its outcomes were assessed by stakeholders.

[30] The Project documents, reports and further relevant data were provided to the consultant by UN Environment at the outset of the consultancy, a Skype meeting between the Evaluation Officer, Task Manager and consultant was organised as an introduction of the Terminal Evaluation work in April 2017. Additional information for collecting the necessary data for carrying out the evaluation was available from the Task Manager and Project stakeholders upon request. The consultant participated in the final Project Steering Group meeting 6-8 June 2017 in Moscow to hold face to face interviews with the Task Manager, Project Coordinator and other Project stakeholders. This was the only Project visit in the framework of this Terminal Evaluation. Finally, targeted e-mail communications and dissemination of the

survey were carried out by the consultant after the final Project meeting. (See annex 2 Evaluation itinerary and overview of stakeholders interviewed)

2.3. Evaluation criteria and key questions

[31] The evaluator approached the Terminal Evaluation in a participatory way, with the aim to achieve triangular co-operation and to bring together input of different stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and execution of the Project, including the stakeholders not identified at Project design. The evaluator focused on producing evidence based conclusions by:

- converting the evaluation information needs into answerable questions;
- tracking down, with maximum efficiency, the best external evidence with which to answer them;
- critically appraising that evidence for its validity (closeness to truth) and usefulness (future Project applicability); and
- evaluating the Project performance.

[32] Ownership of the evaluation results was encouraged by the application of the triangular cooperation approach and the consequent practice of sharing the draft evaluation reports and discussion of its conclusions with UN Environment Task Manager and Technical Expert, Project Coordination Team and UN Environment Evaluation Office and other relevant stakeholders.

[33] During the evaluation the consultant sought to clearly compare the Project intervention with non-action. With other words: "What happened?" compared to "What would have happened without the Project intervention?" A thorough analysis of the baseline situation, trends and counterfactuals in the Russian Federation was undertaken via the questions as formulated in the Evaluation Framework. The findings of that analysis were then compared to the intended Project outcomes and impacts in order to attribute reported Project interventions to those outcomes and impacts.

[34] As Key Strategic Questions, the ToR highlights the following four aspects:

(a) In 2008, UN Environment published the Global Atmospheric Mercury Assessment which indicates that in the Russian Federation, nearly all of the ten categories and 44 sub-categories indicated in the Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases of UN Environment are present. ***To what extent has the Project succeeded in providing best environmental practice and guidelines for control of mercury releases in the Russian Federation?***

(b) In 2010, the Russian based NGO Eco-Accord Centre, at the request of the European Environmental Bureau and under the Zero Mercury Campaign, developed an assessment of mercury emission sources in Russia. The study suggests that the energy sector has the largest contribution of mercury releases to air, amounting to an estimated 39.0 tonnes/year in 2003. ***To what extent and with what success did the project engage relevant sector players in targeted mercury reduction strategies?***

(c) The project baseline indicated that there was no national consolidated data on mercury-containing products, use, consumption and releases from each source and there was a lack of understanding of the sources of mercury releases and their consequences on human health and the environment. ***What is the likelihood that the National Action Plan***

developed through the project will succeed in bridging the gap between Russia and developed countries in its overall prevention and control of mercury pollution? What are the key factors which need to be taken into account in achieving the desired impact?

(d) The Russian Federation has ratified the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions, demonstrating its high national commitment to sound management of chemicals. ***What lessons from The Russian Federation can be learned with regard to strategies for strengthening national capacity in mercury management and the development of national level priority actions that address global conventions including the Minamata Convention on Mercury?***

2.4. Evaluation limitations

[35] There are possible limitations to the outcomes of this Terminal Evaluation. These include amongst others: Potential for respondent bias, limited number of face to face and telephone interviews with Project stakeholders, a limited response to the evaluation survey, an incorrect attribution of the Project outcomes and Impacts to the Project (positive results in sound management of mercury in the Russian Federation caused by actions outside the Project).

[36] **Potential for respondent bias.** The evaluation findings are based, in part, on the views of key informants with a responsibility for implementation and execution of Project activities that could be potentially biased in their responses regarding outcomes. Several measures were taken to reduce the effect of respondent biases and validate interview results, including the following: (i) ensuring that respondents understood the strict confidentiality of responses; (ii) including informants who do not have a responsibility for implementation and execution of Project activities; and (iii) asking respondents to provide a rationale for their judgments, including a description of specific activities which contributed to reported outcomes.

[37] **Limited number of face to face and telephone interviews with Project stakeholders and limited responses to the evaluation survey.** During the last Steering Group Meeting of the Project the consultant extensively interviewed 8 key Project stakeholders that had been directly involved with the Project. In discussions with several further Project stakeholders it turned out that their direct involvement with the Project had been limited. In 2 e-mail correspondences and 8 e-mail surveys[8] received back from Project stakeholders, information to review Project implementation has been collected. All together 18 stakeholders have been contacted. The statistical relative low number of respondents has an impact on the value that can be attributed to quantitative results of the interviews. With such low numbers, the statistical evidence is of limited value.

[38] **Attribution/Contribution**: As with many other international projects, other factors than the intervention itself could have contributed to the expected results/outcomes of the Project. This is particularly relevant for projects aiming at strengthening government ownership of targeted problems and impacting governmental legal and institutional frameworks. Within the framework of this Project there are a lot of external causes that have contributed or will contribute in the future to the expected results / outcomes of the Project. In order to avoid attribution to the Project intervention, where the external causes played a more important role, the consultant has always strived to distinguish clearly between the intervention itself and external factors.

[8] The survey was sent to 12 key stakeholders of whom 8 responded.

2.5. Learning, communication and outreach

[39] To ensure promotion of learning and communication of key findings of the terminal evaluation, the consultant has applied the following approach:

- The reconstructed TOC (see Section 4) was discussed and validated with the Evaluation Manager, the Task Manager and the Project Coordinator;
- Assumptions and drivers were verified with key stakeholders;
- Feedback and potential recommendations were discussed with key Project partners;
- Interviews were undertaken in a semi-structured manner and individually with each key stakeholder to allow space for interviewees to provide their views, priorities and potential recommendations on the implementation process;
- Preliminary findings, lessons learned and recommendations were shared, discussed and validated with the Evaluation Manager, the Task Manager and the Project Coordinator, after the field mission;
- The final report of the Terminal Evaluation took into consideration to comments / suggestions and feedback from Project partners;
- The Terminal Evaluation will be posted on the website of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment and will be publicly available for Project stakeholders and other interested parties.

2.6. Ethics

[40] To allow for a maximum of free and open discussion about the Project results and about how it was implemented, the opinions of the people interviewed and of the people who responded to the survey are not disclosed in direct connection with their individual views. Their responses are being treated with full confidentiality. Only an overview of people consulted for the evaluation is presented in Annex 2 of this report.

3. The Project

3.1. Context

[41] The Project was designed to assist Russia to build capacity and raise awareness towards the upcoming legally binding instrument on mercury, the Minamata Convention.[9] As Russia is one of the largest emitters of mercury, dealing with mercury in Russia is considered to be one of the world priorities in the combat against the global adverse effects on human health and the environment from the chemical element. The Russian Government has recently shown a great interest in better understanding the impacts of mercury on public health and the environment through renewed policy and legislation. However, prior to 2000 consolidated data on mercury containing products, consumption and releases and its subsequent impacts on human health and the environment were not available.

[42] Mercury pollution is a serious concern in the Russian Federation although the risk of exposure to mercury varies substantially across the country. As in many other countries, mercury is still used in many products such as manometers, thermometers, electrical switches, fluorescent lamps, dental amalgam, batteries and some pharmaceuticals. Russia has made efforts to assess mercury emissions to air, mercury released directly to water and soil was less well quantified at the outset of the Project.

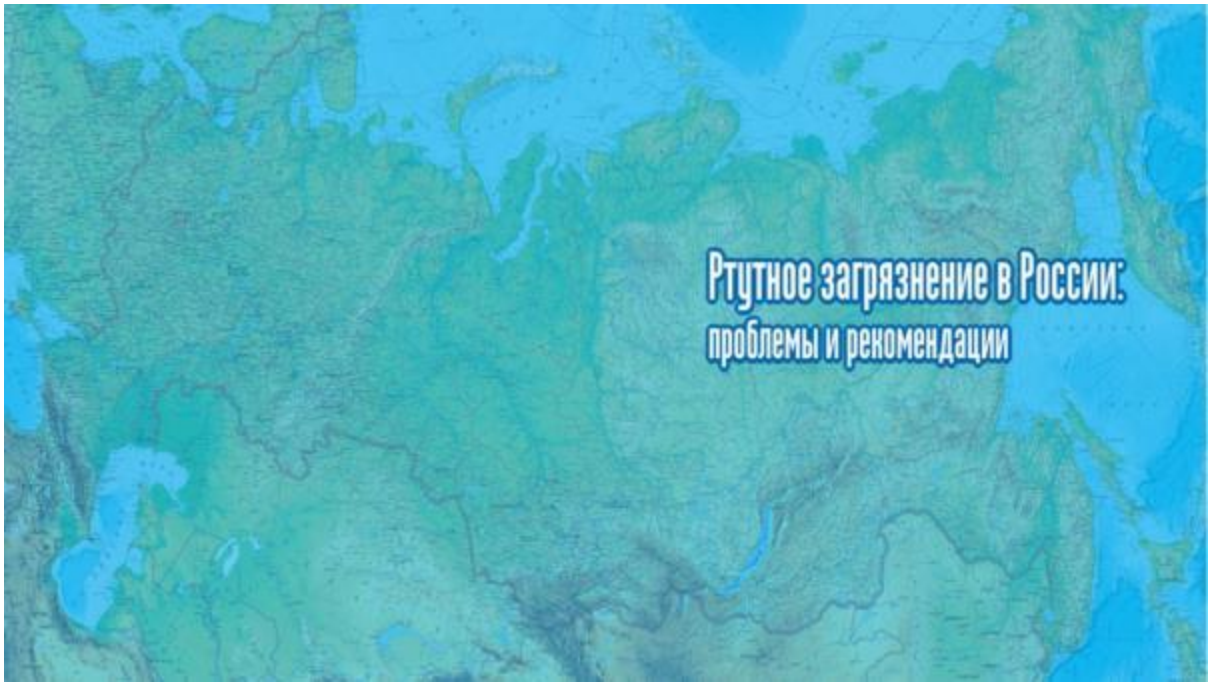


Figure 1 Map of the Russian Federation taken from the cover of final Project report *Mercury pollution in Russia: problems and recommendations*

[43] The first national study on mercury was carried out between 2003 and 2005 by the Arctic Council in the framework of the Arctic Council Action Plan to Eliminate Pollution in the Arctic

[9] During the Projects design phase in 2012 the Minamata Convention was not yet in place. The convention was officially adopted on 10 October 2013 at a Diplomatic Conference, held in Kumamoto, Japan. Russia signed the Minamata Convention on 24-09-2014.

(ACAP). In this study, federal agencies responsible for environmental supervision actively participated.

[44] Within the framework of UN Environment's Global Atmospheric Mercury Assessment: Sources, Emissions and Transport, it was estimated that in the Russian Federation, nearly all of the ten categories and 44 sub-categories indicated in the UN Environment Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases are present.[10]

[45] Between 2004 and 2009, the chlor-alkali sector in the Russian Federation has made significant efforts to reduce releases of mercury resulting in an overall reduction from this sector from 42.4 tonnes of mercury in 2004 to 19 tonnes in 2009.[11]

[46] Within the framework of the HELCOM project "Baltic Hazardous and Agricultural Releases Reduction Project" (BALTHAZAR)[12] a unique experience was made in Russia with a pilot with EU and Russian legislation compliant treatment of mercury containing wastes (fluorescent lamps).

[47] In 2010 the Russian based NGO Eco-Accord developed under the Zero Mercury Campaign of the European Environmental Bureau an assessment of mercury emission sources in Russia from coal firing power plants, chlor-alkali production, cement production, production of copper and zinc, incineration of solid household waste and gold refining. The study suggested that the energy sector has the largest contribution of mercury releases to air amounting to an estimated 39 tonnes per year in 2003.

[48] As coal combustion is considered as a major source of anthropogenic mercury releases also in Russia, the estimations from coal combustion are estimated to be significant. Rough estimates ranged at the outset of the Project from 6 to 18 tonnes per year.[13]

[49] The above-mentioned UN Environment Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases, and a wide range of UN Environment publications on the issue of mercury were indicated to provide relevant information and guidance during the implementation of the Project.

[50] The Russian Federation has ratified the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions demonstrating a high commitment to sound management of chemicals. The Russian environmental policy and regulatory framework has several mercury related environmental standards. In practice, however, not all policy and legislation is fully integrated and implemented. In 2006, the Security Council of the Russian Federation signalled the urgency of this problem and as a result several federal constituents approved regional programmes for urgent actions to improve control over mercury waste management and releases into the environment. Despite these efforts limited results were achieved in mercury reduction and it did not become a strategic issue of Russian environmental politics.

[51] As a result of the Project a first national mercury inventory has been carried out following the guidance of the UN Environment Mercury Toolkit, a programme of capacity building and awareness raising activities has been implemented on the issue of mercury and the Russian

[10] UNEP 2013, UNEP Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases, Geneva, Switzerland

[11] Eberill V., Yagud B., Mironov P., Outcomes of activities aimed at reduction of mercury consumption and emission at chlor-alkali plants in Russia in 2005-2010" (in Russian). Chemical Industry Today Journal, 1-2012, Moscow (as referenced in the ProDoc)

[12] Helsinki Commission, Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (2010). "Reducing Risks of Hazardous Waste in Russia: Balthazar Project 2009-2010". Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission.

[13] Reducing mercury emissions from coal combustion in the energy sector of the Russian Federation, UNEP 2011.

Federation has signed the Minamata Convention. An external challenge for Project stakeholders has been the fact that decision making on ratification of the Minamata Convention is a political decision not depending on their influence.

3.2. Objectives and components

[52] The development goal of the Project is to "protect human health and the environment from toxic exposure to mercury". The specific project objective is to "strengthen capacity of the Russian Federation for the identification of mercury sources, quantification, analysis and monitoring of mercury releases and identification of priority actions to address mercury issues under a future global convention".

[53] The Project has five components, its subsequent planned outputs and expected outcomes. No changes were formally agreed upon during the implementation phase of the Project. In communication with SRI Atmosphere during the Inception Phase of the Terminal Evaluation, it became clear that in the completion phase certain final outputs, like for instance the originally planned five specific source category sector action plans, were implemented slightly different from the original planning at design phase as a Draft National Action Plan (See as well Section 5.5 A. Achievement of outputs, Component 4, output 4).

Table 2 Project components, Expected outcomes and Expected outputs as listed in the Project document.

***Component 1:* Identification of initial guidance on mercury management**	
Expected Outcomes:	Information needs identified
Expected Outputs:	Translation of UN Environment Toolkit into Russian[14]
	Basic information on mercury management in Russian Federation available to relevant stakeholders
***Component 2:* Development of mercury inventories by industrial sector**	
Expected Outcomes:	Comprehensive information on mercury sources and releases (the inventories) and current control measures enables a better understanding of mercury risks to human health and the environment in Russia
Expected Outputs:	Agreements with key industrial associations
	Quantitative and qualitative data on mercury releases available: development of a detailed inventory for the Russian Federation
***Component 3:* Assessment and strengthening of existing analytical capacity for monitoring of mercury in the environment and humans**	
Expected Outcomes:	Improved knowledge on mercury in the environment and the capacity of Russian laboratories regarding mercury analysis and measurements guides the Russian Federation to develop targeted mercury reduction strategies.
Expected Outputs:	Report on national capacity for mercury analysis and overview of laboratories able to perform mercury analysis (at least 10 laboratories assessed)

[14] UNEP 2012, UNEP Toolkit for identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases, Geneva Switzerland

	Available data of good quality on mercury in the environment, including biota and humans, and on mercury in emissions from key sectors in the Russian Federation.
	Record of laboratories participating including mercury sampling, analysis and measurements
***Component 4:* Prioritisation of mercury sources, mercury management gap analysis and development of initial national action plan**	
Expected Outcomes:	Enhanced understanding of priority sources for mercury management through the development of a national action plan, including identification of management gaps and monitoring needs
Expected Outputs:	Natural Resources and Environment website
	Report on management gaps identified including proposals to address these gaps
	National plan developed for future monitoring of mercury levels in the environment including in humans, and for mercury in emissions that will confirm mercury reduction in the environment and in humans
	Action plan for the Russian Federation on medium and long-term measures to decrease mercury emissions in prioritised sectors.
Component 5: Lessons learned, final report and strategies for needs to reduce mercury agreed	
Expected Outcomes:	Better practices used in future projects
Expected Outputs:	Draft report on good practices and lessons learned including recommendations on mercury management, inventory taking and initial action plan for Russian Federation
	Final lessons learned and recommendations requested in other Federal subjects and countries
	Suggestions for dissemination implemented and report disseminated through UN Environments and MNREs web site

3.3. Stakeholders

[54] Major Project stakeholders with contributing and beneficiary roles in the Project were well defined at the design stage of the Project. A rating of their interest and decision-making power is included. The major stakeholders include **key responsible national ministries:**

- Ministry of Natural resources and the Environment (MNRE);
- Ministry of Energy;
- Ministry of Industry and Trade; and
- Ministry of Health.

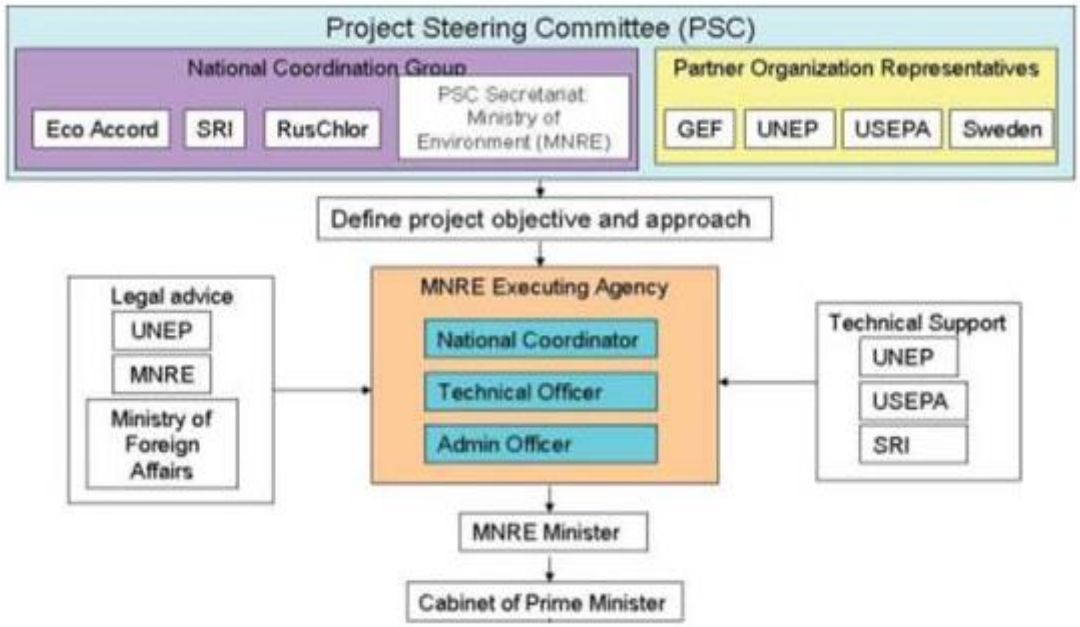
Other key stakeholders are:

- **National Laboratories** able to analyse mercury in air and biota;
- **National State Statistics Committee** collecting data on e.g. production of metals, cement, energy, products, fuel, raw materials;

- **Scientific Research Institute for Atmospheric Air Pollution (SRI Atmosphere)** providing methodological support to national institutions on air quality management and pollution abatement;
- **National Industries Associations** needed to provide support for carrying out the national inventory;
- **NGOs** playing a significant role in awareness raising on mercury issues.

