

Validated Terminal Review of the UNEP-GEF Project ‘Integrated Stockholm convention toolkit to improve the transmission of information under articles 07 and 15’ (GEF ID 9884)

2018 – 2024



UNEP Industry and Economy Division
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Integrated Stockholm Convention Toolkit to Improve the Transmission of Information
under Articles 07 and 15

GEF ID: 9884

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This Terminal Review was carried out for the UNEP Industry and Economy Division/GEF Chemicals and Waste unit by Senior Terminal Review Consultant, Ms. Suman Lederer.

The reviewer would like to express her gratitude to all the persons interviewed, who contributed to this review, as listed in Annex II.

The reviewer would like to thank the project team and in particular Mr. Jitendra Sharma, Task Manager, and Ms. Mihaela Paun, Project Manager, for their contribution and collaboration throughout the review process. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to the representatives of the 7 demonstration countries, the Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Honduras, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Madagascar, Republic of Moldova, Independent State of Papua New Guinea and Saint Lucia, as well as the Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centres in the People's Republic of China and Republic of South Africa and the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre-Stockholm Convention Regional Centre in the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions Secretariat, international experts and UNEP Head of Knowledge and Risk Unit and Fund Management Officer, for their time and valuable inputs to the Terminal Review. The evaluator would also like to thank the task manager and project manager, who took time to provide comments to the draft report.

The reviewer hopes that the findings, conclusions, and recommendations will contribute to the continuous improvement of similar projects in other countries and regions.

BRIEF EXTERNAL CONSULTANT(S) BIOGRAPHY

Ms Suman Lederer is an independent senior evaluation consultant. She has led and participated in numerous evaluations, with a focus on the evaluation of hazardous waste, persistent organic pollutants, waste management, renewable energy, gender and human rights, trust funds, as well as private-sector development projects, in Africa, Asia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, South-Pacific, and Southeast Europe. Further, she has work experience in the private sector and academia in Central and Western Europe.

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ABOUT THE TERMINAL REVIEW

Joint Review: No

Report Language(s): English

Review Type: Management-led Independent Terminal Review

Brief Description: This report presents the findings of the management-led independent Terminal Review of a UNEP-GEF project implemented between 2018 and 2023. The project's objective was to "Facilitate the development, transmission, access and use of data contained in National Implementation Plans (NIP, Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15)". The terminal review sought to assess project performance, in terms of, inter alia, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and determine outcomes and likelihood of impact stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, the GEF and the relevant agencies of the project's demonstration countries.

Key words: National Implementation Plan, NIP, National Reporting under Stockholm Convention, Persistent Organic Pollutants, POPs, new POPs, uPOPs, Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Papua New Guinea and Saint Lucia, Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centres, China, South Africa, Uruguay, BRS Secretariat.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCCC-SCRC	Basel Convention Coordinating Centre - Stockholm Convention Regional Centre	PIR	Project implementation report
BCRC-SCRC	Basel Convention Regional Centre - Stockholm Convention Regional Centre	PM	(UNEP) Project Manager
BRS	Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm Conventions Secretariat	POP	Persistent Organic Pollutants
COP	Conference of Parties	POW	(UNEP's) Programme of Work
CHB	UNEP's Chemicals and Health Branch	PRC	Project Review Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organization	PSC	Project Steering Committee
EA	Expected Accomplishment	RO	(UNEP) Regional Office
EAg	Executing Agency	SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning	SC	Stockholm Convention
ERS	Electronic Reporting System	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
FMO	Funds Management Officer	SSFA	Small-scale Funding Agreement
GEF	Global Environment Facility	TE	Terminal Evaluation
IA	Implementing Agency	TM	(UNEP) Task Manager
IPMR	Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting	TOC	Theory of Change
IT	Information Technology	TOR	Terms of Reference
KRU	Knowledge and Risk Unit	TR	Terminal Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	UN	United Nations
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

MSP	Medium-size project	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
MTS	(UNEP's) Medium-term Strategy	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
NFP	National Focal Point	UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
NIP	National Implementation Plan	u-POPs	Unintended POPs
PIMS	(UNEP's) Programme Information and Management System	USD	United States Dollar

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Table 1: Project Identification Table

GEF Project ID:	9884	Integrated Stockholm Convention Toolkit to Improve the Transmission of Information under Articles 07 and 15	
Implementing Agency (UNEP Division/Branch/Unit):	UNEP Industry and Economy Division, Chemicals and Health Branch, GEF Chemicals and Waste Unit	Executing Agency:	UNEP Knowledge and Risk Unit (KRU)
Sources of Funding (Co-finance):	Demonstration Country (ies): Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Papua New Guinea and St. Lucia	Institution Name/Type: National Governments of all 7 demonstration countries	
Relevant SDG(s):	12.4.1		
MTS (at approval):	2014-2017 2018-2021	UNEP approval date:	February 2018
POW Direct Outcome(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved from 2022): OR POW Output(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved pre-2022)	<i>Indicator i)</i> <i>Increased number and percentage of countries reporting the adoption of policies and regulatory frameworks for the sound management of chemicals and waste, with the assistance of UNEP</i>	POW Expected Accomplishment(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved pre-2022):	<i>POW 2016-2017 Expected Accomplishment a): Countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, including the implementation of related provisions in the multilateral environmental agreements</i>
Sub-programme:	Chemicals and Waste; Chemicals and Pollution Action	Programme Coordination Project:	
UNEP approval date:	February 2018	GEF approval date:	November 2017
GEF Programme 2 of CW1:	<i>Support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets and planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring</i>	GEF Strategic Objective:	<i>CW1: Develop the enabling conditions, tools and environment for the sound management of harmful chemicals and wastes</i>
Project type:	MSP	Focal Area(s):	Chemicals and Waste
Expected start date:	November 2017	Actual start date:	February 2018

<i>Planned</i> completion date:	December 2020	Actual operational completion date:	December 2023
<i>Planned</i> total project budget at approval, including co-finance, in USD:	9,232,340	Actual total expenditures reported as of 31 December 2023, including co-finance, in USD:	9,992,792.06
GEF grant allocation, in USD:	2,000,000	GEF grant expenditures reported as of 31 December 2023, in USD:	1,677,211.46 ¹
<i>Expected</i> Medium-Size Project co-financing, in USD:	Cash: 866,000 In-kind: 6,366,340 Total: 7,232,340	Secured Medium-Size Project co-financing, in USD:	Cash: 1,079,480 In-kind: 7,236,721 Total: 8,316,201
No. of formal project revisions:	0	Date of last approved project revision:	--
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	3	Date of Last Steering Committee meeting:	25 May 2023
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (<i>planned date</i>):	---	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	---
Terminal Evaluation (<i>planned date</i>):	July 2021	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	March-August 2024
Coverage - Country(ies):	Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Papua New Guinea and St. Lucia	Coverage - Region(s):	Latin America and Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe
Dates of previous project phases:	--	Status of future project phases:	--

¹ The actual figure is USD 1,676,591.06, including USD 620.40 which is going to be deducted from it, as this amount is reported to have been returned from an expenditure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project background

1. The findings of the Management-led Independent Terminal Review of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Global Environment Facility (GEF) project 'Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15' GEF ID 9884 are presented in this report. Approved by the GEF in November 2017 with funds amounting to USD 2 million and implementation duration of 36 months, the project commenced at UNEP in February 2018. Managed and supervised by UNEP Task Manager Mr. Jitendra Sharma and UNEP Project Manager Ms. Mihaela Paun, with UNEP's GEF Chemicals and Waste Unit as Implementing Agency and UNEP's Knowledge and Risk Unit as Executing Agency, it partners with 7 parties to the Stockholm Convention as demonstration countries, namely, Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Honduras, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Madagascar, Republic of Moldova, Independent State of Papua New Guinea and Saint Lucia, as well as with Basel Convention Regional Centre – Stockholm Convention Regional Centres in the People's Republic of China and Republic of South Africa and the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre – Stockholm Convention Regional Centre in the Oriental Republic of Uruguay and the Basel Rotterdam Stockholm Conventions Secretariat. Ukraine, which was initially foreseen as a project partner for demonstration, did not participate in the project.
2. The project was formulated as a response to the request of the parties to the Stockholm Convention during the eighth meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 8) for an electronic toolkit for purposes of submission of the National Implementation Plans and National Reports. It entailed four technical outputs, namely, a gap analysis report, the electronic toolkit, its demonstration and replication.

This Review

3. The Management-led Independent Terminal Review was carried out by a Senior Evaluation Consultant, Ms. Suman Lederer, between 01 March and 15 August 2024 and covered the full time-duration of the project from project commencement in February 2018 till December 2023. The main purposes of this management-led independent terminal review were as follows:
 - 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 the project stakeholders.
4. The terminal review assessed the project based on the criteria – strategic relevance, quality of project design, nature of external context, effectiveness, financial management, efficiency, monitoring and reporting, likelihood of sustainability and factors affecting performance. For data collection, UNEP-internal and external and project-related documents were reviewed, and remote interviews conducted with 21 persons – 10 female, 11 male. The theory of change was reconstructed with a few adaptations to the one in the project document. The terminal review was conducted in alignment with the UNEP and GEF evaluation policies and the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards and the ethical principles for evaluations. The draft report was shared with UNEP for comments and feedback which were taken into consideration while finalising the report.

Key findings and conclusions

5. The project is highly relevant in terms of facilitating the reporting requirements of the parties to the Stockholm Convention to fulfil their obligations under the Stockholm Convention, and contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 12 'Sustainable consumption and production'. Besides a few exceptions, for example, the formulation of outcomes in the project logical framework, the theory of change not being fully in alignment with UNEP's definitions and the additional steps necessary to reach the outcome, the project document fulfils all formal requirements. Project commencement was delayed by at least one year and agreements' signing with the demonstration countries started only in mid-2019. Some delay was also experienced in the development of the e-toolkit, due to amongst others, internet connectivity issues faced by the first Information Technology expert working on the e-toolkit. COVID-19 also caused disruptions in project activities at the national level. Nevertheless, the project was successful in completing and achieving all 4 planned technical outputs, namely, the gap analysis report, the development of the e-toolkit, its testing, preparing a replication strategy and data collection and reporting at the national level in the demonstration countries.
6. The reviewer reconstructed the theory of change and assessed the outcomes based on the reformulated direct and project outcomes. Direct outcome 1 is assessed to be achieved and direct outcome 2 partially achieved, as entering of information in the e-toolkit from all the existing NIPs, as planned in Activity 1.2.2, is not reported to have been achieved within the framework of the project; the reason for this being that NIPs are reported and considered to be documents under national ownership and therefore, it is up to the countries to upload the information from their respective NIPs into the e-toolkit. Data collection at the national level has been pointed out to have been challenging in the demonstration countries due to resource constraints – human, technical and financial. Nonetheless, all the project partners have spent co-finance, surpassing the committed amount by over USD 1 million. However, this may also have been due to the extended time period of project implementation. The findings of the terminal evaluation of UNEP's previous global NIP-Update project have not been consistently taken into consideration in this project, especially with respect to the constraints faced particularly by one of the demonstration countries, Papua New Guinea, which were already mentioned in the terminal evaluation report.
7. The project has taken human rights and gender aspects from the beginning, that is, from the conception phase, into consideration, and made efforts to integrate the gender element in its outputs. Support provided by the Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centres in the People's Republic of China and Republic of South Africa and Basel Convention Coordinating Centre – Stockholm Convention Regional Centre in the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, as well as by the project manager and task manager has been appreciated by all the interviewed stakeholders. UNEP Regional Offices (ROs) were not involved in project implementation.
8. Finally, the e-toolkit has been successfully developed, handed over to the BRS Secretariat and is available online. It is under the ownership of the BRS Secretariat which has confirmed its institutional ownership, including future maintenance and adaptation of the toolkit as necessary. Therefore, sustainability is considered to be highly likely.
9. Based on the findings from this review, the project demonstrates performance at the '**Satisfactory**' level (a table of ratings against all review criteria is found in the Conclusions section). All the interviewed stakeholders have highlighted the project and its results to be highly relevant and useful in terms of supporting their work under the Stockholm Convention.

Lessons Learned

10. All the lessons learned are in Section 'Conclusions'. A few of the lessons learned are mentioned in the following:
11. Lesson 1: Taking into account the results of previous TE(s) might contribute to enhanced effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation and mitigate potential challenges and risks.
12. Lesson 2: Interviewed stakeholders have highlighted the good collaboration amongst all the project partners and the support and guidance provided by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, and that some of them knew each other either from previous projects or COP meetings, which has been conducive to a good working relationship.
13. Lesson 3: Throughout project implementation, there is no evidence of involvement of the UNEP ROs in any of the project activities. However, this is reported to not be the case in future UNEP projects, as all projects are now expected to involve the UNEP ROs in implementation.
14. Lesson 4: Although the project has done well not to discriminate anyone on the basis of their geographical location, internet and connectivity issues have been experienced in certain regions from where part of project execution was supported, adding to the time needed for the development of the toolkit by the first IT expert. Support was reportedly requested from a UNDP office in the country, where the expert could then work twice a week, and the expert also helped himself by working some hours in the night to have better connectivity.

Recommendations

15. All the recommendations are in the Section 'Conclusions'. A few of the recommendations are mentioned in the following:
16. Recommendation 1: **Reduction of time duration from project commencement till actual commencement of activities**
17. The project was approved at UNEP in February 2018 and the SSFAs with the project partners have been signed in mid-2019; the first IT expert was recruited after that in 2019. This is already a delay of 1 year to start with activities of the project, although the demonstration countries were already identified at the project formulation stage.
18. Recommendation 2: **Documenting and reporting consistently any change in the project or project partners**
19. Ukraine was foreseen as a project demonstration country, but has not signed the SSFA and not participated in the implementation of the project's activities, finally due to the commencement of the war in February 2022. However, this should have been documented consistently; its non-participation is mentioned in a few documents, and at the same time, it is still mentioned as a demonstration country in the same documents².
20. Recommendation 3: **Consider expanding such demonstration projects to a larger number of countries**
21. 8 demonstration countries were foreseen to participate in this project from different regions. Ukraine has been unable to participate. However, it was not clear why only 8

² As elaborated in the main body of the report, this has been noted in the PSC minutes of the meeting, but not consistently.

countries were selected to participate in the project. Moreover, with the available GEF budget and with one country not participating, project could have included a few other countries even at a later stage, thus resulting in support being provided to other countries and awareness created on the toolkit. To some extent, this has been covered by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, as they have invited a few additional countries to participate in the testing of the toolkit and all the countries in their constituencies to attend capacity-building presentations and webinars.

22. **Recommendation 4: In case of project extension, increase the number of PSC meetings accordingly**

23. In the project document, 3 PSC meetings are foreseen to take place for 3 years of project implementation. However, the project has been extended, without additional PSC meetings taking place.

24. **Recommendation 5: Continue capacity-building and awareness-raising for the usage of the e-toolkit**

25. Awareness-raising and above all, additional capacity-building may be required for other countries to use the toolkit. Capacity-building is entailed in the new ongoing UNEP project on NIP-Update, which is in line with this recommendation.

Validation

The report has been subject to an independent validation exercise performed by UNEP's Evaluation Office. The performance ratings for the 'Integrated Stockholm convention toolkit to improve the transmission of information under articles 07 and 15' (GEF ID 9884) project, set out in the Conclusions and Recommendations section, have been adjusted as a result. The overall project performance is validated at the **Satisfactory** level. Moreover, the Evaluation Office has found the overall quality of the report to be **Satisfactory** (see Annex XIV).

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents the findings of the management-led independent terminal review (TR) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Global Environment Facility (GEF) project 'Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15', GEF ID: 9884. The TR was carried out by an independent senior terminal review consultant, Ms. Suman Lederer, between 01 March and 15 August 2024 in line with the GEF and UNEP evaluation policies, the UNEP Programme Manual and the terms of reference (TOR) for the TR. It covers the full duration of the project from its commencement at UNEP in February 2018 till December 2023.
2. The project was approved by the GEF in November 2017 with a funding of USD 2 million and commenced at UNEP in February 2018, with a foreseen duration of 36 months for implementation. It was managed by UNEP's GEF Chemicals and Waste Unit as Implementing Agency (IA) and its Knowledge and Risk Unit as Executing Agency (EAg) and contributes to the Expected Achievement (EA) '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 (MEAs)'. At the time of the TR, it was supervised and managed by UNEP Task Manager³ (TM) Mr. Jitendra Sharma and UNEP Project Manager⁴ (PM) Ms. Mihaela Paun. 7 countries participated in the project, namely, the Kingdom of Cambodia⁵, Republic of Honduras⁶, Republic of Kenya⁷, Republic of Madagascar⁸, Independent State of Papua New Guinea⁹, Republic of Moldova¹⁰ and Saint Lucia, as well as the Basel Convention-Stockholm Convention Regional Centres (BCRC-SCRC) based in the People's Republic of China and Republic of South Africa and the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre – Stockholm Convention Regional Centre (BCCC-SCRC) in the Oriental Republic of Uruguay. Being a medium-size project (MSP), a mid-term evaluation was not obligatory and has not been conducted.
3. The main purposes of this management-led independent TR are:
 - 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 the project stakeholders.
4. The electronic toolkit (e-toolkit) was requested by the parties to the Stockholm Convention¹¹ (SC) during the eight meeting of the Conference of Parties¹² (COP-8).

³ Up to 2021, Task Manager was Mr. Ludovic Bernaudat.

⁴ Up to 2021, Project Manager was Ms. Jacqueline Alvarez.

⁵ Hereafter, referred to as Cambodia.

⁶ Hereafter, referred to as Honduras.

⁷ Hereafter, referred to as Kenya.

⁸ Hereafter, referred to as Madagascar.

⁹ Hereafter, referred to as Papua New Guinea.

¹⁰ Hereafter, referred to as Moldova.

¹¹ Hereafter also referred to as 'the Convention', and is used interchangeably with 'SC'.

¹² 24 April – 05 May 2017.

According to the project document, this project is not a follow-up to any project, but has taken the results of several National Implementation Plan (NIP) and NIP-Update projects into account while formulating the project document. Some of these projects have been and are being implemented by UNEP, and some by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and/or the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The NIP and NIP Update submission dates of the 7 demonstration countries are shown in the following table:

Table 2: Overview of NIP and NIP-Update submissions

Country	Initial NIP submission date	Latest NIP Update submission date
Cambodia	03 May 2007	25 Jan 2016
Honduras	13 Jan 2010	13 May 2016
Kenya	14 April 2007	07 Oct 2014
Madagascar	25 Sept 2008	06 Oct 2017
Moldova	15 Aug 2005	22 June 2023
Papua New Guinea	09 Sept 2013	---
Saint Lucia	10 Jul 2007	18 June 2021

Source: Stockholm Convention website.

II. TERMINAL REVIEW METHODS

5. This management-led independent TR¹³ was conducted between 01 March and 15 August 2024 by an independent senior review consultant, Ms. Suman Lederer, in line with the GEF and UNEP evaluation policies, the UNEP Programme Manual (2023 Edition) and the TOR for the TR. It covered the complete duration of the project from its commencement at UNEP in February 2018 till 31 December 2023.
6. The Senior TR Consultant has vast experience in the field of evaluations since over 10 years, and has led evaluations in Africa, Asia, Caucasus, Central Asia, South-Pacific, South-east Europe. She has prior evaluation/review experience with UNEP and with GEF projects and was a team member of the portfolio evaluation of the Enabling Activities “Global Project on the Updating of National Implementation Plans for POPs” – GEF ID 5307 and 5525, covering 35 countries, which was conducted between 2018 and 2019.
7. The Senior TR consultant worked under the overall responsibility of the UNEP TM Mr. Jitendra Sharma, supported by UNEP PM Ms. Mihaela Claudia Paun and UNEP Associate Program Officer Mr. Alexander Romanov. UNEP was kept informed throughout the TR.
8. The TR was conducted in and entailed the following phases:
 - i. Inception phase
 - ii. Desk/Document review
 - iii. Data collection and analysis
 - iv. Main report drafting
 - v. Feedback from UNEP and stakeholders
 - vi. Main report finalization
 - vii. Presentation of the findings of the TR, if requested.
9. The TR commenced on 01 March 2024 with the signing of the contract and with an initial briefing from UNEP TM and PM. UNEP’s evaluation office provided detailed guidance documents to conduct the TR which were followed by the senior TR consultant. In line with the guidance documents, the project was assessed based on the following evaluation criteria:
 - i) Strategic relevance
 - ii) Quality of project design
 - iii) Nature of external context
 - iv) Effectiveness
 - v) Financial management
 - vi) Efficiency
 - vii) Monitoring and reporting

¹³ UNEP, 2023: This is a management-led process intended to assess the performance of a project after operational completion. The UNEP Project Manager leads the process, often by hiring the services of an external consultant, and the Independent Evaluation Office validates the performance ratings and assesses the quality of the Final Review Report. A suite of guidance tools is provided by the Evaluation Office to support those carrying out the Review.

- viii) Likelihood of sustainability
 - ix) Factors affecting performance.
10. In line with the above criteria, a TR framework matrix was prepared with the TR criteria, main TR questions and corresponding indicators/means of verification and data sources; this is included in Annex III. For the assessment of the above criteria, the following data-collection methods were used:
- i. **Document review:** Several documents were provided by the Task and Project managers at the onset of the TR, inter alia, project document, project implementation reports (PIRs), output documents, project steering committee (PSC) reports, etc., which were reviewed. The list of reviewed documents is included in Annex IV.
 - ii. **Stakeholder interviews:** During the inception phase, UNEP TM and PM were consulted about the key stakeholders to be interviewed for the TR and a list of stakeholders to be interviewed agreed upon. Based on this, 21 persons were consulted, and interviews conducted remotely, via Zoom, with 10 female and 11 male persons – focal points of 6 demonstration countries, representatives of UNEP, Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centres (BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs), Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions Secretariat (BRS Secretariat) and consultants and experts involved in the project. Selection of stakeholders for the interviews was based not on their gender, but rather on their participation and role in the project and therefore their potential contribution to the TR. A qualitative text analysis was carried out with the information received, which was triangulated across the other data collection methods and sources. The list of stakeholders interviewed is included in Annex II.

Table 3: No. of key stakeholders interviewed

	No. of persons interviewed
Female	10
Male	11
Total	21

- iii. **Evaluation mission:** An evaluation mission to any of the demonstration country was not foreseen or planned for this TR.
11. The project document entails a theory of change (TOC); this was reviewed and adapted during the main TR phase. The updated TOC is included in Section IV.
12. UNEP TM and PM were informed throughout the TR via e-mails and remote meetings conducted on a regular basis to ensure a transparent TR process and clarify any questions.
13. The TR followed the UNEG¹⁴ ethical principles for evaluations, to ensure honesty, truthfulness, professionalism, independence, impartiality, incorruptibility, transparency, respect, responsiveness, accountability, human rights and doing-no-harm. The Senior TR Consultant made equal efforts to contact the key stakeholders without any bias,

¹⁴ United Nations Evaluation Group.

immaterial of factors such as age, gender, race, sexual orientation, background, religion or ethnicity, as well as made efforts to maintain confidentiality¹⁵ and to interact with the stakeholders with appropriate empathy and cultural sensitivity.

14. Data collection and especially the stakeholder interviews were conducted following UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016, 2017) and UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (2020), as follows:

- Data was collected taking into consideration respect for ethics and human rights issues;
- All information was collected according to United Nations (UN) Standards of Conduct;
- All the interviewed stakeholders were informed about the TR by the UNEP project management team;
- The reviewer requested the interviewed stakeholder to mention if the interview poses or has the potential to pose any harm or risk to them;
- Information received during interviews has been analysed in an anonymous manner;
- Findings and judgments are based on evidence and analysis.

LIMITATIONS

Table 4: Limitations

Limitation	Mitigation Measures
One limitation was that feedback regarding the e-toolkit from other parties to the Convention, which did not participate in the project, could not be received, as decision was made by UNEP not to carry out an e-survey the reason mentioned was that it was logistically difficult for UNEP to reach out to all the parties to the Convention, and that it was considered to be beyond the scope of the project and the TR.	Feedback to the e-toolkit received by UNEP from 12 countries was provided to the reviewer.
No response was received from the National Focal Point (NFP) in Honduras to the repeated requests made via e-mail for a TR meeting with the reviewer.	The reviewer could reach and hold TR meetings with FPs of the other six countries, as well as the three BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs and the BRS Secretariat.

15. Besides the above-mentioned limitations, the TR did not face any other specific limitation; all the information and documents provided to the reviewer were deemed to be sufficient, and challenges in conducting the TR or receiving information were not faced.

¹⁵ The Senior TR Consultant made efforts to maintain confidentiality of data, but cannot guarantee against any type of illegal breach of data or confidentiality.

III. THE PROJECT

A. Context

16. 186¹⁶ countries are parties¹⁷ to the Stockholm Convention¹⁸ (SC) on persistent organic pollutants¹⁹ (POPs), including the 7 demonstration countries, namely, Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Moldova and Saint Lucia. Under Article 7 of the Convention, each party is obliged to prepare and implement a NIP to fulfil its obligations under the Convention. Under Article 15, the parties shall report their Convention-related work and progress to the Convention at regular time intervals, and in a format provided by the COP.

Table 5: Stockholm Convention Articles 7 and 15

Article 7 Implementation Plans:

1. Each Party shall:

(a) Develop and endeavour to implement a plan for the implementation of its obligations under this Convention;

(b) Transmit its implementation plan to the Conference of the Parties within two years of the date on which this Convention enters into force for it; and

(c) Review and update, as appropriate, its implementation plan on a periodic basis and in a manner to be specified by a decision of the Conference of the Parties.

2. The Parties shall, where appropriate, cooperate directly or through global, regional and subregional organizations, and consult their national stakeholders, including women's groups and groups involved in the health of children, in order to facilitate the development, implementation and updating of their implementation plans.

3. The Parties shall endeavour to utilize and, where necessary, establish the means to integrate national implementation plans for persistent organic pollutants in their sustainable development strategies where appropriate.

Article 15 Reporting:

1. Each Party shall report to the Conference of the Parties on the measures it has taken to implement the provisions of this Convention and on the effectiveness of such measures in meeting the objectives of the Convention.

2. Each Party shall provide to the Secretariat:

(a) Statistical data on its total quantities of production, import and export of each of the chemicals listed in Annex A and Annex B or a reasonable estimate of such data; and

¹⁶ According to the Stockholm Convention website.

¹⁷ Stockholm Convention text: "For the purposes of this Convention: (a) "Party" means a State or regional economic integration organization that has consented to be bound by this Convention and for which the Convention is in force."

¹⁸ Hereafter, also referred to as 'the Convention'.

¹⁹ Article 1 Objective: Mindful of the precautionary approach as set forth in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the objective of this Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.

(b) To the extent practicable, a list of the States from which it has imported each such substance and the States to which it has exported each such substance.

3. Such reporting shall be at periodic intervals and in a format to be decided by the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting.

Source: Stockholm Convention website.

17. Under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12 ‘Sustainable consumption and production’, indicator 12.4.1 states ‘Number of Parties to multilateral environment agreements (MEA) that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each agreement’.

18. For an effective implementation of the SC, it is crucial that parties to the Convention transmit their NIPs, NIP updates and national reports at foreseen time intervals; these contribute amongst others, to a measurement of effectiveness of implementation of the SC. As explained in the project document, countries are faced with a number of challenges while preparing the NIP or the NIP-update, that is, inadequate financial, human and technical resources, as a result of which parts of the national reports do not contain adequate or appropriate information, including in the demonstration countries. To support adequate and appropriate information in the NIP-updates, as well as the national reports, the electronic toolkit was requested by the parties to the Stockholm Convention during its eight meeting of the COP (COP-8).

B. Objectives and components

19. According to the project document, the objective²⁰ of the project is to “facilitate the development, transmission, access and use of data contained in National Implementation Plans (NIP, Article 7) and national reports (Article 15)”.

20. The following table presents an overview of project outcome and outputs.

Table 6: Overview of outcome and outputs

Expected Accomplishment²¹ (EA):	UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2014-2017, Sub-programme – Chemicals and Waste – EA1 - 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.
POW Output:	Programme of Work (POW), Subprogramme 5 – Chemicals and Waste – EA a) Countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, including the implementation of related provisions in the multilateral environmental agreements.
Overall objective:	Facilitate the development, transmission, access and use of data contained in national implementation plans (NIP, Article 7) and national reports (Article 15)

²⁰ The Project Objective is the intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development results to which a project is expected to contribute.

²¹ Expected Accomplishments were the outcomes of a UNEP Programme of Work until 2021 (i.e., from the MTS 2022-2025 onwards, the term POW Direct Outcome instead of EA).