[55] The Terminal Evaluation found that the stakeholder analysis and the description of the different stakeholders was not fully complete at Project design stage. (Detailed comments on this are provided in Section 5.2, B Quality of Project design, Section 5.5 Effectiveness and Section 6 Factors and processes affecting performance, 6.3 Stakeholder participation and cooperation).

Figure 2 Project decision making flow chart as per Project document



3.4. Project implementation structure and partners

[56] The Projects management structure is based on government ownership and aligned with institutional arrangements for management of the environment and more specifically chemicals and waste. In the Russian Federation, all issues related to mercury are administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation (MNRE). As national ministries are not allowed, by Russian legislation, to play the role of executing agency, that role was designated to SRI Atmosphere. A national Coordination Group consisted of MNRE, SRI Atmosphere, RusChlor and Eco-Accord. A group of Project Partner Organisations represented GEF, UN Environment, US EPA, Swedish EPA and the German Federal Environmental Agency. The National Coordination Group together with Partner Group Organisations formed the Project Steering Committee. The committee met in Steering Group Meetings at the beginning, mid-point and end of the Project. The participation of key industry sector representatives was made possible through respective ministries and industry

associations including Ministry of Energy and Trade, Ministry of Health and Social Development, National laboratories, State Statistics Committee, State Customs Service, Representatives of Scientific Institutes and National Industries Associations were all invited to the Steering Group Meetings. Legal advice was provided by UN Environment, MNRE and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs played a special role in coordinating with the international negotiation process on the development of the Minamata Convention on mercury. Technical support was provided by UN Environment, US EPA, Swedish EPA, German Federal Environmental Agency and SRI Atmosphere. As designated Executing Agency SRI Atmosphere managed the Project on behalf of MNRE, with a National Coordinator and a Financial Officer. The Project was designed to provide the MNRE Minister, the Cabinet of the Prime Minister and the Russian Parliament with the needed information on mercury to take well informed decisions in the negotiation processes for the mercury Convention and with needed information for possible adoption of the Projects National Action Plan on Mercury.

3.5. Changes in design during implementation

[57] No changes were formally agreed upon during the implementation phase of the Project. Although certain final outputs, like for instance the originally planned five specific source category sector action plans, were implemented slightly different from the original planning at design phase.

3.6. Project financing[15]

[58] The financial figures from Table 3 show the total project budget of USD 4,41 million and how this is put together from the GEF contribution and separate in-cash and in-kind national and international stakeholder contributions as defined in the original Project document. Table 4 shows how the funds were actually spent during the lifetime of the Project with a total expenditure of USD 4,51 million.

[59] The total planned co-financing adds up to USD 3,41 million. Planned co-financing has been strongly affected by the Russian Rouble exchange rate changes. In practice the value of the Rouble to the US Dollar went from around 31 Roubles in 2012 to around 58 Roubles in 2017[16]. With this decrease in value of the Rouble, it would have been difficult for the Russian co-financing partners to realise the planned budgeted co-finances within the originally planned time frame of the Project. With more time for implementation from the two subsequent non-cost project extensions this problem was solved.

[60] When comparing the budget to the actual spending of GEF funding, only substantial differences in the expenditures on Component I and Component II occurred. For Component I *(Identification and initial guidance on mercury management)* USD 110,500 was originally budgeted and in practice USD 55,781 was spent. As was explained during the interviews, it became clear during the Inception Meeting that most of the baseline information relevant for the Project was already available and that there was less need for activities to assess the Project baseline. For Component II *(Development of mercury inventories by industrial sector)*

[15] The data on final Project expenditure by component, GEF funding and co-financing realised were sent to the evaluator by the executing agency when the draft version of the evaluation was being discussed by the UN Evaluation Office and the evaluator early January 2018 and added to this section 3.6 of the report.

[16] The lowest value of the Rouble throughout the Project timeline was recorded in January 2016 at 76 Russian Rouble to 1 USD.

on the contrary carrying out the inventory turned out to be more complex and thorough than expected. As described in many places throughout this evaluation, to achieve the required results more work needed to be devoted to this component. In Practise the costs increased from the originally budgeted USD 216,000 to an actual spending of USD 278,407.

[61] As mentioned above, the weakened position of the Rouble towards the US Dollar throughout the Project made it difficult for the co-financing partners to realise the planned co-finances within the originally short Project timeline. In Practice, with the seriously extended Project timeline the co-financing from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MNRE) increased from the originally planned USD 962,000 to an actual spending of USD 996,440 in-kind contribution to the project due to an increased investment in project management. At the same time, the extended project time made it possible for Eco-Accord to increase their in-kind contribution to the Project from USD 65,500 to USD 78,990, as more of their own mercury projects ran in parallel with the Project. For SRI Atmosphere the co-financing was also increased caused by the extended timeline. More work was needed for the inventory itself and also more time was needed for Project management, that posed more challenges than initially expected, as described in various places in this report. As a result, the in-kind and cash contributions of SRI Atmosphere increased from the originally planned USD 537,040 to an actual spending of UDS 601,525. RusChlor's contribution in in-kind co-finances substantially increased due to their active involvement with the project from originally planned USD 436,000 to USD 547,416 actually spent. The organisations "Mercury" and "Fingo" were less involved with the Project than originally planned, as described in various places in this report. This resulted in a decrease of the in-kind contribution for Mercury from originally planned USD 437,000 to USD 358,190 actually spent and for Fingo from originally planned USD 153,000 to USD 138,350 actually spent. The planned in-kind contributions from EPA USA and EPA Swedish were spent as planned. The same holds true for the in-kind and cash contributions of UN Environment. In summary the differences between planned and spent were as follows:

- MNRE committed USD 962,000 and spent USD 996,440
- Eco-Accord committed USD 65,500 and spent USD 78,990
- SRI committed USD 537,040 and spent USD 601,525
- RusChlor committed USD 436,000 and spent USD 547,416
- Mercury committed USD 473,000 and spent USD 358,190
- Fingo committed USD 153,000 and spent USD 138,350

When comparing the original budget with the actual expenditures there was an increase of USD 94, 371 in co-finances spent on the Project.

Table 3 Project budget at design by component, GEF funding and co-financing planned

	GEF Funding	Co-financing (in-kind) MNRE RF	Co-financing (in-kind+cash) UN Environment	Co-financing (in-kind) Eco-Accord	Co-financing (in-kind) SRI	Co-financing (in-kind) RusChlor	Co-financing (in-kind) Mercury	Co-financing (in-kind) FINGO	Co-financing (in-kind) EPA USA	Co-financing (in-kind) EPA Swedisch	Total
Component I Identification and initial guidance on mercury management	110,500	470,000	446,729	0	162,000	0	300,000	70,000	317,000	28,700	1,904,929
Component II Development of mercury inventories by industrial sector	216,000	400,000	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	646,000
Component III Assessment and strengthening of existing analytical capacity for monitoring of mercury in the environment and humans	199,500	0	0	35,500	0	436,000	173,000	83,000	0	0	927,000
Component IV Prioritization of mercury sources, mercury management gap analysis and development of initial national action plan	155,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	155,500
Component V Lessons learned, fnal report and strategies for needs to reduce Hg agreed	229,500	0	0	0	84,880	0	0	0	0	0	314,380
Project management	89,000	92,000	0	0	290,160	0	0	0	0	0	471,160
Total	1,000,000	962,000	446,729	65,500	537,040	436,000	473,000	153,000	317,000	28,700	4,418,969

Table 4 Final Project expenditure by component, GEF funding and co-financing realised

	GEF Funding	Co-financing (in-kind) MNRE RF	Co-financing (in-kind+cash) UN Environment	Co-financing (in-kind) Eco-Accord	Co-financing (in-kind+cash) SRI Atmosphere	Co-financing (in-kind) RusChlor	Co-financing (in-kind) Mercuriy	Co-financing (in-kind) FINGO	Co-financing (in-kind) EPA USA	Co-financing (in-kind) EPA Swedish	Total*
Component I Identification and initial guidance on mercury management	55,781	470,000	446,729	0	139,320	0	100,000	58,350	317,000	28,700	**1,615,880**
Component II Development of mercury inventories by industrial sector	278,407	400,000	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	**708,407**
Component III Assessment and strengthening of existing analytical capacity for monitoring of mercury in the environment and humans	205,363	0	0	48,990	0	547,416	258,190	80,000	0	0	**1,139,959**
Component IV Prioritization of mercury sources, mercury management gap analysis and development of initial national action plan	136,371	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**136,371**
Component V Lessons learned, fnal report and strategies for needs to reduce Hg agreed	231,780	0	0	0	79,690	0	0	0	0	0	**311,470**
Project management	92,298	126,440	0	0	382,515	0	0	0	0	0	**601,253**
Total	**1,000,000**	**996,440**	**446,729**	**78,990**	**601,525**	**547,416**	**358,190**	**138,350**	**317,000**	**28,700**	**4,513,340**

4. Theory of change

[62] This Terminal Evaluation is carried out between April and October 2017. As a result, this report is being written directly after the end of the Project in June - October 2017. With all Project activities not fully reported upon, it is probably early to provide a full overview of the Project's results and impacts. Ultimately, the future Russian initiatives to eliminate negative impacts from mercury for human health and the environment in line with its participation in the Minamata Convention will demonstrate the final effectiveness of the Project.

[63] Making use of the Theory of Change (ToC)[17], the Evaluation Office of UN Environment encourages Project evaluation teams to assess the causal logic, effectiveness and likelihood of impact of Projects. Evaluation teams identify the intended impacts, review the logical framework and analyse the outcome-impact pathways. Results of the evaluation ultimately focus on providing analysis and feed-back for implementing / executing agencies and project partners to reflect on the activities, outputs, and impacts and help to formulate key lessons for organisational learning and operational improvement of future project development and implementation.

[64] In the Project document the Results framework lists the outcomes, key indicators, baseline, target at mid-term and end of Project, sources of verification, risks and assumptions to strengthen the capacity of the Russian Federation for the identification of mercury sources, quantification, and monitoring of mercury releases and identification of priority actions under the Minamata Convention, after Russian ratification. Table 5 outlines the original ToC linkages that exist between the Project outcomes and outputs as set out within the original Project document. The intended Project long term impact in Table 5 and Figure 3 ToC below has been formulated as: **"Protection of human health and the environment from toxic exposure to mercury"**, based on the concise and well formulated Project goal in the Project document.

[65] After the final Project Steering Group meeting a conference call between the evaluator, Task Manager and Project Coordinator was held for validation of the reconstructed ToC and stakeholder analysis as originally proposed by the evaluator in the Inception Report of the Terminal Evaluation. Apart from some proposed corrections and suggestion for improvement of the reconstructed ToC and the stakeholder analysis, the Task Manager and Project Coordinator agreed with the reconstructed ToC and stakeholder analysis as presented in the Inception Report.

[66] Immediate outcomes resulting from Project activities and Project outputs[18] in the reconstructed ToC are as follows summarised from their accurate description in the Project document's Results framework:

- Information needs identified;
- Comprehensive information on mercury sources and releases (the inventories) and current control measures enables a better understanding of mercury risks to human health and the environment in Russia;

[17] Evaluation office of UN Environment: Use of Theory of Change in project evaluations http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7116/14.%20Use%20of%20Theory%20of%20Change%20in%20Project%20Evaluation.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

[18] Project outputs are not listed here to avoid repetition. Please see Table 2 Project components, Expected outcomes and Expected outputs as listed in the Project document and Table 5 Results framework for the Project versus results framework that underpins the ToC.

- Improved knowledge on mercury in the environment and the capacity of Russian laboratories regarding mercury analysis and measurements guides the Russian Federation to develop targeted mercury reduction strategies;
- Enhanced understanding of priority sources for mercury management through the development of a national action plan, including identification of management gaps and monitoring needs;
- Better practices used in future projects.

Immediate outcomes are designed in the Project logic to result in one or more intermediate states towards the intended long-term impact. Certain assumptions and drivers can support the creation of this intended impact. They describe to a certain extend Project circumstances and enabling factors. (For more information on the drivers and assumptions, please see below.) To improve the causal logic of the ToC, the evaluator proposes to summarise from the Results framework an Intermediate state 1 as follows:

- Full guidance material developed and used. Comprehensive info on mercury emissions and releases enables better understanding of risks to human health and the environment in RF;
- National plan for monitoring of Hg developed and submitted to the government for approval;
- NAP including 5 specific sources categories action plans available.

Additionally, the following Intermediate state 2 is proposed as an additional phase towards the intended Project impact:

- Russia ratifies the Minamata Convention;
- Russia starts implementing part of its main obligations under the Minamata Convention;
- Identification, quantification and monitoring processes institutionalized;
- National Action Plan and Priority actions endorsed by key stakeholders;
- Environmental sound management of mercury is part of national policy.

[67] Institutionalisation of the different instruments for sound management of mercury is key for improving the policy and regulatory framework in line with the intended Project long term impact and Russia's obligations under the Minamata Convention, after ratification. Ultimately, institutionalisation can be seen as a process and sound management of mercury being part of national policy as target towards achieving the intended Project impact: **Protection of human health and the environment from toxic exposure to mercury in the Russian Federation** and **Experience and results from Russia's mercury inventory and environmental / human monitoring are replicated to other FSU countries in the region**. (highlighted in a dark orange text box in figure 3 below).

[68] The assumptions in the reconstructed ToC are summarised from the description in the Results framework. To improve the ToC, the evaluator proposes additional assumptions* as being necessary for the change process to happen:

- Political interest to ratify the Minamata Convention*;
- Environmental impact penalties in place*;
- Increased profit from mercury alternatives*;
- Political support and budgets available*;

- Authorities approving and enforcing appropriate legislation for sound management of mercury*;
- Sustained partnerships with labs and industry sector;
- Research institutes have the right expertise and are willing to participate.

[69] Whether the Russian Federation is going to ratify this convention, whether budgets for implementation and enforcement of new legislation will become available and whether economically viable alternatives for mercury will be successfully introduced in the industry sector, is a political decision and technical-economic development question beyond the control of Project stakeholders. The most Project stakeholders can do in this respect is making sure that the Project is carried out to the highest possible standards and that it will produce high quality outputs that are well disseminated among decision makers. i.e. drivers like improved understanding of the magnitude of mercury issues, well informed politicians, positive project experience could support Project impact. Thus, enabling political decision makers to take well informed decisions to adopt policies and legislation for sound management of mercury in the Russian Federation. In consequence, the evaluator proposes to insert the following drivers where the project has a measure of control and can make a meaningful influence:

- Improved understanding of the magnitude of mercury issues;
- Politicians are well informed on mercury issues;
- Positive Project experience and early results;
- Strong government ownership.

[70] The other two drivers in the reconstructed ToC are summarised from the Evaluation framework of the Project document:

- First national inventory developed;
- Criteria for mercury prioritisation developed and used.

[71] Based on the Results framework and the planned activities from the work plan of the original Project document, Figure 3 below presents the reconstructed ToC.

[72] The fact that the final impact of the Project massively depends on the political decision whether the Russian Federation is going to ratify this convention or not, is an enormous external challenge for Project stakeholders. Without ratification of the Minamata Convention by the Russian Federation there will be no further initialisation of mercury identification, quantification, monitoring and endorsement of the National Action Plan (Intermediate outcomes state 2), Sound management of Mercury will not become part of national policy (Intermediate outcome state 2) and even the intended Project impact will be very difficult to achieve. Although the Project stakeholders have little control over this external factor, many of them highlighted the importance of the decision making. The reconstructed ToC has proven to be a valuable instrument. It has particularly contributed to assessing the likelihood of achievement of the intended impact of the Project (as discussed in more detail in section 5.5 Effectiveness)

Table 5: Results framework for the Project versus results framework that underpins the TOC:

ProDoc		**Reconstructed TOC**	
Goal **Objective**	Protect human health and the environment from toxic exposure to mercury Strengthen capacity of the RF for the identification of mercury sources, quantification, analysis and monitoring of mercury releases and identification of priority actions to address mercury issues under a future global convention	**Long Term Impact**	*Protection of human health and the environment from toxic exposure to mercury in the Russian Federation* *Experience and results from Russia's mercury inventory and environmental/human monitoring are replicated to other Former Soviet Countries in the region*
		Intermediate State 2 (proposed by Evaluator)	- Russia ratifies the Minamata Convention - Russia starts implementing part of its main obligations under the Minamata Convention - Identification, Quantification and Monitoring processes institutionalized - NAP and Priority actions endorsed by key stakeholders - Environmental Sound Management of mercury is part of national policy
		Intermediate state 1 **(summarised from the Results framework)**	- Full guidance material developed and used. Comprehensive info on mercury emissions and releases enables better understanding of risks to human health and the environment in RF - National plan for monitoring of Hg developed and submitted to the government for approval - NAP including 5 specific sources categories action plans available
Immediate Outcomes	- Information needs identified - Comprehensive information on mercury sources and releases (the inventories) and current control measures enables a better understanding of mercury risks to human health and the environment in Russia - Improved knowledge on mercury in the environment and the capacity of Russian laboratories regarding mercury analysis and measurements guides the Russian Federation to develop targeted mercury reduction strategies. - Enhanced understanding of priority sources for mercury management through the development of a national action plan, including identification of management gaps and monitoring needs. - Better practices used in future projects		Faithful to the descriptions in the Logical Framework
Outputs	**Component 1** 1. UN Environment Toolkit translated		Faithful to the descriptions in the Logical Framework

ProDoc		Reconstructed TOC	
	2. Basic info on HG management available **Component 2** 1. Agreements with key indus. Associations 2. Quantitative. and qualitative data on Hg releases available: development of a detailed inventory **Component 3** 1. Report on nat. cap. for Hg anal. and overview of labs able to perform Hg analysis 2. Available data on Hg in environment and emissions 3. Record of labs participating **Component 4** 1. Scheme for ranking of Hg sources on web 2. Report on management gaps 3. NAP developed for future Hg monitoring 4. Action plan on medium and long term **Component 5** 1.Draft report on lessons learned + initial action plan 2.Final report on lessons learned + recommendations 3. Suggestions for disseminations		

Figure 3 Reconstructed Theory of Change

5. Evaluation findings

5.1. Strategic relevance

A. Global, national and regional relevance

[73] The risks for human health and the environment from mercury and its compounds have been known and recognised for a long time. Especially reports on mercury poisoning in the city of Minamata, in Japan, drew the attention of the international community to the problems caused by the toxic effects of mercury on human health and the environment. In 1956 the first case of, what was later called the Minamata disease, was discovered in that city. Minamata disease is a syndrome that negatively affects the neurological system and in extreme cases causes insanity, paralysis, coma, and death. The first discovered case of poisoning was caused by the release of methylmercury in the industrial wastewater from the Minamata Chisso Corporation's chemical factory in 1956 and releases continued until 1968.

[74] UN Environment has been actively considering the issue of mercury since 2001with a global assessment of mercury and its compounds, including the chemistry and health effects, sources, long-range transport, as well as prevention and control technologies relating to mercury. In 2009 the Governing Council of UN Environment adopted a decision to request its Executive Director to convene an intergovernmental negotiation committee (INC) with the mandate to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury. In January 2013, the intergovernmental negotiating committee agreed on the text of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Conference of Plenipotentiaries officially signed for the adoption of the convention on 10 October 2013. The objective of the Convention is to: "protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds and it sets out a range of measures to meet that objective. These include measures to control the supply and trade of mercury, including setting limitations on certain specific sources of mercury such as primary mining, and to control mercury-added products and manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used, as well as artisanal and small-scale gold mining."[19] The here described rapidly developing global initiatives to protect human health and the environment from adverse effects from mercury make the Project strategically highly relevant.

[75] As described in Section '3.1 Context', there were at the outset of the Project political and policy developments highly favourable to this Project intervention. At the same time groundwork had been carried out by different initiatives and studies on which the Project could build. The mentioned political and policy developments in combination with the studies that had been carried out, created a context in which the Project was highly relevant and complementary to earlier interventions on the issue of mercury. Moreover, as the Russian Federation is globally one of the most important mercury polluting countries, significant reductions of Russian mercury releases would contribute to important reductions worldwide. Carrying out the first mercury inventory in Russia was therefore of key importance.

[76] Russia has a shared past with its regional neighbours. In the recent Soviet history and even before many of these republics were largely functioning together as one country. Of course, there were significant differences, however, many of the Former Soviet Union experts have

[19] MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY TEXT AND ANNEXES, Retrieved from: http://mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/Booklets/Minamata%20Convention%20on%20Mercury_booklet_English.pdf

studied at Russian Universities and worked in similar technical and cultural environments. Inviting colleagues from Former Soviet Union countries to the final steering committee meeting was a very good idea for sharing experiences and for highlighting the Project results. Based on the shared background there is solid ground for the development of Mercury Initial Assessment projects in former Soviet Union countries were these assessments have not been carried out yet.

[77] The high global and national relevance, assigned to the Project is shared by most of the stakeholders interviewed and respondents that returned the evaluation survey. The acclaim for the initiative to invite colleagues from Former Soviet Union countries was confirmed by most of the countries being present at the Final Steering Committee meeting including the countries that already had completed their Mercury Initial Assessment.

The rating for Global, National, Regional Strategic Relevance – HIGHLY SATISFACTORY (HS)

B. UN Environment mandate and policies

[78] The Project is in line with UN Environment's Medium-Term Strategy and its Chemicals and Waste Sub-programme especially focussing on priority 5 with the objective to minimize the impact of harmful substances and hazardous waste on public health and the environment.

[79] The Project is as well in line with the GEF Focal Area Strategy CHEM-3: pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction. The Project is in line with the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building that addresses the provision of technology support and capacity-building to developing countries as well as to countries with economies in transition. Especially the following cross-cutting issue from the Bali Strategic Plan is relevant: (viii) Support to national and regional institutions in data collection, analysis and monitoring of environmental trends.

The rating for UN Environment Mandate and Policies Strategic Relevance – HIGHLY SATISFACTORY (HS)

C. GEF Focal area strategy framework

[80] The Project is in line with the GEF Focal Area Strategy: CHEM 3: Pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction.

The rating for GEF Focal Area Strategy Framework Strategic Relevance – HIGHLY SATISFACTORY (HS)

The rating for Strategic Relevance – HIGHLY SATISFACTORY (HS)

5.2. Quality of Project design

A. Overall Project design

[81] A detailed review of the Project design was carried out during Inception Phase of the evaluation. The table below gives an overview of the key findings of this review.

Table 6 Overview of the key findings of the Project design review

Criterion	***Rating ****	***Comments / explanation***
A. Nature of the external context	5	No unusual challenging operational environment expected in the Project document.
B. Project preparation	5	The Project clearly describes the global and national situation analysis of mercury issues and Project stakeholders. No stakeholder consultation in the design phase is mentioned. Vulnerable groups and gender are mentioned as a Project focus. Human rights issues are not separately identified.
C. Strategic relevance	6	The Project document is clearly in line with UN Environment / GEF strategic priorities, regional sub-regional priorities and complementary to other relevant interventions.
D. Intended results and causality	4	No ToC is provided in the Project document, as the document was developed before the ToC approach was introduced. There is a clear results framework with causal pathways although final impacts and impact drivers are not very clearly described. Roles of key stakeholders in their causal pathway are given. The risks and assumptions indicate that delays with respect to the timeframe could occur.
E. Logical framework and monitoring	5	Although no explicit ToC is provided, the logical framework and monitoring description does adequately describe the Project logic.
F. Governance and Supervision Arrangements	5	The Project governance and the roles and responsibilities within UNE are clearly described.
G. Partnerships	5	Capacities of partners and roles of external partners are clearly described.
H. Learning, Communication and Outreach	5	Learning, communication and outreach are adequately described in different sections of the Project document
I. Financial Planning /Budgeting	5	No observable deficiencies in the budgets / financial planning at design stage.
J. Efficiency	5	The Project document efficiently describes pre-existing initiatives and provides a strategy for cost effectiveness.
K. Specific realistic risks and mitigation measures have been identified	5	Specific realistic risks and mitigation measures have been identified.
L. Sustainability Replication and Catalytic Effects	5	Sustainability replication and catalytic effects are appropriately described in different sections of the Project document,
M. Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps	6	There are no serious Project design weaknesses or gaps identified.
Overall rating (in line with Evaluation Office weighting factor)	**4.88**	**Satisfactory**

*rating from 1 to 6, with 1 meaning Highly Unsatisfactory and 6 meaning Highly Satisfactory

[82] Overall, the Project is well elaborated. The Project has a comprehensive, coherent logical framework that contributes towards the Project objective in both content and processes. The outputs and outcomes are clearly defined, measurably interconnected. The 5 component

outcomes within the framework are supported by 15 outputs, that in turn foresee 14 activities, although one could argue that the description of the activities in the Project document is rather short. Component 1 and 2 are focusing on the development of tools, information and experience, component 4 is reserved for prioritisation & action planning and component 5 looks back on the lessons learned from the Project, dissemination of Project results and the development of strategies to reduce exposure to mercury in the future. The Project design shows the following strengths and weaknesses:

B. Strengths

- As the Russian Federation was preparing itself to sign the Minamata Convention[20] this Project is highly relevant for the country;
- The Project takes Russia's needs for capacity building into account and aims to develop the existing capacities as well as existing research and policy and regulatory frameworks further;
- The Project is well embedded in national and international initiatives on the issue of mercury;
- The Project document clearly describes the key stakeholders and their decision-making power for the Project;
- Sharing the lessons learned with key partners from the post-Soviet region and beyond was foreseen in the Project document.

C. Weaknesses

- The need to institutionalise (including related annual budget lines) Project results and experiences in the national governmental policy and legal frameworks does not get sufficient attention in the Project document;
- No description of stakeholder consultation during Project design is provided;
- Vulnerable groups are mentioned in different sections in the Project document. These groups are, however, not separately identified in the stakeholder analysis;
- In the Project activities, no activities for awareness raising and the engagement with wider groups beyond the key stakeholders are foreseen;
- Planning the implementation of this Project in the Russian Federation in only two years was most probably too ambitious.

[83] Ultimately, the Project document assumed that institutionalisation of the "planned international legally binding instrument" (later called Minamata Convention) in the existing governmental structures would be achieved by the Project. Only after institutionalisation of the Minamata processes is in place, can Russian stakeholders ensure that the Minamata Convention and the associated obligations under the convention will become governmental policy, regulations are in place and developed as needed, expertise is around, and budget lines exists. At Project end in later 2017, the Russian Federation had signed, but not yet ratified the Minamata Convention. The interviews and discussions with Project stakeholders highlighted relevant external factors that have an influence on the decision making about the ratification process of the Minamata Convention and therefore on the final impact of the Project. These external factors are discussed in more detail under Section '5.4 Nature of the external context'.

[20] The convention was signed on 24/09/2014.

5.3. Stakeholder analysis

[84] Major stakeholders expected to contribute and benefit from the Project are well defined at the design stage of the Project. A rating of their interests and decision-making power is included. On the governmental level, the major stakeholders include **key responsible national ministries:**

- Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MNRE);
- Ministry of Energy;
- Ministry of Industry and Trade; and
- Ministry of Health.

Other key stakeholders are:

- **National Laboratories** able to analyse mercury in air and biota;
- **National State Statistics Committee** collecting data on e.g. production of metals, cement, energy, products, fuel, raw materials;
- **Scientific Research Institute for Atmospheric Air Pollution (SRI Atmosphere)** providing methodological support to national institutions on air quality management and pollution abatement;
- **National Industries Associations** needed to provide support for carrying out the national inventory;
- **NGOs** playing a significant role in awareness raising on mercury issues.

[85] Vulnerable groups were mentioned in different sections in the Project document. These groups were, however, not separately identified in the stakeholder analysis. Depending on a more elaborate analysis of groups in Russian society facing the highest health risks from mercury impacts, possibly worker's organisations, women's organisations, indigenous people's organisations and / or others could have been identified and included in the Project activities. According to UN Environment Evaluation Office Guidance the Terminal Evaluation should e.g. 'ensure that the evaluation methodology includes mechanisms for participation of key stakeholders in the evaluation process.'[21] Although not all stakeholders were identified as a separate group in the Project documents stakeholder analysis, the NGO Eco-Accord was able to involve a wide range of NGOs including women and indigenous people organisations during implementation of their co-funding activities.[22] The evaluator has tried to include views of those NGOs through an extensive interview with two Eco-Accord representatives.

[86] In the stakeholder analysis of the Project document for all stakeholders mentioned above the Project stakeholder roles and their needs from the Project are well described. As key Project communication channel to be used between the Project and its stakeholders the following activities are foreseen:

- Steering Group Meetings
- National Coordination Group Meetings

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21 http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7122/13.%20Guidance%20on%20Stakeholder%20Analysis.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

22 Strengthening partnerships on chemicals under SAICM in the EECCA, Jan 2014 – Jan 2016, financed by Global Green Grants.

- Project publications
- Report on Project Lessons Learned and good practices to be disseminated through internet websites e.g. MNRE, UN Environment, Eco-Accord

The rating for Quality of Project design – SATISFACTORY (S)

5.4. Nature of the External Context

[87] With reference to Section 3.1 Context and 5.1 Strategic Relevance, it can be stated that the external context during Project implementation was very much favourable for implementing the Project. Russia was preparing itself to sign the international binding agreement in development at Project start and a series of regional studies on mercury had been carried out.

[88] With reference to Section 4 Theory of Change, the question whether the Russian Federation is going to ratify the Minamata Convention or not, can have the potential to limit the Project's final impact. Although this will become only clear in the coming years, it is important to mention that a Russian Federation decision not to ratify the convention is expected by key Project stakeholders to be influenced by the following:

- Under the current economic circumstance, the Russian Federation is expected not to be able to meet its obligations under the Minamata Convention without GEF Project funding.
- GEF Project funding is expected to enable mobilization of national co-funding for Minamata activities. Without GEF future funding the Russian Federation will most probably not ratify the Minamata Convention.

The rating for Nature of External Context – Favourable (F)

5.5. Effectiveness

A. Achievement of outputs

[89] According to progress reports and information provided by UN Environment staff, the Project has successfully delivered the activities and outputs planned in the Project document, or is going to deliver these outputs within the closing phase of the Project. It should be mentioned, however, that the fact that not all output deliverables under component 4 and 5 were ready is an important shortcoming in the Project planning. However, the people interviewed and the group of stakeholders that took part in the survey evaluated the outputs as being of good quality. (For more details please see below under the detailed output descriptions). An important achievement in output quality assurance, was the development of a Project peer review mechanism. Amongst other meetings where Project results were discussed, a special peer review and results assessment meeting was organised in April 2016. Project publications and the inventory report itself were made public through the Project website.[23] More recently at the Final Steering Group Meeting, the stakeholders were offered the possibility to comment on the Project results. As one critical note, it is important to mention that not all Project output reports were available from the website at the time of

[23] https://www.mercury2017.ru/

evaluation, indicating that the communication and review strategy might not be functioning fully.

Component 1, Output 1 Russian translation of UN Environment Toolkit

[90] The Toolkit has been translated early on in the Project. Due to the very specific technical language a pragmatic decision was made among Project stakeholders to work for a longer time with a draft version of the Toolkit to allow for the Project experts working in practice with the tool to continue improving the quality of the translation. This process of improving the draft version has been continued practically until Project end. The Russian version of the Toolkit demonstrated its value as a key instrument to initiate the process of systematic data collection on mercury emissions and releases in the Russian Federation.

Component 1, Output 2 Basic information on mercury management in Russian Federation available to relevant stakeholders

[91] A major challenge the Project faced at the start was the difficulty to find the needed information on mercury management in the Russian Federation. As explained by Project stakeholders during the evaluation interviews, Russian monitoring and enforcement authorities not always had the full data registration complete and available. It turned out that complex procedures for getting agreement and access to industrial emissions/releases data made it sometimes impossible to use the data. Especially as long as there is no national legal instrument that makes registration and disclosure of the data an obligation. Given this situation Project partners produced the well referenced and documented report *Mercury in the environment and industry of the Russian Federation: collection and analysis of available information and data.* The report gives direct insight in the currently available data on mercury content in different products, as well as mercury consumption volume in industry and the metal inflow to the environment along with emissions, waste water and solid waste from various manufacturing processes.

Component 2, Output 1 Agreements with key industrial associations

[92] The Russian Chlor-alkali Association (RusChlor), the Mercury Waste Collection, Processing Association (ARSO) and the cement plant expert company GiproCement were identified as possible Project partners for collecting information on mercury releases and emissions from the chlor-alkali and cement sectors for the inventory. A cooperation agreement could be signed (on 28-10-2013) with RusChlor and (on 18-05-2015) with GiproCement, a research and development institute from the cement industry sector. For the Energy sector, the All-Russian Thermal Engineering Institute (VTI) was identified as the institute with the most comprehensive database containing data on power plants in Russia. The VTI database includes the for the inventory especially relevant information on coal use and abatement techniques. On 22-11-2013 VTI agreed to sign a cooperation agreement for information gathering for the inventory. Concerning the metallurgical sector, the Project identified the Unesco department of "Green chemistry for sustainable development" of the Dmitry Mendeleev University of Chemical Technology of Russia as a well-informed partner. On 21-07-2014 an agreement was concluded with the consultancy organisation PUR Ltd for information collection from the metallurgical sector for the inventory. PUR Ltd has direct ties with the Unesco department of "Green chemistry for sustainable development". Finally, the Scientific research centre "Synthesis" a former sub-organisation under the Ministry of Industry and Trade that now operates independently, was willing to share their expert knowledge on

mercury releases in vinyl chloride monomer (VCM) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) production and agreed on 28-10-2013 to cooperate with the Project. [24] All five agreements proved to be of great value for the necessary data gathering for the inventory. The partnering organisations actively facilitated dialogue with companies and assisted to get access to plants when needed for actual measurements.

Component 2, Output 2 Quantitative data on mercury sources and releases available: development of a detailed inventory for the Russian Federation

[93] Project partners worked on developing the mercury inventory from the start of the Project. Russian experts were trained by the Danish consulting company COWI in the application of the UN Environment Toolkit for mercury identification and applied for the national inventory 1) the translated Russian version of that toolkit, 2) general statistics, 3) publicly available databases and databases provided by partners. Data from 2012 were taken for this first inventory. A first draft was available in 2015 for discussion with Russian and international stakeholders and a further detailed draft was presented at the Final Project Steering Group Meeting in June 2017. The first national mercury inventory in the Russian Federation found that:

- In 2012, a total of fifteen hundred tonnes of mercury was released into the environment;
- The largest part of this mercury (747.4 tonnes) was released into soil;
- The smallest part (27.6 tonnes) was released into water;
- The mercury content in waste consisted of 402.3 tonnes;
- The mercury released in products was 230.3 tonnes;
- The emissions to air consisted of 91.8 tonnes.

Please note: the official national statistical data published for 2012 a higher value:

- The total emission to air was 2.993 tonnes; and
- Releases to water 0.01 tonnes.

Table 7: Overview of the 2012 mercury releases into the environment

Rounded total	**1,500**
Soil	747.4
Water	27.6
Waste	402.3
Products	230.3
Air	91.8

[94] There were divergent opinions about the inventory data amongst participants at the Final Steering Group Meeting. With the current lack of mercury monitoring and registration of releases and emissions, standardised amounts based on statistical data were used in the national inventory, following the guidance of the UN Environment Mercury Toolkit. Given these circumstances, debates on the actual correctness of amounts were to be expected. It will be important to find a resolution to the disagreements about the reported amounts of releases and emissions in the closing phase of the Project. Further work will be needed to finetune the

[24] Copies of all here mentioned agreements were shared by the executing agency with the evaluator.

estimation of actual amounts when more precise monitoring and registration techniques will become operational and used as a standard practice in Russia. Implementation of the first mercury inventory in line with the requirements of the UN Environment Mercury Toolkit in the Russian Federation was a significant first step towards such more precise quantification and a major achievement.

Component 3, Output 1 Report on national capacity for mercury analysis and overview of laboratories able to perform mercury analysis

[95] Based on the findings of the 2015 training for Russian laboratory experts and environmental scientists "Mercury in industrial emissions: Monitoring the contents of mercury in environmental objects" the Project drew the important conclusion that no capital investment would be needed to initiate national monitoring of mercury in Russia. In the Project report *Assessment of the potential for mercury monitoring in the Russian Federation, with the aim of developing a training and action plan on monitoring of mercury emissions in the Russian Federation, 2013 o*ver 30 laboratories were approached with questions on the availability of mercury measuring equipment and national certification for performing mercury analysis. 11 laboratories responded to questionnaires and were engaged in Project mercury tests and analysis. 12 laboratories participated in a training workshop to enhance the capacity for sampling and analysis of mercury emissions. Across the country a network of laboratories exists that is equipped with the needed modern measuring devices for environmental monitoring of mercury emissions and releases to the environment. However, the start of systematic national monitoring is expected to be dependent on ratification of the Minamata Convention by the Russian Federation. The report on the training contains a valuable analysis of the national capacity for setting up the required monitoring mechanism.

Component 3, Output 2 Available data of good quality on mercury in the environment, including biota and humans, and on mercury emissions from key sectors in the Russian Federation

[96] Monitoring of environmental and health impacts of mercury is crucial for understanding the trends in actual releases and emissions and past pollution impacts. The Project drew the important conclusion that there are numerous data on mercury in the environment and humans available in Russia. These data, however, are fragmentary, inconsistent and not enough based on measurements. The output report *Data collection on mercury content in the environment within the Russian Federation* highlights the importance of external sources (outside of Russia) next to hot-spots in the regions of non-ferrous metal industry. The report calls for a unified system of mercury monitoring in natural environments with a single corporate national analytical centre. The collected available data provide important baseline elements for the design of such a unified mechanism for systematic monitoring when this would become required under the Minamata Convention, upon ratification by the Russian Federation. The mechanism itself and subsequent adapted legislations should be developed after legislation.

Component 3, Output 3 Record of laboratories participating including mercury sampling, analysis and measurements

[97] This output is described under the Component 3, Output 1 report. The record lists the large number of 110 laboratories equipped to analyse mercury emissions. A successful rate of 30 of these laboratories agreed to participate in the Project activities on the analysis of mercury

content. All laboratories were included in a database of enterprises with experience and technical capabilities for mercury analyses in various media in the Russian Federation.

Component 4, Output 1 scheme of criteria for ranking of mercury sources developed and available through MNRE website

[98] For this output of the Component 4, report *Development of prioritisation criteria for mercury sources in the Russian Federation based on preliminary analysis of regulation gaps and preliminary inventory results* was developed. The report presents criteria that include manufacturing capacity, values of mercury gross releases, proximity of the facility to population centres, estimated time to end of life phase of the facility and above limit concentration in the released amounts. With the inventory further developed in a later stage, Project partners decided that for prioritisation it would be more effective to look at the results of the inventory itself: the combined releases and emissions from non-ferrous metal production sector count for up to 90 % of mercury pollution in the country. This led to the conclusion that if Russia would deal with the mercury pollution in the non-ferrous metal production, it essentially would solve its mercury problems. The criteria report was presented to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and at Project meetings, but not very actively communicated to the public at large.

Component 4, Output 2 report on management gaps identified including proposals to address these gaps

[99] For this output, the Project developed the report: *Comparative analysis of monitoring methodologies and methods of mercury control in the environment, products, raw materials and wastes, applicable in the Russian Federation, and world countries.* The report concludes that in general policy and regulatory mechanism available in the country for mercury monitoring and control are up-to-date and meet modern requirements. Maximum allowable mercury content standards are also in place. However, a unified guideline for the measurement of mercury in different objects is lacking. Unfortunately, also stringent enforcement is still lacking. Detailed recommendations for improvements are proposed. As an attractive example, the report highlights the Japanese experience in which inter-ministerial decision making, active cooperation with the business community and local administration, led to common understanding of the need for more stringent enforcement of mercury regulation and subsequent rapid introduction of new energy-and-resource-saving and waste-free technologies. With the analysis, the Project provides important information for policy makers and politicians to make a well-informed decision on Russian ratification of the Minamata Convention.