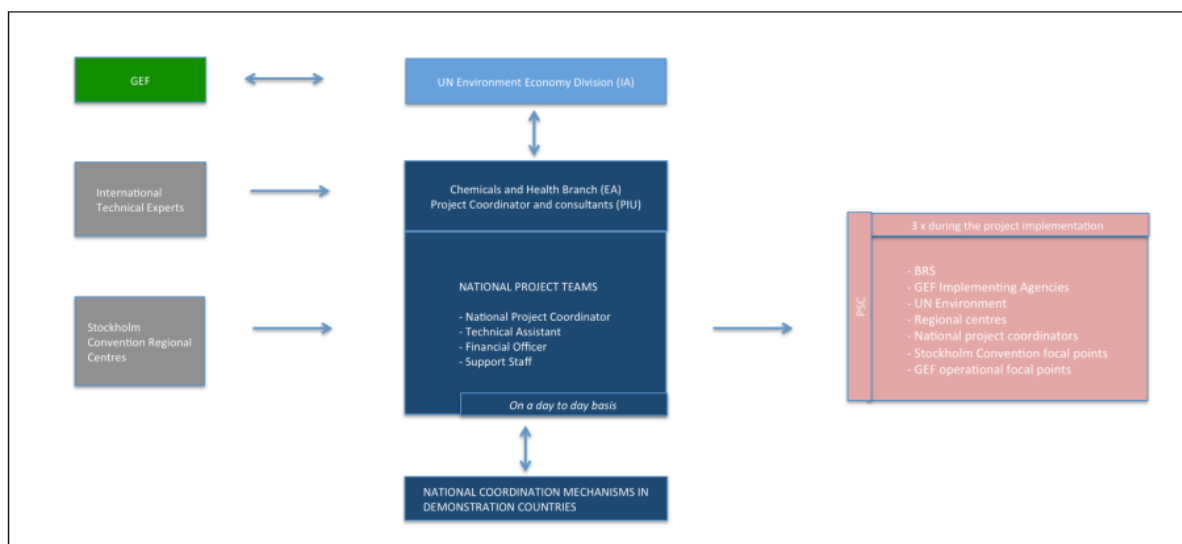
Expected Outcome 1	Enhanced compliance with the SC through improved transmission, accessibility and use of data contained in NIPs (Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15)
Output 1.1	Gap analysis and consultations with Parties to the SC and implementing agencies developed, taking into account gender aspects
Activity 1.1.1	Gap analysis and consultations with Parties to the SC and implementing agencies
Output 1.2	Integrated Articles 7 and 15 electronic toolkit designed taking into account the recommendation on gender, tested and endorsed by the project steering committee
Activity 1.2.1	Development of toolkit modules and pages
Activity 1.2.2	Upload existing NIPs into the integrated electronic toolkit
Output 1.3	Demonstration of the integrated electronic toolkit taking into account gender aspects
Activity 1.3.1	Support to planning and delivery of inventory results (integrated electronic toolkit providing the right platform to do this)
Activity 1.3.2	Support to action planning and integrating the NIP in national processes and budgets
Activity 1.3.3	Countries updated National Reports and incoming data
Output 1.4	Development of replication strategy
Activity 1.4.1	Development of replication strategy for improved NIP transmission and support
Output 1.5	Monitoring and evaluation
Activity 1.5.1	EA completes all regular monitoring reports as required by the M&E plan
Activity 1.5.2	EA organises at least three steering committee meetings
Activity 1.5.3	UNEP Evaluation Office carries out the TE and makes it publicly available on the UNEP website

C. Project implementation structure and partners

21. The GEF has provided funds to the project. UNEP's GEF Chemicals and Waste Unit is the IA and its Knowledge and Risk Unit the EAg, where the PM is also based. As mentioned above, 7 countries have participated in the project, and carried out activities at the national level. A PSC oversaw the project and provided guidance to the project; it consisted of the IA and EAg, the BRS Secretariat, the 7 demonstration countries and the

BCRC-SCRCs in China and South Africa and the BCCC-SCRC in Uruguay. The project has recruited international experts to carry out a few activities, amongst others, for the development of the e-toolkit and the preparation of the gender guidance. This implementation structure is illustrated in the project document as follows:

Figure 1: Organigram of the Project with key project key stakeholders



Source: Project document.

D. Stakeholders²²

22. UNEP Industry and Economy Division/GEF Chemicals and Waste Unit is the IA for the project, and UNEP Knowledge and Risk Unit (KRU), Chemicals and Health Branch (CHB) is the EA for the project.
23. Ukraine, although mentioned in the project document as a demonstration country and participated in the Inception Workshop, never really joined the project; and project activities at the national level were not conducted within the framework of this project.
24. Therefore, UNEP KRU has worked together with 7 demonstration countries, contractors, BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs and with the BRS Secretariat; these are the stakeholders that have high influence on and high interest in project implementation. UNEP Regional Offices (ROs) were not involved in any way in the project activities.
25. Besides the above, other stakeholders are academia and civil society organizations, which do not have high influence on project implementation, but high interest in the project; and the private sector and women's associations, which do not have high influence, and possibly no high interest in the project. As explained by some of the demonstration countries, civil society and women's organizations are normally invited to the workshops and webinars. However, beyond that, they were not involved in project implementation and any of the project activities.

²² A term used in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs, target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP. The term also includes individuals or groups directly or indirectly affected by the changes caused by a project's intervention or operations.

E. Changes in design during implementation

26. Only one change was reported to the TR; as mentioned earlier, Ukraine, although mentioned in the project document as a demonstration country, participated initially in the Inception Workshop in October 2018 in Montevideo, Uruguay, but did not join the project officially; project activities at the national level were not conducted within the framework of this project, and it did not receive any funds from the project; the small-scale funding agreement (SSFA), which was signed between UNEP and the other 7 demonstration countries was not signed with Ukraine. However, this change is not consistently documented. No other changes were reported to the TR.

F. Project financing

27. The project has received funding from the GEF amounting to United States Dollar (USD) 2 million. The following table presents the planned budget for the project:

Table 7: Planned GEF-budget per output

Outputs	GEF funds - USD	Co-finance - USD	Sub-total - USD
1.1	158,000	185,000	343,000
1.2	448,970	485,240	934,210
1.3	1,071,000	4,005,500	5,076,500
1.4	71,000	267,000	338,000
1.5	70,000	50,000	120,000
Project Management	181,030	2,239,600	2,420,630
Total	2,000,000	7,232,340	9,232,340

Source: Project document.

28. The following table presents the committed co-finance for the project:

Table 8: Committed co-finance

Name of co-financer	Type of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount - USD
UNEP	Implementing Agency	In-kind	300,000
BRS Secretariat	International Organization	In-kind	1,080,000
Cambodia	National Government	In-kind	335,600
Honduras	National Government	In-kind	387,740
Kenya	National Government	In-kind	2,700,000
		Grant	300,000
Madagascar	National Government	In-kind	300,000
		Grant	330,000
Republic of Moldova	National Government	In-kind	315,000
Papua New Guinea	National Government	In-kind	174,000
Ukraine	National Government		350,000
BCRC-SCRC-China		In-kind	174,000

		Grant	226,000
BCRC-SCRC-South Africa		In-kind	200,000
BCCC-SCRC-Uruguay		In-kind	50,000
		Grant	10,000
Total			7,232,340

Source: Project document.

29. Actual figures of expenditure and co-finance spent are presented in Section E – Financial Management.

IV. THEORY OF CHANGE AT TERMINAL REVIEW

30. A TOC is a “description and illustration of how and why desired change is expected to happen in a context²³”, that is, it illustrates the pathway to impact in a simplified manner. A TOC is included in the project document in Annex 8; this TOC has been modified and reconstructed in line with UNEP’s definitions²⁴ of different results’ levels, to present the causal pathway²⁵ from, and contribution of, project activities, outputs and outcomes to the envisaged impact. Documents consulted for this purpose are the project document, the text of the Stockholm Convention, as well as information provided on the website of the Stockholm Convention. UNEP’s relevant definitions are included in the following box:

Table 9: Overview of relevant UNEP definitions

UNEP 2023:

Activity: An action taken, or work performed, through which inputs are utilized to realize specific results.

Assumption: An assumption is a significant external factor or condition that should be present for the realization of the intended results but is beyond the influence of the project and its partners. Assumptions are often positively formulated risks (see also Driver).

Project Direct Outcome(s): A project direct outcome is an outcome that is intended to be achieved from the uptake of outputs and occurring prior to the achievement of Project outcome(s).

Driver: A driver is a significant external factor that, if present, is expected to contribute to the realization of the intended results of a project. Drivers can be influenced by the project and its partners. (See also Assumption).

Impact: Impacts are long-lasting results arising, directly or indirectly from a project. Impacts are intended and positive changes and must relate to UNEP’s mandate.

Impact Pathway/ Causal Pathway / Results Chain: Impact or Causal Pathways and Results Chains all describe cause and effect relationships between outputs, outcomes and impacts and are the basis of a project/programme’s “Theory of Change”.

Intermediate States: Intermediate states are changes (i.e., changes at the outcome level) beyond the Project Outcome(s) that are required to contribute towards the achievement of the intended impact of a project.

Outcome(s): An outcome is a change at institutional level, or changes in behaviors, attitudes or conditions achieved from the use (i.e., uptake, adoption, application) of outputs by intended beneficiaries.

Outputs: An output is the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities, and awareness of individuals or within institutions.

²³ UNEP Glossary of results definitions, December 2023.

²⁴ The Project Review Committee (PRC) has pointed out the need for harmonisation of the TOC language to that of UNEP.

²⁵ PRC comments are along similar lines – that the TOC illustrates the causal pathways and to identify how the project fits within the scope, as well as identify the GEF results.

TOC: A Theory of Change is a method used for planning a project, describing the participation that will be needed by different actors and for evaluating the project's performance. It articulates long lasting intended impact and then maps backward to identify the preconditions necessary to achieve this impact(s). It is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why desired change is expected to happen in a context.

Source: UNEP Glossary of results definitions, December 2023.

31. All four technical Outputs 1.1 – 1.4 have not been modified, as well as the envisaged impact. A few additional steps are necessary to reach the Expected Outcome 1 formulated in the project document 'enhanced compliance with the Stockholm Convention'. The reviewer has reconstructed the TOC and the changes are presented in the following table:

Table 10: Reformulation of Results Statements

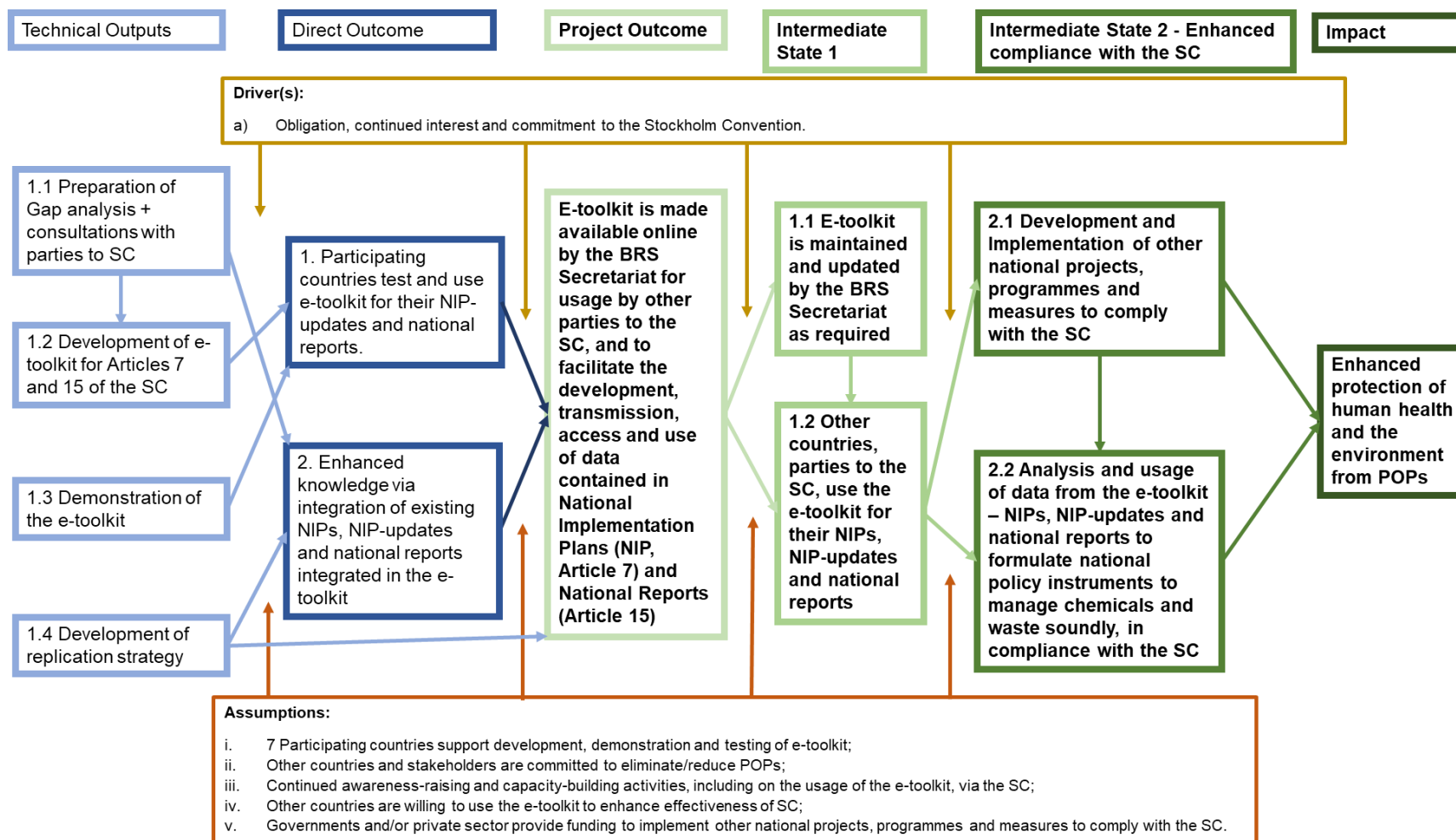
TOC in the project document	Reconstructed TOC
<p>Outcome: Enhanced compliance with the Stockholm Convention (SC) through improved transmission, accessibility and use of data (Article 16) contained in National Implementation Plans (NIP, Article 07) and National Reports (Article 15)</p>	<p>Direct Outcomes:</p> <p>1: Demonstration countries test and use e-toolkit for their NIP-updates and national reports.</p> <p>2: Enhanced knowledge via integration of existing NIPs, NIP-updates and national reports integrated in the e-toolkit.</p> <p>Project Outcome: E-toolkit is made available online by the BRS Secretariat for usage by other parties to the SC, and to facilitate the development, transmission, access and use of data contained in National Implementation Plans (NIP, Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15).</p>
<p>Intermediate Results: Parties to the MEAs meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by the SC (SDG 12.4.1)</p>	<p>Intermediate State 1:</p> <p>1.1 E-toolkit is maintained and updated by the BRS Secretariat as required.</p> <p>1.2 Other countries, parties to the SC, use the e-toolkit for their NIPs, NIP-updates and national reports.</p>
<p>Near term expected impacts: 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 MTS 2014-2017)</p>	<p>Intermediate State 2: Enhanced compliance with the SC</p> <p>2.1 Development and Implementation of other national projects, programmes and measures to comply with the SC.</p> <p>2.2 Analysis and usage of data from the e-toolkit – NIPs, NIP-updates and national reports to formulate national policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, in compliance with the SC.</p>

Drivers and Assumptions:	
Drivers: Awareness raised on the need to improve data collection and management strategy for a more effective implementation of the SC	Driver(s): Obligation, continued interest and commitment to the Stockholm Convention.
Assumptions: Key national stakeholders in demonstration countries display interest in contributing to the data collection for the timely NIP and national report development	Assumptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. 7 Demonstration countries support development, demonstration and testing of e-toolkit; ii. Other countries and stakeholders are committed to eliminate/reduce POPs; iii. Continued awareness-raising and capacity-building activities, including on the usage of the e-toolkit, via the SC; iv. Other countries are willing to use the e-toolkit to enhance effectiveness of SC; v. Governments and/or private sector provide funding to implement other national projects, programmes and measures to comply with the SC.

32. According to the modified TOC, reconstructed by the terminal reviewer, and discussed with the TM and PM, the four technical outputs 1.1-1.4 would contribute to two Direct Outcomes, namely, that the 7 demonstration countries test and use the e-toolkit for their NIP-updates and national reports; and availability of enhanced knowledge via integration of existing NIPs, NIP-updates and national reports in the e-toolkit, which would contribute to the Project Outcome of the BRS Secretariat making it available online for usage by other parties to the SC besides the 7 demonstration countries for their NIPs, NIP-updates and national reports. Achievement of the Project Outcome is expected to lead to Intermediate State 1, that the e-toolkit is maintained and updated by the BRS Secretariat and that other parties to the SC enter their data from the NIPs and national reports in the e-toolkit.
33. Achievement of Intermediate State 1 is expected to lead to Intermediate State 2, data from the e-toolkit can be analysed and used to formulate policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, in compliance with the SC, and that parties to the SC develop and implement other national projects, programmes and measures to comply with the SC, that is, enhanced compliance with the SC.
34. The Intermediate State 2 corresponds to the Expected Accomplishment 1 of UNEP MTS 2014-2017 Sub-programme Chemicals and Waste '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'.
35. The achievement of the Intermediate States as mentioned above would also mean enhanced compliance with the SC, which is expected to lead to the envisaged Impact 'protection of human health and the environment from POPs'.

36. For the achievement of all of the above, the identified Driver in the reconstructed TOC is:
- i. Obligation, continued interest and commitment to the Stockholm Convention.
37. All the interviewees expressed that they are aware of the need to eliminate POPs and that their respective countries are committed to this objective. They are making efforts to update their NIPs and fulfil also their reporting obligations and carry out necessary data collection for it. They consider it as important, but are facing challenges at the same time.
38. Similarly, for the achievement of all the Outcomes, Intermediate States and envisaged Impact, identified Assumptions are as follows:
- i. 7 Demonstration countries support the development, demonstration and testing of e-toolkit;
 - ii. Other countries and stakeholders are committed to eliminating/reducing POPs;
 - iii. Continuation of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities, including on the usage of the e-toolkit, via the SC;
 - iv. Other countries are willing to use the e-toolkit to enhance effectiveness of the SC;
 - v. Governments and/or private sector provide funding to implement other national projects, programmes and measures to comply with the SC.
39. All the 7 demonstration countries have actively participated in the project, supported the development of the e-toolkit, and provided feedback for the development of the toolkit as well as to the draft versions of the toolkit. All 7 demonstration countries have reported testing the toolkit. The BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have conducted capacity-building or other workshops, where other countries, besides the 7 demonstration countries, have also participated and reported that the toolkit is deemed to be a very important tool also by other countries. The BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have raised awareness about the toolkit during different workshops and have mentioned that they plan on providing information about the toolkit also in future. UNEP has already commenced a global NIP-Update project, with the participation of 32 countries, the 'Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)' GEF ID 10785, and plans on entering all relevant information via the e-toolkit. At the national level, the demonstration countries have mentioned that the countries are committed to fulfilling their obligations to the SC and are planning mechanisms at the national level, including IT infrastructure, for data collection and reporting; these however need funds and time to be established, and challenges are being faced.
40. In line with the project document, the achievement of the technical Outputs, Direct Outcomes and Project Outcome falls under the responsibility of the project; thereafter, the achievement of the Intermediate States 1 and 2 falls under the responsibility of the different countries, that is parties to the SC, the driver being their obligation and commitment to the SC. Gender and human rights considerations are to be taken into account by all and at all stages.
41. The reconstructed TOC is illustrated as follows:

Figure 2: Reconstructed TOC at TR



V. TERMINAL REVIEW FINDINGS

A. Strategic Relevance

Findings:

1. The project is in alignment with UNEP's strategies and priorities, GEF's strategic priorities, the Stockholm Convention and country NIPs and contributes to SDG 12 'Sustainable consumption and production'.

Alignment to UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy²⁶ (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

42. **UNEP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2014-2017:** The objective of the sub-programme Chemicals and Waste is "to promote a transition among countries to the sound management of chemicals and waste, with a view to minimizing impacts on the environment and human health". At the time of its formulation, the project was in alignment with the EA1, that is, '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'. Adequate and appropriate information/data is necessary for countries to upgrade necessary institutional capacity, and prepare policy instruments for the effective management of chemicals and waste. Sending the national reports – in line with Article 15 of the SC – would, firstly, require countries to have done the work, that is, to have implemented their obligations to the SC in their respective countries, and secondly, to compile required data, to then report on it. Data thus compiled is necessary to have an overview and measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the SC, and for countries to draft/adapt their policies accordingly.
43. **UNEP MTS 2018-2021:** Project was approved by the GEF in November 2017; it is also in alignment with UNEP's MTS 2018-2021 - Policies and legal, institutional and fiscal strategies and mechanisms for sound chemicals management developed or implemented in countries within the frameworks of relevant MEAs and Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM); indicator 'Increased number of Parties to international MEAs on hazardous and other chemicals and waste that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement'.
44. **UNEP MTS 2022-2025** emphasizes the significance of MEAs within its 'Towards a pollution-free planet implementation plan', within its principles: b) Working through partnerships towards a pollution-free planet; and c) Recognizing that global and regional environmental agreements provide a collaborative framework for governance and time-bound actions. The project has contributed to one of the three 2025 outcomes, namely, Outcome 1: 'Human health and environmental outcomes are optimized through enhanced capacity and leadership in the sound management of chemicals and waste' – "UNEP will promote sound science and information and knowledge sharing on chemicals, waste and pollution" and "UNEP will accelerate policy shifts towards the sound management of chemicals and waste".

²⁶ 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.
<https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

45. From the above, it is clear that the MEAs are a part of the focus area at UNEP, and the project is in alignment with all three MTS so far.
46. **UNEP Programme of Work (POW) 2016-2017:** Project is therefore also in alignment with UNEP POW 2016-2017, EA (a): Countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, including the implementation of related provisions in the multilateral environmental agreements; indicator i) Increased number and percentage of countries reporting the adoption of policies and regulatory frameworks for the sound management of chemicals and waste, with the assistance of UNEP.
47. Similarly, project is also in alignment with UNEP POWs 2018-2019, 2020-2021 and 2022-2023.
- 48. Rating for Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities: Highly Satisfactory**

Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities

49. After formulation, the project has been submitted to and approved by the GEF²⁷ as a medium-size project (MSP) under GEF-6. The GEF-6 chemical and waste strategy's long-term goal is "to prevent the exposure of humans and environment to harmful chemicals²⁸ and waste²⁹ of global importance, including POPs, mercury and ozone-depleting substances, through a significant reduction in the production, use, consumption and emissions/release of those chemicals and waste". The project is in alignment with the Strategic Objective CW1: Develop the enabling conditions, tools and environment for the sound management of harmful chemicals and wastes. And one of the goals to be achieved therein is "through sound data, analysis, and policy frameworks, ... to address the need for enabling conditions to mainstream chemicals and waste management concerns into the national budgets, national planning and policies, and development agenda as well as sector policies", which the project contributes to, specifically, Program 2 of CW1 – Support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets and planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring. Funding for NIPs and NIP-updates falls under Program 2. It aims to support the consolidation of the results of these, including via the reporting mechanisms, for a usage of the information for corresponding planning at national and sector levels. The information provided in the NIPs and NIP-updates are considered to contribute to "foreseen institutional structures of the special program component of the integrated approach in UNEP Governing Council decision 27/12³⁰". The project is deemed to be fully in line with the above objectives.

²⁷ GEF-6, 2014: The objective of the GEF is to achieve an overall net benefit to the global environment. There are five focal area strategies under GEF-6 – i) biodiversity; ii) climate change mitigations; iii) chemicals and waste; iv) international waters; and v) land degradation. Programming targets under GEF-6 for the focal area Chemicals and Waste was USD 554 million against USD 425 million under GEF-5.

²⁸ GEF-6, 2014: For the purpose of the GEF, "Chemicals" in the strategy refer to chemicals controlled under the Stockholm Convention, Minamata Convention and Montreal Protocol as well as those covered by SAICM.

²⁹ GEF-6, 2014: "Waste" refers to waste generated from the production, use and consumption of the chemicals covered by the MEAs for which the GEF is the financial mechanism and other harmful wastes as appropriate in these chemical conventions, the Montreal Protocol and SAICM.

³⁰ In February 2013, The UNEP Governing Council decided to invite governments to consider establishing, through an existing institution, a special programme, funded by voluntary contributions, to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the

50. Rating for Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities: Highly Satisfactory

Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities

51. As mentioned earlier, 186 countries are parties to the Stockholm Convention on POPs, including the 7 demonstration countries participating in the project, Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Moldova and Saint Lucia. Under Article 7 of the Convention, each party is obliged to prepare and implement a NIP to fulfil its obligations under the Convention. Under Article 15, the parties shall report their Convention-related work and progress to the Convention at regular time intervals, and in a format provided by the COP, that is, the national reports. The project was formulated following a decision at COP-8 “To develop, subject to availability of resources, an electronic template for the quantitative information included in national implementation plans in a harmonized manner with the reporting under Article 15 of the Convention” and “To undertake, subject to the availability of resources, capacity-building and training activities to support Parties in order to facilitate the development, review and updating of national implementation plans, taking into account the guidance documents ...”.
52. Therefore, the project is fully aligned with, and contributes to, the objectives of the SC and thus also the environmental priorities of the parties to the SC.
53. Moreover, it fully complies with indicator 12.4.1 ‘Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement’ of target 12.4 ‘By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and environment’ of SDG 12. The project document and a few other documents, inter alia, the PIRs, also mention that the project contributes to SDGs 3.9³¹ and 6.3³², according to the reconstructed TOC, this contribution can only be considered to be indirect, as the project is not undertaking any activities to contribute to the thematic areas of these goals.

Rating for Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities: Highly Satisfactory

Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence

54. Both UNEP and other UN Agencies have prepared several NIP Guidance documents. UNEP has implemented a “Global Project on the Updating of National Implementation Plans for POPs³³” – GEF ID 5307 and 5525, covering 35 countries, and at the time of the TR, is reported to be implementing a NIP-update project in further 32 countries.

future Minamata Convention and the SAICM, noting that each respective governing body would have to determine the participation of its entity in the special programme (GC 27/12).

³¹ By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.

³² By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.

³³ The terminal evaluation was conducted between 2018 and 2019; the Senior Terminal Review Consultant was a member of the terminal evaluation team.

Being parties to the SC, the 7 demonstration countries participating in the project have prepared their respective NIPs and submitted them, and with the exception of Papua New Guinea³⁴, the others have submitted a NIP update and also at least one national report within their regular reporting obligation. Prior to the project, the countries have also participated in capacity-building workshops on NIP-updating organized by the BRS Secretariat and by UNEP, thus receiving information about the preparation of the NIP-update and its requirements.

55. The project, in a way, builds upon information, feedback and results as well as requirements stemming out of all of the above enabling activity projects.
56. The project is also in alignment with the objectives of the Bali Strategic Plan for technology support and capacity-building as it provides a tool to the parties to the SC to support national institutions in data collection, analysis and monitoring and facilitate their compliance with the SC.

Rating for Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence: Highly Satisfactory

Rating for Strategic Relevance: Highly Satisfactory

B. Quality of Project Design

Findings:

2. On the whole, the project document fulfils UNEP's formal criteria for project documents; additional steps are necessary to reach the formulated outcome, which are illustrated in the reconstructed TOC. A structured capacity-building component for other parties to the SC is not included in the project design. 8 countries were consulted to be part of the project, additional countries were not foreseen or consulted regarding participation in the project. With the participation of (finally)7 demonstration countries, the project has covered different geographical regions.

57. Project document was prepared in 2017, and according to Annex 2 of the project document, national focal points of Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia and Ukraine were consulted for the development of the project. It was discussed and decided at the COP-8 to prepare an integrated toolkit, and these 8 countries, which are in different geographical locations of the world, reportedly agreed to participate in the project as demonstration countries. However, it is not really clear how the number of countries was decided and if other countries were approached to participate in the project. The project document mentions the above-mentioned 8 countries and the project was discussed with them during project preparation. One reported reason was the wide geographical coverage, namely, Southeast Asia, Central America, East Africa, Eastern Europe, Southwest Pacific/Oceania and Eastern Caribbean, including island states, and one possible reason for deciding on the potential participation of 8 countries may have been that the foreseen budget for the project was considered to be adequate for 8 countries and the BCRC-SCRCs based in China and South Africa and the BCCC-SCRC in Uruguay, thus also covering the regions East Asia, Africa and South America.
58. The project document entails detailed information about the situation and the problem. It includes a logframe and a TOC, which was modified slightly during the main TR phase, as additional steps are necessary to reach the formulated outcome. Gender has been

³⁴ As reported to the TR, the NIP-Update of Papua New Guinea has been prepared and is awaiting approval via internal procedures to submit it to the SC.

addressed throughout, for example, in the project document in 3 out of 4 technical outputs. The project document fulfils the formal requirements, that is, contains information on all the required criteria, with few shortcomings, for example, the e-toolkit is meant for usage by all parties to the SC; however, a capacity-building component for the parties to the SC is not included in project design directly; it has been carried out via the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs.

59. The following table presents the ratings for the different criteria for the assessment of the project design:

Table 11: Project design ratings table

	SECTION	RATING (1-6)	WEIGHTING	TOTAL (Rating x Weighting)
A	Operating Context	Satisfactory	0.4	0.2
B	Project Preparation	Satisfactory	1.2	0.6
C	Strategic Relevance	Satisfactory	0.8	0.4
D	Intended Results and Causality	Satisfactory	1.6	0.8
E	Logical Framework and Monitoring	Satisfactory	0.8	0.4
F	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	Satisfactory	0.4	0.2
G	Partnerships	Highly Satisfactory	0.8	0.48
H	Learning, Communication and Outreach	Moderately Satisfactory	0.4	0.16
I	Financial Planning / Budgeting	Satisfactory	0.4	0.2
J	Efficiency	Satisfactory	0.8	0.4
K	Risk identification and Social Safeguards	Satisfactory	0.8	0.4
L	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects	Satisfactory	1.2	0.6
M	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps	Satisfactory	0.4	0.2
			TOTAL SCORE:	5.04 Satisfactory <i>(Sum Totals divided by 10)</i>

1 (Highly Unsatisfactory)	< 1.83	4 (Moderately Satisfactory)	>=3.5 <=4.33
2 (Unsatisfactory)	>= 1.83 < 2.66	5 (Satisfactory)	>4.33 <= 5.16
3 (Moderately Unsatisfactory)	>=2.66 <3.5	6 (Highly Satisfactory)	> 5.16

60. Altogether, the project document is assessed to be 'Satisfactory'. Most of the criteria have been rated as 'Satisfactory' and the lowest rating is 'Moderately Satisfactory' for 'Learning, Communication and Outreach'.

Rating for Project Design: SATISFACTORY

C. Nature of the External Context

Findings:

3. Besides the unexpected onset of the COVID-19 pandemic which affected the implementation of the project activities, including at the national level in all 7 demonstration countries, other

factors limiting project's performance, e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval, were not reported to the TR.

61. As mentioned earlier, initially, Ukraine had also planned to be a part of the project. However, for some internal reasons, there were delays in its official participation, that is, in signing an SSFA with UNEP, and finally, due to the outbreak of the war in February 2022, it could not and did not participate in the project.
62. All the 7 demonstration countries reported the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic to have hindered the implementation of project-related activities in their respective countries due to the restriction on movement on persons implemented almost all over the world.
63. At the same time, it was pointed out by a few interviewees that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of coordination work was shifted to the online format and this actually facilitated holding quite a few online webinars, thus making good use of the time when actual movement of persons was restricted.
64. Further to the above, besides normal in-country governmental situations, other reasons having an adverse effect on the project activities were not reported to the TR.