Component 4, Output 3 National plan developed for future monitoring of mercury levels in the environment including in humans, and for mercury emission that will confirm mercury reduction in the environment and in humans

[100] The report is only ready in a pre-draft version and needs further development.

Component 4, Output 4 Action plan for the Russian Federation on medium and long-term measures to decrease mercury emissions in prioritised sectors

[101] As Project stakeholders are not in the position to write a National Action Plan without the formal governmental decision being taken that such an action plan is needed, they have pragmatically decided to describe what would be required for such a plan based on the obligations that the country would have when it would ratify the Minamata Convention. The

report briefly lists all sections of the Convention the Russian Federation that would need to comply with after ratification. i.e. a ban on mercury mining, a ban on import and export of products that contain mercury, a ban to use mercury and mercury containing products in many important production processes, the obligation to lower emissions and releases and strictly monitor and report on actual mercury emissions and releases. There are many fields in Russian industrial processes and enforcement of pollution control legislation where important changes need to be made in case of ratification. The Project stakeholders acknowledge that their outline of important aspects of a national plan is not complete and advise decision makers to set up an expert group with representation from relevant governmental, business structures and NGOs that focuses on environmental protection and public health to be able to write a real national plan to decrease mercury emissions taking Russia's economic interest and the well-being of its citizens into account. The report provides important information for the Russian government for its decision on Russian Ratification of the Minamata Convention.

Component 5, Output 1 Draft report on good practices and lessons learned including recommendations on mercury management, inventory taking and initial action plan for Russian federation

[102] The draft report was not available yet during the evaluation.

Component 5, Output 2 Final lessons learned and recommendations requested in other Federal subjects and countries

[103] The final report was not available yet during the evaluation.

Component 5, Output 3 Suggestions for dissemination implemented and report disseminated through UN Environment' and MNREs website

[104] No output report was available yet during the evaluation.

The rating for Achievement of Outputs: Moderately Satisfactory MS – The Project has successfully delivered most activities and outputs planned in the Project document and is delivering these the remaining incomplete outputs in the closing phase of the Project.[25]

B. Achievement of direct outcomes

[105] The evaluation has assessed to what extent the delivery of outputs has produced short to medium-term changes (outcomes) in the way that the Russian Federation deals with the country's mercury issues. Based on the review of Project document and the interviews conducted, it is believed by the consultant that the direct outcomes include strengthening of

[25] Emails from the executing agency to the evaluator indicated completion of all Project outputs, in December 2017 when the draft of this report was being discussed between the evaluator and the Evaluation office.

the capacity of the Russian Federation for the identification of mercury sources, quantification, analysis and monitoring of mercury releases and identification of priority actions to address mercury issues under the Minamata Convention. Valuable experience has been gained with carrying out the national mercury inventory and a considerable knowledge base has been built by implementing the entire Project activities. Without the Project the Russian Federation would have been less well prepared for signing the Minamata Convention. The knowledge and experience can be used by relevant ministries, departments, local authorities, NGOs and the business sector, provided that the Minamata convention is ratified.

[106] Component 1 Information needs identified. With the UN Environment Toolkit translated (output 1) and the component 1 baseline report developed (output 2), important baseline information was made available to key stakeholders on the UN Environment approach to mercury inventory and information on mercury issues in the Russian Federation. The component 1 baseline information was important information for relevant experts in the field of mercury issues. Whether the information increased their capacity to deal with these issues is difficult to measure. Both Components 1 outputs were equally important to enable the start of the actual inventory. The driver: 'Improved understanding of the magnitude of mercury issues' enabled a better understanding on how to carry out the inventory. The assumption that there was a real 'Political interest to ratify the Minamata Convention' during the start-up phase of the Project was very much applicable and enabled the start-up of the Project.

[107] Component 2 Comprehensive information on mercury sources and releases (the inventories) and current control measures enables a better understanding of mercury risks to human health and the environment in Russia. Cooperation with polluting industries can be a difficult task. Enforcement of legislation needs to be improved. In view of this specific difficulty, the Project proved successfully to be able to overcome such difficulties. Thanks to good networking, Project stakeholders could conclude 5 valuable cooperation agreements for gathering necessary inventory information with companies and institutes from the different relevant industry sectors and from governmental background (output 1). With reference to the mercury inventory, different stakeholders that were interviewed and that responded to the survey characterised the activity as a major achievement that has enabled relevant stakeholders to better understand mercury risks to human health and the environment in Russia (output 2). The inventory has played a key role to support the Russian Federation in the negotiation process of the Minamata Convention. At the same time, it was mentioned by stakeholders that it remains of utmost importance to review and update disputed amounts and passages in the current report text. As the key activity of the Project, the inventory itself (output 2) was without doubt the most important Component 2 activity towards achieving long term impact. As mentioned in the evaluation interviews and stakeholder survey, the drivers 'First national inventory developed and used' and 'Positive Project experience' resulted in the positive idea among Project partners that important results were achieved. The assumptions that there were 'Sustained partnerships with laboratories and the industry sector' and 'Research institutes have the right expertise and willingness to participate' applied.

[108] Component 3 Improved knowledge on mercury in the environment and the capacity of Russian laboratories regarding mercury analysis and measurements guides the Russian Federation to develop targeted mercury reduction strategies. Based on the different trainings carried out and reports developed under Component 3 (output 3) Project stakeholders drew the important conclusion that in Russia a national capacity for mercury analysis is present, data on mercury in the environment are available and laboratories are able to analyse mercury contents (output 1). Within the framework of the Project activities, the somehow inconsistent

data have been analysed leading to improved knowledge on mercury in the environment and biota. The available capacity and knowledge needs now to be further developed in a coordinated way, based on a national unified approach. However, without ratification of the Minamata Convention there will be no legal requirement to analyse mercury and no incentive and even no direct and formal obligation to study and control mercury in the environment and in biota. Output 3 and its finding that a national capacity for mercury analysis is present in Russia is the most important result of component 3. It does provide the required improved knowledge on mercury in the environment and the capacity of laboratories regarding mercury. It shows that the baseline situation is relatively favourable for achieving the Project's long-term impact. The driver 'Positive project experience' reinforces the findings under this component and it motivated Project stakeholders, as reported in the interviews. The assumption, however, of 'Sustained partnerships with laboratories and the industry sector' does not apply, as there is no need for analyse mercury, without ratification of the Minamata Convention.

[109] Component 4 Enhanced understanding of priority sources for mercury management through the development of a national action plan, including identification of management gaps and monitoring needs. Although not all Component 4 outputs were ready during the evaluation, the important conclusion that the combined releases and emissions from non-ferrous metal production count for up to 90 % of mercury pollution in the country, makes clear where the priority is to address most of Russia's mercury problems. The combined output reports (output 2 and 4) show as well that a unified guideline for the measurement of mercury in different substances would be important and that this would need to be accompanied with the strict enforcement of existing legislation. The Draft national action plan (output 4) shows well what needs to be done when Russia ratifies the Minamata Convention and provides important information for political decision makers. Output 4 is certainly the most important output of this component. It moves the Project forwards towards the immediate outcome of enhanced understanding of priority sources for mercury management. However, because of the fact that the decision on ratification of the Minamata Convention is still open towards the Project end, it is unclear whether the driver 'strong government ownership' and the assumption 'Political interest to ratify Minamata' apply. The intermediate state 2 proposed by the evaluator in Section 4 Theory of change is not achieved towards the end of the Project.[26] At the same time, the additional assumptions proposed by the evaluator, that would illustrate institutionalisation of improved management of mercury sources, are only expected to be applicable after ratification of the Minamata Convention.[27] As decision making to ratify the Minamata Convention, is a decision making that is influenced by many external factors and circumstances the achievement of long term impact 'Protection of human health and the environment from toxic exposure to mercury in the Russian Federation' is very much influenced by those external factors and circumstances.

[110] Component 5 Better practices used in future projects. Most of the Component 5 output reports were not available yet during the evaluation. However, the long term impact from the

[26] Intermediate state 2 proposed by the evaluator: Russia ratifies the Minamata Convention, Russia starts implementing part of its main obligations under the Minamata Convention, Identification and Monitoring processes institutionalised, NAP and Priority actions endorsed by key stakeholders, Environmental Sound Management of mercury is part of national policy.

[27] Assumptions proposed by the evaluator relative to Intermediate state 2 and Long-Term Impact: Environmental impact penalties in place, Increased profit form hg alternatives, Political support and budgets available, Authorities approving and enforcing appropriate legislation for sound management of mercury

Project 'Experience and results from Russia's mercury inventory and environmental / human monitoring are replicated to other FSU Countries' is demonstrated by the fact that the Executing Agency SRI Atmosphere is actively involved with the currently starting Belarus and Kazakhstan Mercury Initial Assessments and it actively shared during project implementation experiences with colleagues from Moldova, that carried out their initial assessment in parallel with the Russian inventory, Initial talks on possible cooperation are being held with stakeholders from Armenia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, amongst others during the final Steering Group Meeting in Moscow, in June 2017. Finally, there was active cooperation with colleagues from Kyrgyzstan that carry out the Kyrgyz Primary Mercury Mine Project with UN Environment.

The rating for ACHIEVEMENT OF DIRECT OUTCOMES – SATISFACTORY (S)

C. Likelihood of impact

[111] As stated in the ToR for this evaluation (see Annex 1) a review from direct outcomes, via intermediate states to impact is undertaken to assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts that the Project has contributed to date and is likely to contribute in the future. As the achievement of direct outcomes and likelihood of impact are very much interlinked, the likelihood of impact has been already discussed in Section 5.5 B Achievement of direct outcomes above. To support this assessment UN Environment provides a decision tree to guide the assessment of likelihood of impact along a causal pathway (please see the summary assessment and scoring in table 8 below).

Table 8 Decision tree for rating the likelihood of impact

#	Answers to decision trees questions	Comments	Answers to decision trees questions	Comments
	Direct outcomes are not fully achieved at the time of evaluation.	As the evaluation is carried out before Project end not all outputs of component 4 and 5 have been delivered. This holds back the achievement of direct outcomes.	It is very likely that the direct outcomes of the pathway will be soon achieved.	Based on the latest planning updates it is very likely that the outputs will be delivered and subsequently the direct outcomes achieved before the end of 2017. [28]
2	The direct outcomes are designed to feed into a continuing process after funding.	The outcomes are very much dependent on Russian ratification of the Minamata Convention. They do however, feed into a continuing process, however, gained Project experience is actively used in the region of FSU countries		

[28] Updates on the planning were received by the evaluator from the Executing Agency, beginning October 2017. Emails from the executing agency to the evaluator indicated completion of all Project outputs, in December 2017, when the draft of this report was being discussed between the evaluator and the Evaluation office.

3	The assumptions to move to first intermediate state hold.	The important assumptions to move to the first intermediate state hold. There is a political interest in Minamata although ratification is unclear to date, a partnership with labs and industry is sustained. Research institutes have the right expertise and are willing to participate		
4	Drivers help to move to first intermediate state are in place and effectively promoted.	The developed inventory strengthened the baseline with more complete information on mercury. Criteria for better understanding of mercury priorities supported the development of a national plan for monitoring of mercury (although the document is currently a not fully completed draft version yet). Positive project experience and project ownership of the government supported the development of Proposals for a National Action Plan on mercury (although it will need a formal government decision to commission an official national action plan).		
5	It is likely that the first 'intermediate state' of the pathway will be achieved before Project end.	The national monitoring plan will be completed on short notice and submitted to the government for approval. The Proposals for a National Action Plan are ready and submitted to the government although it will need a formal government decision to commission an official national action plan). Instead of 5 specific priority sources categories, the inventory has found 1 specific priority category (non-ferrous metal production).		Please see note # 23.
6	The assumptions to move beyond the first intermediate	There is a political interest in Russia to ratify the Minamata Convention. However, to date it is not clear whether Russia will ratify or not.		

	state hold only partially.	There is a sustained partnership with laboratories and the industry sector. Research institutes have the right experience and are willing to participate. Without ratification environmental impact penalties on mercury releases will not be put in place and enforced, there will be no incentive to promote mercury alternatives. The same holds true for the political support to reserve budgets to further stimulate the development and use of mercury alternatives and the improvement and enforcement of appropriate legislation for sound management of mercury. Experience and results from Russia's mercury inventory and environmental / human monitoring are replicated to other FSU countries in the region		For a detailed description see above under Section 5.5 B Achievement of direct outcomes above.

[112] Further forward linkage towards Intermediate state 2 and Long-Term Impact is partly dependent on the political decision to ratify the Minamata Convention. As discussed in Section 4 Theory of Change, Minamata ratification is entirely outside the control of Project partners. However, as described in Section 5.5 Effectiveness, A Achievement of direct outcomes, long term impact in the field of experience exchange as result of the project is taking place; Experience and results from Russia's mercury inventory and environmental / human monitoring are replicated to other FSU countries in the region

[113] An important observation from both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Environment is that there is a strong political interest in the Russian Federation to ratify the Minamata Convention. However, under the current economic circumstances the country will not be able to meet its obligations under the convention without GEF Project funding. GEF Project funding will be key to mobilize national co-funding for Minamata activities. It is expected that without GEF funding the Russian Federation will most probably not ratify the Minamata Convention.

The rating for LIKELYHOOD OF IMPACT ACHIEVEMENT
A forward linkage towards intermediate state 2 exists and Long Term Impact, but is limited. The PATHWAY RATING for likelihood of impact achievement is considered to be Moderately Likely

5.6. Financial management

[114] According to the financial figures of Project reports provided to the evaluator the Project has been successful in its financial management of the available budget and co-financing resources. After the initial delays during the Project start-up phase the Project has made a strong progress towards the delivery of its outputs (see as well section 1. Introduction, Section 5.2 Quality of Project design, 5.2.A Overall Project design, Section 5.5 effectiveness and 5.5.A Achievement of outputs, Component 5, 'Output 4 Implement a monitoring and evaluation plan'). The Terminal Evaluation has found that the financial reporting was not always on time, especially in the first phase of the Project when some financial reports were missing. The lacking information from the missing financial reports was later provided in the financial reports that followed suit. This failure to fully comply with the reporting obligations is explained in the interviews as relating to the start-up problems that the Project experienced in its first phase and the lack of response to questions from UN Environment and the absence of a counterpart at UN Environment to discuss reporting questions due to personnel changes at the time (see as well Section 5.8 monitoring and reporting). Interviews with the current UN Environment Task Manager and Fund Managing Officer revealed that in general there were no principal issues with the reporting and that the financial management has been sound throughout the lifetime of the Project and appropriate communication was maintained between the Executing Agency and the Fund Managing Officer.

[115] Unfortunately, the Final Project expenditure by component[29], GEF funding and co-financing realised, and the Independent Financial Audit were not yet ready during the Terminal Evaluation. This made it difficult to assess the management of the realised co-financing. However, based on the reviewed reports and the interviews with the Project coordinator, the Task Manager and the Fund Managing Officer, the Evaluator believes that the Project has proven to be sound in its administrative management.

Table 9 Financial Management Table for Evaluation of Financial Performance

GEF PROJECTS		
Financial management components:	**Rating ***	**Evidence/ Comments**
1. Questions relating to financial management across the life of the project:		
Compliance with financial requirements and procedures of UN Environment and all funding partners (including procurement rules, financial reporting and audit reports etc.)	S	Signed PCA, project reports received
Timeliness of project financial reports and audits	S	Financial reports received
Quality of project financial reports and audits	S	Financial reports received
Contact/communication between the PM/TM & FMO**	S	Interviews
PM/TM & FMO responsiveness to addressing and resolving financial issues	S	Interviews
2. Questions relating to financial information provided during the evaluation:		

[29] The final data were received early January 2018 and added to Section 3.6 Project financing in the final version of this report. At the same time email messages from the Executing Agency to the evaluator indicated that the financial audit reports were concluded in December 2017.

Provision of key documents to the evaluator (based on the provision of A-F below)		S	There was a need to actively ask for status updates
A.	An up-to-date 'Co-financing and Project Cost's table	U	Not ready during evaluation
B.	A summary report on the project's annual financial expenditures during the life of the project.	U	Incomplete
C.	Financial documents from Mid-Term Evaluation/Review (where appropriate)	N/A	
D.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA) – where appropriate	S	Signed PCA
E.	Associated financial reports for legal agreements (where applicable)	N/A	
F.	Copies of any completed audits	N	Not completed
Demonstrated knowledge by the PM/TM & FMO of partner financial expenditure		S	Interviews
PM/TM & FMO responsiveness to financial requests during the evaluation process		S	Correspondence, Skype calls
Overall rating		**S**	

*Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).
**Portfolio Manager, Task Manager and Fund Managing Officer

5.7. Efficiency

[116] Cost-effectiveness and timely implementation is key for the quality of any project implementation. As mentioned above the Project was originally planned for a 24-month implementation period and subsequently extended in two phases to 48 months. An important comment on the original Project design is that planning the implementation of this Project in only two years was most probably too ambitious. The tight planning of the Project has caused delays right from the start. The two approved no-cost extensions (extension 1 in April 2013 and extension 2 in 2015[30]) have solved this issue well. After initial delayed implementation and underspending, implementation caught up at the beginning of 2016 with more than half of the available budget spent.

[117] According to interviews carried out for this Terminal Evaluation delays have been caused by initial difficulties in obtaining data from industrial sectors needed for the inventory, initial difficulties in involving relevant stakeholders, difficulties caused by UN Environments transfer to the new Umoja administrative system in 2015 and periodically limited availability of UN Environment's Project and financial management counterparts. This limited availability is understood to be caused by personnel changes at UN Environment during the first two years of the Project's implementation. However, with the arrival of the new management team within UN Environment, timely guidance became available for the Project and an effective "tracking tool" to monitor Project progress was introduced. The tool is seen by the Executing Agency as an improvement to the tools that were originally planned for use in the Project document. (see as well: Section 5.5 Effectiveness, A Achievement of outputs, Component 5, Output 4 Implement a monitoring and evaluation plan).

[30] The second extension approval is not recorded in the documents made available to the evaluator. The request for extension is recorded in a letter to UN Environment dated 31 May 2015.

[118] As described in Section 3.1 Context, the Project was designed to efficiently use the results of the combined mercury studies and activities carried out earlier in the Russian Federation by Russian and International organisations and partnerships. The Project cooperated actively with existing Russian institutions, preparing during the implementation phase of the Project to sign the Minamata Convention. As standard operating procedure for minimizing its environmental footprint, the Project implemented efficiency measures by combining necessary Project travel for different activities to avoid excessive travel, planning steering committee and Project meetings "back to back" with the same purpose to avoid extra travel and by online publishing[31] of key Project documents to avoid needless printing.

[119] At the Final Steering Group Meeting in Moscow the Project showed to have good potential for a catalytic effect through the invitation of key stakeholders from other former Soviet countries. The capacity built in the Russian Federation can be used to foster replication of project results in other former Soviet countries interested to work with their Russian colleagues on Minamata Initial Assessments.

[120] The Executing Agency's cooperation with the environmental NGO Eco-Accord proved to be very successful. Eco-Accord had hands-on experience in the implementation of mercury projects and was able to contribute well organised stakeholder engagement, awareness raising and communication activities to the Project. Partnering with Eco-Accord resulted in time and funds related efficiencies for the Project.