Rating for Nature of the external context: Moderately Favourable

D. Effectiveness

Findings:

- 4. All the activities foreseen in the project document, including activities at the national level in the 7 demonstration countries, and workshops by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, have been successfully carried out, that is, the Gap Analysis report, the development of the e-toolkit, testing of the e-toolkit, development of a gender guidance, and a replication strategy.**
- 5. The e-toolkit has been developed and handed over to the BRS Secretariat and is available online. One of the toolkit modules has been translated into Chinese, French and Spanish.**
- 6. Direct Outcome 1 is considered to be achieved; Direct Outcome 2 is considered to be partially achieved for the project, and quantitative data from existing NIPs and National Reports remains to be entered into the e-toolkit. Project Outcome is considered to be achieved and it is assessed to be likely that project results contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the SC.**
- 7. While a few capacity-building activities were carried out within the framework of the project, stakeholders mentioned further need for capacity-building on the e-toolkit for the other parties to the SC. Awareness-raising is necessary to encourage usage of the toolkit by the other parties to the SC.**

Availability of Outputs

- 65. Output 1.1: Gap analysis and consultations with Parties to the SC and implementing agencies developed, taking into account gender aspects.** This output has been achieved, that is, a Gap Analysis report has been prepared. It compiles information on qualitative and quantitative data which is requested in NIPs, NIP-updates, within the reporting obligation under Article 15 of the SC, as well as other reports, that is, DDT³⁵,

³⁵ For ease of reading, abbreviations have been included in the text, and the full forms are included in the footnotes. Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane.

POP-PBDEs³⁶, PFOS³⁷, u-POPs³⁸. It also compiles the reporting time schedule for all reports under the SC. The report presents interesting findings, inter alia, existing overlaps between different reports under different reporting obligations; a need for correlation of data required under the NIP and the reporting under Article 15; existing gaps in the NIP on data required for the national reports; unclear linkage between NIP development, NIP-update development and national reporting; and lack of coherence between the timelines for reporting under different reporting obligations under the SC.

66. A generic gap analysis was presented to, and discussed with, key stakeholders of the project during its inception workshop in October 2018 in Montevideo in Uruguay, back-to-back with the global workshop³⁹ 'From NIPs to Implementation', of the global NIP projects, namely, the 7 demonstration countries⁴⁰, the BRS Secretariat, the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs representatives from China, South Africa and Uruguay, representatives of UNIDO and UNEP.
67. SSFAs were signed between UNEP and each of the 7 demonstration countries, for conducting activities at the national level; these were a national gap analysis report, conducting a national workshop, updating the POPs inventory, testing the e-toolkit and providing information on national mechanisms for the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15 of the SC. National Gap Analysis Reports were prepared by all 7 demonstration countries, national workshops conducted with pertinent stakeholders at the national level, POPs inventory, foreseen within the project, is reported to have been updated in all of the 7 countries, Papua New Guinea reported facing challenges in carrying out inventory of the new POPs⁴¹; all the 7 countries reported having tested the e-toolkit; and all of them reported having established or planning the process of establishing mechanisms at the national level for relevant data collection to fulfil their obligations under Articles 7 and 15 of the SC.
68. In the case of three of the seven countries, one of the three partnering BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs was also involved as a partner in the SSFA with the country, that is, the SSFA was a tripartite agreement between UNEP, the BCCC-SCRC and the country, namely, Honduras, Moldova and Saint Lucia, together with the BCCC-SCRC hosted by Uruguay. This was done to provide support and guidance to the countries in their national activities, and to facilitate payment for carrying out the activities at the country level.
69. **Output 1.2: Integrated Articles 7 and 15 electronic toolkit designed taking into account the recommendations on gender, tested and endorsed by the project steering committee; Output 1.3: Demonstration of the integrated electronic toolkit taking into account gender aspects.** The e-toolkit was developed by two international consultants, who were recruited by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) based on a 'Global support services agreement' for human resources and procurement signed

³⁶ POP-Polybromodiphenyl ethers.

³⁷ Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid.

³⁸ Unintended POPs.

³⁹ Presentation, 2018: Objectives of the workshop: i. Disseminate lessons learned/good practices on the NIP development, update and implementation processes at national levels; ii. Sharing of information on main findings; and iii. Identify national and regional opportunities to address remaining challenges in implementing the Stockholm Convention.

⁴⁰ Also with the participation of Ukraine.

⁴¹ Some of the activities of this project overlap with those of other ongoing NIP project, for example the inventory of new POPs.

between UNEP and UNOPS for the time period 01 January 2018-31 December 2022, which refers to the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between UNEP and UNOPS valid from November 2011 till December 2017.

70. A gender guidance was prepared 'Incorporating Gender Dimensions into National Strategy Setting in Chemicals Management' (2021) for the Minamata Convention National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining and Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans, to provide guidance for gender mainstreaming in the activities of these two Conventions. The guidance document concludes that despite several progressive steps, "gender considerations in the context of POPs management remain largely understudied and under-recognized". Recommendations include, amongst others, the development of national regulations with gender considerations, engagement of both men and women in POPs-related work including technical work, eliminating the wage gap between both the genders, and the creation of knowledge-management platforms.
71. Four modules of the e-toolkit have been prepared – i) NIP submission module; ii) POPs inventory module; iii) Queries module; and iv) Guidance module. In October 2022, the BRS Secretariat informed all parties⁴² to the SC about the test/demonstration version of the toolkit and they were requested to provide feedback within 3 months' time.
72. The reviewer was provided with feedback which the PM had received from the following countries - Argentina, Armenia, Cambodia, Canada, Egypt, Estonia, India, Ireland, Norway, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Saint Lucia.
73. Finally, it was approved/endorsed by the PSC during its third/final meeting on 25 May 2023, and has been integrated on the website https://nips.pops.int/guidance_1.html.
74. In June 2023, the e-toolkit was handed over to the BRS Secretariat via e-mail; the BRS Secretariat was informed that the final application has been transferred to the BRS server; moreover, it received the logic of the application and the corresponding files, the source code and the database. The BRS Secretariat has then confirmed receiving the files, and confirmed it also during the meeting with the reviewer. One of the toolkit modules has been translated into Chinese, French and Spanish.
75. The above website was consulted by the reviewer in May 2024. Under the 'NIP Submission Module', 2 countries are being shown as having completed their NIP submissions. Whereas there was no data visible for one of the countries, Senegal, data submitted by the second country, Thailand, could be accessed and viewed. Both countries were not part of the project.
76. The second part/button 'POPs Inventories Module' shows in its Part A a summary of inventory guidance documents, and contains 12 guidance documents for carrying out inventory⁴³. It also reportedly contains a Part B, not yet visible through the public interface, which provides a comprehensive Inventory Report Format which can be accessed via login credentials as provided by the BRS Secretariat.
77. The third button 'Queries Module' has two parts – 'Predefined Queries' and 'Free Search'. Upon running the 'Predefined Queries', the result shown was the NIP submission of Thailand.

⁴² Stockholm Convention Official Contact Points and National Focal Points.

⁴³ Of POPs pesticides, Pentachlorophenol (PCP), Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), Polybromodiphenyl ethers (PBDEs), Hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD), Hexachlorobutadiene (HCBD), Polychlorinated naphthalenes (PCNs), Short chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs), DDT, Perfluorooctane, sulfonic acid, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride (PFOS, its salts and PFOSF).

78. The fourth and last button is the 'Guidance Module', which shows three sub-categories, 'Guidance on NIP developing and review', 'Guidance on NIP implementation' and 'Guidance on reporting under Convention'. The first sub-category shows guidance documents for preparing a NIP and NIP-Update; the second sub-category shows guidance documents on NIP implementation, namely, socio-economic aspects, inventories, alternatives, BAT/BEP⁴⁴ and other; and the last button shows guidance on reporting under the SC, the 'User manual for the Electronic Reporting System (ERS) of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants'.
79. The 7 demonstration countries have reportedly submitted their national reports via the e-toolkit; however, these could not be accessed by the reviewer on the above website. Further, whereas the gender guidance document, prepared within the framework of this project is available on UNEP's website⁴⁵, it was not on the aforementioned website; moreover, gender was not mentioned in the NIP template provided on the website.
80. During the interviews, stakeholders pointed out the need for capacity-building for other countries, parties to the Convention, which were not involved in the project/development of the e-toolkit. The 7 demonstration countries were involved in the development of the e-toolkit at every stage, and are aware of the requirements and usage of the e-toolkit. However, the same knowledge is lacking for several other parties to the Convention, besides those which have participated in webinars and presentations of the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, which included presentations on the e-toolkit. Interviewees expressed mixed opinion about the requirement for capacity-building on the usage of the toolkit; while most of the interviewees expressed the opinion that training might be necessary on the usage of the toolkit, some of them found that the instructions were sufficient to use the toolkit, and separate training on the usage might be redundant. UNEP has an ongoing project on NIP-Update which includes 32 countries, and as highlighted by UNEP, capacity-building on the toolkit, amongst other activities, is also planned to be carried out within the framework of the project. Interviewees also pointed out the need for promoting the toolkit to the other parties of the SC via the COP.
81. **Output 1.4: Development of replication strategy.** A comprehensive document has been prepared, 'Replication Strategy'⁴⁶, which entails details about the project, its activities and its outputs. It identifies main organizations, namely, BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, BRS Secretariat, UNEP, UNIDO, UNDP, UNITAR, which could promote the e-toolkit and its usage. It delineates actions these organizations could take or role they could play in promoting the e-toolkit. It explains the toolkit and the usage of the toolkit for the different organizations, or how their work is related to the Stockholm Convention, thus showing options for an integration of the e-toolkit.
82. Further, as mentioned above, for the parties to the SC to use the e-toolkit in future, as pointed out by a few stakeholders, capacity-building and awareness-raising might be necessary, which has been carried out only for the 7 demonstration countries participating in this project. Capacity-building of a few other countries, namely 32 countries, updating their NIPs is planned within the framework of UNEP's ongoing global project 'Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants

⁴⁴ Best available technology/Best environmental Practice.

⁴⁵ <https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action/pollution-and-health/persistent-organic-pollutants-pops-2>

⁴⁶ Taking into account different literature on strategy, terms related to the definition of strategy are, amongst others, goals to be achieved, specific course of action to reach goals, main stakeholders involved, planning to reach a goal, resource allocation.

(POPs) GEF ID 10785, as confirmed by UNEP; all the information is planned to be entered via the e-toolkit, and demonstration countries will still have the possibility to submit their NIP-Update via the conventional transmission method of submitting the document in WORD or pdf format directly to the BRS Secretariat. The project document of the aforementioned project refers to the e-toolkit and, amongst others, that a knowledge platform is foreseen⁴⁷ in the project which is planned to “be linked with the forthcoming electronic toolkit to allow access to NIP data so that regional trends can be identified to develop new interventions”, as well as familiarization with the toolkit and access and use of data from the NIPs.

83. Rating for Availability of Outputs: Availability of Outputs has been assessed as ‘Satisfactory’.

Achievement of Direct Outcomes

84. Direct Outcome 1: Demonstration countries test and use e-toolkit for their NIP-updates and national reports.

85. As mentioned above, the 7 countries have actively participated in the project and its activities, including testing the e-toolkit and providing feedback about it. Most of the countries recruited an expert/IT expert to test and provide feedback on the e-toolkit. The project has confirmed having taken the feedback into consideration and making changes to the e-toolkit before finalizing it and handing it over to the BRS Secretariat, where it has been integrated into the website https://nips.pops.int/guidance_1.html, is available online and can be accessed.

86. Moldova and Saint Lucia have prepared their NIP-Update after commencement of the project and used the e-toolkit for uploading it and providing it to the BRS Secretariat, and the toolkit was found to be very useful for this purpose. Papua New Guinea has reported that the NIP-Update document is completed and awaiting final approvals at the Ministerial level to then submit it to the BRS Secretariat.

87. The following table shows the initial NIP submissions, as well as the NIP-Update and National Report submissions of the 7 demonstration countries:

Table 12: Submission dates of NIPs, NIP-Updates and NRs

Country	NIP submission date	Latest NIP Update submission date	Submission dates (month, year) of latest National Report
Cambodia	03 May 2007	25 Jan 2016	Sept. 2022
Honduras	13 Jan 2010	13 May 2016	Jan. 2023
Kenya	14 April 2007	07 Oct 2014	Aug. 2022
Madagascar	25 Sept 2008	06 Oct 2017	Aug. 2022
Moldova	15 Aug 2005	22 June 2023	Jan. 2023

⁴⁷ As reported to the TR, this has already been done. <https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/initiatives/global-nip-update/Integrated+Electronic+Toolkit>.

Papua New Guinea	09 Sept 2013	---	---
Saint Lucia	10 Jul 2007	18 June 2021	July 2022

Source: Stockholm Convention website.

88. Therefore, the Direct Outcome 1 is assessed to be **achieved** for the project.
- 89. Direct Outcome 2: Enhanced knowledge via integration of existing NIPs, NIP-updates and national reports integrated in the e-toolkit.**
90. Countries have highlighted that the toolkit facilitates the ease of providing information, as previous information is already entered and saved and provides a good overview. The project is reported to have been very helpful to countries in preparing further NIP-Updates, and the national reports. Reportedly, the pdf format, which was an acceptable format for the documents' submission to the BRS Secretariat, and in which several NIPs and NIP-Updates have been submitted is a difficult format to be used for textual analysis, especially if it is in a non-word-searchable pdf-format, which is reported to be the case for several documents. Information henceforth, when entered, would be available in the e-toolkit in a format which consolidates information and makes textual analysis possible, which would enable the BRS Secretariat and the countries themselves to use this knowledge and information.
91. Moreover, the interviewed countries have also reported that preparing the Gap Analysis reports prepared in each country was a very helpful exercise and helped receive and update information in their respective countries, and the workshops at the national level gave the opportunity to bring together relevant in-country stakeholders. The data collection carried out for the NIP-Updates and/or national reports is also reported to have provided further necessary data on POPs, including new POPs in some cases. At the same time, most of the interviewed countries have faced challenges in data collection; these challenges are reported to be related to different issues, inter alia, unwillingness or hesitation on the part of institutions to provide data, data collection first to be carried out at the (data-owner) institutions themselves, human resource challenges in the project teams at national level.
92. On the one hand, according to the project document, Activity 1.2.2, all previously-submitted NIPs were planned to be uploaded to the e-toolkit; on the other hand, the ownership of a NIP, as the word 'national' in the name 'National Implementation Plan' already explains, is with the country and therefore, each country should enter its NIP and information from its previous NIPs in the e-toolkit itself. This was also explained as the reason why an external consultant could not have carried out this task.
93. During the TR, the reviewer accessed the website with the toolkit in May 2024, and information from one country, which was not part of the project, could be accessed. The interviewed demonstration countries have also highlighted that the thematic area of POPs is a continuous process, as additional POPs are identified and added, and that the e-toolkit is a very helpful tool for the purpose of reporting. They have made efforts to prepare and establish national reporting mechanisms; however, some have not gone beyond the designing phase as it is reported to be a complex process and resources such as human and financial resources are insufficient; also, corresponding IT infrastructure would be necessary which is also not already existing and needs to be established.
94. Based on all of the above, Direct Outcome 2 is considered to be **partially achieved** for the project; and altogether, work remains to be done in terms of uploading existing NIPs and relevant data into the toolkit.

Achievement of Project Outcomes

- 95. Project Outcome: E-toolkit is made available online by the BRS Secretariat for usage by other parties to the SC, and to facilitate the development, transmission, access and use of data contained in National Implementation Plans (NIP, Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15).**
96. Quantitative data from the existing NIPs of 7 demonstration countries is reported to have been integrated into the e-toolkit, but it is not yet visible to the wider public, as work on the website with the e-toolkit was ongoing during the time of the TR.
97. A few parties to the SC, which did not participate in the project, are reported to have enquired about the e-toolkit. However, at that time, the toolkit was not ready and functioning. As explained to the reviewer, all the NIP-Updates henceforth, especially funded by the GEF⁴⁸ – that is since the going-live of the e-toolkit – are required to be uploaded into the e-toolkit. Also, while an adoption of the e-toolkit by the COP of the SC is not obligatory for the e-toolkit to be used, it would contribute to strengthening its official status and its usage by other parties to the SC.
98. As mentioned earlier, UNEP has commenced a follow-up project ‘Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)’ GEF ID: 10785, for supporting 32 countries in preparing their NIP-Updates; entering required data of their respective NIP-Updates within the project is foreseen via the e-toolkit. According to the project document, project completion is planned for the end of 2025.
99. Although guidance⁴⁹ is available on developing a NIP, interviewed stakeholders also pointed out that a particular format for submission is not specified in the Convention, that is, whether it should be as a WORD file or pdf file, in any online tool or submitted offline, is not specified. Therefore, it is really up to the parties to the SC to decide how and in which format – in terms of WORD file, pdf file, online or offline – they submit their NIPs. Nevertheless, a submission of data via such a toolkit would provide the information in a consistent and uniform manner, facilitating usage of information, both by the BRS Secretariat as well as by the countries themselves, and also facilitate an evaluation of ‘Effectiveness’ of the SC, and results achieved so far.
100. The website of the e-toolkit was consulted by the reviewer in May 2024. Under ‘NIP Submission Module’, 2 countries were shown as having completed their NIP submission, Senegal and Thailand. Information about Thailand could be accessed; however, no information was visible for Senegal, although the website showed 100% completion; it is not clear if no information existed on the website or if it was not visible.
101. It remains to be seen when the e-toolkit will be used by all the parties to the SC for their respective NIP-Updates and national reports, and if and to what extent the BRS Secretariat, UNEP, other Agencies and/or the parties to the SC themselves can analyse data provided in the e-toolkit in a useful manner to delegate projects and programmes for an effective implementation of the requirements of the SC.

Rating for Achievement of Project Outcomes: Achieved.

Likelihood of Impact

102. Envisaged Impact: Protect human health and the environment from POPs.

⁴⁸ This could not be confirmed by the TR.

⁴⁹ <https://www.pops.int/Implementation/NationalImplementationPlans/Guidance/tabid/7730/Default.aspx>

103. As illustrated in the TOC, action is required from the parties to the Convention in the respective countries to achieve the envisaged impact of 'protection of human health and the environment from POPs'. The project contributes to the envisaged impact by means of the e-toolkit, which can only provide data for analysis if the data has been entered into it by the parties to the SC.

104.7 demonstration countries have tested the toolkit and entered their national reports via the toolkit, in addition to other quantitative data requested in the e-toolkit pertinent to the NIPs, as mentioned and confirmed by several interviewees, although these could not be accessed and confirmed by the reviewer in May 2024, while accessing the toolkit on the internet, as these are not (yet) available for public view. The e-toolkit was endorsed by the PSC at its third meeting in May 2023, 'handed over' to the BRS Secretariat in June 2023, is available online and can be accessed.

105. A few parties to the SC are reported to have requested information about the toolkit and whether they can use it to input their data. However, at the time of the query, the toolkit was not ready. Also, the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have reported that other countries which have not participated in the project have expressed interest in the toolkit, and have expressed positive opinions about its development. Further, feedback received by the PM from 12 countries which have not partnered in the project was provided to the reviewer. This, of course, cannot be extrapolated to all the parties of the SC and concluded that they are interested in the toolkit and would like to use it. It does however show interest in the toolkit and the willingness of at least some parties to the SC to use it.

106. It remains to be seen if the e-toolkit is actively used firstly by the parties to the SC to upload the necessary information, secondly, by the BRS Secretariat, to analyse and present data from it, and thirdly, again from the parties to the SC to continue formulating national policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, in compliance with the SC, and for the development and implementation of other national projects and programmes and measures to comply with the SC. At the time of the TR, as emphasized by all the interviewed stakeholders, there is no indication that parties to the SC are not committed to fulfilling their obligations to the SC. It was however pointed out that it may take time for parties to the SC to get used to the toolkit, start using it and for the toolkit to actually receive data from all the parties to the SC.

Achievement of Likelihood of Impact: Likely, with respect to contributing towards the achievement of the objectives of the SC, and thus contributing to the envisaged impact.

Rating for Effectiveness: Satisfactory

E. Financial Management

Findings:

8. SSFAs were signed between UNEP and the 7 demonstration countries and 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs. The SSFAs do not explicitly mention a completion of foreseen activities for the payment instalments, but a submission of the interim progress and expenditure reports.

9. The BCCC-SCRC based in Uruguay was a part of the tripartite SSFA between UNEP and 3 demonstration countries, to provide support to the countries for the implementation of their activities. In the case of all 3 countries, an additional reason was the facilitation of payment for carrying out the activities at the country level.

10. All the financial transactions and documentation of financial information has been carried out in compliance with UNEP's rules and procedures.

11. Whereas the payments to the project partners were in line with the corresponding SSFAs, 2 final reports showing the status of activities, some of which were conducted in 2024 and a few which could not be completed, were prepared and submitted in May/June 2024.

12. The amount of co-finance spent surpasses the committed amount of co-finance by over USD 1 million. However, this may also be due to the prolonged time period of project implementation.

13. Although there was no fixed schedule of regular communication between the UNEP FMO and PM, interaction has taken place and information exchanged as necessary according to the activity, the PM has provided all required information to the FMO and no issues were reported.

Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures

107. As explained earlier, SSFAs have been signed between each of the 7 demonstration countries and UNEP, with the inclusion of BCCC-SCRC Uruguay in 3 of them. Payment transfers have been carried out in line with the foreseen agreements and all steps have been documented according to normal procedures at UNEP, however final expenditure reports⁵⁰ from 2 of the project partners, namely Papua New Guinea and the BCRC-SCRC in South Africa, were prepared and submitted only in May/June 2024.

Rating for Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures: Satisfactory.

Completeness of Financial Information

108. Financial information has been documented in compliance with UNEP's rules and procedures and is deemed to be sufficient. Initial budget information is included in the project document. Subsequent changes have undergone budget revisions and these have been documented according to UNEP's internal procedures. Expenditure of co-finance has also been documented and provided by the 7 demonstration countries to the project management team and these were also provided to the reviewer. The project management team has provided financial information to the reviewer at the onset of the TR. Additional documentation was requested by the reviewer during the main phase of the TR and was also received.

109. As mentioned above, final expenditure reports from 2 project partners have been submitted in May and June 2024 respectively, showing a major part of the expenditure.

110. Project expenditure is shown in the following table:

⁵⁰ In the case of Papua New Guinea, according to the 3rd interim expenditure report, from 16.03.2021-31.12.2021, total expenditure amounted to USD 35,838. However, a cumulative amount of USD 82,800 was already transferred to the project partner in Papua New Guinea. The final report showing a total expenditure of USD 89,476 was sent on 06 June⁵⁰ 2024. These payment transfers have been in line with the SSFA as payment transfers were foreseen after submitting corresponding progress and expenditure reports, as the status of completion of activities is not really specified.

Regarding the BCRC-SCRC in the Republic of South Africa, an initial amount of USD 119,400, 60% of the total SSFA amount, was foreseen in the SSFA to be transferred after signing it, and this has been done. And the last progress and expenditure reports, showing a total expenditure of USD 104,000 were sent on 20 May 2024⁵⁰ and show that some activities could not be completed, and hence, the rest of the amount from the SSFA has not been transferred. Therefore, this initial payment of USD 119,400 was also in line with the SSFA; at the same time, all foreseen activities could not be completed in the foreseen time and the final report was received only later during the TR of the project. The remaining unutilised amount of USD 15,400 was yet to be transferred back to UNEP.

Table 13: Expenditure per year and per cost category

Expenditure Categories	2018 USD	2019 USD	2020 USD	2021 USD	2022 USD	2023 USD	Grand Total USD
Staff and Other Personnel Costs	44,707.76	78,371.25	43,770.00	49,161.13	211,672.91	66,122.47	493,805.52
Travel	67,667.84	-2,219.30	150.00	-	-	19,836.36	85,434.90
Contractual Services	420.00	1,123.85	437.70	201.33	9,742.31	1,223.73	13,148.92
Operating and Other Direct Costs	226.72	-	-	-	6,500.00	-	6,726.72
Transfer/Grant to IP	-	-	153,832.22	260,962.99	229,246.91	274,934.21	918,976.33
Grants Out	-	92,682.80	65,815.87	-	-	-	158,498.67
PSC							-
IP-PSC							-
Total (USD)	113,022.32	169,958.60	264,005.79	310,325.45	457,162.13	362,116.77	1,676,591.06

Source: UNEP FMO, PM.

Table 14: Expenditure per year and per Output

All in USD	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total	Planned budget
Output 1.1	96,409.88	-2,252.51	12,750.00	5,926.34	3,259.97	22,000.00	158,093.68	158,000.00
Output 1.2	16,612.44	111,424.83	110,118.37	12,605.45	143,175.95	99,450.19	549,258.39	448,970.00
Output 1.3	0.00	30,403.43	141,137.42	257,280.48	223,779.83	191,964.78	1,062,350.13	1,071,000.00
Output 1.4	0.00	30,000.00	0.00	6,105.45	44,040.12	0.00	80,145.57	71,000.00
Output 1.5	0.00	382.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	382.85	70,000.00
PM				29,028.13	42,645.46	48,701.80	169,077.19	181,030.00
Total	113,022.32	169,958.60	264,005.79	310,945.85	456,901.33	362,116.77	1,676,950.66	2,000,000.00

Source: Quarterly progress and expenditure reports, UNEP FMO, PM.

111. The following table presents the committed amount of co-finance, as committed during project formulation and entered in the project document, and the actual co-finance leveraged:

Table 15: Committed and actual spent co-finance

Name of co-financer	Type of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Committed Amount - USD	Actual Amount - USD
UNEP	Implementing Agency	In-kind	300,000	1,200,000
BRS Secretariat	International Organization	In-kind	1,080,000	
Cambodia	National Government	In-kind	335,600	477,100
Honduras	National Government	In-kind	387,740	454,100
Kenya	National Government	In-kind	2,700,000	2,700,000
		Grant	300,000	300,000
Madagascar	National Government	In-kind	300,000	415,000
		Grant	330,000	330,000
Republic of Moldova	National Government	In-kind	315,000	609,720
		Grant		207,480
Papua New Guinea	National Government	In-kind	174,000	415,000
Ukraine	National Government		350,000	
Saint Lucia	National Government	In-kind		106,801
BCRC-SCRC-China	Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for the Asia and Pacific Region	In-kind	174,000	226,000
		Grant	226,000	174,000
BCRC-SCRC-South Africa	Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for the English-speaking countries in Africa	In-kind	200,000	360,000
BCCC-SCRC-Uruguay	Basel Convention Coordinating Centre - Stockholm Convention Regional Centre in Uruguay	In-kind	50,000	273,000
		Grant	10,000	68,000
Total			7,232,340	8,316,201

Source: Project document, Draft Project Final Report July 2023, Co-finance reports from demonstration countries and BCSC-RCs.

112. As shown in the above table, the 7 demonstration countries and other key stakeholders have spent co-finance altogether amounting to over USD 8 million, that is USD 1 million beyond the committed co-finance of USD 7.23 million. However, as captured in the TE of the previous UNEP project 'Global Project on the Updating of National Implementation Plans for Persistent Organic Pollutants', the extension of the project, albeit no-cost extensions, might "affect the in-kind contributions of the countries", for example, in terms of personnel for oversight, meetings, etc., that is, the spent co-finance may be higher than initially planned as a higher amount would have been spent due to the extension.

113. Rating for Completeness of Financial Information: Satisfactory

Communication between Finance and Project Management Staff

114. As elaborated by the project management team and confirmed by the Funds Management Officer (FMO) assigned to the project, although regular coordination meetings were not deemed to be necessary and not held, communication has taken place via e-mail and in person about all the aspects related to the finance management of the project. Whenever payment transfers were to be carried out, appropriate supporting documents are reported to have been submitted to the FMO, who has reviewed the documents in line with UNEP's financial procedures. In case any additional information was required, the PM is reported to have provided it to the FMO in a timely manner. After reviewing and clarification, the FMO has then approved the payment transfers. However, 2 final reports including the final status of activities and expenditure were prepared and submitted only in May/June 2024.

115. Communication is reported to have been effective and facilitating all procedures. Issues in communication between the project management team and the FMO were not reported.

Table 16: Financial Management Table

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures:		S	Whereas payments to the project partners have been done in line with the SSFAs, 2 of the corresponding final expenditure reports were prepared and sent only in May and June 2024 showing a major part of the expenditure, which was not shown in the previous interim expenditure reports.
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence ⁵¹ to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules		No	
2. Completeness of project financial information⁵²:		S	Same as above
Provision of key documents to the reviewer (based on the responses to A-H below)		S	2 final expenditure and progress reports showing activities covering the total amounts transferred were prepared and provided in May and June 2024 respectively.
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	Co-financing and project costs' tables at design are included in the project document
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Budget has been revised as the estimated yearly expenditure was

⁵¹ If the review raises concerns over adherence with policies or standard procedures, a recommendation maybe given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.

⁵² See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference

			different during implementation against the planned budget; however, there is not much deviation in the expenditure per output compared with the planned budget.
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	All SSFAs were provided to the TR
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	Information related to the fund transfers was provided to the reviewer.
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	Yes	Documentation of co-finance provided to the TR
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	Provided by the PM and FMO to the reviewer
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>)	N/A	All expenditure reports were provided.
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	N/A	
3. Communication between finance and project management staff		S	
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		S	
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		HS	
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.		S	Issues were not reported. The final expenditure and progress reports from 2 project partners were prepared and provided in May/June 2024.
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		S	Same as above
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the review process		HS	All finance-related documentation and information requested for the TR were provided in a timely manner. Final expenditure and progress reports from 2 project partners were prepared and provided in May and June 2024 upon request.
Overall rating		S	

Rating for Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff: Satisfactory

Rating for Financial Management: Satisfactory

F. Efficiency

Findings:

14. The project was approved by the GEF in November 2017, commenced officially at UNEP in February 2018, and has been completed 30 months beyond its foreseen completion.

15. The Inception Workshop has taken place in October 2018; the SSFAs with 3 countries were however signed in mid-2019, and the IT expert came on board end of 2019, that is, over a year after project commencement.

16. The COVID-19 pandemic caused disruption to project activities, especially at the national level in all the 7 demonstration countries.

17. All the SSFAs had to be extended due to the delay in completion of project activities.

18. A few interviewees pointed out that the budget allocation for Saint Lucia may not have been sufficient for all foreseen activities; however, the country is also implementing other GEF projects, and was able to complete all the foreseen activities.

19. A few activities in Papua New Guinea were completed in 2024 after the commencement of the TR.

20. The findings of the TE of UNEP's previous global NIP-Update project have not been taken into consideration with respect to the constraints faced by Papua New Guinea and planning any mitigation measures or additional support.

21. The SSFA with Kenya was signed only in January 2022 due to in-country issues, but this has not additionally impacted the delay in project implementation.

22. Contracts for the IT experts were issued via UNOPS, thus providing good contractual conditions to the experts and at the same time reducing the administrative burden on UNEP's side.