The rating for EFFICIENCY MODERATLY SATISFACTORY (MS)

5.8. Monitoring and reporting

A. Monitoring design and budgeting

[121] The Terminal Evaluation has assessed the monitoring tools provided by the Project document to assure the overseeing of Project implementation, including half year reports, yearly Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), financial quarterly expenditure reports, Work Plan, Inception Workshop, National Coordination Group Meetings, Steering Group Meetings and Mid-term Review. In the Project design, adequate planned activities and resources were foreseen for mid-term and terminal evaluation. A monitoring plan to track progress against SMART indicators towards achievement of the Project outputs and direct outcomes was part of the Project document. No budgeted plan for data collection in connection with monitoring was foreseen in the Project. Monitoring was assumed to be carried out as part of the day to day Project management by the Executing Agency. Gender and low represented groups were mentioned in the Project document. These groups were, hover, not included in the monitoring tools.

The rating for Monitoring design and budgeting: Satisfactory (MS)

[31] Via the Project website https://www.mercury2017.ru/

B. Monitoring implementation

[122] During the interviews with the Executing Agency the evaluator learned that the Project Supervision Plan provided in the Project Document for monitoring purposes, was not much used during Project implementation. This monitoring and evaluation tool for supervision was designed to be used by the Executing Agency's coordination team. The tool was used, although not very actively. However, after an initial period of limited guidance and management from the side of UN Environment, the newly appointed management provided from 2015 on a more effective milestone tracking tool to monitor Project progress. This tool was used actively. The lack of management and guiding from the side of UN Environment at the beginning of the Project seems to have negatively impacted on the initial phase of the Project when a lot of start-up problems and delays occurred.

[123] The PIRs and the Milestone tracking tool show that delays and implementation issues were highlighted on a timely basis in order to deal with implementation risks. Ultimately, the problems caused by delays in the first phase of the Project implementation and the tight timeframe for the Project were solved by the two subsequent Project extensions.

[124] The Mid-term Review was carried out by means of a short Project review in a mission report of the Task Manager in April 2016. It is the opinion of the evaluator that the review is well based on information provided by a variety of stakeholders involved with the Project (e.g. MNRE deputy Director Vladimir Ivlev, COWI mercury expert Jakob Maag, participants of Peer review and result assessment meeting (18 April 2016), participants of Steering Group Meeting (19 April 2016)) and provides an assessment of the Project results thus far and the needed recommendation to the executing agency to prepare a request for the second Project extension.

The rating for Monitoring implementation: Satisfactory (S)

C. Project reporting

[125] The Terminal Evaluation has found that in the initial stage of the Project a number of progress reports were missing and some of the quarterly financial reports were not delivered. The lacking information from the missing narrative and financial reports was later provided with the financial, progress reports and PIRs that followed suit. This failure to fully comply with the reporting obligations is explained in the interviews as relating to the start-up problems that the Project experienced in its first phase and the lack of timely response to questions from UN Environment due to personnel changes at the time (see Section 5.6 Financial Management). Other reporting documents that contain information, important for monitoring (the Terminal Report, the Final Project expenditure by component, GEF funding and co-financing realised and the Independent Financial Audit) were not yet ready during the Terminal Evaluation.

The rating for Project reporting: Satisfactory (S)

The rating for Monitoring and Reporting: Satisfactory (S)

The Project's documentation, analysis and tracking of risks are well implemented and clearly identified throughout the Project PIR's the Milestone tracking tool and other relevant Project reports and meetings.

5.9. Sustainability

[126] In line with the ToR for this Terminal Evaluation the following aspects of Project sustainability are addressed in the Terminal Evaluation: Socio-political sustainability, Financial sustainability and Institutional sustainability.

A. Socio-political sustainability

[127] The most important sustainability question in regard to the Project is determined by socio-political aspects. As mentioned in different sections of this report the question whether the Russian Federation is going to ratify the Minamata Convention or not, can have the potential to limit the achievement of the Project's direct outcomes and its final impact. This decision cannot be influenced in any way by Project stakeholders. Ratification of the Minamata Convention very much depends on Russian financial and political decision making. It is a political decision and technical-economic development question beyond the control of the Project. There is an active interest among responsible ministerial stakeholders to take the Project achievement forwards, but final decision making is carried out on the political level.

The rating for Socio-political sustainability: Moderately Unlikely (MU)

B. Financial sustainability

[128] The financial and institutional sustainability of the Project cannot be separated from socio-political and institutional sustainability. The political decision whether to ratify the Minamata Convention or not is the central factor, determining the Projects sustainability. If this decision will be taken, the obligations under the convention will be taken into account and implemented by all relevant institutions. In turn, government will make budgets available for implementation of the necessary policy and regulatory framework and the business sector will have to comply with the new rules and implement the necessary production changes. The most Project stakeholders could do to influence the Project's sustainability is making sure that the Project is carried out to the highest possible standards and produces high quality outputs that are well disseminated amongst Project stakeholders; thus, enabling political decision makers to take well informed decisions to adopt policies and legislation for sound management of mercury in the Russian Federation.

The rating for Financial sustainability: Moderately Unlikely (MU)

C. Institutional sustainability

[129] The institutional sustainability of the Project is directly dependent on a political decision to ratify the Minamata Convention. As the current policy and regulatory framework in Russia does not enforce strict prevention and control of mercury, the active motivation is lacking in

the business sector to become active in this field. Without ratification environmental sound management of mercury will not become part of the national policy in the Russian Federation.

The rating for Institutional sustainability: Moderately Unlikely (MU)

[130] Based on a review of all Project reports and based on the interviews held in Moscow in June 2017, the evaluator believes Project stakeholders did to a satisfactory level what they could to ensure the Project's sustainability. A critical note, however, should be made on the quality of the communication and dissemination of Project results. The original Project document contained an annex on Public Awareness, communication and mainstreaming. These important activities, however, were not included in detail in the Project activities and outputs. As a result, communication and dissemination of Project results could have received a higher level of attention during the implementation of the Project. In this respect, the cooperation with the NGO Partner Eco-Accord compensated well for the Project's lack of planned communication and dissemination activities. Eco-Accord actively communicated the Project results and worked on awareness raising in their mercury activities reported as co-financing to the Project.[32]

[131] Predicting future Russian political decision making is a difficult task. Likewise, it is very difficult to assess the likeliness of the Project's sustainability. Based on the interviews with Project stakeholders the evaluator assesses the sustainability of the Project as Moderately Unlikely.

The rating for Sustainability rating: Moderately Unlikely (MU)

Project stakeholders to a Satisfactory level did what they could to ensure the Project's sustainability.

[32] Strengthening partnerships on chemicals under SAICM in the EECCA, Jan 2014 – Jan 2016, financed by Global Green Grants.

6. Factors and processes affecting Project performance

6.1. Preparation and readiness

[132] With regard to the inclusion of prior mercury studies and activities in Russia the Project was well prepared. As described under 'Section 3.1 Context', there was a series of earlier national and international projects that focused on the issue of mercury pollution in the Russian Federation and so to speak paved the way for carrying out a first national mercury inventory in the country. The Project design carefully considered the outcomes and lessons learned from the earlier implemented mercury projects in the Russian Federation. It was developed in close coordination with the international effort to prepare for an international legally binding convention, later called the Minamata Convention.

[133] Concerning the Project preparation and readiness at managerial level, the situation was different. Right from the start, it was clear that the planned timeline for Project implementation was too short and problems occurred in the identification of and communication with relevant stakeholders (especially from the industry sector). At the same time, the transfer of funds from UN Environment to the executing agency turned out to be more challenging than anticipated. This experience confirms the fact that projects like the one at hand need more time for implementation, especially to deal with mentioned practical managerial difficulties.

The rating for Preparation and readiness: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

6.2. Quality of Project management and supervision

[134] As mentioned under sections '5.6 Financial management' and '5.8 Monitoring and reporting', the Project management performance of the Executing Agency and the backstopping and supervision provided by UN Environment was not of the needed quality during the first phase of the Project implementation. Based on the interviews it is understood by the evaluator that at a certain point there was very little guidance for the implementation of the Project from the side of UN Environment. Although it is practically understandable that personnel changes can cause difficult situations for implementing agencies, it is important to avoid such situations and guarantee ongoing support and direction to Project implementation. Project reports and the interviews with Project stakeholders confirm a strong improvement of Project management in the second phase of the Project in 2015 when the new UN Environment management started and all management and supervision problems both on the side of the Implementing Agency and of the Executing Agency were gradually solved. As mentioned in other sections, extending the Project solved a lot of the implementation problems caused by a too-short Project timeframe.

The rating for Quality of Project management and supervision: Satisfactory (S)

6.3. Stakeholder participation and cooperation

[135] Cooperation with ministerial stakeholders at the level of Project meetings where specific results were discussed went well. Although through the interviews held and the survey's received back from Project stakeholders, it became clear that creating real inter-ministerial

Project ownership was difficult to realise. Representatives of non-MNRE ministries typically replied that they evaluated the Project and its results as important and well implemented, but that their ministry's involvement with the Project was limited to Project meetings where results were presented and discussed. However, this difficulty to really involve a larger group of relevant stakeholders from the different other ministries that do not implement a project themselves, seems to be a practical reality that is experienced in many international projects and in many countries.

[136] As mentioned under sections '3.2 Objectives and components', '5.2. Quality of Project design' and '5.5 Effectiveness', the Terminal Evaluation found that the stakeholder analysis and the description of the different stakeholders was not fully complete at Project design stage. Vulnerable groups are mentioned in different sections in the Project document and the issue of gender equity is highlighted. These groups are, however, not separately identified in the stakeholder analysis. Moreover, no activities for awareness raising and the engagement with these stakeholders are foreseen in the Project activities described in the Project document. Fortunately, this does not mean that the actual evaluation of stakeholder participation and cooperation for the Project should be negative. The Eco-Accord NGO activities counted as in-kind contribution to the Project that are documented in the final Project publication show very well carried out practices of stakeholder participation in which vulnerable groups are included in identifying mercury problems throughout the country.[33]

The rating for Quality of Stakeholder participation and cooperation Satisfactory (S)

6.4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

[137] Gender equity is mentioned at different places in the Project document as a Project focus. Human rights issues are not separately identified in the Project document. Although the evaluation has not found any evidence of the Project failing to respond well to gender equity and human rights issues, no special Project policy has been made at the start of the Project to strengthen its positive and pro-active responsiveness to human rights and gender equity. In the interviews on these subjects the executing agency in hindsight expressed that they would have been interested in receiving some more guidance here from UN Environment. The Project partner Eco-Accord, however, does have a policy on gender equity, human rights and specific vulnerabilities of women and children and women's roles in environmental protection. The policy is implemented in all Eco-Accord activities, including the in-kind contribution activities to this Project.[34] From the interviews, the evaluator learned that representatives from indigenous people organisations took part in the Eco-Accord activities.

The rating for Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

6.5. Country ownership and driven-ness

[138] As mentioned in 'Section 3.1 Context', there was a strong interest in the preparation phase of the Project and during implementation in the Russia Federation to mitigate mercury

[33] Mercury pollution in Russia: problems and recommendations. For in-kind contribution project: see footnote 20.
[34] Strengthening partnerships on chemicals under SAICM in the EECCA, Jan 2014 – Jan 2016, financed by Global Green Grants.

pollution and lower the risks for human health and the environment from mercury used in different sectors of society. Russia actively prepared to sign the legal binding mercury instrument that later was called the Minamata Convention. The Project played an instrumental role in Russia's preparation for signing the Convention and as a result there was a strong ownership especially from MNRE. The further development of Russia's ownership of mercury issues and drivenness of to lower environmental and health risks from mercury strongly depends on the political decision whether to ratify the Minamata Convention.

The rating for Country ownership and driven-ness: Satisfactory (S)

6.6. Communication and public awareness

[139] Communication of learning and experience sharing between Project partners and interested groups arising from the Project during its lifetime was actively pursued by Project partners through different Project meetings and Project outputs. Respondents to the survey and stakeholders interviewed felt that the Project actively communicated with the relevant stakeholders at Project and Steering Group meetings. Especially the communication to guarantee the quality of the Project output publications and the inventory itself through peer reviewing is important in this respect. A special Peer review and result assessment meeting was organised in April 2016. Project publications and the inventory report itself were made public through the Project website[35] and at the Final Steering Group Meeting the stakeholders were offered the possibility to comment on the Project results. The decision to invite colleagues from Former Soviet Union countries to the final Steering Committee meeting was a very good idea for sharing experiences to a regional audience of stakeholders and for highlighting the Project results.

[140] The original Project design highlighted the importance of public awareness to influence the attitude on mercury issues among wider stakeholder groups and civil society at large. It did, however, not include specific activities in this field. However, the Eco-Accord NGO activities counted as in-kind contribution to the Project, and documented in the final Project publication, show well carried out practices of stakeholder participation and awareness raising in which larger audiences are included in identifying mercury problems throughout the country. Eco-Accord actively communicated the Project results in regional meetings with Russian NGOs, with members of the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) and through environmental e-mail lists[36], its own website[37] and Russian environmental news websites.[38] Together with the Executing Agency SRI Atmosphere a special workshop was organized in March 2017 to discuss the preliminary results with NGOs and other relevant stakeholders from Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries. It is important to mention that there were divergent views among Project stakeholders on the quality of the communication and public awareness activities of Eco-Accord. As is the case in many other countries, NGO activities were at least at one instance in the evaluation critically reviewed by Russian Project stakeholders as biased and counterproductive.

The rating for Communication and public awareness: **Satisfactory (S)**

[35] https://www.mercury2017.ru/
[36] http://mailchi.mp/a95e58208f67/ipen-global-newsletter-mercury-94023
[37] http://www.ecoaccord.org and http://www.ecoaccord.org/pop/Rtutnoe_zagryaznenie_English_25-08.pdf
[38] http://ecoznay.ru/publ/ehkologicheskij_praktikum/rtutnoe_zagrjaznenie_rossii/11-1-0-991

7. Conclusions and recommendations

7.1. Conclusions

[141] Despite a delayed start and a series start-up problem the Project has played a key role to support the Russian Federation in the negotiation process of the Minamata Convention. Especially around the Project start the Project initiative was well chosen and highly relevant in the external context. As Russia is globally one of the most important mercury polluting countries, significant reductions of Russian mercury releases would contribute to important reductions worldwide. The inventory pointed out that up to 90 % of the mercury releases stem from the non-ferrous metal industry. Carrying out the first mercury inventory in Russia was therefore of key importance. There were divergent opinions about the inventory data among participants at the final steering group meeting of the Project. The Project has, however established a mechanism for the peer review of the inventory and other Project outputs and the debated amounts of releases and emissions will be further detailed and corrected before the Project's official closure in December 2017.

[142] The original Project design was well developed with an elaborated logical framework that contributed towards the Project objective in both content and process. The stakeholder analysis of the Project document, however, was not very detailed and the different roles foreseen for the different stakeholders failed to connect in a practical way to the planned activities and deliverable outputs. The same holds true for the Projects communication and awareness raising strategy. It was not well reflected in the planned activities and outputs. The original time planning for the Project was not realistic. International experience with similar Projects should have been considered to allow time for solving typical Project hurdles and start-up problems.

[143] In practise the Project cooperated during its implementation well with the key stakeholders from government, the business sector and academia. The above-mentioned lack of a strategy for communication and involvement with more distant stakeholders like groups at risk, woman groups, ethnic minorities and the public at large was well compensated for by active cooperation with the NGO Eco-Accord, that is very active in this field.

[144] Because of the not realistic time planning, serious delays in the delivery of outputs and delivery of direct outcomes have occurred that finally could only be solved by two non-cost extensions. Notwithstanding the delays, the Project was managed well both in terms of technical quality of the implemented activities and administrative financial reporting. Mercury releases have been identified using the international best practice approach of UN Environment. The results enable national stakeholders to better understand mercury risks for human health and the environment in the Russian Federation. Based on the Project experience in Russia regional colleagues in Former Soviet Countries are assisted in carrying out the Minamata Initial Assessments and other relevant mercury projects.

[141] However important the Project might have been in Russia's negotiation towards signing the Minamata Convention, the ultimate decision whether the country will finally ratify the convention is a political decision beyond control of the Project. The possibilities to advocate the importance to join the convention, however, could have been used better when the Project would have more actively shared its results with broader stakeholder groups and the public at large. A well implemented communication strategy could have strengthened the intended impact of the Project.

[145] Interviewed stakeholders assess that under the current economic circumstances the Russian Federation will not be able to meet its obligations under the Minamata Convention without GEF Project funding. GEF Project funding would enable the necessary mobilisation of national co-funding for Minamata activities. Without GEF funding the Russian Federation will most probably not ratify the Minamata Convention.

[146] In addition to the above conclusions this Terminal Evaluation of the Project is required to especially find answers to the following set of key strategic questions:

A. UNEP published in 2008 the Global Atmospheric Mercury Assessment which indicates that in the Russian Federation, nearly all of the ten categories and 44 sub-categories indicated in the Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases of UNEP are present. **To what extent has the project succeeded in providing best environmental practice and guidelines for control of mercury releases in the Russian Federation?**

B. In 2010 the Russian based NGO Eco-Accord Centre, at the request of the European Environmental Bureau and under the Zero Mercury Campaign, developed an assessment of mercury emission sources in Russia. The study suggests that the energy sector has the largest contribution of mercury releases to air amounting to an estimated 39.0 tons/year in 2003. **To what extent and with what success did the project engage relevant sector players in targeted mercury reduction strategies?**

C. The project baseline indicated that there was no national consolidated data on mercury-containing products, use consumption and releases from each source and there was a lack of understanding of the sources of mercury releases and their consequences on human health and the environment. **What is the likelihood that the National Action Plan developed through the project will succeed in bridging the gap between Russia and developed countries in its overall prevention and control of mercury pollution? What are the key factors which need to be taken into account in achieving the desired impact?**

D. The Russian Federation has ratified the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions, demonstrating its high national commitment to sound management of chemicals. **What lessons from The Russian Federation can be learned with regard to strategies for strengthening national capacity in mercury management and the development of national level priority actions that address global conventions including Minamata Convention on Mercury?**

[147] As an answer to **Question A** the Terminal Evaluation has found that the Project has succeeded well in providing the best environmental practices and guidelines for control of mercury releases in the Russian Federation. In the Mid-term review of the Project the international mercury expert Jakob Maag even characterizes the Project as the best implementation of the MIA toolkit to date. An important factor in achieving this result was the well-organised openness to and cooperation with key Project stakeholders and application of the specially developed Project peer review mechanism. Project results can help to develop effective approaches to solving severe environmental problems in the Russian Federation, the region of Former Soviet Countries and in other regions.

[148] Although it can be difficult to cooperate with representatives of polluting industries in Russia, the evaluator found as an answer to **Question B** that the Project was successful in the engagement with industrial associations, companies and governmental institutes for targeted information collection, necessary for the inventory. Finally, 5 agreements could be signed with relevant organisations. However, as the current policy and regulatory framework in Russia does not enforce strict prevention and control of mercury, the active motivation is lacking in the business sector to become active in this field (see as well Section '5.5. Effectiveness', A. Achievement of outputs, Component 2, Output 1 Agreements with key industrial associations and Section 5.9 Sustainability).

[149] As the Project stakeholders are not in a position to commission a Mercury National Action Plan, the National Action Plan developed through the Project is presented as a draft action plan to highlight what actions Russia would have to undertake once it would ratify the Minamata Convention. As an answer to **Question C** the evaluator found that the Project has provided through its first national inventory a better understanding of mercury pollution in the Russian Federation. In order to achieve the desired Project impact and bridge the gap between Russia and developed countries in its overall prevention and control of mercury pollution, it is key that the country ratifies the Minamata Convention and an official National Action Plan can be commissioned.

[150] As national environment authorities around the world must deal with national environmental problems that often have a global dimension, it is key that they do cooperate with international colleagues. Global conventions are an excellent form of a coordinated approach to such global problems. As an answer to **Question C** the evaluator would like to stress the importance to facilitate this international cooperation and experience exchange when looking for strategies for strengthening national capacities in mercury management and development of national priority action that addresses global conventions including the Minamata Convention on mercury.

[151] International cooperation to strengthen the national capacity for sound management of chemicals is of utmost importance for Russia. Continuation of GEF funding is seen by Project stakeholders as an important mechanism to enable this cooperation.

Table 10: Summary table of evaluation rating

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
A. Strategic relevance	The Project positioned its activities very well in line with prior and current national, regional and international mercury initiatives and the international development of the Minamata Convention. (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.1 Strategic Relevance)	HS*
Global, national and regional relevance	The evaluation has found that the Project had a strong global, national and regional relevance (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.1 Strategic Relevance)	HS
UN Environment mandate and policies	The evaluation has found that was in line with UN Environment mandate and policies. Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.1 Strategic Relevance)	HS
GEF Focal area strategy framework	The evaluation has found that the project is in line with GEF Focal Area Strategy: CHEM 3: Pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction	HS
Complementary with existing interventions	The evaluation has found that the Project was complementary with prior and current mercury interventions. (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.1 Strategic Relevance)	HS
B. Quality of Project design	The Project has a comprehensive, coherent logical framework that contributes towards the Project objective in both content and process. Not all stakeholders are properly identified and awareness raising and communication with stakeholders could have been more integrated in the planned Project activities. The original planned timeframe was probably too short. (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.2 Quality of Project design)	S
C. Nature of the External Context	The nature of the external context was very favourable for the context. Future development of that external context is dependent on political decision making and beyond control of Project stakeholders (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.4 Nature of external context)	F
D. Effectiveness	The evaluation has found that the Project was effective in producing programmed outputs and immediate outcomes faithful to the Project description. (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.5 Effectiveness)	S
Achievement of outputs	The Project has (with several delays) produced the programmed outputs. Not all outputs are fully finished at the time of evaluation. However, there is evidence that they will finalised before Project end. (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.5 Effectiveness, 5.5.A Achievement of outputs)	MS
Achievement of direct outcomes	The Project has successfully produced the immediate outcomes faithful to the Project description. (Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.5 Effectiveness, 5.5.B Achievement of direct outcomes)	S
Likelihood of impact	The Project's impact will strongly depend on the political decision whether the Russian Federation will ratify the convention. (Section 5 Evaluation findings, D. Effectiveness, Likelihood of impact)	ML***
E. Financial management	Overall the evaluation has found that the Project was financially well managed. (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.6. Financial management)	S

Compliance with financial requirements and procedures of UN Environment	The evaluation has found that the Project complied with UN Environment financial requirements and procedures (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.6. Financial management)	S
Timeliness of project financial reports and audits	The evaluation has found that the financial reporting was not always on time, but the required information was provided. (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.6. Financial management)	S
Quality of project financial reports and audits	The evaluation has found that the Project financial reports were of good quality. Audit reports were not ready when the evaluation was carried out. (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.6. Financial management)	S
Contact/communication between the PM/TM & FMO	The evaluation has found that appropriate communication was maintained between PM/TM & FMO. (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.6. Financial management)	S
PM/TM & FMO responsiveness to addressing and resolving financial issues	During the start-up of the Project there was a lack of responsiveness due to personnel changes, but things improved very much in the second half of the Project. (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.6. Financial management)	S
F. Efficiency	The Project has demonstrated well designed Efficiency in making use of and following up on the combined existing national and international mercury initiatives. (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.7 Efficiency)	MS
G. Monitoring and reporting	On Monitoring and reporting the evaluation has found that initially the Project did not fully comply with UN Environment regulations. In the second phase of the Project monitoring and reporting improved as a result of better guidance from UN Environment (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.8 Monitoring and reporting)	S
Monitoring design and budgeting	The evaluation has found that a well elaborated monitor plan including the needed budget was in place, (5.8 Monitoring and reporting)	MS
Monitoring implementation	The evaluation has found that monitoring was carried out well. The supervision tool from the Project design that did not work well was replaced by the introduction of a new milestone tracking tool that worked much better (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.8 Monitoring and reporting)	S
Project reporting	There were delays in the reporting especially in the start-up phase of the project. Reporting was improved after the two subsequent Project extensions (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.8 Monitoring and reporting)	S
H. Sustainability	The efforts of Project stakeholders to secure Project sustainability are regarded by the evaluator as satisfactory. The sustainability is, however, dependent on political decision making and regarded as moderately unlikely (MU) (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.9 Sustainability)	MU**
Socio-political sustainability	The evaluation found that the sustainability of the Project is very much dependent from socio-political circumstances. If no political decision will be taken to ratify Minamata there will be little sustainability for the project (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.9 Sustainability)	MU
Financial sustainability	Without ratification, no budgets will become available. (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.9 Sustainability)	MU

Institutional sustainability	Without ratification environmental sound management of mercury will not become part of the national policy in the Russian Federation (Section 5 Evaluation findings 5.9 Sustainability)	MU
I. Factors affecting performance	The evaluation has found that the Project dealt in a satisfactory way with factors affecting its performance (Section 6. Factors affecting performance)	S
Preparation and readiness	The Project design carefully considered the outcomes and lessons learned from the earlier implemented mercury projects in the Russian Federation. At the same time, there were start-up problems that caused delays in the first phase of the Project. (Section 6.1 Preparation and readiness)	MS
Quality of Project management and supervision	The quality of Project management and supervision was not very well in the starting phase of the Project. Processes improved considerably during the second half of the Project. (Section 6.2 Quality of Project management and supervision)	S
Quality of Stakeholder participation and cooperation	Stakeholder participation and cooperation with key stakeholders was well organized in Project activities. Stakeholder participation with the wider public and vulnerable groups, were mentioned in the original Project design but not well included in the planned Project activities. This was compensated by co-funding activities of the Project partner showing well elaborated stakeholder participation and cooperation. (Section 6.3 Quality of Stakeholder participation and cooperation)	S
Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	Gender equity is mentioned at different places in the Project document as a Project focus. Human rights issues are not separately identified in the Project document. The Project partner Eco-Accord, however, does have a policy on gender equity, human rights and specific vulnerabilities of women and children and women's roles in environmental protection. The policy is implemented in all Eco-Accord activities, including the in-kind contribution activities to this Project. (Section 6.4 Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity)	MS
Country ownership and driveness	Russia actively prepared to sign the legal binding mercury instrument that later was called the Minamata Convention. Further development of country ownership for solving mercury issues depends now on political decision making. (Section 6.5 Country ownership and drivenness)	S
Communication and public awareness	Communication with key Project stakeholders was well organised. Public awareness raising and communication with the public at large was not included in the Project design. Eco-Accord was very active in this field and organised in cooperation with STI atmosphere many important activities including involvement of experts and NGOs from the EECCA region. (Section 6.6 Communication and public awareness)	S
Overall Project rating	**Satisfactory**	**S**

*Satisfactoriness: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). **Sustainability, ***Likelihood of impact: Highly Likely (HL); Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U); Highly Unlikely (HU).

7.2. Lessons learned

[152] The most important lessons that are discussed throughout this Terminal Evaluation are shortly summarised in the section below. Unfortunately, the Output 5 Lessons learned report was not ready yet when the evaluation was carried out. The findings of the Lessons learned report could have been used for comparison.

Lesson 1. Work with a realistic timeframe for the implementation of Project activities. Rather be pessimistic than optimistic in the assessment of the time needed for implementation. Especially practical and administrative procedures tend to take more time than expected

[153] The evaluation found that the original time frame for the implementation of Project activities was very optimistic. Starting up international projects takes usually time. Much time is needed to overcome usual administrative problems of international cooperation and specific country difficulties to start-up Project activities. Especially in the first phase of the Project it is important that the implementing agency assigns a lot of time to make sure that the necessary requirements for reporting and funds transfer are clear and that the application of reporting rules functions as required. With this mechanism in place further challenges are easier to deal with. In the first phase of this Project the required guidance seemed not to be fully available. (See as well Sections 5.2 Quality of Project design and 5.7 Efficiency.)

Lesson 2. Include stakeholder engagement, awareness raising and communication with all identified stakeholders into the planned Project activities and make sure to include all groups relevant for UN Environment and GEF policies in the Project document's stakeholder analysis, to avoid that their importance is forgotten during project implementation

[154] The evaluation found that a large group of relevant stakeholders has been mentioned in the original Project document. In general, cooperation with key stakeholders was carried out well. The evaluation has found, however, that the identification of groups relevant to UN Environment and GEF policies in the stakeholder analysis of the Project document was incomplete. As the Project activities were primarily focusing on technical aspects of mercury pollution, communication with the wider public got less attention in the implementation of the originally planned Project activities. The same holds true for awareness-raising amongst vulnerable groups including women, children and indigenous peoples. Including stakeholder engagement awareness raising and communication into the Project design of the activities could have given the activities a more prominent role. This prominence would have enabled stronger advocacy of the Project goals among Russian policy and decision makers and the public at large.

[155] The evaluation found that the Executing Agency's cooperation with the environmental NGO Eco-Accord proved to be very successful. Eco-Accord had hands-on experience in the implementation of mercury projects and was able to contribute well organised stakeholder engagement, awareness raising and communication activities to the Project. (See as well Sections 3.3 Stakeholders, 5.2 Quality of Project design, 5.5 B Achievement of direct outcomes, Component 5 Better practices used in future projects, 6.3 Stakeholder participation and cooperation and 6.6 Communication and public awareness.)

Lesson 3. Make active use of a Peer review mechanism in mercury national inventories and give strong attention to the dissemination all output publications in order to achieve a maximum of quality assurance and exchange with relevant experts

[156] **The evaluation found that the Project adequately aimed at guaranteeing the quality of output reports via the development of a Project peer review mechanism. As commonly practiced in academia, it is safe to say that there are no better critics than colleagues working in the same field of expertise. A special peer review validation meeting and the publication of Project output reports on the Project website turned out to be a good method to improve the quality of the draft inventory results and other Project output reports. It is, however, important to make sure that all Project reports are available from the website and that a strong communication strategy makes sure that their publication is well known with the relevant audiences. (See as well Sections 5.5.A. Achievement of outputs, 5.8 Monitoring and reporting, 6.6 Communication and public awareness and 7.1 Conclusions.)**

Lesson 4. Political decision making whether to ratify the Minamata Convention or not is beyond the control of Project Stakeholders. Concentrate on the facilitation of well-informed decision making and actively communicate the Project findings

[157] **The evaluation found that the political interest whether to ratify the Minamata Convention or not is beyond the control of Project stakeholders. This external context, however, will have a strong influence on the Project's long-term impact. It is important to highlight that all Project stakeholders could do was to make sure that politicians will be able to make a well-informed decision. In hindsight, it is clear that the Project very much supported the Russian Federation during the negotiation process to sign the Minamata Convention. (See as well Sections 4 Theory of Change, 5.4 Nature of external context, 5.5.C. Likelihood of impact, 6.5 Country ownership and driven-ness, 6.6 Communication and public awareness and A. Conclusions.)**

Lesson 5. There is a strong interest to develop other national mercury inventories in the region on pre-existing expert networks among FSU countries because of a shared past. It would be very efficient to capitalise on this and efficiently use the experience built within the framework of this Project in de development of new Mercury Initial Assessments in the Region

[158] **The evaluation found that it was a very good idea to invite colleagues from Former Soviet Union countries to the final steering committee meeting in June 2017 in Moscow and other Project meetings. The shared experience in e.g. education, science, technology, culture, industrial development directly proved to enable effective experience and knowledge sharing among participants. As the Russian inventory is seen as the best implementation of the MIA Toolkit to date, the existing networks could be used for replication of the Project results in other Former Soviet Union countries interested to cooperate with Russian Project stakeholders on national inventories (See as well Sections 5.5 Achievement of direct outcomes, component 5 Better practices used in future projects, 5.7 Efficiency, 6.6 Communication and public awareness and 7.1 Conclusions.)**

7.3. Recommendations

[159] Considering the scope of the evaluation and based on the main findings, conclusions and lessons learned, the recommendations presented here are addressed to UN Environment as the Implementing Agency of the Pilot Project on the development of mercury inventory in the Russian Federation.

Recommendation 1. Need for a follow-up project to sustain the positive results of the first national mercury inventory in the Russian Federation

[160] There is an important task for UN Environment and the Government of Russia to make sure that follow-up project is developed to make sure that the positive results of the first national mercury inventory in the Russian Federation are sustained. It is of importance that follow-up initiatives and international cooperation projects are developed in line with what would be required from Russia after ratification of the Minamata Convention.

Recommendation 2. Need for alternative strategies in case the Russian Federation decides not to ratify the Minamata Convention

[161] In case of a Russian Federation decision not to ratify the Minamata Convention there is an important task for UN Environment to make sure that the developed capacity among key Project stakeholders in Russia will not be lost. An alternative strategy would be the involvement of Project stakeholders in regional and international mercury projects. At the same time, trained Russian experts could play a valuable role in the development of Mercury Initial Assessments in other Former Soviet countries that did not yet develop their first national mercury assessment.

Recommendation 3. Need for continued advocacy on the importance of the Minamata Convention

[162] There is an important task for UN Environment to continuously advocate the importance for countries to join the Minamata Convention. As mentioned several times in this Terminal Evaluation, it is not the Project stakeholder's role to try to directly influence high level political decision making. From a neutral UN position UN Environment does advocate the importance of the Minamata Convention. In doing so, it is important to stress environmental and public health risks in the Minamata advocacy. At the same time, it would be important to stress possible cost reductions and gains for the environment and public health that can be achieved with stringent enforcement of mercury regulation and subsequent rapid introduction of new energy-and-resource-saving and waste-free technologies.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference for the Terminal Evaluation

Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment/Global Environment Facility project
"Pilot Project on the Development of Mercury Inventory in the Russian Federation"

Part 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

Sub-programme:	Chemicals and Waste	**Expected Accomplishment(s):**	EA1 (MTS 2014-17) Enabling environment: Countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly including the implementation of related provisions of the multilateral environmental agreements	
UN Environment approval date:	21 March 2013	**Programme of Work Output(s):**	524.2	
GEF project ID:	5222	**Project type:**	Medium-sized Project (MSP)	
GEF Operational Programme #:	CHEM-03	**Focal Area(s):**	Persistent Organic Pollutants/ chemicals	
GEF approval date:	Unspecified	**GEF Strategic Priority:**	CHEM-3; Project Mana	
***Expected* start date:**	April 2013	**Actual start date:**	May 2013	
***Planned* completion date:**	September 2015	**Actual completion date:**	June 2017	
***Planned* project budget at approval:**	US$ 4,418,969	**Actual total expenditures reported as of [date]:**	US$ 622,045.15	
GEF grant allocation:	US$ 1,000,000	**GEF grant expenditures reported as of June 2016:**	US$ 565,576 USD	
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	N/A	**Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:**	N/A	
***Expected* Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:**	US$ 3,418,969	**Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:**	US$ 3,418,969	
First disbursement:	US$ 200,000	**Date of financial closure:**	30 June 2017	
No. of revisions:	1	**Date of last revision:**	2017	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	4	**Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:**	**Last:** 18 April 2016	**Next:**6 Jun 2017
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation *(planned date):*	N/A	**Mid-term Review[39](actual date):**	April 2016	
Terminal Evaluation *(planned date):*	N/A	**Terminal Evaluation (actual date):**	Apr-Sep 2017	
Coverage - Country(ies):	National - Russian Federation	**Coverage - Region(s):**	Europe	
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	**Status of future project phases:**	N/A	

2. Project rationale

[39] This was an informal project review that was undertaken by the Task Manager

1. Concerns about the global adverse effects of mercury on human health and the environment have been acknowledged by governments since 2003, when the conclusions of the Global Mercury Assessment were discussed and agreed by the Governing Council. Since 2003, UNEP has delivered a programme of activities to address the global challenge of mercury, including developing the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. In 2007, Governing Council decision 24/3 called for UNEP to strengthen the Global Mercury Partnership, and also to support the process to review and assess options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments.
2. UNEP Governing Council decision 25/5, adopted in February 2009, requested UNEP Executive Director to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) with the mandate to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury. Furthermore, GC Decision 25/5 also requests UNEP Executive Director to coordinate, inter-alia, the enhancement of national inventories on mercury and to raising public awareness and support risk communication. The INC is mandated to develop a comprehensive and suitable approach to mercury, including provisions to increase knowledge through awareness-raising and scientific information exchange and to specify arrangements for capacity building and technical and financial assistance.
3. Russia is one of the largest emitters of mercury in the world; therefore dealing with mercury in Russia is considered as one of the world priorities. Review of existing information has shown significant gaps in knowledge and understanding of mercury pollution and related issues at the national level; although a number of research efforts made by scientists in nationally as well as internationally supported project initiatives enable a rough assessment of the scale of the mercury problems in Russia. Prior to 2000, there was no national consolidated data on mercury-containing products, consumption and releases, and there was a lack of understanding of the sources of mercury releases and their consequences on human health and the environment. As a result, there was a big gap between Russia and developed countries in terms of overall prevention and control of mercury pollution. In addition to the need for an improved inventory of mercury releases, a national action plan to address the principal source categories and to decrease mercury releases had not been considered. Regulations were mostly developed to mitigate extraordinary (accidental) mercury releases and in a specific sector, with no integrated view of the problem.
4. Since 2000 the Russian Government has shown great interest in better understanding of mercury issues existing in the country. In April 2012 the President of the Russian Federation signed the presidential decree on the "Adoption of principles of state policy in the field of environmental development of the Russian Federation until 2030". This Decree is considered as a regulatory framework and will guide the Russian Government in the development and updating of new and existing environmental policy instruments for regulation of releases of harmful substances, including mercury, into the environment in the Russian Federation. Inter-agency consultations to assess the current level of knowledge in issues of mercury pollution in Russia has resulted in a set of decisions calling for the assessment of available national data on mercury releases into the environment, and establishment of an information system of data on mercury-related issues to be developed. Following these consultations, federal ministries and services have improved their understanding of the mercury issues and have become more active in terms of preparation of the national position within the INC process. Moreover, as Russia has strategic plans to develop the Arctic region in an environmentally friendly manner, respective efforts to preserve the Arctic environments are being planned. Russia is also working on incorporating chemicals management, including mercury, and other persistent pollutants into its environmental policies with a focus on regulation, monitoring and pollution inventories. It will ensure the sustainability of this project at the national level. Further details are provided in the following section.
5. The Pilot Project on the Development of Mercury Inventory in the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the "Project") was designed to assist Russia build capacity and raise awareness towards the upcoming legally binding instrument on mercury. This project was expected to provide: (a) the first full national inventory on mercury in the Russian Federation, using the updated UNEP Toolkit40 for identification and quantification of mercury releases (2012); and (b) the first national action plan on mercury management with specific action plans for key sectors, based on the results of the inventory. Russia's co-financing for this project and for the activities related to mercury management identified by this project are expected to add to the adoption of new regulatory elements towards a sound management of mercury required for the medium and long term.

3 Project objectives and components

6. This project provides the tools and means to integrate mercury in the environmental agenda in Russia, and a sound programme for mercury release reduction. It will contribute to the implementation of the future mercury convention and will provide valuable information to UNEP's work to develop updated global inventories. The project is expected to produce the first national inventory and action plan of mercury in

[40] In the Russian Federation, nearly all of the ten categories and 44 sub-categories indicated in the UNEP Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases are present.

Russia. It will also improve Russia's capacity for management of mercury pollution, and allow Russia to prepare itself for ratification and ensure compliance with obligations of both the mercury treaty and the Heavy Metals Protocol to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE) Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution Convention, of which Russia has been a party since 1980. The project will also provide valuable information for UNEP in its continuing work to update the UNEP Mercury Toolkit, and improve its applicability to developing countries.

7. The development goal of the Project is to "protect human health and the environment from toxic exposure to mercury". The specific project objective is to ***"strengthen capacity of the Russian Federation for the identification of mercury sources, quantification, analysis and monitoring of mercury releases and identification of priority actions to address mercury issues under a future global convention"***.

8. The project has five components, which consist of a number of activities designed to deliver on planned outputs and expected outcomes. The table below presents a summary of the project's components, outputs and outcomes as defined in the approved project document.