23. Instable internet connection adversely impacted the work of the first IT expert.

24. Due to the delay in project implementation, although all SSFA extensions were no-cost extensions, costs still do take place in the form of staff time.

25. The involvement of the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs and the support and commitment of the PM have been appreciated by all stakeholders.

26. One change in PM and TM has taken place, without any reported adverse impact on the project. The current PM had already worked on the project for 2 years since project commencement, and joined again later as UNEP staff, thus continuing work on the project with prior knowledge. The task manager has worked on different GEF projects and is also well-versed with the requirements of GEF projects.

27. UNEP Regional Offices were not involved in project implementation.

28. The activities carried out at the national level are considered by all stakeholders to be very useful for ongoing chemicals-related work in the countries, also in terms of fulfilling their obligations under the SC.

29. Prior familiarity amongst the project partners, either based on previous collaborative work or meetings at the COP, has been mentioned as one of the reasons for the good collaboration in this project.

116. The project was approved by the GEF in November 2017; project commencement date is noted at UNEP to be in February 2018 and accordingly, expected completion was July 2021, as the project duration is 3 years. It has been delayed by 30 months and was completed in December 2023. One of the main reasons mentioned is the COVID-19 pandemic, which, starting in March 2020, caused restrictions in the movement of

persons which went on for almost two years. During this time, interviewees have highlighted that challenges were faced at the national level to carry out project-related activities⁵³, especially Output 1.3 – demonstration of the e-toolkit, because for the demonstration of the e-toolkit, POPs data from the 7 demonstration countries was required, and the outbreak of COVID-19 is reported to have had a strong adverse effect on data-collection activities.

117. In February 2018, the project commenced officially at UNEP. Soon after, an international consultant was recruited, who is now the PM of the project. The then international consultant worked from June 2018 till mid-2020 on the day-to-day management of the project. However, the first SSFAs with 3 countries have been signed in mid-2019, as the process for preparing and signing the agreements is explained to be a process which takes time. The first Information Technology (IT) expert came on board in November 2019. Although the preparation and signing of the SSFAs might be a lengthy process, the project has experienced a delay of 1 year to start project activities.

118. One change in UNEP PM has been reported. The current PM took over the project as PM in September 2021. However, this change in PM did not have any adverse impact on the project, as the current PM was already working on the project as an expert between mid-2018 and mid-2020.

119. 3 initial SSFAs are valid till August 2020, and 2 till December 2020. It is clear that all partners involved in the project intended to complete the project by the end of 2020. Altogether 3 SSFAs are for a time period of less than one year. Although countries are already parties to the SC and as such are obliged to carry out work related to the SC to fulfil their obligations under the SC, and taking into account the fact that all 7 countries extended their SSFAs, first, a time period of less than one year is not considered to be adequate for the activities, which the countries were foreseen to carry out within the framework of this project. Second, as mentioned by several interviewees, the e-toolkit was delayed and could, therefore, not be tested by them at the foreseen time, thus also contributing to the delay of the project.

120. Third, it was pointed out by individual interviewees that the GEF-budget for Saint Lucia, USD 36,000, was considered to be inadequate for carrying out all the activities within this project. Nonetheless, this has not hindered any activities, as the country is also a demonstration country in some other GEF-funded projects and is conducting several activities, including data collection, within the framework of other projects, as this is reportedly also in alignment with its national priorities. Thus, synergies were also realized with activities undertaken within other GEF-funded projects.

121. In the case of Papua New Guinea, the terminal evaluation⁵⁴ (TE) of UNEP's 'Global Project on the Updating of National Implementation Plans for Persistent Organic Pollutants' – GEF IDs 5307 and 5525 – notes that within the project implementation period March 2014 – May 2018 some activities of the project could not be achieved, that is three out of five components⁵⁵ of the project could not be completed. The status

⁵³ Not only for this project, but for all ongoing projects in the time period of COVID-19.

⁵⁴ <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/30730>

⁵⁵ These components are: Component 3: Development of Action Plans for New POPs and updating of Action Plans for initial POPs including gaps analysis; Component 4: Formulation of revised and updated National Implementation Plan with its associated Action Plans for all 22/23 POPs; and Component 5: Endorsement of National Implementation Plan. Key challenges noted in the terminal evaluation are, inter alia, as follows:

of implementation of this NIP-Update project as well as the in-country challenges faced have not been taken into account in this project, and additional support or guidance, also possibly via any of the three BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs or UNEP ROs, not provided in this project. Although this project had already commenced when the above-mentioned TE report was finalized, adaptations could have been made to implementation modalities of this project, for example, by the involvement of a UNEP RO or a BCRC/BCCC-SCRC for supporting Papua New Guinea in project implementation.

122. In the case of Kenya, the SSFA with the country could only be signed in January 2022 due to in-country issues, whereas the other countries had all signed between July 2019 and July 2020. In Kenya, challenges were faced regarding opening an account for the project to receive payment. It could sign the SSFA only after this issue was resolved in the country. However, this is not reported to have an adverse impact on the timeline of the project, as it was one of three countries which had an extension of the SSFA till around mid-2023 to complete the foreseen activities.
123. Although all of the SSFA extensions with the 7 demonstration countries were no-cost extensions, the cost of staff time for the extended time for implementation is still a cost which takes place at the Executing Agency as well as at all the demonstration countries and institutions.
124. The collaborative work with, and support provided by, the BCCC-SCRC in Uruguay, which was a part of the tripartite SSFAs with Honduras, Saint Lucia and Moldova, as well as support provided by the UNEP PM were appreciated by the interviewed stakeholders.
125. Some delay is reported to have been experienced in the development of the e-toolkit itself. The first international IT expert, recruited for the development of the e-toolkit, was based in Togo during the time of the contract and had enormous internet-connection problems on a regular basis. This is reported to have impacted the time required for the development of the e-toolkit. Inadequate quality of internet connection has actually been mentioned in the project document as a risk in that parties to the SC may not (be able to) fill out the e-toolkit due to poor internet connection. Moreover, the development of the e-toolkit has also taken longer than anticipated. Upon recruitment, the first IT expert started working on the toolkit development. The initial IT solution expressed by the BRS Secretariat regarding the hosting of the application was to integrate the toolkit into the existing BRS server. However, this did not work out well in the first/alpha version of the toolkit, which is reported to have encountered technical issues/bugs, etc. Thereafter, a different approach was followed, to build the application on a standalone page and not be embedded in the BRS server and databases; this was the approach which was then followed and the toolkit re-designed and developed in a modified manner, which also took time.
126. Quality constraints on the e-toolkit were not reported with the exception of normal feedback which is provided and received for a first version of any application / software / website, which is what the first IT expert prepared and delivered. Thereafter, the

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- i. Lack of stakeholders in providing data to the project. Data confidentiality and security was the main concern;
 - ii. Some national consultants used were academics and on occasions had busy schedules resulting in delays in consultancy reports;
 - iii. Inadequate budget for travel of project personnel affected delivery of results;
 - iv. In country capacity to deliver results is limited.

second IT expert worked on the e-toolkit, updated it and which, after finalisation, was handed over to the BRS Secretariat.

127. UNEP ROs were not involved in any of the activities of the project. As elaborated by the project management staff, involving the UNEP ROs in the project has been integrated in future UNEP projects, termed “co-creation”. The involvement of UNEP Field Representations in projects “to ensure and support full involvement” has also been recommended in the TE of the previous NIP-Update project ‘Global Project on the Updating of National Implementation Plans for Persistent Organic Pollutants’. Nevertheless, the UNEP ROs have been kept informed about the project by receiving quarterly information about the project(s) in their respective regions, which has been explained to the reviewer to be the normal practice at UNEP.

128. The contracts with both the IT experts, the first and the second, were issued, as explained earlier, via UNOPS, with which UNEP has signed an MoU; the reason for this reportedly being the benefits which could be provided to the IT experts for the time duration of their respective contracts, and the reduced burden of administering the contractual obligations – payments, etc. – for UNEP, thus making use of resources within the UN system.

129. The following table presents pertinent data related to the 7 demonstration countries:

Table 17: Overview of relevant data of 7 demonstration countries and 3 BCSC/BCCC-SCRCs

Countries	NIP submission	NIP-Update submission	National Report submission (latest)	SSFA begin	SSFA till	No. of extensions	Extension till	National Gap Analysis Report	National Workshop	Tool-kit testing	SSFA amount USD	Total expenditure USD
Cambodia	May 2007	Jan 2016	Sept 2022	July 2019	Aug 2020	03	May 2022	X	X	X	102,000	102,000
Honduras	Jan 2010	May 2016	Jan 2023	Aug 2019	Aug 2020	03	May 2022	X	X	X	96,000	96,000
Kenya	Apr 2007	Oct 2014	Aug 2022	Jan 2022	July 2022	02	Apr 2023	X	X	X	112,000	112,000
Madagascar	Sept 2008	Oct 2017	Aug 2022	Sept 2019	Jun 2020	04	Sept 2022	X	X	X	102,000	102,000
Moldova	Aug 2005	Jun 2023	Jan 2023	May 2020	Dec 2020	02	Mar 2022	X	X	X	149,100	145,178
Papua New Guinea	Sept 2013	--- ⁵⁶	---	Sept 2019	Aug 2020	06	Jun 2023	X	X	---	92,000	89,476
Saint Lucia	Jul 2007	Jun 2021	Jul 2022	Jul 2020	Dec 2020	05	Apr 2023	X	X	X	33,600	27,720
BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs:												

⁵⁶ It has been explained earlier that Papua New Guinea has completed the NIP-Update template, but was awaiting the completion of country-internal procedures for the approval of submission of the data.

China				Feb 2022	Jul 2022	03	Jun 2023				199,500	199,500
South Africa				Feb 2022	Jul 2022	03	Jun 2023				199,000	104,000
Uruguay				Nov 2022	Jul 2022	02	Apr 2023				249,925	211,159

Source: SSFAs, SSFA Amendments, Expenditure reports, Progress reports of the 7 demonstration countries and 3 BCSC/BCCC-SCRCs.

130. Regarding synergies and/or complementarity, all the interviewed stakeholders have emphasized the usefulness of the activities carried out within this project and complementarity with the ongoing chemicals-related work in their respective countries. They have emphasized the respective country's commitment to the SC, and despite resource constraints, are reportedly doing their best to fulfil their obligations under the SC.
131. UNEP has already worked with most of the 7 demonstration countries earlier, for example, for the preparation of the initial NIP and NIP update. The FPs in these countries for the SC and mostly in the thematic area of waste and/or chemicals, including POPs, have been working in their respective institutions since several years, and therefore, also possess and present substantial institutional memory. The FPs, to some extent, also know each other from various COP meetings or other events and conferences related to 'chemicals'. This was mentioned to be one of the reasons for the good collaborative work amongst the partnering institutions, including collaborative work with the BCCC-SCRC Uruguay which was a partner in 3 tripartite SSFAs.
132. Taking all of the above into account, including the delays, the additional cost of staff due to the delay, good collaborative work amongst the partnering institutions, building upon existing work-relationships, but also the insufficient consideration of the results of the previous terminal evaluation, 'Efficiency' is assessed to be 'Moderately Satisfactory'.

Rating for Efficiency: Moderately Satisfactory

G. Monitoring and Reporting

Findings:

30. The monitoring mechanism consisted of the inception workshop, 3 planned PSC meetings, which included the final validation workshop, as well as the quarterly progress reports and annual PIRs to GEF.

31. 3 planned PSC meetings have taken place; however, the project was extended and there are 3 years, 2019, 2020, 2022, during which no PSC meeting, even remotely, has taken place.

32. Quarterly progress and expenditures reports and annual PIRs have been prepared and sent to the GEF, as per GEF requirements. 7 demonstration countries and the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have prepared interim and final progress and expenditures reports and sent to the PM; the final reports from 2 project partners have been prepared and sent in May/June 2024.

33. Ukraine, initially foreseen to participate in the project, did not participate in the project; however, this has not been consistently documented. Its non-participation is mentioned in a few documents; at the same time, Ukraine is also mentioned as a demonstration country elsewhere in the same documents.

Monitoring Design and Budgeting

133. In the logical framework of the project document, Output 1.5 is 'Monitoring and Evaluation' (M&E). In the table 'GEF approved budget' in Annex 9 of the project document, 'monitoring' is not specifically mentioned, and a budget specifically for monitoring has not been planned, but budget has been allocated for a global inception workshop, outputs' validation workshops and steering committee meeting, coordination meetings and TE, which are all a part of the M&E framework. In the 'M&E' plan, budget has been allocated for the steering committee meetings and for the TE. The detailed elaboration of Output 1.5 in the project document explains that day-to-day project management and monitoring would fall under the responsibility of the Executing

Agency, and would start with the inception workshop and the preparation of a workplan. A workplan with an overview of full project implementation is included in the project document. Being an MSP, according to the GEF requirements, the conducting of a mid-term evaluation is not obligatory, and was not planned in this project.

134. The gap analysis was expected to contribute to monitoring as all the NIPs were planned to be reviewed and gaps identified, thereby establishing a baseline. Three Steering Committee meetings are foreseen during project implementation, that is, one per year. Further, half-yearly progress reports are foreseen with respect to workplan and budget, as well as the yearly PIRs for the GEF, which is a requirement of the GEF. The project document also refers to the project 'POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention' GEF ID 4886. UNEP-internal procedures, as long as it was still using the Programme Information and Management System (PIMS), required a half-yearly progress report to be entered in the PIMS system. The annual reports, PIRs, planned in the project document are requirements of the GEF. These reports constitute the monitoring mechanism during the time period foreseen for the implementation of activities under Outputs 1.2 and 1.3, the actual development of the e-toolkit modules, uploading of existing NIPs into the e-toolkit, support in planning and delivery of inventory results, support in planning and integrating the NIP in national processes and budgets, and countries update National Reports, as these are activities crucial for a success of the project. Although the term 'monitoring' has not been explicitly mentioned, being an MSP with 3 years of project duration, the inception workshop, three steering committee meetings for three years of project implementation, coordination meetings, half-yearly progress reports and annual PIRs, are considered to be sufficient for this project on the whole.

Rating for Monitoring Design and Budgeting: Satisfactory

Monitoring of Project Implementation

135. As foreseen in the project document, an inception workshop has taken place from 25-26 October 2018, in Montevideo in Uruguay, back-to-back with the global workshop⁵⁷ 'From NIPs to Implementation', of the global NIP projects 'Global project on the updating of National Implementation Plans for POPs' and 'Global project on the updating of National Implementation Plans for POPs', from 23-24 October 2018. Participants of the inception workshop were representatives of the 8⁵⁸ demonstration countries - Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Papua New Guinea, St. Lucia and Ukraine, BRS Secretariat, BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs from China, South Africa and Uruguay, as well as UNIDO and UNEP and independent consultants.

136. Also, as foreseen in the project document, three PSC meetings have taken place as follows:

Table 18: PSC meetings

No.	Date(s)	Place	Participants – Representatives of/from
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⁵⁷ Presentation, 2018: Objectives of the workshop: i. Disseminate lessons learned/good practices on the NIP development, update and implementation processes at national levels; ii. Sharing of information on main findings; and iii. Identify national and regional opportunities to address remaining challenges in implementing the Stockholm Convention.

⁵⁸ As explained earlier, initially, Ukraine was planned to be part of the project and also participated in the Inception Workshop.

1	22 October 2018	Montevideo, Uruguay	BRS Secretariat, BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs – China, South Africa, Uruguay, UNIDO, UNEP, International Expert
2	01 December 2021	Remote, via MS Teams	Cambodia, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Papua New Guinea, BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs – South Africa, Uruguay, BRS Secretariat, UNEP
3	25 May 2023	Geneva, Switzerland	Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, St. Lucia, BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs – China, South Africa, Uruguay, BRS Secretariat, UNEP

Source: Minutes of PSC meetings 1, 2 and 3.

137. The first PSC meeting has taken place at project commencement in 2018, back-to-back with the above-mentioned global workshop in Montevideo in Uruguay, and the inception workshop of the project. In 2019, the SSFAs with the demonstration countries were being prepared and signed, therefore, a PSC meeting was not deemed necessary to be held, as there were no further activities to be reported or discussed, as it was the first year after project commencement. Regarding 2020, the reported reason for not holding a PSC meeting is the unexpected outbreak of the COVID-19⁵⁹ pandemic and the corresponding restrictions⁶⁰ on movement of persons. The second PSC meeting then took place in December 2021. As for 2022, project activities were ongoing and the toolkit was awaited; it was deemed to be better to have the toolkit ready and then hold the next PSC meeting. The third/last PSC meeting has taken place in May 2023, after completion of the project activities, to present the results of the project, and the e-toolkit, to receive approval/endorsement of the PSC for the e-toolkit. On the one hand, this is also what was foreseen in the project document, that the PSC meetings were to take place “the first one back-to-back with the inception workshop; one midterm; one at the project end back-to-back with the outputs validation workshop”. On the other hand, the initial project duration was three years, that is, it can be understood that one PSC meeting was to be held each year; and this was not adapted, although the project duration was subsequently extended, as the delays were not foreseen.

138. Workplans and revisions for the years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022 and 2023 were provided to the reviewer; these have been reported by the PM to be part of monitoring process during implementation.

139. The project’s demonstration countries and other key stakeholders are reported to have met sometimes during other meetings/workshops, for example, COP meetings and webinars organized by the RCs, and amongst others, informally discussed the project activities. At the same time, a few interviewees have pointed out the lack of a structured mechanism for exchange between project partners, besides the PSC meetings.

Rating for Monitoring of Project Implementation: Satisfactory

⁵⁹ <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>

⁶⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_lockdowns

Project Reporting

140. Annual reporting to the GEF, a requirement of the GEF, has taken place and reports from 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 were provided to the reviewer. A report has also been prepared for the global inception workshop, as well as minutes of the PSC meetings; all of these were also provided to the reviewer.
141. Moreover, the project management team has maintained all project-related documents in a structured manner. It provided all the documents to the reviewer in a properly-filed structure which provided a good overview and was easy to navigate to find the necessary documents during the TR.
142. Each of the 7 demonstration countries and the three BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have submitted the initially foreseen and agreed-upon intermediate progress and expenditure reports, and final expenditure and progress reports, which include detailed description of activities conducted; in the case of Papua New Guinea, the final progress report and final expenditure report were prepared and sent beginning of June 2024⁶¹, as 2 activities have reportedly been completed only in March 2024; similarly, the BCRC-SCRC in South Africa submitted the final progress report and final expenditure report end of May 2024⁶².
143. The UNEP-internal PIMS system is reported to not be used anymore at UNEP, which required a 6-monthly reporting from the PMs. The IPMR is an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system which requires an entry of information in the ERP system. Therefore, besides the PIRs to the GEF, other reports are reported to not be a requirement at the UNEP anymore, unless specifically requested from any side. As explained to the TR, till the PIMS and IPMR systems were in use at UNEP, the project has fulfilled its reporting requirements. Quarterly progress reports, as a monitoring measure, had been prepared and submitted to the GEF; the quarterly reports from the third quarter of 2021 till the second quarter of 2023 were provided to the reviewer.
144. The non-participation of one of the countries initially foreseen to participate in the project, Ukraine, which has in fact participated initially in some of the project events, has not been consistently documented. An official letter was sent by UNEP to the national representatives of Ukraine in January 2022, however, in PIR 2023, it is still mentioned as a demonstration country. Within the PIRs 2022, 2023 and the 2nd PSC and 3rd PSC meeting reports, it has been mentioned that Ukraine was unable to officially join the project; at the same time, it is still mentioned as a demonstration country elsewhere in the same documents, as well as in the progress report for the second quarter of 2023.

Rating for Project Reporting: Satisfactory

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting: Satisfactory

H. Sustainability

Findings:

34. Socio-political, financial and institutional sustainability is deemed to be 'highly likely'. The e-toolkit is available online and accessible, and ownership of the e-toolkit is with the BRS Secretariat.

⁶¹ These were provided to the reviewer on 10 June 2024, after submission of the draft TR report.

⁶² Received by the reviewer 06 June 2024, after submission of the draft TR report.

Socio-political Sustainability

145. 186 countries are signatories to the SC, and are obliged to fulfil the requirements under it, amongst others, to prepare and submit their respective NIPs within two years of the ratification of the SC at the national level, to update their NIPs and to submit their national reports as required by the SC. The project has developed an e-toolkit to facilitate the transmission, accessibility and use of data contained in the NIPs (Article 7) and national reports (Article 15). That is, the project facilitates and supports existing SC obligations and requirements. Therefore, a risk to socio-political sustainability is deemed to be low.

Rating for Socio-political Sustainability: Highly likely.

Financial Sustainability

146. After the development of the e-toolkit within the framework of the project, it is under the ownership of the BRS Secretariat, and integrated on its website https://nips.pops.int/guidance_1.html. As mentioned earlier, existing NIPs have been uploaded into it. The BRS confirmed that it will be responsible for the full maintenance of the e-toolkit; financial resources for its maintenance would stem from the core budget of the BRS Secretariat, which is normally the case for maintenance of its IT infrastructure. Reportedly, currently, European Union funds have been received for the maintenance of the toolkit. Therefore, risk to financial sustainability is considered to be low.

Rating for Financial Sustainability: Highly Likely.

Institutional Sustainability

147. Institutional sustainability is considered to be given, and risk to it is considered to be low. The main output developed by the project, the e-toolkit, has been “handed over” to the BRS Secretariat, and is under the ownership of the BRS Secretariat. As mentioned above, it is already uploaded on the website https://nips.pops.int/guidance_1.html, and is available online. The BRS Secretariat has confirmed full ownership of the e-toolkit and also that work is ongoing to fix some issues and bring it in alignment with the existing system and its requirements. It also plans to carry out regular maintenance and sustaining work on the e-toolkit in future as required. Therefore, the e-toolkit is considered to be in good hands institutionally and risk to its sustainability⁶³ is considered to be low.

Rating for Institutional Sustainability: Highly Likely.

Rating for Sustainability (Likelihood): Highly Likely

I. Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

Findings:

35. The project commenced in February 2018, but the first 3 SSFAs with 3 demonstration countries were signed in mid-2019, and the first IT expert started working on the project end of 2019; thus, it has taken over a year for project activities to commence.

⁶³ Although it may not remain exactly as it has been developed, as the reporting requirements of the SC adapt over time, and therefore, the e-toolkit will most probably (have to be) adapted at some point.

36. The e-toolkit was requested at the COP 8, and all 7 demonstration countries were consulted during project development. The e-toolkit has been referred to at COP 9, 10 and 11.

37. All the 7 countries and 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have participated actively in the project, and ownership about chemicals-related work in their respective countries is reported to be high; at the same time, they face several challenges in terms of resources – human, financial and technical.

38. The project has taken human rights and gender aspects into consideration, and a gender guidance has also been prepared. Gender mainstreaming is reported to also have been addressed at the workshops of the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs. Issues regarding gender were not reported.

39. Coordination meetings amongst all project partners have not taken place besides the inception workshop and 3 PSC meetings.

40. All project-related information and documents have been uploaded to UNEP's website where they can be freely accessed.

Preparation and Readiness

148. Project document was developed and was ready in mid-2017 when it was reviewed by UNEP's Project Review Committee (PRC). In November 2017, it was approved by the GEF and in February 2018, it officially commenced at UNEP. Soon after, an international consultant was recruited, who is now the PM of the project. The then international consultant worked from June 2018 till mid-2020 on the day-to-day management of the project. The project document entails, as required by the GEF, commitment of co-finance by the demonstration countries. Further, according to Annex 2 of the project document, the national focal points of the then envisaged demonstration countries were consulted for project development, thus ensuring that the countries were already informed about the project and the forthcoming activities.

149. However, the first SSFAs with 3 countries have been signed in mid-2019, as the process for preparing and signing the agreements is explained to be a process which takes time. The first IT expert came on board in November 2019. Although the preparation and signing of the SSFAs might be a lengthy process, the project has experienced a delay of 1 year to start project activities.

Rating for Preparation and Readiness: Moderately Satisfactory

Quality of Project Management and Supervision

150. As mentioned earlier and above, shortly after project commenced officially at UNEP in February 2018, an international consultant was recruited who started working with the project in June 2018 and continued till mid-2020. She became a staff member at UNEP in mid-2021 and was assigned to the project as PM. Therefore, the current PM is aware of the project and its activities since its commencement. All the interviewed stakeholders have appreciated the dedication and engagement of the current PM and the support she has provided. She is reported to have been interacting with the IT experts on a regular basis, sometimes even on a daily basis during the development of the toolkit. Interaction with the 7 demonstration countries and the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs is reported to have been effective, and issues were not reported.

151. The TM, albeit also a new UNEP staff member since mid-2021, had been working on other GEF projects before, and was well aware and informed about the GEF, the GEF-funded projects and their requirements. Interviewed stakeholders, although having had

more interactions with the PM, have also mentioned that they are aware of the project management team, which has included the PM and the TM, and have appreciated it. The whole project finally falls under the responsibility of the Head of the Knowledge and Risk Unit, Chemicals and Health Branch in the Industry and Economy Division, who has been involved in, and supervising, the project also since its commencement, and therefore, was well aware of the project and provided background information.

152. The official project commencement at UNEP was in February 2018. However, the first SSFAs with 3 countries have been signed only in mid-2019, over a year later, as the process for preparing and signing the agreements is explained to be a process which takes time, and the first IT expert came on board in November 2019. The demonstration countries were known and already considered in the project document; yet, it has taken over a year till the signing of the SSFAs between UNEP and the demonstration countries. The consultant working on the project was recruited in June 2018 and the Inception workshop took place in October 2018. Reportedly, the SSFAs were prepared and the signing procedure carried out between October 2018 (after the Inception workshop) and mid-2019. Although the preparation and signing of the SSFAs might be a lengthy process, the project has experienced a delay of 1 year to start project activities.
153. As explained under 'Financial Management', whereas payment to the BCRC-SCRC in the Republic of South Africa has been carried out according to the corresponding SSFA, all the activities included in the SSFA could not be carried out till project completion, moreover, the corresponding final progress and expenditure reports were prepared and sent in only in May 2024, despite reported follow-up by the PM, thus coinciding with the TR.
154. It is a similar situation with the payments to Papua New Guinea, a demonstration country in the project. As explained earlier, the payments have been carried out in accordance with the SSFA between UNEP and Papua New Guinea, but a few activities were carried out only in 2024; and the final progress and expenditure reports were prepared and sent in June 2024.
- 155.3 PSC meetings were planned in the project document for a time period of 3 years of foreseen project implementation. Although the time period of project implementation was extended due to delays, additional PSC meetings were not held. Moreover, a few interviewed stakeholders mentioned that coordination meetings with all project partners together, besides the PSC meetings, were not held, which would also have been beneficial, for example for sharing of information, good practices, experience, etc.
156. Interviewed stakeholders have expressed project management and supervision requirements to have been fulfilled satisfactorily and all the interviewed stakeholders have appreciated UNEP's work and support provided within the framework of this project.

Rating for Quality of Project Management and Supervision: Satisfactory

Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation

157. The e-toolkit was requested by the COP-8. All the 7 demonstration countries, initially 8 were foreseen including Ukraine, were consulted for project development. All the 7 demonstration countries and 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs are reported to have participated actively in the project activities, and contributed to and carried out their parts actively, with very few exceptions of incomplete activities, which have been elaborated under the sub-section 'Efficiency'. Moreover, the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs are also involved in other (GEF) projects in the region, and have reported to have included an introduction

of the toolkit in their workshops and webinars, thus creating awareness in a few other parties to the SC about the toolkit, which are not part of this project, for example, the BCRC-SCRC in the Republic of South Africa has reported to have reached 37 African countries within the framework of workshops and webinars.

158. SSFAs were signed between UNEP and the 7 demonstration countries⁶⁴ respectively, in some cases, as explained earlier, these were tripartite SSFAs, under which the demonstration countries have received funding to carry out activities at the national level. At the national level, as elaborated earlier, the 7 demonstration countries have prepared a gap analysis report, conducted workshops, carried out data collection, and tested the toolkit.
159. The BRS Secretariat has provided technical support in selecting the IT experts who developed the e-toolkit; moreover, it is reported to have also provided guidance and information about the server of the BRS Secretariat, to which the e-toolkit has been uploaded and integrated, and shared the demonstration for the parties to the SC to also test it, tested the e-toolkit, and provided feedback.
160. The BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs for English-speaking countries in Africa, for the Asia and the Pacific Region and for Latin America, in South Africa, China and Uruguay respectively, are reported to have supported in disseminating project outputs and in promoting the e-toolkit. Further, the BCCC-SCRC in Uruguay has provided support to three of the demonstration countries, namely, Honduras, Moldova and Saint Lucia.

Rating for Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation: Satisfactory

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

161. The project document has taken gender aspects throughout into account; inter alia, the formulation of 3 out of 4 technical outputs includes that gender aspects are to be taken into account; these are the outputs regarding the gap analysis report and the development of the toolkit. It also encourages demonstration countries towards gender mainstreaming in their NIPs. It entails a sub-section on 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment', where it elaborates on the difference in the exposure of POPs to

⁶⁴ Cambodia represented by its Ministry of Environment of Kingdom of Cambodia;

Honduras represented by the Secretary of National Resources and Environment of Honduras; tripartite together with the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre, Stockholm Convention Regional Centre, for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer, hosted by Uruguay;

Kenya represented by its National Treasury and Planning;

Madagascar represented by its Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Madagascar;

Papua New Guinea represented by The Conservation and Environment Protection Authority of Papua New Guinea;

Moldova represented by The Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of the Republic of Moldova; tripartite together with the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre, Stockholm Convention Regional Centre, for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer, hosted by Uruguay;

Saint Lucia represented by the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development; tripartite together with the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre, Stockholm Convention Regional Centre, for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer, hosted by Uruguay.

women and men, and how both are differently affected by POPs. The output indicators have also mentioned gender aspects.

162. During project implementation, gender aspects have also been taken into account, namely, in the e-toolkit. Moreover, a gender guidance was prepared within the framework of the project which includes recommendations on how to incorporate gender in the NIPs.
163. Further, all the demonstration countries have confirmed having focused on gender mainstreaming in their respective activities. The BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have conducted workshops and/or webinars, and have integrated the topic of 'gender mainstreaming' in the workshops/webinars.
164. NFPs of the project in the demonstration countries as well as at the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs are female and male persons, therefore, the persons interviewed for the TR also represented both genders. The TM is a male person, the PM is a female person and the reviewer is a female person.
165. With its envisaged contribution to a betterment of the environment, the project is also in alignment with the latest UN General Assembly resolution⁶⁵ which has declared a "clean, healthy and sustainable environment" as a human right. The project document entails the Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability Framework in the Annex 'ESSES Principle and Safeguard checklist', which is used "to identify and evaluate environmental, social and economic implications of an intended project"⁶⁶. It includes human rights⁶⁷ considerations, which have been assessed with the help of a given set of questions in a screening checklist.
166. As reported by all the interviewees, human rights and gender aspects have been an integral part of the project activities, and in general, they have highlighted that awareness on gender mainstreaming has increased in their respective countries especially with respect to implementing different projects. Issues related to gender were not reported.