Table 2. Summary of project activities, outputs and expected outcomes

Components	Activities	Outputs	Expected Outcomes
Component 1: Identification of initial guidance on mercury management	*Activity 1.1:* Identify initial guidance materials including translation into Russian of the revised UNEP Toolkit (2013)	Translated UNEP Toolkit Basic information on mercury management in Russian Federation available to relevant stakeholders (listed on page 19)	Information needs identified
Component 2: Development of mercury inventories by industrial sector	*Activity 2.1:* Awareness workshops leading to at least 3 agreements with key industrial associations. *Activity 2.2:* Conduct and develop mercury inventory of relevant mercury sources and quantify their mercury releases through consultations and national workshops.	Agreements with key industrial associations. Quantitative and qualitative data on mercury releases available: development of a detailed inventory for the Russian Federation	Comprehensive information on mercury sources and releases (the inventories) and current control measures enables a better understanding of mercury risks to human health and the environment in Russia
Component 3: Assessment and strengthening of existing analytical capacity for monitoring of mercury in the environment and humans	*Activity 3.1:* Assessment of mercury laboratories in Russia able to analyse mercury in various media according to internationally recognized methods *Activity 3.2:* Collection of available data of good quality on mercury in the environment including biota and humans, and on mercury in emissions from prioritized sectors from Russian Federation. *Activity 3.*3Development of a capacity building programme on measurements of mercury in emissions at the source to reinforce analytical capacity of local laboratories.	Report on national capacity for mercury analysis and overview of laboratories able to perform mercury analysis (at least 10 laboratories assessed) Available data of good quality on mercury in the environment, including biota and humans, and on mercury in emissions from key sectors in the Russian Federation. Record of laboratories participating including mercury sampling, analysis and measurements.	Improved knowledge on mercury in the environment and the capacity of Russian laboratories regarding mercury analysis and measurements guides the Russian Federation to develop targeted mercury reduction strategies.
Component 4: Prioritization of mercury sources, mercury management gap analysis and development of initial national action plan.	*Activity 4.1:* Development of criteria for prioritization of mercury sources *Activity 4.2:* Identification of mercury management gaps by sector and proposals to address these gaps *Activity 4.3:* Identification of needs for environmental and human monitoring *Activity 4.4:* Development of sector action plans for prioritized sectors	Scheme of criteria for ranking of mercury sources developed and available through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment website Report on management gaps identified including proposals to address these gaps. National plan developed for future monitoring of mercury levels in the environment including in humans, and for mercury in emissions that will confirm mercury reduction in the environment and in humans	Enhanced understanding of priority sources for mercury management through the development of a national action plan, including identification of management gaps and monitoring needs.

Components	Activities	Outputs	Expected Outcomes
		Action plan for the Russian Federation on medium and long term measures to decrease mercury emissions in prioritized sectors.	
Component 5: Lessons learned, final report and strategies for needs to reduce mercury agreed	*Activity 5.1: Hold national workshops to discuss draft report, strategies and lessons learned* *Activity 5.2: Development of a final report including lessons learned and future recommendations* *Activity 5.3: Implement a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan*	Draft report on good practices and lessons learned including recommendations on mercury management, inventory taking and initial action plan for Russian Federation Final lessons learned and recommendations requested in other Federal subjects and countries Suggestions for dissemination implemented and report disseminated through UNEPs and MNREs web site Monitoring and evaluation plan fully implemented assess rate of project's success	Better practices used in future projects

4. Executing Arrangements

9. This project was implemented by UNEP and executed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation (MNRE).

10. As **Implementing Agency**, UNEP was responsible for overall project supervision, overseeing the project progress through the monitoring and evaluation of project activities and progress reports, including technical issues. UNEP worked in close collaboration with the Executing Agency (EA).

11. As **Executing Agency**, MNRE executed, managed and was responsible for the project and its activities on a day-to-day basis. It established the necessary managerial and technical teams to execute the project. It recruited consultants necessary for technical activities and supervised their work. It monitored the project; in addition to organizing independent audits in order to guarantee the proper use of GEF funds. Financial transactions, audits and reports were to be carried out in accordance with national regulations and UNEP procedures. MNRE was responsible for providing regular administrative, progress and financial reports to UNEP. MNRE was supported by UNEP and the national experts identified in the project.

12. A **Project Steering Committee** (PSC) was created and expected to meet at the beginning, mid- and end of project. It was expected to comprise of donors, executing and implementation organisms (such as: UNEP DTIE Chemicals, MNRE, Ministry of Industry and trade, Ministry of Energy, National Industries Associations, Scientific research Institute for Atmospheric air pollution (SRI Atmosphere), Ministry of Health, NGOs and other GEF implementation organisms. The PSC was responsible for evaluating the progress of the project and taking the necessary measures to guarantee the fulfilment of the goals and objectives.

13. A **Project Team** (PT) and **Project Coordinator** were established within the Executing Agency; the team was in charge of the execution and management of the project and reports to UNEP and the PSC; it included a representative from the Ministry of Civil Affairs, a Project Coordinator, Technical Assistant and Management Assistant.

14. The **National Coordination Group** (NCG) assisted the Project Team assessed the progress made in the project. It was composed of key national partners participating in the project to provide technical and administrative support to perform the project activities.

15. The activities under this project were facilitated by internal project communication with national and local government counterparts regarding the implementation of activities both at the national and local levels. UNEP DTIE Chemicals Branch was also to be kept informed of activities being undertaken within the project and assist in technical matters upon request.

5. Project Cost and Financing

16. The Project budget was based on a grant amount of US$ 1,000,000 from the GEF Trust Fund, with additional co-financing of about US$ 3,418,969 (comprising grants and in-kind financing). While the Project Budget was revised in 2015, the total project cost remained unchanged. Table 3 below presents a summary of the total project costs and co-financing received by the project.

Table 3. Summary of project cost by component

Project Component	Grant Amount (US$)	Confirmed Co-financing (US$)
Component 1	110,500	1,794,429
Component 2	216,000	430,000
Component 3	199,500	727,500
Component 4	155,500	0
Component 5	229,500	84,880
	911,000	3,036,809
	89,000	382,160
	1,000,000	**3,418,969**

6. Implementation Issues

17. Delays in implementation of some project components have mainly been related to41: additional time required for communications with stakeholders (e.g. with Hg test sites) ; prolonged period of the project funds transfer processing by UNEP; delayed completion of some of key deliverables (analysis/assessment/sampling reports, data bases, national plans, lessons, etc.); and report translations in English and Russian languages. To counter the risks associated with these challenges, project implementation was intensified and stakeholders not identified at the commencement of the project were involved.

[41] UNEP GEF PIR July-Dec 2015 and Half Yearly Progress Report Jan-Jun 2016

18. A project extension was also granted to extend the project to end in August 2016[42]. The project close was further extended to June 2017 to allow for the completion of pending activities. In spite of these revisions to the project document and budget, the total cost of the project has remained unchanged.

Part 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

7. Key Evaluation principles

19. 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.

20. **The "Why?" Question.** As this is a terminal evaluation and similar interventions are envisaged for the future, particular attention should be given to learning from the experience. 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.

21. **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.

22. **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 Office. 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. This may include some or all of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of an evaluation brief or interactive presentation.

8. Objective of the Evaluation

23. In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy[43] and the UN Environment Programme Manual[44], 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 the main project partners (MNRE, UNEP, Scientific and Production Association FINGO, RusChlor Association of chlorine industry, VTI, Scientific Centre "Synthesis", EP Mercury, Eco-Accord NGO, US EPA, Swedish EPA)[45]. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially in contributing to the continuing updating of the UNEP Mercury Toolkit, and to serve as a reference to other countries in similar situations.

9. Key Strategic Questions

24. In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined from Section. 10 below, the evaluation will address the **strategic questions** listed below. These are questions of interest to UN Environment and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:

[42] Project Revision signed on 21/9/2015
[43] http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx
[44] http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf . *This manual is under revision.*
[45] Half Yearly Progress Report Jan-Jun 2016

(a) UNEP published in 2008 the Global Atmospheric Mercury Assessment which indicates that in the Russian Federation, nearly all of the ten categories and 44 sub-categories indicated in the Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases of UNEP are present[46]. To what extent has the project succeeded in providing best environmental practice and guidelines for control of mercury releases in the Russian Federation?

(b) In 2010 the Russian based NGO Eco-Accord Centre, at the request of the European Environmental Bureau and under the Zero Mercury Campaign, developed an assessment of mercury emission sources in Russia. The study suggests that the energy sector has the largest contribution of mercury releases to air amounting to an estimated 39.0 tons/year in 200347. To what extent and with what success did the project engage relevant sector players in targeted mercury reduction strategies?

(c) The project baseline indicated that there was no national consolidated data on mercury-containing products, use consumption and releases from each source and there was a lack of understanding of the sources of mercury releases and their consequences on human health and the environment. What is the likelihood that the National Action Plan developed through the project will succeed in bridging the gap between Russia and developed countries in its overall prevention and control of mercury pollution? What are the key factors which need to be taken into account in achieving the desired impact?

(d) The Russian Federation has ratified the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions, demonstrating its high national commitment to sound management of chemicals. What lessons from The Russian Federation can be learned with regard to strategies for strengthening national capacity in mercury management and the development of national level priority actions that address global conventions including Minamata Convention on Mercury?

10. Evaluation Criteria

25. 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 achievement 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.

A. Strategic Relevance

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 also include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at 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 UNEP Medium Term Strategy[48] (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW)*[49]

The evaluation should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW.

ii. *Alignment to UNEP/GEF/Donor Strategic Priorities*

Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building[50] (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

[46] Project Document
[47] Ibid
[48] UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UNEP's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UNEP's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes.
[49] UNEP MTS 2010-2013, PoW 2012-13 / UNEP MTS 2014-2017 PoW 2014-15, PoW 2016-17
[50] http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf

the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies.

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

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented. Examples may include: national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc.

iv. *Complementarity with Existing Interventions*

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 (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies) that address similar needs of the same target groups . The evaluation will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include UNDAFs or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP'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 and country ownership and driven-ness.

B. Quality of Project design

The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template 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.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage): stakeholders participation and cooperation and responsiveness to human rights and gender equity, including the extent to which relevant actions are adequately budgeted for.

C. Nature of External Context

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). 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 and unexpected external operating context, the overall rating for Effectiveness 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

The evaluation will assess effectiveness across three dimensions: achievement of outputs, achievement of direct outcomes and likelihood of impact.

i. Achievement of Outputs

The evaluation will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs (products and services delivered by the project itself) and achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any *formal* modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, a table should be provided showing the original formulation and the amended version for transparency. The achievement of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their usefulness 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 and quality of project management and supervision[51].

[51] 'Project management and supervision' will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

ii. Achievement of Direct Outcomes

The achievement of direct outcomes is assessed as performance against the direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed[52] Theory of Change. 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 if substantive amendments to the formulation of direct outcomes are necessary. The evaluation should report evidence of attribution between UNEP'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 UNEP's contribution should be included.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: quality of project management and supervision; stakeholders' participation and cooperation; responsiveness to human rights and gender equity and communication and public awareness.

iii. Likelihood of Impact

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. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available on the EOU website, web.unep.org/evaluation and is supported by an excel-based flow chart called, Likelihood of Impact Assessment (see 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.
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 and Social Safeguards.

The evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role or has promoted scaling up and/or replication[53] as part of its Theory of Change and as factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact.
Ultimately UNEP 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 UNEP's Expected Accomplishments, the Sustainable Development Goals[54] 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 project management; stakeholders' participation and cooperation; responsiveness to human rights and gender equity; country ownership and driven-ness and communication and public awareness.

E. Financial Management

Financial management will be assessed under three broad themes: *completeness* of financial information, *communication* between financial and project management staff and *compliance* with relevant UN financial management standards and procedures. 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. The evaluation will assess the level of communication between the Task 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. The evaluation will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted.

[52] UNEP 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.

[53] *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.

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

Factors affecting this criterion may include: preparation and readiness and quality of project management and supervision.

F. Efficiency
In keeping with the OECD/DAC definition of efficiency, the evaluation will assess 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 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.

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 UNEP's environmental footprint.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: preparation and readiness (e.ge. timeliness); quality of project management and supervision and stakeholders participation and cooperation.

G. Monitoring and Reporting
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
Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART[55] indicators towards the achievement of the projects outputs and direct outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender or groups with low representation. 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 Implementation
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. 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
UNEP has a centralised Project Information Management System (PIMS) in which project managers upload six-monthly status reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant(s) by the Evaluation Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (specifically the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool). The evaluation will assess the extent to which both UNEP and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: quality of project management and supervision and responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. disaggregated indicators and data).

H. Sustainability
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. 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.

[55] SMART refers to indicators that are specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-specific.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

The evaluation will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of project direct outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

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 e.g. 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, e.g. continuation of a new resource management approach. The evaluation will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where the direct outcomes of a project have been extended into a future project phase. The question still remains as to whether the future project outcomes will be financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

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, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure.

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 and country ownership and driven-ness.

i. Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project. 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 preparation is covered in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP 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 and supervision provided by UNEP.

I.Factors and Processes Affecting Project Performance

(These factors are rated in the ratings table, but are discussed as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above).

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

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP. The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various 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.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

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 UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment.

The report should present the extent to which the intervention, following an adequate gender analysis at design stage, has implemented the identified actions and/or applied adaptive management to ensure that Gender Equity and Human Rights are adequately taken into account. In particular, the evaluation will consider to what extent project design (section B), the implementation that underpins effectiveness (section D), and monitoring (section G) have taken into consideration: (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; (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

The evaluation will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. 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 and interests of all gender and marginalised groups.

vi. Communication and Public Awareness

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 gender and 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

26. The Terminal Evaluation will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings.

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

(a) A **desk review** of relevant background documentation, including, but not limited to:

- Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, 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, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc.;
- Project outputs: (UNEP toolkit, workshop reports, guidance materials, mercury data/inventories, Agreements, national action plan, studies and reports;
- Mid-Term Review of the project;

(b) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with:

- UN Environment Task Manager (TM);
- Project management team;
- UN Environment Fund Management Officer (FMO);

- Project partners, including (MNRE, UNEP, Scientific and Production Association FINGO, RusChlor Association of chlorine industry, VTI, Scientific Centre "Synthesis", EP Mercury, Eco-Accord NGO, US EPA, Swedish EPA);
- Other relevant resource persons.

(c) **Surveys** (e.g. questionnaires, online survey tools)
(d) **Field visits** (field mission to The Russian Federation to meet key project participants and beneficiaries)
(e) **Other data collection tools**(the evaluator may include additional data gathering methods not listed here).

11. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

28. The evaluation consultant will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** (see Annex 1 for links to all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.
- **Preliminary Findings Note:** in the form of a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation or a briefing email, the sharing of preliminary findings on the completion of the field mission, is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.
- **Draft and Final Evaluation Report:** (see links in Annex 1) 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.
- **Evaluation Bulletin:** a 2-page summary of key evaluation findings for wider dissemination through the EOU website.

29. **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.

30. 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.

31. 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.

32. 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 Task Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six monthly basis.

12. The Consultants' Team

33. For this evaluation, the evaluation team will consist of one independent consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager (Pauline Marima), in consultation with the UN Environment Task Manager (Ludovic Bernaudat), Fund Management Officer (Anu Shenoy) and the Sub-programme Coordinator of the Chemicals and Waste Sub-programme Maarten Kappelle). The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the evaluation. It is, however, the consultant's individual responsibility to arrange for their travel, visa, obtain documentary evidence, plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UN Environment Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

34. The consultant will be hired the over the period April/2017 to August/2017 during which time the evaluation deliverables listed in Section 11 'Evaluation Deliverables' above should be submitted. S/he should have: an advanced university degree in sciences, evaluation experience preferably using a Theory of Change approach, experience in chemicals and hazardous waste management including a broad understanding of mercury related issues, a minimum of 10 years of technical / evaluation experience, knowledge of Russian language along with excellent writing skills in English. Experience in managing partnerships, knowledge management and communication is desirable for all evaluation consultants.

35. The consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Office of UN Environment, for overall management of the evaluation and timely delivery of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables, above. The consultant will ensure that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

13. Schedule of the evaluation

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

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the evaluation

Milestone	Tentative timeline
Kick-off meeting	April 2017
Inception Report	April 2017
Evaluation Mission – 1 week (Russian Federation – specific cities to be confirmed based on meeting arrangements and available budget)	May 2017
Presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	May 2017
Telephone interviews, surveys etc.	April – June 2017
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	June 2017
Draft Report shared with UN Environment Project Manager and team	June/July 2017
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	July/August 2017
Final Report	August 2017
Final Report shared with all respondents	August 2017

Annex 2: Evaluation itinerary and overview of stakeholders interviewed

Time	Description	Location / means of communication
	Tuesday 06 June 2017	
11.40 - 12.15	Interview with Vladimir Lenev, Minister – Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to International Organizations in Nairobi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
15.45 - 16.20	Interview with Natalya Tretyakova, Head of Division of International Environmental Conventions, International Cooperation Department Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
16.15 - 15.30	Interview with Ake Mikaelsson, Programme Coordinator for Russia, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Policy Development Department, International Co-operation Unit	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
20.00 - 23.00	Interview with Alexander Romanov, Project Coordinator SRI Atmosphere	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
	Wednesday 07 June 2017	
11.40 - 12.15	Interview with Oxana Tsittser, Expert Eco-Accord	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
14.00 - 15.00	Interview with Oxana Tsittser, Expert Eco-Accord and Olga Ponizova, Executive Director Eco-Accord	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
16.15 - 15.30	Interview with Maria Vodyanova, Representative Ministry of Health and Social Development	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
20.30 - 23.00	Interview with Alexander Romanov, Project Coordinator SRI Atmosphere	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
	Thursday 08 June 2017	
14.00 - 15.00	Interview with Ludovic Bernaudat, Task manager UN Environment and Gunnar Futsaeter Technical Expert UN Environment	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
16.15 - 15.30	Interview with Alexander Romanov, Project Coordinator SRI Atmosphere	Final Steering Committee Meeting Moscow
	Monday 06 to Thursday 08 June 2017	

	Throughout the Final Steering Committee Meeting, the evaluator has spoken to different stakeholders representing ministries, NGOs and expert institutes from other Former Soviet Countries invited to Moscow for the presentation of Project results.	
	Monday 3 July 2017	
10.00 - 10.30	Theory of Change validation conference call with Ludovic Bernaudat and Alexander Romanov	Conf. call
	July and August 2017	
	Telephone and e-mail correspondence with Project stakeholders, including responses to a small six-question Project survey. Responses were received from:	
1	Valentin Eberil, representative of RusChlor Association of chlorine industry	Survey / E-mail
2	Yury Treger, representative of Scientific Centre “Synthesis”	Survey
3	Anna Makarova, representative of D. Mendeleev University of Chemical Technology of Russia.	Survey
4	Patrick Huber, representative of US Environmental Protection Agency	Survey
5	Ake Mikaelsson, Programme Coordinator for Russia, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	Survey
6	Maria Vodyanova, Representative Ministry of Health and Social Development	Survey
7	Khamidulina Khizblaevna, representative of Russian Register of Potential Dangerous Chemical and Biological Elements of RosPotrebNadzor (Federal Inspectorate for the Protection of Consumer Rights and Human Welfare)	Survey
8	Katja Kraus, representative of German Environment Protection Agency - UBA	Survey / E-mail
9	Olga Speranskaya, Director of the Chemical Safety Program at the Eco-Accord	E-mail
	July – September 2017	
	Telephone, e-mail and Skype correspondence with Alexander Romanov and Ludovic Bernaudat	
	23 August - 12 September 2017	
	E-mail correspondence with Anuradha Shenoy, Fund Managing Officer UN Environment	E-mail

Annex 3: Evaluation bulletin

Pilot project on the development of mercury inventory in the Russian Federation

Results & Lessons Learned from the first national mercury inventory carried out in Russia

About the Project

The Project was designed to assist Russia to build capacity and raise awareness towards the upcoming legally binding instrument on mercury, the Minamata Convention. As Russia is one of the largest emitters of mercury, dealing with mercury in Russia is considered to be one of the world priorities in the combat against the global adverse effects on human health and the environment from the chemical element. The Russian Government has recently shown a great interest in better understanding the impacts of mercury on public health and the environment through renewed policy and legislation.