Rating for Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality: Highly Satisfactory

Environmental and Social Safeguards

167. Firstly, the project itself is in, and contributes to, the thematic area of 'environment'. With its activities, outputs and outcomes, it has intended to contribute to the envisaged impact of projects for the implementation of the SC, namely, protection of human health and environment. The section 'Project Description' has discussed the global environmental problems originating from chemicals, and issues related to POPs have been elaborated. Fulfilling a formal requirement at UNEP and at GEF for project approval, it contains in the Annex an 'Environmental, Social and Economic Review Note (ESERN)'. According to this note, all the negative impacts on the listed potential

⁶⁵ UN GA A/76/L.75 Agenda item 74 (b), July 2022.

⁶⁶ UNEP (2015). UNEP Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability Framework (ESSEF).

⁶⁷ Based on the Human Rights Principles: The project will make an effort to include any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular vulnerable and marginalized groups; from the decision-making process that may affect them. The project will respond to any significant concerns or disputes raised during the stakeholder engagement process. The project will make an effort to avoid inequitable or discriminatory negative impacts on the quality of and access to resources or basic services, on affected populations, particularly people living in poverty or marginalized or excluded individuals or groups.

aspects⁶⁸ are not to be expected during project implementation. Finally, the screening decision concludes 'low risk' of the project to the environment.

Rating for Environmental and Social Safeguards: Highly Satisfactory

Country Ownership and Driven-ness

168. Ownership of the activities at the national level in all the 7 demonstration countries is considered to be high; however, the countries have also reported several challenges they faced in carrying out the activities, inter alia, in-country data collection for the old POPs and especially for the new POPs, lack of resources – including financial, human, technical, lack of IT infrastructure, lack of mechanism for regular data collection, availability of data under the jurisdiction of different authorities, sometimes unwillingness or hesitation of institutions to share data, etc. These factors have contributed to the longevity of the process of data collection, not receiving all required data and making efforts to put mechanisms in place for data collection, which all together have in turn contributed to incomplete data collection for the NIP-Updates, especially with data on new POPs, and in one case to non-completion of activities foreseen within this project.

Rating for Country Ownership and Driven-ness: Satisfactory taking all the in-country limitations and constraints into consideration.

Communication and Public Awareness

169. Project partners were 7 demonstration countries at institutional level and 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs. The 7 demonstration countries have reported working with key stakeholders and key stakeholder institutions in their respective countries, that is with focal points at authorities, and with institutions from where they have requested data, whether data which they possess or data they have received from other institutions. The project partners have reported conducting workshops for in-country key stakeholders, wherein they have raised awareness for and discussed the Stockholm Convention, POPs, this project, the NIPs, the NIP-Updates, including gender, and data collection.

170. The project has held 3 PSC meetings between 2018 and 2023. Besides this, the project management team was in ad hoc contact with the different partners – all 7 countries, 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs and the IT experts. During the workshops/webinars conducted by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, other countries, besides the demonstration countries, have also participated, thus raising awareness about the e-toolkit.

171. A few interviewees have pointed out inadequate interaction amongst all project partners, for exchange of information, good practices, implementation methods and challenges faced, as the 3 PSC meetings held in a time duration of 5 years was not considered to be completely sufficient.

172. Raising awareness with the general public has not been done, as the project, its results, the SC and reporting to the SC is done by specified country focal points, and general public is not really involved in the process.

⁶⁸ Biodiversity, resource efficiency, safety of dams, involuntary resettlement, indigenous people, labour and working conditions, cultural heritage, gender equity, economic sustainability.

173. Besides informing all parties to the SC about the e-toolkit in October 2022 and requesting them to test it and send feedback, the BRS Secretariat informed them in September 2023 via e-mail⁶⁹ about the e-toolkit being online and accessible for entering data, together with the website to access the e-toolkit.

174. COP 9, decision SC-9/9⁷⁰, refers to the development of the e-toolkit, has requested feedback to the toolkit from the parties to the SC and has requested the BRS Secretariat to make it available to all the parties to the SC. Agenda item 5 (d) at COP 10⁷¹ and item 5 (d)⁷² at COP 11⁷³ entail details about the project, that is, its objective, components and progress achieved up to the COP 10. The e-toolkit has also been noted in SC-10/11 and SC-11/7.

175. At around 10 events⁷⁴, that is, workshops and/or webinars, the project and the toolkit were introduced. Moreover, the project has uploaded all project-related information on UNEP's website, which can be freely accessed - <https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action/pollution-and-health/persistent-organic-pollutants-pops-8>

176. It contains detailed information about the project, as well as all the reports and documents which were prepared within the framework of the project, inter alia, background of the project, the project document, the corresponding SC COP decisions,

⁶⁹ Dated 25 September 2023.

⁷⁰ In this context, SC-9/16 regarding reporting under Article 15 of the Stockholm Convention, is also referred to.

⁷¹ UNEP/POPS/COP.10/INF/26.

⁷² Item 5 (d) of the provisional agenda.

⁷³ UNEP/POPS/COP.11/INF/23.

⁷⁴ **Workshop** to support inventory development and priority setting in developing and updating of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([2018, Pretoria, South Africa](#))

Workshop to support inventory development and priority setting in developing and updating of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([2018, São Paulo, Brazil](#))

Regional Training Workshop on the Article 15 reporting requirements under the Stockholm Convention ([2020, Trinidad and Tobago](#))

Regional capacity-building workshop to improve the development, update and submission of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) and National Reports under the Stockholm Convention for Asia and Pacific Region, ([Online May 17-18 2022](#))

UNEP side-event: From data to action: Informed decision-making for Stockholm Convention implementation, during Stockholm Convention COP-10 ([Geneva, Switzerland, 7 June 2022](#))

Workshop on developing, reviewing, and updating national implementation plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([Pretoria, South Africa, 13-15 September 2022](#))

Workshop on developing, reviewing, and updating national implementation plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([Jakarta, Indonesia, 27-29 September 2022](#))

Regional Webinar on Capacity building and information exchange on the general considerations for setting up national mechanisms for NIP development/update and reporting for Latin America and Caribbean region (Online, 29 September 2022)

Workshop on "From Science to Action" for the BRS and industrial chemicals guidance for the Stockholm Convention ([Barcelona, Spain, 17-20 October 2022](#))

Webinar for the project "Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15" for Africa region (Online, 16 -17 November 2022)

Outputs Validation Workshop and third Steering Committee Meeting of the project "Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15" ([Geneva, 25 May 2023](#))

all documents related to the Inception Workshop from October 2018 in Uruguay, the gap analysis report, two YouTube videos⁷⁵ about the NIP submission module and the financial resources, explanation about the modular structure of the e-toolkit, the gender guidance, the replication strategy, reports and documents from the 7 demonstration countries, information regarding the workshops mostly related to the SC and to updating the NIPs and all the documents related to the last meeting/ 3rd PSC meeting / validation workshop in May 2023.

Rating for Communication and Public Awareness: Satisfactory

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance: Satisfactory

⁷⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZgy1xwLmEI> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqu4P-NxV4s>

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

177. The project is assessed to be highly relevant in terms of facilitating the fulfilling of the reporting obligations to the SC. It is completely in alignment with UNEP's MTS and POW, as well as with the donor, GEF's, strategic priorities, and global and national priorities. The project document fulfils UNEP's and the GEF's formal criteria, inter alia, entailing a logical framework and TOC, problem analysis and other criteria such as human rights and gender aspects. Ukraine, which was initially foreseen to participate in the project as a demonstration country, did not participate in the project's activities at the national level, and this has not been documented consistently. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted project activities adversely as it posed challenges to the implementation of activities at the national level.
178. The project has been successful in that all the 4 technical outputs have been achieved. The e-toolkit has been successfully developed, handed over to the BRS Secretariat and is available online. The 7 demonstration countries have carried out several activities in their respective countries, namely, conducting workshops with key stakeholders, data collection and testing the toolkit and providing feedback. Also, the 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have conducted workshops and raised awareness about the toolkit. The BCCC-SCRC hosted by Uruguay was also a partner with 3 countries within the framework of tripartite agreements between UNEP and the countries, has provided them support in their activities, and facilitated payments for carrying out the activities at the country level. Direct outcome 1 is assessed to be achieved, as all the demonstration countries carried out all the foreseen activities at the national level; direct outcome 2 regarding the enhancement of knowledge based on integration of all existing NIPs in the e-toolkit is assessed to be partially achieved for the project, and work remains to be done by the parties to the SC in terms of entering quantitative data from existing NIPs into the e-toolkit. Although both direct outcomes have not been fully achieved, the project outcome is still assessed to be achieved, as the e-toolkit is available online and is available to all parties to the SC. However, it remains to be seen if the other parties to the SC use the toolkit for their NIP-Updates and NRs, which can be facilitated via a corresponding COP decision. Finally, impact is assessed to be likely in terms of project's contribution towards the achievement of the objectives of the SC, and thereby contributing to the envisaged impact.
179. The budget provided by the GEF has been managed in line with UNEP's policies and procedures and yearly expenditure has been documented and provided to the reviewer for the years 2018-2023. While a few remaining activities were completed only in 2024, and corresponding final progress and expenditure reports prepared and received only in May and June 2024 from the BCRC-SCRC in South Africa and Papua New Guinea respectively, the other 6 demonstration countries and 2 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs had completed all activities and submitted their corresponding progress and expenditure reports by the end of 2023. Initial payment amounts transferred to the BCRC-SCRC in South Africa and to Papua New Guinea were considerably higher than the expenditures incurred respectively, until corresponding final expenditure reports were provided in May and June 2024 for the remaining amounts of expenditure. These payments were carried out as they were in line with the signed SSFAs, which did not explicitly mention a completion of activities as a prerequisite, but rather the signing of the SSFA and the submission of the interim progress reports as prerequisites for the payment transfers.
180. The project has experienced a delay of 2.5 years, one year right after the commencement of the project and then over 1 year during COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the SSFAs were signed in mid-2019, as well as the first IT expert recruited. Internet

connection issues are reported to have been faced by the first IT expert, and this may have been a contributing factor to the time taken to develop the first version of the toolkit. Moreover, the initially-requested technical solution by the BRS Secretariat to embed the toolkit into the existing BRS server structure did not work well, and the toolkit had to be redesigned, which also took time.

181. One change of PM has taken place, but this has not negatively affected project implementation as the current PM was already on board as an expert. Some internal synergies may possibly have been lost as UNEP's ROs were not involved in the project in any way. UNEP has however made use of existing resources within the UN-system for issuing contracts to the IT experts via UNOPS, thus reducing its own administrative work related to the contracts. Results of the previous TE of UNEP's global NIP-Update project have not been taken into account for an adaptation of any activities in this project, especially in the case of Papua New Guinea, for which challenges have been noted in the TE report and which faced challenges in carrying out activities at the national level within this project and could complete a few activities only in March 2024.
182. Monitoring has been planned in the project document via the Inception workshop and 3 PSC meetings and half-yearly progress reports to be prepared by UNEP and submitted to the GEF, as well as from the project partners to UNEP, as specified in the SSFAs. However, despite the extension of the project, additional PSC meetings or other coordination meetings together with all the involved project partners have not taken place. Reporting has been carried out as foreseen, and all the project partners have submitted progress and final reports; 2 final reports and final expenditure reports have been prepared by project partners only in May and June 2024 respectively.
183. The finalized version of the toolkit has been handed over to the BRS Secretariat, is under its institutional ownership and available online. Updates are already being carried out and future maintenance and updates are planned to be carried out with its core budget. Therefore, risks to socio-political, institutional and financial sustainability are considered to be low. After the decision at COP 8 to develop the e-toolkit, the toolkit has been mentioned at COP 9, 10 and 11. However, since it is not an obligatory tool to be used, continuous awareness-raising might be necessary to encourage parties to the SC to enter relevant data via the toolkit. In this context, UNEP has planned its usage in its new global NIP-Update project 'Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) GEF ID 10785'.
184. All the interviewed stakeholders have appreciated the dedication, guidance and support provided by the current PM, and by all the involved UNEP staff. All the project partners were committed to the project and to the SC, and have worked actively on the project activities, within the in-country constraints and limitations. The project has taken human rights and gender aspects into account in project design, as well as implementation, and has included these aspects also in all the workshops carried out and in the toolkit.
185. In conclusion, the project has been appreciated as being timely and providing support to the 7 demonstration countries in carrying out relevant activities at the national level pertinent to the SC; the e-toolkit developed by the project, albeit developed with a delay, has been very much appreciated as a very useful tool for entering and documenting relevant data and facilitating the ease of entering relevant data. It brings with it a high potential for analysis and usage, possibly via any artificial intelligence (AI) tools, to facilitate the enhancement of effectiveness of the SC-related activities, projects and programmes, at the same time being dependent on data-input by all the parties to the SC.

B. Summary of project findings and ratings

186. The table below provides a summary of the ratings and finding discussed in Chapter I. **Overall, the project demonstrates a rating of 'Satisfactory'.**

UNEP Evaluation Office Validation of Performance Ratings:

The UNEP Evaluation Office formally quality assesses (see Annex XIV) management led Terminal Review reports and validates the performance ratings therein by ensuring that the performance judgments made are consistent with evidence presented in the Review report and in-line with the performance standards set out for independent evaluations.

The Evaluation Office assesses a Terminal Review report in the same way as it assesses the initial draft of a Terminal Evaluation report. It applies the following assumptions in its validation process:

- That what is being assessed is the contents of the report and the extent to which it makes a consistent and justifiable case for the performance ratings it records.
- That the consultant has, within the report, presented all the evidence that was made available to them.
- That the Review has been based on a robust Theory of Change, reconstructed where necessary, which reflects UNEP's definitions at all levels of results.
- That the project team and key stakeholders have already reviewed a draft version of the report and provided substantive comments and made factual corrections to the Review Consultant, who has responded to them. The Evaluation Office assumes, therefore, that it has received the Final (revised) version of the report.

In this instance the Evaluation Office finds that the quality of the Report reaches the Satisfactory level and validates the overall project performance rating at the **'Satisfactory'** level.

Table 19: Summary of project findings and ratings⁷⁶

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
Strategic Relevance		HS	Rating validated	HS
1. Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and strategic priorities	In alignment with MTS 2014-2017, 2018-2021, 2022-2025 and POW 2016-2017, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2022-2023.	HS	Rating validated	HS
2. Alignment to Donor/Partner strategic priorities	In line with program 2 of strategic objective CW1 - Support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets and planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring.	HS	Rating validated	HS
3. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	Contributes to and facilitates fulfilling reporting obligations to the SC of the parties to the SC.	HS	Rating validated	HS
4. Complementarity with relevant existing interventions/coherence	Builds upon other NIP and NIP-Update projects implemented by UNEP and other Agencies.	HS	Rating validated	HS

⁷⁶ Most criteria will be rated on a six-point scale as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated, also on a six-point scale, from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU) and Nature of External Context is rated from Highly Favourable (HF) to Highly Unfavourable (HU).

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
Quality of Project Design	The project fulfils all the formal requirements for a project document, with very few shortcomings, for example, the formulation of outputs and outcomes used in the project logical framework and TOC is not fully in alignment with the definition of outputs and outcomes at UNEP.	S	Rating validated	S
Nature of External Context	COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions in project activities, especially at the national level in the 7 demonstration countries.	MF	Rating validated	MF
Effectiveness		S		MS
1. Availability of outputs	All 4 technical outputs are considered to be achieved – gap analysis report, development of toolkit and testing of toolkit, and the replication strategy.	S	Rating validated	S
2. Achievement of project outcomes	Direct outcome 1 regarding testing and usage of toolkit by the 7 demonstration countries –achieved; Direct outcome 2 with respect to the enhancement of knowledge via the integration of data from existing NIPs, NIP-Updates and NRs – partially achieved for the project, and work remains to be done by all the parties to the SC; Project outcome –achieved.	S	Direct Outcome 2, which is key for attaining the intermediate states, was only partially achieved, despite the project being extended 30 months beyond its original completion date. Additionally, the three outcome statements do not align with the original outcome statement's intention, which was to enhance compliance with the SC.	MS

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
3. Likelihood of impact	E-toolkit is developed and available online. It contains some quantitative data from the demonstration countries. Interest and commitment have been expressed, also from non-demonstration countries. The more countries use the toolkit and enter data, the more data will be available for analysis and further usage. Therefore, project is assessed to contribute to the envisaged impact, although this would also depend finally on the parties to the SC actually entering their POPs-related data into the toolkit.	Likely	There is insufficient evidence that the intermediate states have been achieved, nor that all the assumptions needed to move from outcomes to intermediate states hold true. For example, a key assumption is that other countries are willing to use the e-toolkit. Although the report indicates that parties to the SC are committed to fulfilling their obligations, it will take time for them to actively begin using the e-toolkit (see paragraphs 82, 101, 106) and implement national policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste in compliance with the SC.	ML
Financial Management		S	Rating validated	S
1. Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures	On the whole, the project has adhered to UNEP's financial policies and procedures; 2 payments have been made, albeit in compliance with the SSFAs, where the expenditure reports have been received only in May and June 2024.	S	Rating validated	S
2. Completeness of project financial information	All finance-related reports have been prepared and made available to the TR; 2 expenditure reports were prepared and submitted only in May and June 2024. Until then, the interim expenditure reports already submitted accounted for expenditure amounts considerably lower than the payment amounts already transferred.	S	Rating validated	S

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
3. Communication between finance and project management staff	Although regular coordination meetings or communication were not reported to have taken place, communication between finance and project management staff is reported to have been good and effective; all necessary information was provided by the PM to the FMO, who has then reviewed documentation and approved the payments; issues were not reported.	S	Rating validated	S
Efficiency	Project has experienced a delay of 2.5 years, one of the main reasons being the COVID-19 pandemic. A delay of 1 year has taken place after the commencement of the project; and lastly, in the finalization of the e-toolkit. The results of the TE of the previous NIP-Update projects 5525 and 5307, especially regarding Papua New Guinea, have not been considered during this project. UNEP ROs were not involved in project implementation. On the positive side, collaboration amongst partners is reported to have worked very well and existing resources within the UN system, for example, issuance of expert contracts via UNOPS, have been made use of, thus reducing administrative work for UNEP.	MS	Rating validated	MS
Monitoring and Reporting		S	Rating validated	S

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	Project document entails M&E as an output. Although the term 'monitoring' is not explicitly mentioned, it was planned to be carried out via the Inception Workshop, the PSC meetings, the reports from project partners, half-yearly reports for UNEP-internal reporting and for the GEF and workplans.	S	There is insufficient evidence of a monitoring plan at the project launch that included data collection methods or a dedicated budget for monitoring activities, among other key features.	MS
2. Monitoring of project implementation	The Inception Workshop and 3 PSC meetings have taken place, as foreseen. However, despite the extension of the project, additional PSC meetings or other coordination meetings together with all project partners is not reported to have taken place.	S	There is insufficient evidence regarding the levels of baseline data collected, whether the data was disaggregated by vulnerable or marginalized groups, or if the monitoring budget was adequately spent.	MS
3. Project reporting	Annual PIRs, a requirement of the GEF, have been prepared and submitted. The project partners have also prepared and submitted their progress reports. The project management staff has prepared quarterly progress reports. However, the non-participation of one country, initially foreseen to participate in the project, has not been documented consistently.	S	Rating validated	S
Sustainability		HL		L
1. Socio-political sustainability	186 countries are parties to the SC and are obliged to reporting under articles 7 and 15 of the SC. The project's main output, the e-toolkit, facilitates the fulfilling of their reporting obligations. As such, risk to socio-political sustainability is considered to be low.	HL	The success of the e-toolkit is highly dependent on socio-political factors, specifically the willingness of countries to utilize it. Although the report indicates commitment from the Parties to the SC, strong adoption of the e-toolkit may take time.	L

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
2. Institutional sustainability	The e-toolkit has been handed over to the BRS Secretariat, is under its institutional ownership, available online and can already be used to enter data.	HL	The BRS Secretariat has confirmed full ownership of the e-toolkit. However, the necessary policies and frameworks to support its institutionalization across all Parties to the SC are not yet in place. Additionally, there is a need for capacity-building opportunities to enable countries to effectively use the e-toolkit	L
3. Financial sustainability	The BRS Secretariat has confirmed that maintenance costs will be covered by its core budget.	HL	Rating validated	HL
Factors Affecting Performance		S	Rating validated	S
1. Preparation and readiness	Although all project partners were aware of the project, there was a delay of over 1 year in the commencement of the activities; that is, over one year after the commencement of the project, the SSFAs with the countries were signed and the first IT expert recruited, in mid and late 2019.	MS	Rating validated	MS
2. Quality of project management and supervision	One change in PM has taken place; this is not reported to have any adverse effect on project implementation, as the current PM has worked as an expert on the project from mid-2018 to mid-2020. All the interviewed stakeholders have confirmed and appreciated the support and guidance provided by UNEP.	S	Rating validated	S
2.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:	As elaborated above.	S	Rating validated	S
2.2 Partners/Executing Agency:	As elaborated above.	S	Rating validated	S

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation	All the 7 demonstration countries and 3 BCSC/BCCC-SCRCs have actively engaged in the project activities. Due to different reasons, namely, COVID-19 and resource constraints, activities in Papua New Guinea could be completed only in mid-2024. Stakeholders are reported to have been very committed to the project and to chemicals' management with regard to the SC.	S	Rating validated	S
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality	The project document has taken human rights and gender into account, and the outputs' formulation entails gender aspects. A gender expert was recruited and workshops have been conducted by BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs including gender mainstreaming. A gender guidance was prepared with recommendations on how to incorporate gender in the NIPs and other projects.	HS	Rating validated	HS
5. Environmental and social safeguards	Project operates in the thematic area of environment. All formal criteria at UNEP for project approval, for example, ESERN, have been fulfilled. Project poses low risk to the environment and contributes to the envisaged positive impact on the environment.	HS	Although the project design included screening for environmental and social safeguards, the review does not provide any evidence that the project implemented measures to monitor or manage safeguard risks during implementation.	S

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating	Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU)	EOU Validated Rating
6. Country ownership and driven-ness	All the 7 demonstration countries have actively participated in and carried out the activities foreseen in the project. Data collection, especially of new POPs, is reported to have been challenging in all the countries. Taking all the in-country limitations and constraints into consideration, ownership and driven-ness was satisfactory.	S	Rating validated	S
7. Communication and public awareness	Public awareness was not foreseen in the project, with the exception of the website www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action which can be freely accessed by all. The BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have conducted workshops with the participation of other parties to the SC, which did not participate in the project, and communicated, amongst others, about the toolkit. The BRS Secretariat has communicated via e-mail to all the parties to the SC regarding the toolkit. However, coordination meetings or common communication of project results amongst key stakeholders has not taken place with the exception of the 3 PSC meetings.	S	Rating validated	S
Overall Project Performance Rating		S	Overall rating validated	S

C. Lessons learned

Lesson Learned #1:	Taking into account the results of previous TE(s) might contribute to enhanced effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation and mitigate potential challenges and risks
Context/comment:	The results of the TE of the previous UNEP project 'Global Project on the Updating of National Implementation Plans for Persistent Organic Pollutants' regarding the challenges faced by Papua New Guinea in the previous project have not really been taken into consideration, although reference to it has been made in the project document. Both are GEF-funded projects, related to the same Branch within UNEP, and with an overlap of a few countries. Taking into account previous experience and results is expected to contribute to increasing effectiveness and efficiency of UNEP's work, and mitigate challenges and risks.
Cross-references:	Findings 19, 20

Lesson Learned #2:	Good collaboration amongst all project partners, some from earlier
Context/comment:	Interviewed stakeholders have highlighted the good collaboration amongst all the project partners and the support and guidance provided by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, and that some of them knew each other either from previous projects or from COP meetings, which has been conducive to a good working relationship.
Cross-references:	Finding 9, 25, 29

Lesson Learned #3:	UNEP ROs not involved in any activities of the project
Context/comment:	Throughout project implementation, there is no evidence of involvement of the UNEP ROs in any of the project activities. However, this is reported to not be the case in future UNEP projects, as all projects are now expected to involve the UNEP ROs in implementation.
Cross-references:	Finding 27

Lesson Learned #4:	Internet and connection issues of the IT expert
Context/comment:	Although the project has done well not to discriminate anyone on the basis of their geographical location, internet and connectivity issues have been experienced, contributing to the time needed for the development of the toolkit. Support was reportedly requested from a UNDP office in the country, where the expert could work

	twice a week, further, the expert helped himself by working some hours in the night to have better connectivity.
Cross-reference:	Finding 23

Lesson Learned #5:	Gender aspects integrated in the project and gender guidance prepared
Context/comment:	Starting from the project document to the toolkit, the project has taken gender aspects into account. The project partners have included information on gender mainstreaming in their workshops, and have confirmed that it is an important part of all of their work. A gender guidance was prepared which contains recommendations on how to mainstream gender in the NIPs and other projects.
Cross-reference:	Finding 38

Lesson Learned #6:	One module of the toolkit translated into French, Spanish and Chinese
Context/comment:	This is considered to be a good practice to have translations of (parts of) project results in other languages to enable easier understanding and usage.
Cross-reference:	Finding 5

Lesson Learned #7:	Issuance of experts' contracts carried out via UNOPS
Context/comment:	In this project, it is considered to be a good practise, firstly, because it has reduced UNEP's work with regard to both the IT experts' contracts and secondly, because the contracts had additional benefits for the IT experts.
Cross-reference:	Finding 22

Lesson Learned #8:	Project-related information and documents made available on the internet
Context/comment:	All the documents prepared within the framework of the project have been uploaded on UNEP's website and can be freely accessed: https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action/pollution-and-health/persistent-organic-pollutants-pops-8
Cross-reference:	Finding 40

Lesson Learned #9:	Wide geographical coverage via partnering with 7 demonstration countries and 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs in different geographical regions
Context/comment:	The project has made efforts towards wide geographical coverage; the 7 demonstration countries are from the regions Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Europe.
Cross-reference:	Finding 2

D. Recommendations

Recommendation #1:	Reduce the time duration from project commencement till the actual commencement of activities
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The project was approved at UNEP in February 2018 and the SSFAs with the project partners have been signed in mid-2019; the first IT expert was recruited after that in 2019. This is already a delay of 1 year to start with activities of the project, although the demonstration countries were already clear at project formulation stage.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Knowledge and Risk Unit (EAg)
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 15

Recommendation #2:	(Enhance) Involvement of UNEP ROs in project implementation
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	UNEP has a network of Field Representations – Regional Offices and Country Offices – and they were not involved in the project activities; the project management staff has sent quarterly activity reports to them to keep them informed. Possible synergies may not have been realized by their non-involvement.
Priority Level:	High

Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 27

Recommendation #3:	Take into account previous related projects and results of previous evaluations
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	In the case of Papua New Guinea, the TE of the previous UNEP NIP-Update project has already mentioned existing challenges in the country which could have been taken into consideration and adaptive measures undertaken to further support the country in the implementation of the activities foreseen within this project.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 20

Recommendation #4:	Document and report consistently any change in the project or project partners
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Ukraine was foreseen as a project demonstration country, but has finally not signed the SSFA and not participated in the implementation of the project's activities, recently due to the commencement of the war in February 2022. However, as explained in the main body of the TR report, this has not been documented consistently in different reports, mentioning the reasons for its non-participation sometimes, and still listing it as a demonstration country in the same documents.
Priority Level:	High

Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 33

Recommendation #5:	Consider expanding such demonstration projects to a larger number of countries
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	8 demonstration countries were foreseen to participate in this project from different regions, namely Southeast Asia, Central America, East Africa, Eastern Europe, Southwest Pacific/Oceania and Eastern Caribbean, including island states. Ukraine has been unable to participate. However, it was not clear why only 8 countries were selected to participate in the project; one possible reason may have been that the planned budget for the project was considered to be sufficient for project implementation in the said number of countries. Moreover, with the available GEF budget and with one country not participating, project could have included a few other countries as well, even at a later stage, thus resulting in support provided to other countries and awareness created on the toolkit. To some extent, this has been covered by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, as they have invited a few additional countries to participate in the toolkit testing and all the countries of their constituencies in the capacity-building presentations and webinars.
Priority Level:	Medium
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 2

Recommendation #6:	In case of project extension, increase the number of PSC meetings accordingly
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	In the project document, 3 PSC meetings are foreseen to take place for 3 years of project implementation. However, the project has been extended, without additional PSC meetings taking place.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Findings 30, 31

Recommendation #7:	Consider holding coordination meetings with all the project partners, besides the PSC meetings
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	3 PSC meetings have taken place, and some of the project demonstration countries have participated in the same workshop organized by the BCSC-RCs. However, a common coordination or status meeting with all the project partners, besides the PSC meetings to share experiences, good practices and information might contribute to enhanced effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 39

Recommendation #8:	Continue capacity-building and awareness-raising for the usage of the e-toolkit
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Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Capacity-building for non-demonstration countries, which are also parties to the SC, has been carried out by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs within webinars and workshops. Nonetheless, additional awareness-raising and above all, capacity-building may be required for other (non-demonstration) countries to use the toolkit. Capacity-building is also entailed in the new ongoing UNEP project on NIP-Update, which is in line with this recommendation.
Priority Level:	Medium
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	In future, starting as soon as possible
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 7

Recommendation #9:	SSFAs should include the completion of specific activities per payment instalment; payment transfers after the 1st initial payment should be carried out after receiving the progress report from the project partner regarding the completion of foreseen activities, and reports should be received in a timely manner.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	2 final progress and expenditure reports were prepared and submitted only in May and June 2024 respectively.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	UNEP PMs, FMOs
Proposed implementation time-frame:	At all times in future
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 11

Recommendation #10:	The toolkit should be included on the agenda of future COP meetings to raise awareness and encourage other parties to the SC to enter their relevant data into the toolkit
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Analysis of information from the toolkit can only be done based on data entered in the e-toolkit, that is, it is necessary that all parties to the SC enter data in the toolkit. And it would be helpful if the toolkit is included on the agenda of the future COP(s).
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Project and other institutional partners
Responsibility:	UNEP Chemicals and Waste Unit to ensure this is included in the agenda of the future COP(s)
Proposed implementation time-frame:	Albeit difficult to estimate, but probably for the next 3-5 years
Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:	Finding 7

ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Table 5: Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the reviewers, where appropriate

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
Various	Name of regional centre to be corrected (comment from BRS Secretariat)	This is well received and modified accordingly.

ANNEX II. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE TERMINAL REVIEW

	Organisation	Name	Position	Role in the project	Gender
1	BCRC-SCRC, PR China	Ms. Chen Yuan	Senior Programme Officer	Partnering Organization	F
2	BCRC-SCRC, PR China	Ms. Qiaoyun Zhang	Programme Officer	Partnering Organization	F
3	BCRC-SCRC, South Africa	Mr. Thabo Moraba	Acting Executive Director, Africa Institute	Partnering Organization	M
4	BCCC-SCRC, Uruguay	Ms. Gabriela Medina	Executive Director	Partnering Organization	F
5	BCCC-SCRC, Uruguay	Ms. Natalia Maciel	Project Manager	Partnering Organization	F
6	BRS Secretariat, Switzerland	Ms. Carla Valle-Klann	Programme Officer	Key stakeholder organization	F
7	BRS Secretariat, Switzerland	Mr. Julien Hortonedá	Information Officer Head, Knowledge Management Team	Key stakeholder organization	M
8	BRS Secretariat, Switzerland	Ms. Claire Morel	Information System Officer	Key stakeholder organization	F
9	Conservation and Environment Protection Authority (CEPA), Papua New Guinea	Mr. Veari Kula	Managing Director, CEPA	Demonstration country focal point	M
10	Ministry of Environment, Cambodia	Mr. Laska Sophal	Director, Department of Hazardous Substance Management	Demonstration country focal point	M
11	Ministry of Environment and Forests, Kenya	Mr. Edward Njuguna	Project Officer	Demonstration country focal point	M
12	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Madagascar	Ms. Rakotoarisetra Haritiana	POPs National Focal Point	Demonstration country focal point	F
13	Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations & Sustainable Development, Saint Lucia	Ms. Yasmin Jude	Sustainable Development and Environment Officer	Demonstration country focal point	F
14	Pro Mediu – Asociatia Expertilor de Mediu, Moldova	Ms. Tatiana Tugui	Project Manager	Demonstration country focal point	F
15	Independent Expert	Mr. Gbamra Akounda	Consultant	IT expert	M
16	Independent Expert	Mr. Fouad Bergigui	Consultant	Gender consultant	M
17	Independent Expert	Mr. Recep Turkoglu	Consultant	IT expert	M
18	UNEP	Mr. Ludovic Bernaudat	Head, Knowledge and Risk Unit	Executing Agency	M

	Organisation	Name	Position	Role in the project	Gender
19	UNEP	Mr. Jitendra Sharma	Programme Management Officer/ GEF Task Manager	GEF Task Manager	M
20	UNEP	Ms. Mihaela Paun	Programme Management Officer	Project Manager	F
21	UNEP	Mr. Gricha Zurita	Fund Management Officer	Fund Management Officer	M

ANNEX III. TERMINAL REVIEW FRAMEWORK/MATRIX

No	Evaluation Criteria	Sub Questions	Indicators / Means of verification	Data Sources
A. Strategic Relevance				
i.	Alignment to the UNEP Medium term strategy (MTS), programme of Work (POW)	- Is the project in line with UNEP's mandate and how? - Is the project aligned with UNEP's MTS and POW?	- Degree of alignment with UNEP MTS and POW	- UNEP MTS, PoW - ProDoc - Annual PIRs - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager
ii.	Alignment with GEF Strategic Priorities	- Is the project in line with GEF Strategic priorities, and how?	- Degree of alignment with GEF strategic policies	- ProDoc - Annual PIRs - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interview with BRS Secretariat
iii.	Relevance to National Environmental Priorities	- Does the project respond to the stated environmental concerns and needs of the participating countries?	- Degree of alignment with: National plans, strategies, policies and agreements	- ProDoc - Progress reports - Stockholm Convention website - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries
B. Quality of Project Design				
	Relevance and logic of project Objectives, activities, Outputs and Outcomes according Project Quality Design template in Annex C.	The Quality of Project Design is assessed using the template provided by the UNEP Evaluation Office.	- Result of Overall Project Design Quality rating	- ProDoc, - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager
C. Nature of External Context				

No	Evaluation Criteria	Sub Questions	Indicators / Means of verification	Data Sources
	Aspects related to external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval).	- Has the project faced an unusually challenging operational environment that negatively affected project performance, such as: * Conflicts or security issues? * Government instability? * Risks of natural disasters?	- Number of extensions; changes in project document	- ProDoc - Progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Internet research
D. Effectiveness				
i.	Availability of Outputs	- Were Outputs and milestones delivered on time and as planned? If not, what were the reasons of delay/changes? - What is the quality of these Outputs? - To what extent do the Outputs contribute to their planned Outcomes?	- Examples of Outputs being used by end users - Involvement of stakeholders in the production of Outputs	- ProDoc - TOC - Project progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with BRS Secretariat
ii.	Achievement of direct Outcomes	- What Direct Outcomes have been achieved? - Are these Direct Outcomes a result of project intervention?	- Testing and usage of toolkit - Data entry into toolkit	- ProDoc - TOC - Project progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with BRS Secretariat
iii.	Likelihood of Impact	- What is the likelihood of expected positive impacts to be realized? - To what extent have there been any scaling up and/or replication of project results?	- Usage - Replication	- ProDoc - TOC - Project progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries

No	Evaluation Criteria	Sub Questions	Indicators / Means of verification	Data Sources
		- Is the project likely to contribute to the long-lasting changes represented by the SDGs, and/or the intermediate-level results reflected in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments?		- Interviews with BRS Secretariat
E. Financial Management				
i	Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures	- Is the project being implemented in compliance with UN financial management standards and procedures?	- Alignment of financial reporting with UNEP's format	- Project document - Financial reports - Expenditure reports from 7 demonstration countries - Interview with UNEP Fund Management Officer - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries
ii	Completeness of financial information	- What is the actual expenditure of the project? - To what extent is the project's expenditure in line with the corresponding approved budget?	- Alignment of financial reporting with UNEP's format - Alignment of expenditures during project implementation with approved budget	- Project budget - Financial reports - Interview with UNEP Fund Management Officer - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager
F. Efficiency				
i	Cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution	- What factors have caused delays (if any) and have affected/are affecting project execution and costs? How?	- Number of project extensions, budget adjustments, revisions	- Project document - Financial reports - Interview with UNEP Fund Management Officer - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with BRS Secretariat

No	Evaluation Criteria	Sub Questions	Indicators / Means of verification	Data Sources
G. Monitoring and Reporting				
i.	Monitoring design and budgeting	- To what extent is the monitoring plan designed to track progress against SMART indicators?	- Quality of monitoring plan - Number and quality of monitoring documents	- ProDoc - Monitoring/progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries
ii.	Monitoring of project implementation	- To what extent is the monitoring plan operational? - To what extent are the allocated funds for monitoring actually used to support monitoring?	- Number and quality of monitoring documents	- ProDoc - Monitoring/progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries
iii.	Project reporting	- Have the 6-monthly status reports been prepared within UNEP (or any other reporting obligation followed)? - To what extent have other UNEP and donor reporting requirements been fulfilled?	- Number and quality of reports delivered in line with reporting requirements - Number and quality of approved reports - Number and quality of reports delivered to the donor	- ProDoc - Progress/Monitoring reports - PIRs - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interview with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat
H. Likelihood of Sustainability				
What is the likelihood that the project achievements will be taken forward / adopted by the Stockholm Convention?				
i.	Socio-political sustainability	- What is the level of ownership, interest and commitment among governments and among other main stakeholders?	- Status of pilot testing of toolkit	- ProDoc - Progress reports - PIRs - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat

No	Evaluation Criteria	Sub Questions	Indicators / Means of verification	Data Sources
ii.	Financial sustainability	- To what extent are project Outcomes dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained?	- Availability of funding for future maintenance and updates	- ProDoc - PIRs - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat
iii.	Institutional sustainability	- What is the status of adoption of the toolkit by the Stockholm Convention?	- Ownership of the toolkit	- ProDoc - PIRs - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat
I. Factors and Processes Affecting Project Performance				
i.	Preparation and Readiness	- What was the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team during project preparation?	- Involvement of project stakeholders in project preparation - Commencement date of project implementation	- ProDoc - Progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat
ii.	Quality of Project Management and Supervision	- Are staffing and financing arrangements at UNEP sufficient to drive implementation? - What is the nature of communication and collaboration with stakeholders?	- Staffing of UNEP project management team - Communication with stakeholders	- ProDoc - Progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat
iii.	Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation	- What consultation and communication mechanisms were put in place to ensure an active stakeholder engagement and ownership?	- Number of stakeholders identified and actively involved in project implementation	- ProDoc - Progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries

No	Evaluation Criteria	Sub Questions	Indicators / Means of verification	Data Sources
		- What measures were taken to ensure inclusion and participation of all groups, including gender groups?	- Consultations with stakeholders - Involvement of gender groups	- Interviews with the BRS Secretariat - Interviews with gender groups
iv.	Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity	- To what extent does the project intervention adhere to UNEP's policy and strategy for gender and human rights?	- Number of gender and human rights stakeholders identified and actively involved in project implementation - Evidence of gender consideration in project design, implementation and monitoring and gender distribution in participation in project activities and events	- UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment - ProDoc - Progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat - Interviews with gender groups
v	Environmental and Social Safeguards	- To what extent were UNEP's requirements, with respect to environmental and social safeguards, met?	- Inclusion of safeguard issues	- ProDoc - Project progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries
vi.	Country Ownership and Driven-ness	- To what extent was/is the government / public sector qualitatively involved with the project?	- Degree to which project results have been adopted and championed in the 7 participating countries	- ProDoc - Progress reports - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat
vi.	Communication and Public Awareness	- How are learning and experience sharing communicated between project partners and interested groups? - Which public awareness activities were undertaken during so far?	- Operative communication platforms - Number of published articles, brochures, other	- ProDoc - Progress reports - Awareness raising materials developed within the project - Awareness-raising workshop reports

No	Evaluation Criteria	Sub Questions	Indicators / Means of verification	Data Sources
			communication material, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews with Task Manager and Project Manager - Interviews with national focal points (NFPs) and/or representatives of 7 demonstration countries - Interviews with the BRS Secretariat

ANNEX IV. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Project planning and reporting documents

- Project document
- PIRs 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
- Workplans 2022, 2023
- Budget revisions 2022
- Final project report – draft 2023

Project outputs – Overall

- Inception workshop report
- Inception workshop country presentations
- Expenditure reports 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
- PSC meeting reports 2018, 2021, 2023

Project output 1

- Gap Analysis

Project output 2

- Gender Guidance
- E-toolkit
- Feedback received from countries

Project output 3

- National gap analysis reports
- Workshop reports
- Progress reports
- Expenditure reports
- Final progress reports
- Final expenditure reports

Project output 4

- Replication strategy

Agreements and reporting documents

- SSFAs – BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs China, South Africa, Uruguay
- SSFA Amendments – BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs China, South Africa, Uruguay
- Workshop reports
- Chinese translation for NIP Module
- Progress reports
- Expenditure reports
- Final progress reports
- Final expenditure reports
- Consultant contracts and reports

Previous reviews/evaluations

- N/A

Reference documents

- COP documents from COP 8, 9, 10, 11

Websites:

<https://www.pops.int>

www.thegef.org

https://nips.pops.int/guidance_1.html

<https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/30730>

<https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_lockdowns

<https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action/pollution-and-health/persistent-organic-pollutants-pops-8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZgy1xwLmEI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqu4P-NxV4s>

ANNEX V. PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

Expenditure per year and per cost category

Expenditure Categories	2018 USD	2019 USD	2020 USD	2021 USD	2022 USD	2023 USD	Grand Total USD
Staff and Other Personnel Costs	44,707.76	78,371.25	43,770.00	49,161.13	211,672.91	66,122.47	493,805.52
Travel	67,667.84	-2,219.30	150.00	-	-	19,836.36	85,434.90
Contractual Services	420.00	1,123.85	437.70	201.33	9,742.31	1,223.73	13,148.92
Operating and Other Direct Costs	226.72	-	-	-	6,500.00	-	6,726.72
Transfer/Grant to IP	-	-	153,832.22	260,962.99	229,246.91	274,934.21	918,976.33
Grants Out	-	92,682.80	65,815.87	-	-	-	158,498.67
PSC							-
IP-PSC							-
Total (USD)	113,022.32	169,958.60	264,005.79	310,325.45	457,162.13	362,116.77	1,676,591.06

Source: UNEP FMO, PM.

Expenditure per year and per Output

All in USD	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total	Planned budget
Output 1.1	96,409.88	-2,252.51	12,750.00	5,926.34	3,259.97	22,000.00	158,093.68	158,000.00
Output 1.2	16,612.44	111,424.83	110,118.37	12,605.45	143,175.95	99,450.19	549,258.39	448,970.00
Output 1.3	0.00	30,403.43	141,137.42	257,280.48	223,779.83	191,964.78	1,062,350.13	1,071,000.00
Output 1.4	0.00	30,000.00	0.00	6,105.45	44,040.12	0.00	80,145.57	71,000.00
Output 1.5	0.00	382.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	382.85	70,000.00
PM				29,028.13	42,645.46	48,701.80	169,077.19	181,030.00
Total	113,022.32	169,958.60	264,005.79	310,945.85	456,901.33	362,116.77	1,676,950.66	2,000,000.00

Source: Quarterly progress and expenditure reports, UNEP FMO, PM.

Committed and actual co-finance spent:

Name of co-financer	Type of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Committed Amount - USD	Actual Amount - USD
UNEP	Implementing Agency	In-kind	300,000	1,200,000
BRS Secretariat	International Organization	In-kind	1,080,000	
Cambodia	National Government	In-kind	335,600	477,100
Honduras	National Government	In-kind	387,740	454,100
Kenya	National Government	In-kind	2,700,000	2,700,000
		Grant	300,000	300,000
Madagascar	National Government	In-kind	300,000	415,000
		Grant	330,000	330,000
Republic of Moldova	National Government	In-kind	315,000	609,720
		Grant		207,480
Papua New Guinea	National Government	In-kind	174,000	415,000
Ukraine	National Government		350,000	
Saint Lucia	National Government	In-kind		106,801
BCRC-SCRC-China	Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for the Asia and Pacific Region	In-kind	174,000	226,000
		Grant	226,000	174,000
BCRC-SCRC-South Africa	Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for the English-speaking countries in Africa	In-kind	200,000	360,000
BCCC-SCRC-Uruguay	Basel Convention Coordinating Centre - Stockholm Convention Regional Centre in Uruguay	In-kind	50,000	273,000
		Grant	10,000	68,000
Total			7,232,340	8,316,201

Source: Project document, Draft Project Final Report July 2023, Co-finance reports from demonstration countries and BCSC/BCCC-SCRCs.

ANNEX VI. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial Management Table

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures:		S	Whereas payments to the project partners have been done in line with the SSFAs, 2 of the corresponding final expenditure reports were prepared and sent only in May and June 2024 showing a major part of the expenditure, which was not shown in the previous interim expenditure reports.
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence ⁷⁷ to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules		No	
2. Completeness of project financial information⁷⁸:		S	Same as above
Provision of key documents to the reviewer (based on the responses to A-H below)		S	2 final expenditure and progress reports showing activities covering the total amounts transferred were prepared and provided in May and June 2024 respectively.
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	Co-financing and project costs' tables at design are included in the project document
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Budget has been revised as the estimated yearly expenditure was different during implementation against the planned budget; however, there is not much deviation in the expenditure per output compared with the planned budget.
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	All SSFAs were provided to the TR
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	Information related to the fund transfers was provided to the reviewer.
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	Yes	Documentation of co-finance provided to the TR
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	Provided by the PM and FMO to the reviewer

⁷⁷ If the review raises concerns over adherence with policies or standard procedures, a recommendation maybe given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.

⁷⁸ See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference

G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>)	N/A	All expenditure reports were provided.
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	N/A	
3. Communication between finance and project management staff		S	
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		S	
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		HS	
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.		S	Issues were not reported. The final expenditure and progress reports from 2 project partners were prepared and provided in May/June 2024.
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		S	Same as above
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the review process		HS	All finance-related documentation and information requested for the TR were provided in a timely manner. Final expenditure and progress reports from 2 project partners were prepared and provided in May and June 2024 upon request.
Overall rating		S	

ANNEX VII. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH TOOLS

<https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action/pollution-and-health/persistent-organic-pollutants-pops-8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZgy1xwLmEI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqu4P-NxV4s>

Workshop to support inventory development and priority setting in developing and updating of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([2018, Pretoria, South Africa](#))

Workshop to support inventory development and priority setting in developing and updating of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([2018, São Paulo, Brazil](#))

Regional Training Workshop on the Article 15 reporting requirements under the Stockholm Convention ([2020, Trinidad and Tobago](#))

Regional capacity-building workshop to improve the development, update and submission of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) and National Reports under the Stockholm Convention for Asia and Pacific Region, ([Online May 17-18 2022](#))

UNEP side-event: From data to action: Informed decision-making for Stockholm Convention implementation, during Stockholm Convention COP-10 ([Geneva, Switzerland, 7 June 2022](#))

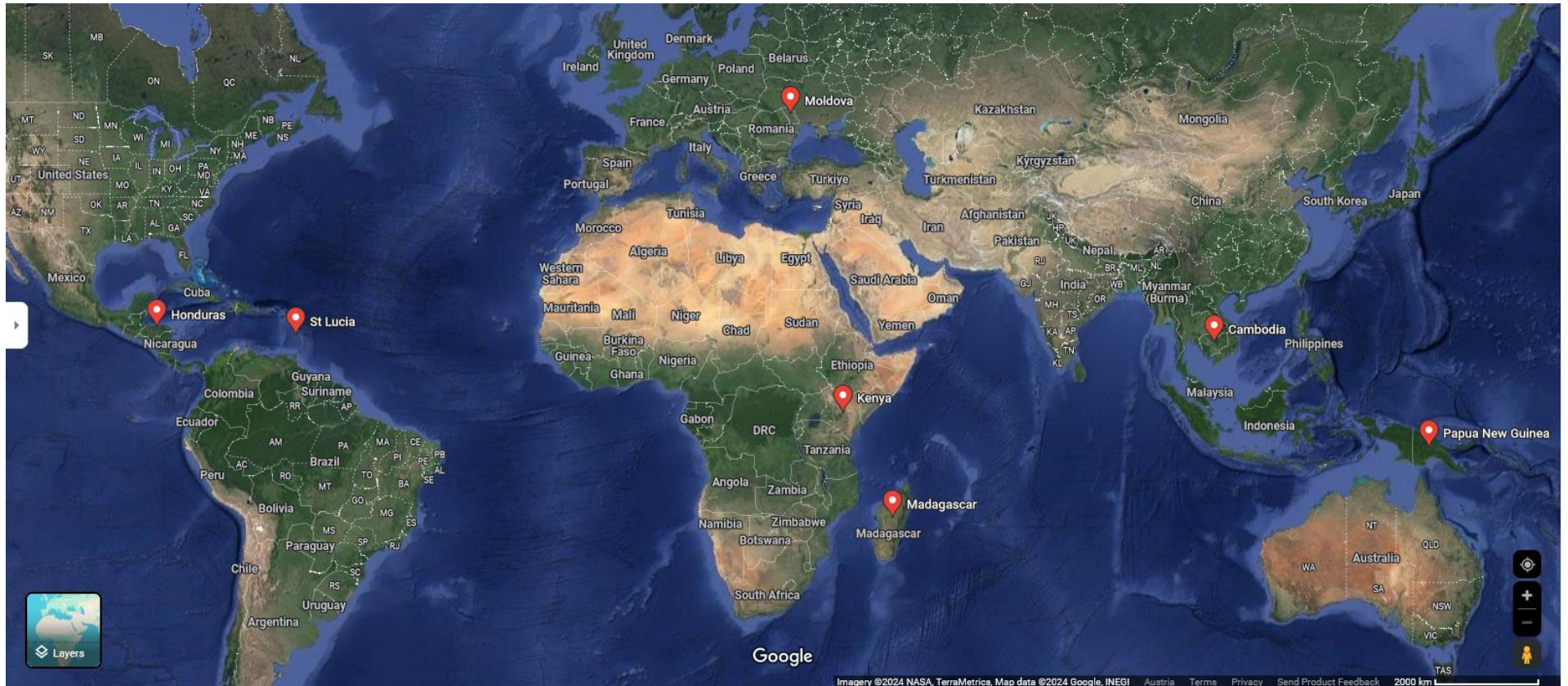
Workshop on developing, reviewing, and updating national implementation plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([Pretoria, South Africa, 13-15 September 2022](#))

Workshop on developing, reviewing, and updating national implementation plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([Jakarta, Indonesia, 27-29 September 2022](#))

Workshop on “From Science to Action” for the BRS and industrial chemicals guidance for the Stockholm Convention ([Barcelona, Spain, 17-20 October 2022](#))

Outputs Validation Workshop and third Steering Committee Meeting of the project “Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15” ([Geneva, 25 May 2023](#))

ANNEX VIII. DEMONSTRATION COUNTRIES ON THE WORLD MAP



Source: Google maps.

ANNEX IX. TERMINAL REVIEW TIMELINE

Milestone	Dates
Contract commencement	01 March 2024
Inception Phase	
Evaluation initiation meeting	01 March 2024
Preliminary desk review	March 2024
Inception report draft submission	31 March 2024
Inception report - feedback from PM team	02 April 2024
Finalized inception report submission	03 April 2024
Data collection and Analysis Phase	
Web-based interviews via Zoom and MS Teams	15 April – 01 May 2024
Analysis	May 2024
Report drafting	May 2024
Reporting phase	
Terminal Review Report draft v1 submission	30 May 2024
TR report draft v1 – feedback from PM team	06 June 2024
TR report draft v2 submission	20 June 2024
TR report draft v2 – feedback from PM team	03 July 2024
TR report draft v3 submission	04 July 2024
TR report draft v3 – feedback from PM team	09 July 2024
TR report draft v4 submission	15 July 2024
Terminal Review Report draft – shared with key stakeholders	17 July 2024
Terminal Review Report draft – feedback from key stakeholders	29 July 2024
Finalized Terminal Review Report submission	31 July 2024
Completed implementation plan of recommendations by project management team	06 August 2024
Finalized Terminal Review Report including logo, and implementation plan of recommendations by project management team	08 August 2024

ANNEX X. BRIEF CV OF THE INDEPENDENT SENIOR REVIEWER

Name: Suman Lederer

Profession	Independent Senior Evaluation Consultant; External Lecturer
Nationality	Austrian
In-Country experience (evaluation mission, other work-related in-country experience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe: Armenia, Austria, Germany, Belgium, France, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia • Africa: South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda • Asia: India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Viet Nam • Oceania: Samoa, Solomon Islands
International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEP, UNESCO, UNODC, OSCE, UNIDO
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Science – Environmental Technology and International Affairs, Technical University of Vienna • Master of Advanced International Studies, Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, Austria • Business Administration, Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Short biography

Ms. Suman Lederer is an independent senior evaluation consultant, based in Vienna, Austria. She has led numerous evaluations at International Organizations with a focus on the evaluation of POPs, environment, culture and heritage, human right and gender and private-sector development projects and programmes in the regions Africa, Asia, Caucasus, Central Asia, South-Pacific, Southeast Europe. Further, she has work experience in the private sector and academia in Central and Western Europe.

Key skills and experience for this assignment:

- Vast experience in M&E, project management and research, especially evaluations;
- Experience in evaluating GEF projects at International Organizations;
- Several years' experience in leading evaluations at international level;
- Proven experience in the evaluation of global projects involving multiple countries;
- Strong interview, communication and report-writing skills.

Selected Independent evaluations:

Lead Consultant MTR: Promotion and Delivery of Environmentally Sound Waste Management Technologies and Methods and in-Country Technical and Advisory Support.

Lead Consultant TE: Environmentally Sound Management and Final Disposal of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in the Republic of India, Lao PDR and Serbia.

Team member TE: Global Project on the Updating of NIPs for POPs.

Lead Consultant MTE: Capacity Strengthening and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans (NIPs) in SADC and COMESA Sub-regions.

Lead Consultant MTR: Development and promotion of non-POPs alternative to DDT in the Republic of India.

Team leader MTE: Demonstration of BAT and BEP in open-burning activities in response to the Stockholm Convention on POPs in the ESEA.

Team lead Independent Renewal Evaluation: African World Heritage Fund.

Team lead Independent Evaluation: Management of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

ANNEX XI. TERMINAL REVIEW TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

Terminal Review of the UNEP/GEF project

Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15 (GF ID 9884)

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

(This section describes what is to be reviewed. Key parameters are: project timeframe, funding envelope, results framework and geographic scope)

E. Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

<p>UNEP Sub-programme:</p>	<p>Subprogramme 5: Chemicals and Pollution Action</p>	<p>UNEP Division/Branch:</p>	<p>Industry and Economy Division, GEF Chemicals and Waste, Chemicals and Health Branch</p>
<p>Expected Accomplishment(s):</p>	<p>Facilitate the development, transmission, access and use of data contained in National Implementation Plans (NIP, Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15)</p>	<p>Programme of Work Output(s):</p>	<p>"PoW Outcomes: 3A PoW Outcome Indicators: i and vi Direct outcomes to which project contributes: 3.5, 3.11, 3.13"</p>
<p>SDG(s) and indicator(s)</p>	<p>Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages Target: 3.9 – “By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination”.</p> <p>Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all Target: 6.3 – “By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally”.</p>		

	Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production SDG Target: 12.4.1 - "Number of Parties to MEAs that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each agreement".		
GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-7⁷⁹)	N/A (this is a normative project)		
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	Status of future project phases:	N/A

FROM THE PROJECT'S PIR REPORT (use latest version) :

Project Title:	Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15
Executing Agency:	UNEP Chemicals Branch, Knowledge & Risk Unit
Project partners:	"Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions Secretariat; Basel and Stockholm Conventions Regional Centre for English speaking countries in Africa; Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre in Uruguay Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for the Asia and the Pacific Region in China"
Geographical Scope:	Global
Participating Countries:	Cambodia, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Republic of Moldova, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Ukraine

GEF project ID:	9884	IMIS number⁸⁰:	
Focal Area(s):	Chemicals and Waste	GEF OP #:	
GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:	CW-1-1	GEF approval date*:	09-Nov-17
UNEP approval date:	16-Nov-17	Date of first disbursement*:	10-Feb-18
Actual start date⁸¹:	09-Feb-18	Planned duration:	36 months

⁷⁹ This does not apply to Enabling Activities

⁸⁰ Fields with an * sign (in yellow) should be filled by the Fund Management Officer

⁸¹ Only if different from first disbursement date, e.g., in cases where a long time elapsed between first disbursement and recruitment of project manager.

Intended completion date*:	31-Jul-23	Actual or Expected completion date:	31-Jul-21
Project Type:	MSP	GEF Allocation*:	USD 2,000,000
PPG GEF cost*:	N/A	PPG co-financing*:	N/A
Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing*:		Total Cost*:	
Mid-term Review/eval. (planned date):	N/A	Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	31-Dec-23
Mid-term Review/eval. (actual date):	N/A	No. of revisions*:	2 (extension and budget revision)
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	25-May-23	Date of last Revision*:	
Disbursement as of 30 June [year]*:		Date of planned financial closure*:	
Date of planned completion^{82*}:		Actual expenditures reported as of 30 June [year]⁸³:	USD 999,112.92 (Dec 2022)
Total co-financing realized as of 31 December [year]:		Actual expenditures entered in IMIS as of 31 December [year]*:	
Leveraged financing.⁸⁴			

F. Project Rationale⁸⁵

The volume of chemicals manufactured and used continues to grow, with a shift in production from highly industrialized countries towards developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Increased international co-operation is needed to eliminate or reduce the use of toxic chemicals, to promote the development and adoption of safer alternatives, and to build capacity for management at every stage of the lifecycle of chemicals, including disposal. In this regard, it is important that existing national laws and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) for the sound management of hazardous chemicals and wastes be fully implemented. Public availability of adequate information about hazardous chemicals and waste is essential to support these efforts. The need to facilitate and track national reporting will only grow stronger under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes indicator 12.4.1, "Number of Parties to MEAs

⁸² If there was a "Completion Revision" please use the date of the revision.

⁸³ Information to be provided by Executing Agency/Task Manager

⁸⁴ See above note on co-financing

⁸⁵ Grey =Info to be added

that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each agreement”.

The National Implementation Plan (NIP) and the National Reports submitted to the Stockholm Convention Secretariat under Articles 7 and 15 respectively are the key data sources used in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Stockholm Convention (SC). Because the objective of the Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (POPs), an adequate indicator of the successful implementation of the Convention is the reduction and/or elimination of overall releases with consequent benefits for human health and the environment across the globe. The low reporting rate by Parties has a direct impact on the analysis required under the Effectiveness Evaluation process as acknowledged in the Executive summary of the report on the effectiveness evaluation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants⁸: “a key challenge in undertaking this evaluation was the limited data available from national reports and NIPs”; (...) “Quantitative information on the production of POPs reported by Parties is extremely limited, such that it is not possible to discuss trends”.

Article 7 of the Convention requires Parties to update their NIPs to address new POPs as they are added to the Convention annexes. The fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eight Conference of Parties (COP) of the SC listed an additional seventeen chemicals, triggering the need for parties to update their NIPs within the two years after the amendments entered into force for each Party.

As of end of April 2016, eleven years after the entry into force of the Convention, a majority of parties (163 out of 180 or 91%) have transmitted their NIPs addressing the 12 initial POPs. Among these, 61 parties transmitted their NIP within their individual deadlines (37%).

The initial high rates of NIP transmission have decreased over time. For most parties, the deadline to transmit the updated NIPs addressing COP-4, COP-5 and COP-6 amendments has passed. Only 43 parties have transmitted their updated NIPs addressing COP-4 amendments (i.e. 24% of parties under the obligation to do so) from them 49% are developing countries, only 38 have transmitted their NIPs addressing COP-5 amendments (i.e. 21% parties which are under the obligation to do so) from them 50% are developing countries, and only 13 have transmitted their NIPs addressing COP-6 amendments (i.e. 7% parties which are under the obligation to do so) from them 62% are developing countries.