The Project originally planned for a 24-month implementation period. However, since additional time was needed for communication with stakeholders, funds transfer, completion of reporting and translation of documents a no cost extension was granted to a 48-month implementation period with June 2017 as end date. The total budget (US$) based on GEF allocation was US$ 1,000,000. The total Secured Medium-Size Project co-financing US$ 3,513,340.

Mercury pollution is a serious concern in the Russian Federation although the risk of exposure to mercury varies substantially across the country. As in many other countries, mercury is still used in products such as manometers, thermometers, electrical switches, fluorescent lamps, dental amalgam, batteries and some pharmaceuticals. Russia has made efforts to assess mercury emissions to air, mercury released directly to water and soil was less well quantified at the outset of the Project.

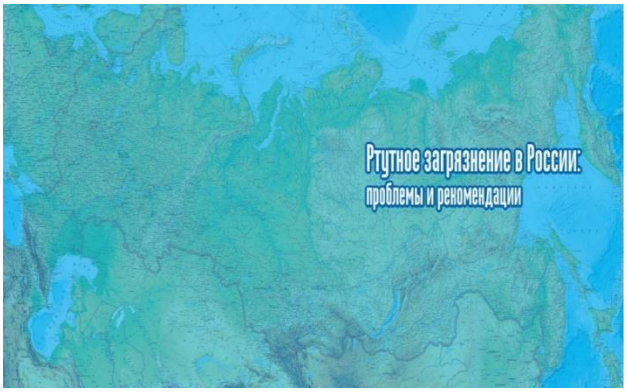
The first national mercury inventory in the Russian Federation found that in 2012 fifteen hundred tonnes of mercury was released into the environment. The largest part of this mercury (747.4 tonnes) was released to soil. The smallest part (27.6 tonnes) was released to water. The mercury content in waste consisted of 402.3 tonnes, mercury released in products 230.3 tonnes and the emissions to air consisted of 91.8 tonnes.

Mercury flasks at the mercury recovery plant Kubantsvetmet in Krasnodar (Photo credit COWI)

The national inventory highlighted the important finding that the combined releases and emissions from non-ferrous metal production count for up to 90 % of mercury pollution in the country.

Strategic Relevance and impact

The Project positioned its activities very well in line with preceding national, regional and international mercury initiatives and the international development of the Minamata Convention. In fact, the project played an instrumental role in Russia's preparation for signing the convention.



However, at Project end it is still unclear whether the Russian Federation will finally ratify the Minamata Convention. Future political decision making on the question whether Russia will ratify the convention or not will have a serious impact on the outcomes of the Project. The Project has

provided essential baseline information, based upon which, political decision makers can make a well-informed decision.

Performance

Despite a delayed start and serious start-up problems the Project has succeeded well in providing the best environmental practice and guidelines for control of mercury releases in the Russian Federation and is reviewed by international mercury experts as the best implementation of the UN Environment Toolkit to date for mercury initial assessments (MIAs).

The Project has demonstrated well designed Efficiency in making use of and following up on the combined existing national and international mercury initiatives and is fully consistent with UNEP / GEF strategic priorities, regional sub-regional priorities and complementary with other relevant interventions. The project results can help to develop effective approaches to solving severe environmental problems in the Russian Federation, the region of Former Soviet Countries and in other regions.

Although not all stakeholders were identified as a separate group in the Project document stakeholder analysis, the NGO Eco-Accord was able to involve a wide range of NGOs including women and indigenous people organisations during implementation of their co-funding activities. At the same time, Eco-Accord proactively communicated the Project results at national workshops and meetings in close cooperation with the Executing Agency Scientific Research Institute for Atmospheric Air Protection, but also in the wider audience of Eastern Europe Caucasus and Central Asia regional networking meetings.

Final Steering Group Meeting (06-08 June 2017 in Moscow)

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Key Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: Work with a realistic timeframe for the implementation of Project activities. Rather be pessimistic than optimistic in the assessment of the time needed for implementation. Especially practical and administrative procedures tend to take more time than expected

The evaluation found that the original time frame for the implementation of Project activities was very optimistic. Starting up international projects takes usually time. Much time is needed to overcome usual administrative problems of international cooperation and specific country difficulties to start-up Project activities.

Lesson 2: Include stakeholder engagement, awareness raising and communication with all identified stakeholders into the planned Project activities and make sure to include all groups relevant for UN Environment and GEF policies in the Project document's stakeholder analysis, to avoid that their importance is forgotten during project implementation.

The evaluation found that a large group of relevant stakeholders has been mentioned in the original Project document. In general, cooperation with key stakeholders was carried out well. The evaluation has found, however, that the identification of groups relevant to UN Environment and GEF policies in the stakeholder analysis of the Project document was incomplete. As the Project activities were primarily focusing on technical aspects of mercury pollution, communication with the wider public got less attention in the implementation of the originally planned Project activities. Including stakeholder engagement awareness raising and communication into the Project design of the activities could have given the activities a more prominent role.

Lesson 3: Make active use of a Peer review mechanism in mercury national inventories and give strong attention to the dissemination all output publications in order to achieve a maximum of quality assurance and exchange with relevant experts

The evaluation found that the Project adequately aimed at guaranteeing the quality of output reports via the development of a Project peer review mechanism. A special peer review validation meeting and the publication of Project output reports on the Project website turned out to be a good method to improve the quality of the draft inventory results and other Project output reports. It is, however, important to make sure that all Project reports are available from the website and that a strong communication strategy makes sure that their publication is well known with the relevant audiences.

Lesson 4: Political decision making whether to ratify the Minamata Convention or not is beyond the control of Project Stakeholders. Concentrate on the facilitation of well-informed decision making and actively communicate the Project findings.

The evaluation found that the political interest whether to ratify the Minamata Convention or not is beyond the control of Project stakeholders. This external context, however, will have a strong influence on the Project's long-term impact. It is important to highlight that all Project stakeholders could do was to make sure that politicians will be able to make a well-informed decision. In hindsight, it is clear that the Project very much supported the Russian Federation during the negotiation process to sign the Minamata Convention.

Lesson 5: There is a strong interest to develop other national mercury inventories in the region on pre-existing expert networks among FSU countries because of a shared past. It would be very efficient to capitalise on this and efficiently use the experience built within the framework of this Project in de development of new Mercury Initial Assessments in the Region.

The evaluation found that it was a very good idea to invite colleagues from Former Soviet Union countries to the final steering committee meeting in June 2017 in Moscow and other Project meetings. The shared experience in e.g. education, science, technology, culture, industrial development directly proved to enable effective experience and knowledge sharing among participants. As the Russian inventory is seen as the best implementation of the MIA Toolkit to date, the existing networks could be used for replication of the Project results in other Former Soviet Union countries interested to cooperate with Russian Project stakeholders on national inventories.

Annex 4: List of documents consulted and people consulted

Documents consulted

- ToR Terminal evaluation of the UN Environment/ Global Environment Facility project "Pilot Project on the Development of Mercury inventory in the Russian Federation"
- Evaluation office of UN Environment: Evaluation Process Outline for Evaluation Consultants
- Project Document "Pilot Project on the Development of Mercury inventory in the Russian Federation", dated November 2011
- Evaluation office of UN Environment: Guidance on the Structure and Contents of the Inception Report
- Evaluation office of UN Environment: Use of Theory of Change in project evaluations
- Evaluation office of UN Environment: Stakeholder Analysis in the Evaluation Process
- PCA agreement 02-04-2013
- PIR 2013-2014
- PIR 2014-2015
- PIR 2015-2016
- PIR 2016-2017
- Half yearly progress report 1 May 2013 – 31 December 2013
- Half yearly progress report 1 July – 31 December 2015
- Half yearly progress report 1 January 2016 – 30 June 2016
- Mid-term review based on Mission and Meeting reports by the UN Environment Task Manager
- Project Inception meeting report 2013
- Project Supervision plan 2012
- Milestone Tracking Tool Hg Project ver1 November 2015
- Milestone Tracking Tool Hg Project ver2 December 2015
- Milestone Tracking Tool Hg Project ver3 Jan-Feb 2016
- Milestone Tracking Tool Hg Project ver4 March-April 2016
- Mercury in the environment and industry of the Russian Federation: collection and analysis of available information and data, 2015
- Mercury inventory toolkit methodology, training presentation by COWI
- UN Environment Mercury Toolkit, Russian version
- Assessment of the potential for mercury monitoring in the Russian Federation, with the aim for developing a training and action plan on monitoring of mercury emissions in the Russian Federation, 2013
- Cooperation agreement with 5 Project partner organisations
- Mercury Inventory (Russian and English versions)
- Data collection on mercury content in the environment within the Russian Federation, 2016
- Development of prioritization criteria for mercury sources in the Russian Federation based on preliminary analysis of regulation gaps and preliminary inventory results, 2016
- Comparative analysis of monitoring methodologies and methods of mercury control in environment objects, products, raw materials and wastes, applicable in the Russian Federation, and world countries, 2016 (I assume that this is the official publication title. If not, please delete the very Russian "object")

- Development of Proposals for National Action Plan for Mercury Control in the Environment in the Russian Federation, 2016
- Mercury pollution in Russia, problems and solutions
- Minutes of PSC meetings
- Project website: https://www.mercury2017.ru/
- IPEN Global newsletter: http://mailchi.mp/a95e58208f67/ipen-global-newsletter-mercury-94023
- Eco-Accord website http://www.ecoaccord.org and http://www.ecoaccord.org/pop/Rtutnoe_zagryaznenie_English_25-08.pdf
- Eco Know, International Network Resource for Environmental Education http://ecoznay.ru/publ/ehkologicheskij_praktikum/rtutnoe_zagrjaznenie_rossii/11-1-0-991

People consulted

#	People consulted	Email
1	Ludovic Bernaudat, Task manager UN Environment	ludovic.bernaudat@un.org
2	Valentin Eberil, Representative of RusChlor Association of chlorine industry	info@ruschlor.ru
3	Gunnar Futsaeter, Technical Expert UN Environment	gunnar.futsaeter@un.org
4	Patrick Huber, Representative of US Environmental Protection Agency	Huber.Patrick@epa.gov
5	Khamidulina Khizblaevna, Representative of Russian Register of Potential Dangerous Chemical and Biological Elements of RosPotrebNadzor (Federal Inspectorate for the Protection of Consumer Rights and Human Welfare)	khalidiya@yandex.ru
6	Katja Kraus, Representative of German Environment Protection Agency - UBA	Katja.Kraus@uba.de
7	Vladimir Lenev, Minister – Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to International Organizations in Nairobi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	vladimirlenev@mail.ru
8	Anna Makarova, Representative of D. Mendeleev University of Chemical Technology of Russia.	annmakarova@mail.ru
9	Ake Mikaelsson, Programme Coordinator for Russia, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Policy Development Department, International Co-operation Unit	Ake.Mikaelsson@naturvardsverket.se
10	Olga Ponizova, Executive Director Eco-Accord	oponizova@mail.ru

11	Alexander Romanov, Project Coordinator SRI Atmosphere	alexann.rm@gmail.com
12	Anuradha Shenoy, Fund Managing Officer UN Environment	Anuradha.Shenoy@un.org
13	Olga Speranskaya, Director of the Chemical Safety Program at the Eco-Accord	speransk2004@mail.ru
14	Yury Treger, Representative of Scientific Centre “Synthesis”	yurytreger@gmail.com
15	Natalya Tretyakova, Head of Division of International Environmental Conventions, International Cooperation Department Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	nataliat@mnr.gov.ru
16	Oxana Tsittser, Expert Eco-Accord	mnsoxana@mail.ru
17	Maria Vodyanova, Representative Ministry of Health and Social Development	lab.pochva@mail.ru

Annex 5: Brief CV of the consultant

Wouter Pronk is an independent consultant based in The Netherlands. Wouter Pronk holds a Master degree in Slavonic Languages and has 20 years of experience in managing environmental and capacity building projects in Eastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, India, Egypt, Vietnam and South Africa for the environmental NGOs Milieukontakt International and Green Cross Switzerland. Next to his work for both NGOs Mr. Pronk worked with two Dutch engineering companies, internationally active in soil remediation projects.

Since 2004, Mr. Pronk has been involved in POPs and soil remediation projects financed by The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FAO, UN Environment, GEF, Green Cross Switzerland, UNDP and The World Bank with a focus on awareness raising, environmental and social impact assessment and planning activities, technical capacity building, project evaluation and stakeholder involvement.

Key skills and experience for this assignment

- International project management experience in Former Soviet Countries;
- Experience with Stakeholder involvement in chemical pollution projects;
- Design and implementation of community engagement plans;
- Design and implementation of training and capacity building programmes;
- Experience with Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

Qualification and Associations

- MA Slavonic Languages;
- Additional practical training courses in sound management of obsolete and POPs pesticides by FAO (Environmental Management Toolkits);
- Ambassador of the International HCH and Pesticides Association (IHPA).

Employment record

February 2016 to present, Project manager Green Cross Switzerland;

February 1997 to February 2016, Project manager Milieukontakt International, The Netherlands

April 2010 to July 2012, Project expert on stakeholder involvement, Witteveen+Bos Environmental Engineers (part time)

August 2008 to January 2009, Project expert Russia, Tauw Group Environmental and Business Consultants (part-time)

Annex 6: Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

Evaluation Title:

Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project: "Pilot project on the development of mercury inventory in the Russian Federation"

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 the 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	Draft Report Rating	Final Report Rating
Substantive Report Quality Criteria			
Quality of the Executive Summary: 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.	Draft report: *(Exec Summaries are not always provided at draft stage)* Final report: The Executive Summary is well developed and is presented in both English and Russian language for the benefit of the in-country stakeholders	Not Rated	6
I. Introduction 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.) 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?	Draft report: Precise, well written and captures the main introductory points Final report: No change	5	5
II. Evaluation Methods	Draft report: This section is complete, concise, and it covers the required sub-topics satisfactorily	6	6

This section should include a description of how the *TOC at Evaluation*[56] was designed (who was involved etc.) and applied to the context of the project? 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.). The methods used to analyse data (e.g. scoring; coding; thematic analysis etc.) should be described. It should also address evaluation limitations such as: low or imbalanced response rates across different groups; 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. 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.	Final report: No change		
III. The Project This section should include: • *Context:* 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). • *Objectives and components*: Summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • *Stakeholders:* Description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • *Project implementation structure and partners:* A description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners	Draft report: This section is also complete and covers all the required sub-topics in a concise and clear manner. Final report: No change	6	6

56 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*.

• *Changes in design during implementation:* Any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • *Project financing:* Completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing			
IV. Theory of Change 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. *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'.* 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.	Draft report: The TOC diagram is coherent and is a result of a consultative process. The narrative howver needs improvement to prvide audiene with a suitable explanation of the causal pathways depicted in the diagrammatic representation, and to ensure that there are no inconsistencies between the two. Final report: Improvements requested in the Toc and accompanying narrative have been effected in a satisfactory manner.	4	5
V. Key Findings **A. Strategic relevance:** 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: v. Alignment to the UN Environment Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) vi. Alignment to UN Environment/GEF/Donor Strategic Priorities vii. Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities viii. Complementarity with Existing Interventions	Draft report: Section is well done and covers all the main aspects of relevance prescribed in the TOR Final report: No change	6	6
B. Quality of Project Design To what extent are the strength and weaknesses of the project design effectively summarized?	Draft report: The strengths and weaknesses of the design are sufficiently described. Minor corrections required in the tabulation of ratings and scoring.	5	5

	Final report: Requested amendments effected satisfactorily		
C. Nature of the External Context For projects where this is appropriate, key external features of the project's implementing context that may have been reasonably expected to limit the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval) should be described.	Draft report: The TE sufficiently describes the key external issues that are most likely to affect the project's performance. This is also cross referenced in other sections of the report as appropriate Final report: No change	5	5
D. Effectiveness **(i) Outputs and Direct Outcomes:** How well does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the achievement of a) outputs, and b) direct outcomes? How convincing is the discussion of attribution and contribution, as well as the limitations to attributing effects to the intervention.	Draft report: Outputs are described by component but there appears to be insufficient evidence provided to the consultant to support a thorough assessment of outputs. Final report: Requested improvements have been effected in the assessment of the Effectiveness criteria	4.5	5
(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?	Draft report: The narrative does not provide an in-depth analysis that sufficiently integrates the causal pathways, actors, drivers and assumptions. Suggestions have been provided on how to improve the analysis Final report: Improvements noted in the narrative and supporting evidence	3	5
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: • *completeness* of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • *communication* between financial and project management staff and • *compliance* with relevant UN financial management standards and procedures.	Draft report: The section has been covered relatively well although the summary table for financial performance is partially completed (evidence for the ratings given are missing). Consultant advised to complete the table Final report: *(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)*	4	5

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: • Implications of delays and no cost extensions • Time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe • 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. • The extent to which the management of the project minimised UN Environment's environmental footprint.	Draft report: This section has been covered sufficiently. Final report: No change	5	5
G. Monitoring and Reporting How well does the report assess: • Monitoring design and budgeting *(including SMART indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.)* • Monitoring implementation *(including use of monitoring data for adaptive management)* • Project reporting *(e.g. PIMS and donor report)*	Draft report: This section is well covered and goes beyond assessing the progress reporting by also looking into the project's results-based monitoring for adaptive management. Final report: No change	6	6
H. Sustainability 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: • Socio-political Sustainability • Financial Sustainability • Institutional Sustainability *(including issues of partnerships)*	Draft report: The assessment of sustainability does identify the most pertinent issues likely to undermine sustenance of outcomes. The analysis is satisfactory and some suggestions have been made to clarify some minor contradictions Final report: No change	5	5
I. Factors Affecting Performance These factors are <u>not</u> discussed in stand-alone sections but are **integrated in criteria A-H as appropriate**. To what extent, and how well, does the evaluation report cover the following cross-cutting themes: • Preparation and readiness • Quality of project management and supervision[57]	Draft report: The required sub-criteria are all covered sufficiently. Cross referencing has been done appropriately. Suggestions for improvement (e.g. inclusion of supporting evidence) have been made in some cases. Final report:	5	5

[57] 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.

• Stakeholder participation and co-operation • Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity • Country ownership and driven-ness • Communication and public awareness	Improvements noted, to varying degrees, in the coverage given to these criteria in the final version of the report		
VI. Conclusions and Recommendations **i. Quality of the conclusions:** The key strategic questions should be clearly and succinctly addressed within the conclusions section? It is expected that the conclusions will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect them in a compelling story line. Conclusions, as well as lessons and recommendations, should be consistent with the evidence presented in the main body of the report.	Draft report: The conclusions section is very well developed and clearly presents the most critical findings of the evaluation. However, responses to the key strategic questions are not concisely developed. Final report: Improvments noted in the coverage of the key strategic questions.	5	6
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.	Draft report: The lessons are relevant and based on findings. The context is summarized well and crossreferences have been used adequately. Some amendments are however needed to phrase the lessons in a way that they can have wider application and that are more instructive. Final report: Improvments noted in the formulations of lessons learned	4.5	5
iii) Quality and utility of the recommendations: To what extent are the recommendations proposals for specific actions 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. Recommendations should represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations.	Draft report: The recommendations are relevant and identify the action and who should implement it. Final report: No change	5	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?	Draft report: Structure is well done. Minor suggestions given to make the coverage of the different criteria more complete. Final report: Report is fully compliant will the guidelines issues.	5	6

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?	Draft report: Report is well written, language is clear, formatting is good Final report: No change	**6**	**6**
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		**5=S**	**5.5= HS**

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.