The average delay on the NIP transmission for the 12 initial POPs for the countries that have submitted their NIP is 2 years and 4 months. For the NIPs addressing COP-4 and COP-5 the delays are of 2 years and 1 year, respectively.

Even when NIPs are submitted, there is a wide margin of interpretation of each party to define what should be included or not in their NIPs. While some documents are very succinct and clear, others are providing NIPs which are very long, unclear and which lack key data or information on what parties are doing or how they are planning to implement the Convention. Also, NIPs differ significantly in their coverage of sectors and national coverage, as well as in the timeframe of the respective national action plans. Thus, based on such a broad range of NIP approaches, it is rather difficult for any stakeholder to make an analysis on the NIP submissions. The action plan developed as part of the NIP is frequently overly ambitious and poorly prioritized, and thus does not support effective implementation of the Convention. NIPs are not only the foundation stones of national policies. Their submission is also a precondition for accessing funding through the Financial Mechanism of the SC. NIPs are therefore key in defining projects that will help parties meeting their obligations under the SC. However, meaningful projects for technical assistance that meet parties' needs can only be developed when the inventories, action plans and the

assessments of costs are accurate. The capacity of parties to develop appropriate national strategies and implementation plans is crucial to achieve this goal. On the opposite, the scarce financial resources made available to assist developing countries to fulfil the obligations under the Convention may not be used efficiently.

Article 15 requires Parties to provide regular updates on progress in implementation of the SC through submission of National Reports every four years.

Only a small proportion of the parties provided their reports as required under Article 15. Overall, only 31% of the parties reported in the first cycle; 55% in the second, and 40% in the third cycle. The decrease in the number of reports submitted by parties between the 2nd and the 3rd cycle can be explained, among other challenges, by the difficulties in accessing and using the new electronic reporting system. The BRS Secretariat has supported Parties in overcoming the barriers of using the new electronic reporting system. 64% of the reports sent are from developing countries.

Effort is required to allow more parties to be able to report in all cycles, and when they do so, this should be done as per deadline set by the COP. Furthermore, reports need to improve in terms of data quality. Many of the gaps in the reports submitted relate to the lack of data on POPs, more specifically on inventories of these chemicals. Additionally, several parties have only reported in one of the reporting cycles.

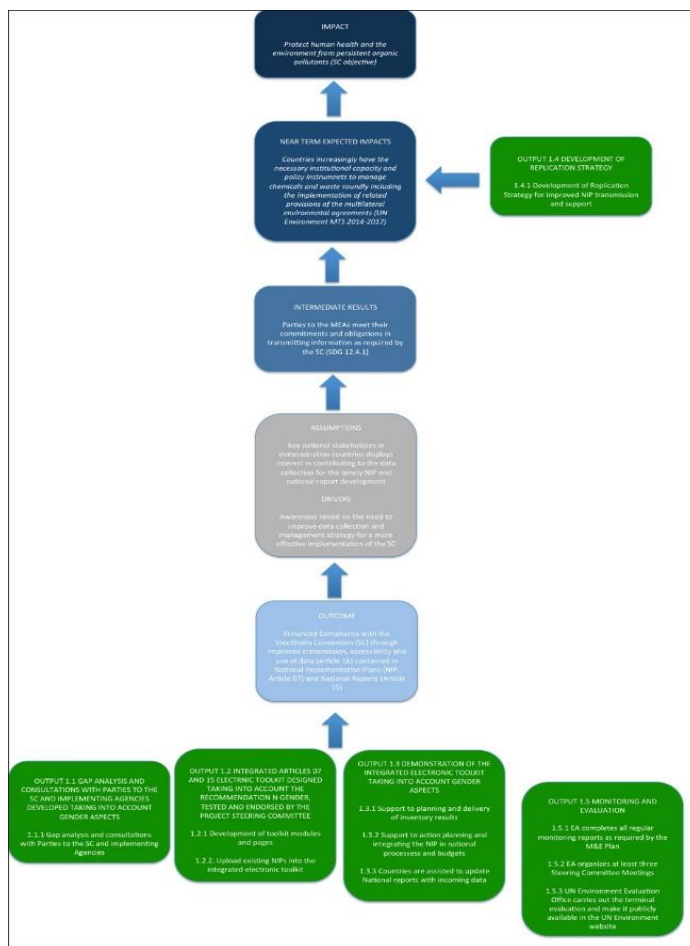
A total of 70 parties (39%) have not reported.

The overlap in the scope of reporting between NIPs and National Reports means that data could be shared however Parties seem not to correlate the processes of developing and updating their NIPs with the Reporting obligation under Article 15. Sometimes information and data might be collected for one purpose and not used for the other. Even data provided by official sources differs sometimes, making it very difficult to rely on and make assessments. The experts that assessed the funding needs of Parties that are developing countries or countries with economies in transition to implement the Stockholm Convention for the period 2018–20229 acknowledged that it proved to be very challenging to identify the source of data and to match tabulated data to the correct years in the various reports.

The SC Secretariat has informally consulted Parties on the challenges they have faced in complying with Articles 7 and 15. UN Environment has also consulted Parties on the same issue on the occasion of the COP8. Three root causes have been identified:

- Format of the NIP itself
- National coordination
- Lack of National Resources

G. Project Results Framework Theory of Change



Logical Framework

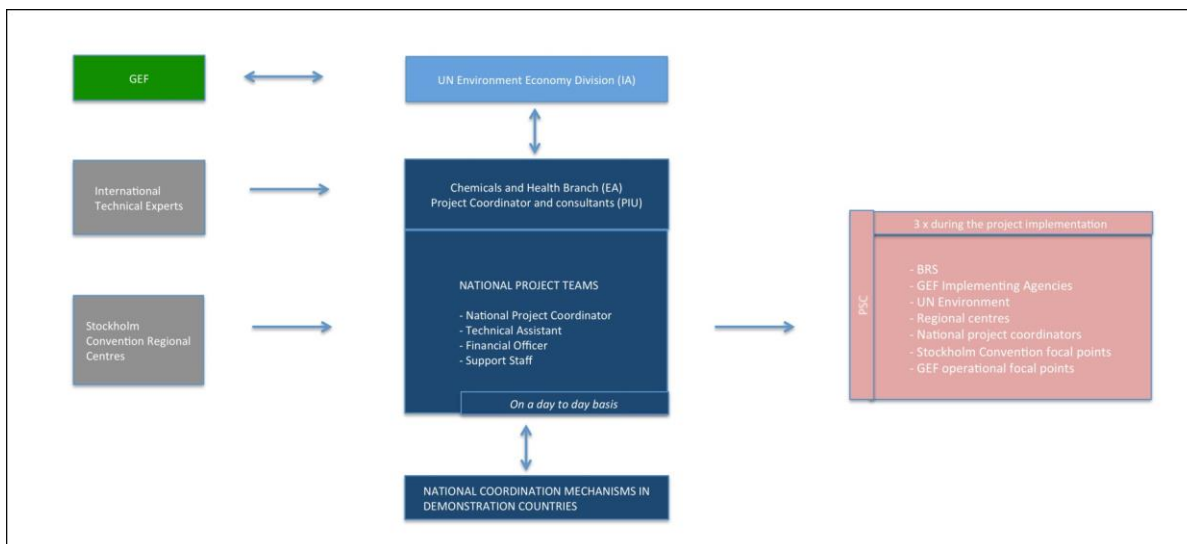
Project Outcome	Objective level Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Enhanced compliance with the Stockholm Convention (SC) through improved transmission, accessibility and use of data (article 16) contained in National Implementation Plans (NIP, Article 7) and National Reports (Article 15)	Number of countries that meet their obligations in transmitting information as required by Articles 7 and 15 of the Stockholm Convention (SDG 12.4.1)	00 demonstration countries have submitted the updated NIPs addressing COP 6 amendments. 00 countries have reported in the 4 th round deadline for national reports.	6 demonstration countries 6 demonstration countries	SC reporting system, UNEP Live	Risk: Delays are caused for political / administrative reasons even if the NIP and National Reports are technically completed in time. Assumption: Funding is in place on time Assumption: there is political willingness and capacity to meet the obligations under Articles 7 and 15 of the Stockholm Convention. Assumption: Demonstration countries will access funds for the NIP updates.
	Increased percentage of data from NIPs is used to report under Article 15 and used in Article 16	To be determined in the gap analysis that will be done in the project component 1	To be determined	SC reporting system, UNEP Live	Assumption: Countries choose to use the electronic toolkit for submitted their NIPs and to manage data on POPs inventory
Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks

Output 1.1: Gap analysis and consultations with Parties to the SC and implementing agencies developed, taking into account gender aspects.	Number of gap analysis report produced	None	1 report	UNEP Live	Assumption: key stakeholders will be available and willing to provide qualitative information to complete the gap analysis.
	Number of recommendations related to gender aspects		1 recommendation		
Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Output 1.2: Integrated Articles 7 and 15 electronic toolkit designed taking into account the recommendation on gender, tested and endorsed by the project Steering Committee	Number of integrated electronic toolkit taking into account gender aspects designed, tested and endorsed	None	1 integrated electronic toolkit	Steering Committee meeting report	Assumption: key stakeholders accept the relevance of collecting gender-segregated data always when possible.
	Percentage of quantitative data in existing NIPs imported into the new integrated electronic toolkit	None	100%	Integrated electronic toolkit records	Assumption: Quantitative data exists in existing NIPs
Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks

Output 1.3: Demonstration of the integrated electronic toolkit taking into account gender aspects	Number of demonstration countries assisted in fully entering new NIP and national report data into the integrated electronic toolkit	None	06 demonstration countries	Integrated electronic toolkit records	Assumption: Integrated electronic toolkit is up and running in time for parties to use
	Number of countries entering gender disaggregated data in the integrated electronic toolkit when relevant		06 demonstration countries		
	Number of countries taking into account gender aspects in the NIP Action Plan	Zero	06 demonstration countries	SC reporting system	Assumption: Lessons are learnt during project to ensure maximum success of integrated electronic toolkit demonstration
Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Output 1.4: Development of Replication Strategy	Number of replication strategies developed and endorsed by the project Steering Committee	None	1 replication strategy	Replication strategy report	Assumption: the project is successfully implemented
Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks

<p>Output 1.5: Monitoring and Evaluation</p>	<p>Terminal evaluation rate for the project</p>	<p>The gap analysis developed under output 1.1 will provide qualitative information for the monitoring and evaluation</p>	<p>Highly Satisfactory</p>	<p>Inception workshop report Minutes of Steering Committee meetings Progress and financial reports Terminal report Terminal evaluation report</p>	<p>Assumption: project funds and co-financing are available and political support to the project remains valid until the project completion.</p>
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H. Executing Arrangements



Implementing Agency (IA): UN Environment is one of the GEF implementing Agencies. As such, UN Environment implements this project through the Economy Division. The UN Environment Economy Division will be responsible for the overall project supervision, overseeing the project progress through the monitoring and evaluation of project activities and progress reports. It will report the project implementing progress to GEF and will take part in the Project Steering Committee (PSC). UN Environment Economy Division will closely collaborate with the EA and provide it with administrative support in the implementation of the project.

UN Environment's comparative advantage¹⁸ for the GEF is related to its being the only United Nations organization with a mandate derived from the General Assembly to co-ordinate the work of the United Nations in the area of environment and whose core business is the environment. In this project in particular UN Environment's comparative strength is in:

1. Providing the GEF with a range of relevant experiences: UN Environment has assisted countries in more than 100 NIP development and NIP updating projects;
2. The best available science and knowledge upon which it can base its investments: UN Environment has a science team fully focused on the sound management of chemicals and wastes;
3. It serves as the Secretariat to three of the MEAs, for which GEF is the financial mechanism: coordination and cooperation with the SC Secretariat and SAICM are integrated to UN Environment's work.

PSC: The PSC's membership includes the BRS Secretariat, IA, EA, Other GEF implementing agencies, national focal points, and other stakeholders including the

representatives from the global network of Basel / Stockholm Regional Centres. The role of the PSC is to:

- Oversee the GEF Project;
- Provide overall guidance and ensure coordination between all parties;
- Provide overall supervision for project implementation;
- Approve the annual work plan and budget;
- Oversee the implementation of corrective actions;
- Enhance synergy between the GEF project and other ongoing initiatives.

The PSC will meet at least three times during the project implementation or according to the project's needs.

Basel / Stockholm Regional Centres: The Global network of regional centres provide a unique resource which will be used to support the on-the-ground execution of the project at country level. The specific role of each centre will be defined during the execution of the project based on the needs defined at national level in each of the countries where demonstration / pilot activities are initiated.

Executing Agency (EA): UN Environment Chemicals and Health Branch will execute the project. As EA, the Chemicals and Health Branch's key roles include:

- Coordination of inputs from project partners;
- Establishing and housing the project implementation unit (PIU);
- Acting as Secretariat for the Project Steering Committee (PSC) composed of main project partners;
- Working with project partners to ensure that the agreed work plan is met and that the budget flows to the executing partners listed below. The EA will also consolidate reports on Output delivery from project executing partners for onward submission to the IA,

This global, normative project requires the coordination of many partners across regions and countries. The project will only be a success if the multiple stakeholders from the target regions work in a coherent and coordinated manner to a common standard. Based on a review of potential options it was agreed, in consultation with the BRS Secretariat, that the Science Unit of the UN Environment Chemicals and Health Branch would be the most appropriate partner to lead the execution of this project. The Branch has technically supported the SC Secretariat and countries on NIP development and updating since the Convention entered into force. The Branch has also contributed to developing and delivering face-to-face trainings, webinars and guidance tools linked to the completing of NIPs and NIP update projects. Currently the Branch is executing the global component of two sister GEF projects (GEF ID 5307 and 5525) aimed at supporting countries on NIP updating. The Branch is also heavily engaged in the delivery of the DDT Road Map and PCB Elimination Network (PEN). The new project is Global in nature thus requiring an Executing Agency which operates at the Global rather than Regional or National level.

The Branch recognizes that besides having the best knowledge and experience to successfully execute this project, adequate human resources are needed to support

its implementation. In response to this need the Unit is currently recruiting two staff members who will be on board to fully support the execution of the project from its approval. This is in addition to the project staff recruited to support the execution of the POPs Global Monitoring Plan projects.

Project Implementation Unit (PIU): The PIU will be staffed by a Project Coordinator. The role of the PIU is to:

- Ensure Project execution (all technical aspects of project implementation);
- Ensure project governance and oversight of the financial resources from GEF investment;
- Provide staff time and expertise in guiding and advancing the project;
- Sharing all achievements and project products/outputs with stakeholders;
- Supervise the consultants and project partner organizations to deliver against their contracts and in time;
- Organize the PSC meetings and serve as its secretariat;
- Management and implement the project results and output level M&E framework, to evaluate project performance;
- Manage the flow of information from the field and producing periodic monitoring reports.

The PIU will be housed at and be supported by the EA. The PIU is responsible for the daily execution of the project, including all reporting and monitoring duties, as well as the follow-up of all contractual tasks. The PIU liaises with all project partners, including with National Focal Points, the primary representatives of National Coordinating Committees. The PIU serves as Secretariat to the PSC.

As is shown in the graphical sketch below, the EA makes agreement with all partners in the project (i.e., beneficiary countries). By implementing the agreements, the partners report back to the EA and interact among themselves according to project activities.

I. Project Cost and Financing

PROJECT BUDGET AND CO-FINANCE BUDGET ATTACHED AS ANNEX A

J. Implementation Issues

1. [Record any important issues that have arisen in the implementation of the project including: important issues emerging from Mid-Term Review/ Mid-Term Evaluation significant delays, changes in partners, implementing countries and/or results statements. Some of these issues may have been reported in the annual Project Implementation Review reports. Note the dates when such changes have been approved and who by]

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

(Apart from section 9, where you could insert up to 3 strategic questions that are in addition to the review criteria, this section is standard and does not need to be revised for each project)

K. Objective of the Review

2. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy⁸⁶ and the UNEP Programme Manual⁸⁷, the Terminal Review (TR) is undertaken at operational 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 Review 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 UNEP and the project countries. Therefore, the Review will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially for future phases of the project, where applicable.

L. Key Review principles

3. Review findings and judgements will be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the Review 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.

4. **The “Why?” Question.** As this is a Terminal Review and similar interventions are envisaged for the future, particular attention will be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the “why?” question should be at the front of the consultant(s)’ minds all through the review exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultant(s) 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 (i.e. what contributed to the achievement of the project’s results). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

Attribution, Contribution and Credible Association: In order to *attribute* any outcomes and impacts to a project intervention, one needs to consider the difference between what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project (i.e. take account of changes over time and between contexts in order to isolate the effects of an intervention). This requires appropriate baseline data and the identification of a relevant counterfactual, both of which are frequently not available for reviews. Establishing the *contribution* made by

⁸⁶ <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

⁸⁷ <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

a project in a complex change process relies heavily on prior intentionality (e.g. approved project design documentation, logical framework) and the articulation of causality (e.g. narrative and/or illustration of the Theory of Change). Robust evidence that a project was delivered as designed and that the expected causal pathways developed supports claims of contribution and this is strengthened where an alternative theory of change can be excluded. A *credible association* between the implementation of a project and observed positive effects can be made where a strong causal narrative, although not explicitly articulated, can be inferred by the chronological sequence of events, active involvement of key actors and engagement in critical processes.

5. **Communicating Review Results.** A key aim of the Review is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the review process and in the communication of review findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all review deliverables. Draft and final versions of the main Review Report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Task Manager. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The consultant will plan with the Task Manager which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key review findings and lessons to them. This may include some, or all, of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of a review brief or interactive presentation.

M. Key Strategic Questions

6. In addition to the review criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Review will address the **strategic questions**⁸⁸ listed below (no more than 3 questions are recommended). These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution. Also included are five questions that are required when reporting in the GEF Portal and these must be addressed in the TR:

7.

8. Q1: How will the toolkit be useful in the broader context of Convention reporting and NIP submissions?

9. Q2: Will the project assist various stakeholders in obtaining and organizing accurate and reliable data?

10. Q3: Do the project outcomes support scaling up and contributing to longer term objectives?

11. Q4: What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?

12.

13. Address the questions required for the GEF Portal in the appropriate parts of the report and provide a **summary of the findings in the Conclusions section of the report:**

14.

a) Under Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation:

⁸⁸ The strategic questions should not duplicate questions that will be addressed under the standard review criteria described in section 10.

15. What was the performance at the project's-completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided⁸⁹).

b) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation:

16. What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? (*This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval*)

c) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality:

What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? (*This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent*)

d) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards:

What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. (*Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this Review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal*)

e) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness:

What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? (*This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval*)

N. Review Criteria

17. All review criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the review criteria. The set of review 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 availability 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.

18. Annex 1 of these Terms of Reference provides a table with a list of various tools, templates and guidelines that can help Review Consultant(s) to follow a thorough review process that meets all of UNEP's needs.

A. Strategic Relevance

The Review will assess the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the donors, implementing regions/countries and the target beneficiaries. The Review will 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

⁸⁹ This does not apply to Enabling Activities

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's Medium-Term Strategy⁹⁰ (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

The Review should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building⁹¹ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries.

ii. Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partner Strategic Priorities

Donor strategic priorities will vary across interventions. The Review will assess the extent to which the project is suited to, or responding to, donor priorities. In some cases, alignment with donor priorities may be a fundamental part of project design and grant approval processes while in others, for example, instances of 'softly-earmarked' funding, such alignment may be more of an assumption that should be assessed.

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

The Review will assess the alignment of the project with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030. 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 will also be considered. Examples may include: UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) or, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc. Within this section consideration will be given to whether the needs of all beneficiary groups are being met and reflects the current policy priority to leave no-one behind.

iv. Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence⁹²

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization⁹³, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies within the same country, sector or institution) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The Review 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 work within UNDAFs or One UN

⁹⁰ 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. <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

⁹¹ <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

⁹² This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.

⁹³ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

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
- Country ownership and driven-ness

B. Quality of Project Design

19. The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the review inception phase. Ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established. The complete Project Design Quality template should be annexed in the Review Inception Report. Later, the overall Project Design Quality rating⁹⁴ should be entered in the final review ratings table (as item B) in the Main Review Report and a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage should be included within the body of the Main Review Report.

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

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

C. Nature of External Context

20. At review inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval⁹⁵). This rating is entered in the final review ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an *Unfavourable* or *Highly Unfavourable* external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Review Consultant and Task Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

i. Availability of Outputs⁹⁶

21. The Review will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and making them available to the intended beneficiaries as well as its success in 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, reformulations may

⁹⁴ In some instances, based on data collected during the review process, the assessment of the project's design quality may change from Inception Report to Main Review Report.

⁹⁵ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team. From March 2020 this should include the effects of COVID-19.

⁹⁶ Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2019).

be necessary in the reconstruction of the Theory of Change (TOC). In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The availability of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their provision. It is noted that emphasis is placed on the performance of those outputs that are most important to achieve outcomes. The Review will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs available and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision⁹⁷

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes⁹⁸

22. The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the outcomes as defined in the reconstructed⁹⁹ Theory of Change. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. Emphasis is placed on the achievement of project outcomes that are most important for attaining intermediate states. As with outputs, a table can be used to show where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary to allow for an assessment of performance. The Review should report evidence of attribution between UNEP's intervention and the project 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 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the project outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

iii. Likelihood of Impact

23. Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (*i.e. from project outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact*), the Review will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long-lasting impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project reviews is outlined in a guidance note and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment

⁹⁷ For GEF funded projects 'project management and supervision' will refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP, as Implementing Agency.

⁹⁸ Outcomes are the use (*i.e. uptake, adoption, application*) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behavior, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

⁹⁹ UNEP staff are currently required to submit a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during a review 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 review.

Decision Tree'. Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from project 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.

24. The Review will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects (e.g. will vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities and/or women and children, be disproportionately affected by the project?). 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.

25. The Review will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role¹⁰⁰ or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a demonstration component or implicitly as expressed in the drivers required to move to outcome levels) and as factors that are likely to contribute to greater or long lasting impact.

26. 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-lasting or broad-based changes. However, the Review will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the long-lasting changes represented by the Sustainable Development Goals, and/or the intermediate-level results reflected in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and the strategic priorities of funding partner(s).

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

E. Financial Management

Financial management will be assessed under three themes: *adherence* to UNEP's financial policies and procedures, *completeness* of financial information and *communication* between financial and project management staff. The Review 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/component level and will be compared with the approved budget. The Review 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. The Review will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The Review will assess the level of communication between the Project Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it

¹⁰⁰ The terms catalytic effect, scaling up and replication are inter-related and generally refer to extending the coverage or magnitude of the effects of a project. *Catalytic effect* is associated with triggering additional actions that are not directly funded by the project – these effects can be both concrete or less tangible, can be intentionally caused by the project or implied in the design and reflected in the TOC drivers, or can be unintentional and can rely on funding from another source or have no financial requirements. *Scaling up and Replication* require more intentionality for projects, or individual components and approaches, to be reproduced in other similar contexts. *Scaling up* suggests a substantive increase in the number of new beneficiaries reached/involved and may require adapted delivery mechanisms while *Replication* suggests the repetition of an approach or component at a similar scale but among different beneficiaries. Even with highly technical work, where scaling up or replication involves working with a new community, some consideration of the new context should take place and adjustments made as necessary.

relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

27. Under the efficiency criterion the Review will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution.

28. Focusing 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 Review 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 Review 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.

29. The Review will give special attention to efforts made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities¹⁰¹ with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

30. The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. Consultants should note that as management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to UNEP and Executing Agencies.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

G. Monitoring and Reporting

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

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

32. Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART¹⁰² results towards the achievement of the project's outputs and

¹⁰¹ Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

¹⁰² SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. In particular, the Review will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management. The Review 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, where applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

33. The Review will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives throughout the project implementation period. This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups, including gendered, marginalised or vulnerable groups, such as those living with disabilities, in project activities. It will also consider the quality of the information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation and how it was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The Review should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

The performance at project completion against Core Indicator Targets should be reviewed. For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided.

iii. Project Reporting

34. UNEP has a centralised project information management system (Anubis) in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Review Consultant(s) by the Task Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The Review will assess the extent to which both UNEP and GEF reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Consideration will be given as to whether reporting has been carried out with respect to the effects of the initiative on disaggregated groups.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

H. Sustainability

35. Sustainability¹⁰³ is understood as the probability of the benefits derived from the achievement of project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the

¹⁰³ As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-term maintenance of outcomes and consequent impacts, whether environmental or not. This is distinct from the concept of sustainability in the terms 'environmental sustainability' or 'sustainable development', which imply 'not living beyond our means' or 'not diminishing global environmental benefits' (GEF STAP Paper, 2019, Achieving More Enduring Outcomes from GEF Investment)

intervention. The Review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the endurance of achieved project outcomes (i.e. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of direct outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

36. The Review will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of the benefits derived from project 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 Review will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

37. Some project 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 project 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 natural resource management approach. The Review 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 project outcomes have been extended into a future project phase. Even where future funding has been secured, the question still remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

38. The Review will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) 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. In particular, the Review will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

I. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

(These factors are rated in the ratings table but are discussed within the Main Review Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other review criteria, above. If these issues have not been addressed under the Review Criteria above, then independent summaries of their status within the reviewed project should be given in this section)

i. Preparation and Readiness

39. This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (i.e. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The Review 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 Review 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 included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality*).

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

40. For GEF funded projects 'project management and supervision' may refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP as Implementing Agency. The performance of parties playing different roles should be discussed and a rating provided for both types of supervision (UNEP/Implementing Agency; Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-category established as a simple average of the two.

41. The Review 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.); maintaining project relevance within changing external and strategic contexts; communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

42. Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs, target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP and the executing partner(s). 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.

43. The progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program occurring since the MTR should be reviewed. This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

44. The Review 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 Review will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment¹⁰⁴.

¹⁰⁴The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved

45. 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 Equality and Human Rights are adequately taken into account. In particular the Review will consider to what extent project, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible inequalities (especially those related to gender) in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

46. The completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent.

v. Environmental and Social Safeguards

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening at the project approval stage, risk assessment and management (avoidance, minimization, mitigation or, in exceptional cases, offsetting) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The Review will confirm whether UNEP requirements¹⁰⁵ were met to: *review* risk ratings on a regular basis; *monitor* project implementation for possible safeguard issues; *respond* (where relevant) to safeguard issues through risk avoidance, minimization, mitigation or offsetting and *report* on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken. UNEP requirements for proposed projects to be screened for any safeguarding issues; for sound environmental and social risk assessments to be conducted and initial risk ratings to be assigned are reviewed above under Quality of Project Design).

The Review will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.

Implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval should be reviewed, the risk classifications verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant should be shared with the Task Manager.

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

47. The Review will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the

over time. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy-2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

¹⁰⁵ For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project designs since 2011.

intended projects results, i.e. either: a) moving forwards from outputs to project outcomes or b) moving forward from project outcomes towards intermediate states. The Review 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 (e.g. representatives from multiple sectors or relevant ministries beyond Ministry of Environment). 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. Ownership should extend to all gender and marginalised groups.

vii. Communication and Public Awareness

48. The Review 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 Review should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Review will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate

The project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

49. The Terminal Review will be an in-depth review using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the review process. Both quantitative and qualitative review 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 review implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the review findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) should provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

50. The findings of the Review will be based on the following:

51. A **desk review** of:

Relevant background documentation, inter alia project document, progress and expenditure reports, steering committee reports, key communication with countries/stakeholders etc.;

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 deliverables (e.g. publications, assessments etc. including reports as applicable)

Mid-Term Review or Mid-Term Evaluation of the project, if applicable;

Evaluations/Reviews of similar projects.

(a) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with:
UNEP Task Manager (TM);

Project Manager (PM)

Project management team;

UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);

Portfolio Manager and Sub-Programme Coordinator, where appropriate;

Project partners, including executing agencies, BRS Secretariat, sub-contractors etc.;

Relevant resource persons/consultants;

Representatives from civil society and specialist groups (such as women's, farmers and trade associations etc), if applicable.

(b) **Field visits:** Not applicable, the meetings to be organized virtually. If required, option for field visit will be explored by the UNEP (IA)

(c) **Other data collection tools:** If needed, to be decided by the Review Consultant at the inception phase

0. Review Deliverables and Review Procedures

52. The Review Consultant will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** (see Annex 1 for a list of 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, review framework and a tentative review schedule.
- **Preliminary Findings Note:** typically in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings 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 Review Report:** containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the review findings organised by review criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table. In addition, submit a deck of slide on the terminal review of the project.

53. A **Review Brief** (a 2-page overview of the evaluand and review findings) for wider dissemination through the UNEP website may be required. This will be discussed with the Task Manager no later than during the finalization of the Inception Report.

54. **Review of the Draft Review Report.** The Review Consultant will submit a draft report to the Task Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. The Task Manager will then forward the revised draft report 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 Task Manager for consolidation. The Task Manager will provide all comments to the Review Consultant for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

55. The final version of the Terminal Review report will be assessed for its quality by the UNEP Evaluation Office using a standard template and this assessment will be annexed to the final Terminal Review report.

56. At the end of the review process, the Task Manager will prepare a **Recommendations Implementation Plan** in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals, and circulate the **Lessons Learned**.

P. The Review Consultant

57. The Review Consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the Task Manager Jitendra Sharma, in consultation with the Fund Management Officer Anuradha Shenoy, and the Portfolio Manager Kevin Helps.

58. The Review Consultant will liaise with the Task Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Review. It is, however, the consultant's individual responsibility (where applicable) to arrange for their visas and immunizations as well as to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the Review as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Review Consultant will be hired over a period of 5.5 months [November 2023 to April 2024] and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area is required and an advanced degree in the same areas is desirable; a minimum of 7 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a good/broad understanding of NIPs and POPs is desired. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with possible field visits.

59. The Review Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Task Manager, for overall quality of the review and timely delivery of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Review Deliverables, above. The Review Consultant will ensure that all review criteria and questions are adequately covered.

Q. Schedule of the Review

60. The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Review.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Review

Milestone	Tentative Dates
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Inception Report	
Review Mission, if applicable	Not applicable
E-based interviews, surveys etc.	
PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	
Draft Review Report to Task Manager (and Project Manager)	
Draft Review Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	
Final Review Report	
Final Review Report and a deck of slides shared with all respondents	

R. Contractual Arrangements

61. The Review Consultant(s) will be selected and recruited by the Task Manager under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a "fees only" basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the consultant certifies that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

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

63. Schedule of Payment:

64. Deliverable	Percentage Payment
65. Approved Inception Report (as per Annex I document #9)	30%
66. Approved Draft Main Review Report (as per Annex I document #10)	30%
67. Approved Final Main Review Report	40%

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

69. The consultant may be provided with access to UNEP's information management systems (e.g. PIMS, Anubis, SharePoint, etc.) and, if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the Review Report.

70. In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by UNEP, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Head of Branch or Portfolio Manager until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

71. If the consultant fails to submit a satisfactory final product to the Project Manager in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, UNEP reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultant's fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the project team to bring the report up to standard or completion.

ANNEX XII. GEF PORTAL INPUTS

GEF portal inputs

Question: What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7¹⁰⁶, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided¹⁰⁷).

Response:

The project did not work on the "Reduction, disposal and elimination of chemicals and their waste ...", but mainly on the development of an e-toolkit to facilitate reporting requirements of the Stockholm Convention under Articles 7 and 15. Therefore, in the annual PIRs, the project has not reported on the core and sub-indicators specified by the GEF.

Question: What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? (This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)

Response:

The project is an MSP and an MTR was not obligatory and has not been carried out.

§§ 157-160 in the terminal review report:

1. All the 7 demonstration countries were consulted for project development. All the 7 demonstration countries and 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs are reported to have participated actively in the project activities, and contributed to and carried out their parts actively, with very few exceptions of incomplete activities, which have been elaborated under the sub-section 'Efficiency'. Moreover, the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs are also involved in other (GEF) projects in the region, and have reported to have included an introduction of the toolkit in their workshops and webinars, thus creating awareness in a few other parties to the SC about the toolkit.
2. At the national level, as elaborated earlier, the 7 demonstration countries have prepared a gap analysis report, conducted workshops, carried out data collection, and tested the toolkit.
3. The BRS Secretariat has provided technical support in selecting the IT experts who developed the e-toolkit; moreover, it is reported to have also provided guidance and information about the server of the BRS Secretariat, to which the e-toolkit has been uploaded and integrated, and shared the demonstration for the parties to the SC to also test it, tested the e-toolkit, and provided feedback.
4. The BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs for English-speaking countries in Africa, for the Asia and the Pacific Region and for Latin America, in South Africa, China and Uruguay respectively, are reported to have supported in disseminating project outputs and in promoting the e-toolkit. Further, the

¹⁰⁶ The GEF is currently operating under the seventh replenishment period of the GEF Trust Fund covering the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2022. The GEF Portal Reporting Guide for FY20 Reporting Process indicates that GEF-6 projects that have yet to map existing indicators to GEF-7 Core Indicators need to do so at MTR stage or (if already there) at the time of the TE. (i.e. not GEF projects approved before GEF-6)

¹⁰⁷ This is not applicable for Enabling Activities

<p>BCCC-SCRC in Uruguay has provided support to three of the demonstration countries, namely, Honduras, Moldova and Saint Lucia.</p>
<p><i>Question: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)</i></p>
<p><i>Response:</i></p> <p>§§ 161-166 in the terminal review report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The project document has taken gender aspects throughout into account; inter alia, the formulation of 3 out of 4 technical outputs includes that gender aspects are to be taken into account. It also encourages demonstration countries towards gender mainstreaming in their NIPs. It entails a sub-section on 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment'. The output indicators have also mentioned gender aspects. 2. A gender guidance was prepared within the framework of the project which includes recommendations on how to incorporate gender in the NIPs. 3. All the demonstration countries have confirmed having focused on gender mainstreaming in their respective activities. The BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have conducted workshops and/or webinars, and have integrated the topic of 'gender mainstreaming' in the workshops/webinars. 4. NFPs of the project in the demonstration countries as well as at the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs are female and male persons, therefore, the persons interviewed for the TR also represented both genders. The TM is a male person, the PM is a female person and the reviewer is a female person. Issues related to gender were not reported.
<p><i>Question: What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. (Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)</i></p>
<p><i>Response:</i></p> <p>The risk classification reported in the latest PIR, PIR 2023, is "low". Almost all the project activities had been completed at that time, and therefore, the project risk rating "low" in the PIR 2023 is considered to be correct.</p> <p>Impact of risks to components mentioned in the 'Environmental Social and Economic Screening' of the project document have been correctly marked as 'not given'.</p> <p>All the responses to the safeguard questions mentioned in the 'ESES Principle and Safeguard checklist' of the project document, most of which have been marked as 'No', were still valid at the end of the project.</p> <p>One unidentified risk which was unexpected for the whole world was the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

Question: What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? (This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)

Response:

Project's knowledge management approach and outcomes [Terminal Review report §§169-176]:

1. The project has uploaded all project-related information on UNEP's website, which can be freely accessed - <https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action/pollution-and-health/persistent-organic-pollutants-pops-8>
2. Project partners were 7 demonstration countries at institutional level and 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs. The 7 demonstration countries have reported working with key stakeholders and key stakeholder institutions in their respective countries.
3. The project has held 3 PSC meetings between 2018 and 2023. Besides this, the project management team was in ad hoc contact with the different partners – all 7 countries, 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs and the IT experts. During the workshops/webinars conducted by the BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs, other countries, besides the demonstration countries, have also participated, thus raising awareness about the e-toolkit.
4. COP 9, decision SC-9/9, refers to the development of the e-toolkit, has requested feedback to the toolkit from the parties to the SC and has requested the BRS Secretariat to make it available to all the parties to the SC. Agenda item 5 (d) at COP 10 and item 5 (d) at COP 11 entail details about the project, that is, its objective, components and progress achieved up to the COP 10. The e-toolkit has also been noted in SC-10/11 and SC-11/7.
5. At around 10 events, that is, workshops and/or webinars, the project and the toolkit were introduced, as follows:
 - Workshop to support inventory development and priority setting in developing and updating of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([2018, Pretoria, South Africa](#))
 - Workshop to support inventory development and priority setting in developing and updating of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([2018, São Paulo, Brazil](#))
 - Regional Training Workshop on the Article 15 reporting requirements under the Stockholm Convention ([2020, Trinidad and Tobago](#))
 - Regional capacity-building workshop to improve the development, update and submission of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) and National Reports under the Stockholm Convention for Asia and Pacific Region, ([Online May 17-18 2022](#))
 - UNEP side-event: From data to action: Informed decision-making for Stockholm Convention implementation, during Stockholm Convention COP-10 ([Geneva, Switzerland, 7 June 2022](#))
 - Workshop on developing, reviewing, and updating national implementation plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([Pretoria, South Africa, 13-15 September 2022](#))
 - Workshop on developing, reviewing, and updating national implementation plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention ([Jakarta, Indonesia, 27-29 September 2022](#))
 - Regional Webinar on Capacity building and information exchange on the general considerations for setting up national mechanisms for NIP development/update and reporting for Latin America and Caribbean region (Online, 29 September 2022)
 - Workshop on "From Science to Action" for the BRS and industrial chemicals guidance for the Stockholm Convention ([Barcelona, Spain, 17-20 October 2022](#))
 - Webinar for the project "Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15" for Africa region (Online, 16 -17 November 2022)
 - Outputs Validation Workshop and third Steering Committee Meeting of the project "Integrated SC toolkit to improve the transmission of information under Articles 07 and 15" ([Geneva, 25 May 2023](#))

6. Two YouTube videos are available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZgy1xwLmEI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqu4P-NxV4s>

Question: What are the main findings of the evaluation?

Response:

Overall, the project demonstrates a rating of 'Satisfactory'.

§§ 177-186 in the Terminal Review report:

1. The project is assessed to be highly relevant in terms of facilitating the fulfilling of reporting obligations to the SC. It is completely in alignment with UNEP's MTS and POW, as well as with the donor, GEF's, strategic priorities, and global and national priorities. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted project activities adversely as it posed challenges to implementation of activities at the national level.
2. The project has been successful in that all the 4 technical outputs have been achieved. The e-toolkit has been successfully developed, handed over to the BRS Secretariat and is available online. The 7 demonstration countries have carried out several activities in their respective countries, namely, conducting workshops with key stakeholders, data collection and testing the toolkit and providing feedback. Also, the 3 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs have conducted workshops and raised awareness about the toolkit. Direct outcome 1 is assessed to be achieved, as all the demonstration countries carried out all the foreseen activities at the national level; direct outcome 2 regarding the enhancement of knowledge based on integration of all existing NIPs in the e-toolkit is assessed to be partially achieved for the project, and work remains to be done by the parties to the SC in terms of entering quantitative data from existing NIPs into the e-toolkit. Although not both direct outcomes have been fully achieved, the project outcome is still assessed to be achieved, as the e-toolkit is available online and is available to all parties to the SC. However, it remains to be seen if the other parties to the SC use the toolkit for their NIP-Updates and NRs, which can be facilitated via a corresponding COP decision. Finally, impact is assessed to be likely in terms of project's contribution towards the achievement of the objectives of the SC, and thereby contributing to the envisaged impact.
3. The budget provided by the GEF has been managed in line with UNEP's policies and procedures and yearly expenditure has been documented and provided to the reviewer for the years 2018-2023. While a few remaining activities were completed only in 2024, and corresponding final progress and expenditure reports prepared and received only in May and June 2024 from the BCRC-SCRC in South Africa and Papua New Guinea respectively, the other 6 demonstration countries and 2 BCRC/BCCC-SCRCs had completed all activities and submitted their corresponding progress and expenditure reports by the end of 2023.
4. The project has experienced a delay of 2.5 years, one year right after the commencement of the project and then over 1 year during COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the SSFAs were signed in mid-2019, as well as the first IT expert recruited. Internet connection issues are reported to have been faced by the first IT expert, and this may be a contributing factor to the time taken to develop the first version of the toolkit. Moreover, the initially-requested technical solution by the BRS Secretariat to embed the toolkit into the existing BRS server structure did not work well, and the toolkit had to be redesigned, which also took time.
5. One change of PM has taken place, but this has not negatively affected project implementation as the current PM was already on board as an expert. Some internal synergies may possibly have been lost as UNEP's ROs were not involved in the project in any way. UNEP has however made use of existing resources within the UN-system for issuing contracts to the IT experts via UNOPS, thus reducing its own administrative work related to the contracts. Results of the previous TE of UNEP's global NIP-Update project have not been taken into account for adaptation of any activities in this project, especially in the case of Papua New Guinea, for which challenges have been noted in the TE report and which faced challenges

in carrying out activities at the national level within this project and could complete a few activities only in March 2024.

6. Monitoring has been planned in the project document via the Inception workshop and 3 PSC meetings, as well as half-yearly progress reports to be prepared by UNEP and submitted to the GEF, as well as from the project partners to UNEP, as specified in the SSFAs. However, despite the extension of the project, additional PSC meetings or other coordination meetings together with all the involved project partners have not taken place.
7. The finalized version of the toolkit has been handed over to the BRS Secretariat, is under its institutional ownership and available online. Updates are already being carried out and future maintenance and updates are planned to be carried out with its core budget. Therefore, risks to socio-political, institutional and financial sustainability are considered to be low. After the decision at COP 8 to develop the e-toolkit, the toolkit has been mentioned at COP 9, 10 and 11. However, since it is not an obligatory tool to be used, continuous awareness-raising might be necessary to encourage parties to the SC to enter data via the toolkit. In this context, UNEP has planned its usage in its new global NIP-Update project 'Global Development, Review and Update of National Implementation Plans (NIPs) under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) GEF ID 10785'.
8. All the interviewed stakeholders have appreciated the dedication, guidance and support provided by the current PM, and by all the involved UNEP staff. All the project partners were committed to the project and to the SC, and have worked actively on the project activities, within the in-country constraints and limitations. The project has taken human rights and gender aspects into account in project design, as well as implementation, and has included these aspects also in all the workshops carried out and in the toolkit.
9. In conclusion, the project has been appreciated as being timely and providing support to the 7 demonstration countries in carrying out relevant activities at the national level pertinent to the SC; the e-toolkit developed by the project, albeit developed with a delay, has been very much appreciated as a very useful tool for entering and documenting relevant data and facilitating the ease of entering relevant data. It brings with it a high potential for analysis and usage, possibly via any artificial intelligence (AI) tools, to facilitate the enhancement of effectiveness of the SC-related activities, projects and programmes, at the same time being dependent on data-input by all the parties to the SC.

ANNEX XIII. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Project Title and Reference No.: INTEGRATED STOCKHOLM CONVENTION TOOLKIT TO IMPROVE THE TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION UNDER ARTICLES 07 AND 15

Contact Person (TM/PM): Jitendra Sharma and Mihaela Paun

	PLANS			
RECOMMENDATIONS	ACCEPTED (YES/NO/PARTIALLY)	WHAT WILL BE DONE?	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE	REPOSIBLE OFFICER/ UNIT/ DIVISION/ AGENCY
Reduce the time duration from project commencement till the actual commencement of activities	Yes	Standard procedures for project inception and implementation are formulated for all projects.	N/A	UNEP GEF CW Unit
(Enhance) Involvement of UNEP ROs in project implementation	Yes	Co-creation with regional offices from design to implementation support is normally followed as standard practice.	N/A	UNEP GEF CW Unit
Take into account previous related projects and results of previous evaluations	Partial	Do not agree fully with the comment from Papua as the two projects are not fully interlinked. However, the recommendation will be considered in future project design as much as possible.	N/A	UNEP GEF CW Unit
Document and report consistently any change in the project or project partners	Partial	The project did not have MTR, therefore officially removing country from list was not considered. Sufficient efforts were made and documented for convincing Ukraine join the project. However, the recommendation	N/A	UNEP GEF CW Unit

		from TR will be taken on board for future projects.		
Consider expanding such demonstration projects to a larger number of countries	No	The project has already covered more than the countries from original list. Pilot testing was done by all parties invited by the Convention secretariat and inputs were received. However, if the next phase of project happens, it will plan to include more countries. Meanwhile the toolkit has been handed over to BRS Secretariat to take next steps.	N/A	UNEP GEF CW Unit and BRS Secretariat
In case of project extension, increase the number of PSC meetings accordingly	Yes	Comment accepted. COVID and lack of a full time project manager for a short while impacted the PSC.	N/A	N/A
Consider holding coordination meetings with all the project partners, besides the PSC meetings	Yes	Comment accepted.	N/A	N/A
Continue capacity-building and awareness-raising for the usage of the e-toolkit	Yes	Comment accepted	Dec 2025	UNEP GEF CW Unit with execution partners of NIP Global
SSFAs should include the completion of specific activities per payment instalment; payment transfers after the 1st initial payment should be carried out after receiving the progress report from the project partner	Yes	Comment accepted	N/A	UNEP

<p>regarding the completion of foreseen activities, and reports should be received in a timely manner.</p>				
<p>The toolkit should be included on the agenda of future COP meetings to raise awareness and encourage other parties to the SC to enter their relevant data into the toolkit</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Comment accepted, but this will be responsibility of BRS Secretariat as UNEP will only provide recommendations. Final decision is of secretariat.</p>	<p>3 years (next 2 COPs)</p>	<p>BRS Secretariat with the help of UNEP</p>

ANNEX XIV. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE TERMINAL REVIEW REPORT

Review Title: Management-led Terminal Review of the UNEP/GEF project “Integrated Stockholm Convention toolkit to improve the transmission of information under articles 07 and 15” (GEF ID 9884) 2018 – 2024

Consultant: Suman Lederer

All UNEP Reviews are subject to a quality assessment by the UNEP Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the review product (i.e. Main Review Report).

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Review Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
<p>Quality of the Executive Summary Purpose: acts as a stand alone and accurate <u>summary</u> of the main review product, especially for senior management. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concise overview of the review object • clear summary of the review objectives and scope • overall review rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria • reference to where the review ratings table can be found within the report • summary response to key strategic review questions • summary of the main findings of the exercise/synthesis of main conclusions • summary of lessons learned and recommendations. 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The Executive Summary covers all required elements, except for responses to key strategic questions and a summary of the main conclusions.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The Executive Summary provides an accurate overview of the report’s findings, including some of the project’s strengths and weaknesses in relation to the criteria. However, these elements could have been integrated in a clearer, more organized manner.</p>	5
<p>Quality of the ‘Introduction’ Section Purpose: introduces/<u>situates</u> the evaluand in its institutional context, establishes its main parameters (time, value, results, geography) and the purpose of the review itself. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, Branch etc) • date of PRC approval, project duration and start/end dates • number of project phases (where appropriate) • results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. POW Direct Outcome) • coverage of the review (regions/countries where implemented) • implementing and funding partners • total secured budget • whether the project has been reviewed/evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, external agency etc.) • concise statement of the purpose of the review and the key intended audience for the findings. 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The Introduction covers all required elements, except for full institutional context (e.g., UNEP division and branch), results framework to which it the project contributes, and the key audience for the Review. However, the institutional context is described in detail in ‘Table 6: Overview of outcome and outputs’ (Section II.B).</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The Introduction is clear, well-structured, and effectively describes the evaluand. However, it includes information more appropriate for the project section, such as a table of the participating countries’ initial and most recent NIP submission dates.</p>	5
<p>Quality of the ‘Review Methods’ Section Purpose: provides reader with clear and comprehensive description of review methods, demonstrates the <u>credibility</u> of the findings and performance ratings. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of review data collection methods and information sources • justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative; electronic/face-to-face) • number and type of respondents (<i>see table template</i>) • selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The Review Methods section includes most required elements, except for the analytical methods used for the document review.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The Review Methods are well presented in concise and clear language. Limitations are thoroughly described, and the efforts made to address gender considerations and ethical issues are adequately detailed. However, it could have provided more detail on the stakeholder respondents. The respondents</p>	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation • methods to include the voices/experiences of different and potentially excluded groups (e.g. vulnerable, gender, marginalised etc) • details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.) • methods used to analyse data (scoring, coding, thematic analysis etc) • review limitations (e.g. low/ imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; language barriers etc) • ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected. Is there an ethics statement? E.g. <i>'Throughout the review process and in the compilation of the Final Review Report efforts have been made to represent the views of both mainstream and more marginalised groups. All efforts to provide respondents with anonymity have been made.'</i> 	<p>table only includes the number of respondents and their gender, without other affiliation, such type of organization or group.</p>	
<p>Quality of the 'Project' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> describes and <u>verifies</u> key dimensions of the evaluand relevant to assessing its performance.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Context:</i> overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses) • <i>Results framework:</i> summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders:</i> description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners:</i> description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • <i>Changes in design during implementation:</i> any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing:</i> completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section covers the required elements in a satisfactory manner. The project financing tables did not have actual expenditures, but these are presented in the Financial Management (Section E).</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section effectively describes the key dimensions of the evaluand. It could have strengthened the problem context by describing POPs and their effects on the environment and people.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Quality of the Theory of Change</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to set out the TOC at Review in diagrammatic and narrative forms to support consistent project performance; to articulate the causal pathways with drivers and assumptions and justify any reconstruction necessary to assess the project's performance.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of how the <i>TOC at Review</i>¹⁰⁸ was designed (who was involved etc) • confirmation/reconstruction of results in accordance with UNEP definitions • articulation of causal pathways 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section is complete. It includes a narrative and diagrammatic description of the TOC and all the required elements.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The causal pathway is described effectively, but it lacks an explicit discussion of the Outputs. Gender and human rights considerations are mentioned. The reconstructed TOC appropriately identified gaps in the original causal pathway, as the</p>	<p>4</p>

¹⁰⁸ During the Inception Phase of the review process a *TOC at Review Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the review process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Review*.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of drivers and assumptions • identification of key actors in the change process • summary of the reconstruction/results re-formulation in tabular form. <i>The two results hierarchies (original/formal revision and reconstructed) should be presented as a two-column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'.</i> This table may have initially been presented in the Inception Report and should appear somewhere in the Main Review report. 	<p>jump from the Outputs to the original Outcome was too abrupt—before achieving compliance, it's necessary to ensure usage of the product. However, the three newly created Outcomes (i.e., e-toolkit usage, increased knowledge, and the availability of the e-toolkit) are too distinct from the original Outcome (i.e., enhanced compliance with the SC).</p> <p>The reformulation table should have included a third column justifying the reformulation of the statements.</p> <p>The diagram is effective, except for the placement of the drivers and assumptions, which could have been positioned more strategically along the pathway. Only one driver is listed for the entire TOC, but there are likely many more that should have been identified between different result levels.</p> <p>Last, some of the description of the causal pathway delves into the evaluation findings prematurely, including the delivery of outputs and achievement of outcomes.</p>	
<p>Quality of Key Findings within the Report</p> <p>Presentation of evidence: nature of evidence should be clear (interview, document, survey, observation, online resources etc) and evidence should be explicitly triangulated unless noted as having a single source.</p> <p>Consistency within the report: all parts of the report should form consistent support for findings and performance ratings, which should be in line with UNEP's Criteria Ratings Matrix.</p> <p>Findings Statements (where applicable): The frame of reference for a finding should be an individual review criterion or a strategic question from the TOR. A finding should go beyond description and uses analysis to provide insights that aid learning specific to the evaluand. In some cases a findings statement may articulate a key element that has determined the performance rating of a criterion. Findings will frequently provide insight into 'how' and/or 'why' questions.</p>	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The report includes key finding statements presented as stand-alone items (within text boxes).</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The frame of reference for each finding is the evaluation criterion under which the finding is presented. Some findings go beyond presenting summative statements by offering analytical perspectives that provide a deeper insight about the evaluand. In several instances however, the "so what?" question remains unanswered by the finding statements.</p>	5
<p>Quality of 'Strategic Relevance' Section</p> <p>Purpose: to present evidence and analysis of project strategic relevance with respect to UNEP, partner and geographic policies and strategies at the time of project approval.</p> <p>To include:</p> <p>Assessment of the evaluand's relevance vis-à-vis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities • Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities • Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities • Complementarity with Existing Interventions: complementarity of the project at design (or during 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section covers all the required aspects of relevance.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The assessment is detailed and clearly presented. The rating is consistent with the evidence provided.</p>	6

<p>inception/mobilisation¹⁰⁹), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups.</p>		
<p>Quality of the 'Quality of Project Design' Section Purpose: to present a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the project design, on the basis that the detailed assessment was presented in the Inception Report.</p>	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section is complete. A summary of the strengths and weakness of the project design is provided, including a table presenting the ratings for the different criteria assessed.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section summarizes only a few of the project design's strengths and weaknesses at a high level. It could have benefited from more detail about 'Learning, Communication and Outreach' (e.g. a description of the shortcomings) which received the lowest rating as compared other criteria.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Quality of the 'Nature of the External Context' Section Purpose: to describe and recognise, when appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project's implementing context that limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval¹¹⁰), and how they affected performance.</p> <p>While additional details of the implementing context may be informative, this section should clearly record whether or not a major and unexpected disrupting event took place during the project's life in the implementing sites.</p>	<p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section adequately identifies and presents the main external issues that affected project implementation.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Quality of 'Effectiveness' Section (i) Availability of Outputs: Purpose: to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the outputs made available to the intended beneficiaries.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a convincing, evidence-supported and clear presentation of the outputs made available by the project compared to its approved plans and budget • assessment of the nature and scale of outputs versus the project indicators and targets • assessment of the timeliness, quality and utility of outputs to intended beneficiaries • identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability). 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section is complete and systematically presents an assessment of each of the project's Outputs.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section presents a clear and evidence-based assessment of Outputs. It includes clear identification of evidentiary sources, such as reports, websites, and interviews. However, Output indicators and their targets are missing, which impacts ability to fully assess the scale of delivery compared with the project's intentions. Gender issues are briefly mentioned as pertaining to the delivery of Outputs 1.2 and 1.3, but not with regard to any positive/negative effects on disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>5</p>

¹⁰⁹ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

¹¹⁰ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team.

<p>ii) Achievement of Project Outcomes:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the uptake, adoption and/or implementation of outputs by the intended beneficiaries. This may include behaviour changes at an individual or collective level.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a convincing and evidence-supported analysis of the uptake of outputs by intended beneficiaries • assessment of the nature, depth and scale of outcomes versus the project indicators and targets • discussion of the contribution, credible association and/or attribution of outcome level changes to the work of the project itself • any constraints to attributing effects to the projects' work • identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability). 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section is complete and systematically presents an assessment of the project's Outcomes.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The assessment of Outcomes achievement is clear, presenting both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. In most cases, the sources of evidence are clearly identified, making for a convincing presentation. The assessment of Outcomes is consistent with the reconstructed TOC. The contribution, credible association and/or attribution of Outcome level changes by the project can be inferred from the text. However, the potentially positive/negative effects on disadvantaged groups (due to gender, vulnerability or marginalization) have not been mentioned.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>(iii) Likelihood of Impact:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact, including an assessment of the extent to which drivers and assumptions necessary for change to happen, were seen to be holding.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an explanation of how causal pathways emerged and change processes can be shown • an explanation of the roles played by key actors and change agents • explicit discussion of how drivers and assumptions played out • identification of any unintended negative effects of the project, especially on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability). 	<p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The assessment of the likelihood of impact is generally clear and evidence based. However, the section lacks a full explanation of how the causal pathway emerged, including the status of the intermediate states, assumptions, and drivers. Without a thorough assessment of these elements, it is challenging to evaluate the likelihood of achieving the intended impact. The rating given for this criterion is not sufficiently supported in the discussion.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Quality of 'Financial Management' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table (may be annexed).</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures • <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section covers all the required elements of financial management</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section presents an integrated analysis of the project's financial management under the prescribed sub-criteria, using examples to corroborate the findings. Detailed expenditure tables have been included, including information on co-financing (sources, and corresponding amounts in cash and in kind). The 'financial management' table is sufficiently detailed and has been included in the sub-section. The section on adherence could have been more detailed. Elements such as budget revisions and expenditure analyses are mentioned in other sections (e.g., completeness), but they could have been more thoroughly integrated into the adherence section.</p>	<p>6</p>

<p>Quality of 'Efficiency' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under efficiency (i.e. the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness).</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe discussion of making use, during project implementation, of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. implications of any delays and no cost extensions the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint. 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section covers the required elements and sufficiently details issues affecting timeliness and cost-effectiveness.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The analysis of efficiency is comprehensive, providing useful insights into the project's efforts to ensure cost-effectiveness and timeliness, as well as some of the setbacks and challenges that the project experienced and their consequences. For example, there is a good presentation of the events that led to no-cost extensions of the partner agreements, and consequently of the project. It also effectively discusses the use of existing programs and partnerships and UNEP's relationships with partner countries.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Quality of 'Monitoring and Reporting' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the evaluand's monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> quality of the monitoring design and budgeting (including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.) quality of monitoring of project implementation (including use of monitoring data for adaptive management) quality of project reporting (e.g. PIMS and donor reports) 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section discusses the three dimensions of monitoring and reporting, as required.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The assessment includes some evidence of the extent to which the project was monitored. The quality of monitoring is, however, unclear because many key aspects are not included in the assessment. For example, there is no information on the existence and quality of a monitoring plan, the quality of indicators, or planned data collection methods. The assessment of monitoring during implementation and reporting is primarily based on the frequency of PSC and other project meetings / workshops, and GEF PIRs (less on PIMS and IPMR). There is no information on the quality of actual data collected, and the utility of monitoring in facilitating adaptive management.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Quality of 'Sustainability' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under sustainability (i.e. the endurance of benefits achieved at outcome level).</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> socio-political sustainability financial sustainability institutional sustainability 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section covers all the required dimensions of sustainability, and each sub-criterion is rated.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section provides a clear and concise assessment of sustainability for each sub-criterion. The assessment on financial sustainability is convincing. However, the presentation of socio-political sustainability could have provided more detailed evidence of countries' commitment to the SC, not just a sense of obligation, and interest in the e-toolkit to support a 'highly likely' rating. Similarly, the institutional sustainability presentation could have included an assessment of the extent to which policies are in place to ensure the institutionalization of the e-toolkit, as well as the capacity of the countries to use it effectively, to support a 'highly likely' rating.</p>	<p>5</p>

<p>Quality of Factors Affecting Performance Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> These factors are not always discussed in stand-alone sections and may be integrated in the other performance criteria as appropriate. However, if not addressed substantively in this section, a cross reference must be given to where the topic is addressed and that entry must be sufficient to justify the performance rating for these factors.</p> <p>Consider how well the review report, either in this section or in cross-referenced sections, covers the following cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation and readiness • quality of project management and supervision¹¹¹ • stakeholder participation and co-operation • responsiveness to human rights and gender equality • environmental and social safeguards • country ownership and driven-ness • communication and public awareness 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): An assessment of factors affecting performance is presented as a stand-alone section within the report. All the required criteria are covered.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The assessment of factors affecting performance is generally well detailed and supported with evidence. The assessment is consistent with the findings already presented in the rest of the report. More details for some of the elements could have strengthened the section, but in most cases, this information was presented in the previous sections.</p>	6
<p>Quality of the Conclusions Section</p> <p>(i) Conclusions Narrative:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present summative statements reflecting on prominent aspects of the <u>performance of the evaluand as a whole</u>, they should be derived from the synthesized analysis of evidence gathered during the review process.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compelling narrative providing an integrated summary of the strengths and weakness in overall performance (achievements and limitations) of the project • clear and succinct response to the key strategic questions • human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention should be discussed explicitly (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) 	<p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section includes a narrative of the conclusions and a summary table of ratings, but the key strategic questions have not been explicitly addressed.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The conclusion provides summative statements on the project's performance following the main evaluation criteria. However, it does not necessarily synthesise the project's strengths and weaknesses in an integrated manner. It could have benefited from better inclusion and discussion of the human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention.</p>	4
<p>ii) Utility of the Lessons:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present both positive and negative lessons that have potential for wider application and use (replication and generalization)</p> <p>Consider how well the lessons achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are rooted in real project experiences (i.e. derived from explicit review findings or from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future) • briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful • do not duplicate recommendations 	<p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The Lessons Learned have not been formulated in a manner that lends them useful for wider application in similar contexts. Most are not presented as lessons, but rather as elements of the project without context or explanation for how they helped or hindered project performance. For example, Lesson 2 simply states, "Good collaboration amongst all project partners, some from earlier," but it does not explain how this element may affect projects performance. The "comment/context" also does not offer any insightful explanation. Similarly, Lesson 3 "UNEP ROs not involved in any activities of the project" lacks clarity as there is no explanation as to what the lesson is or why the lack of involvement is important.</p>	2

¹¹¹ 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 provided by UNEP. This includes providing the answers to the questions on Core Indicator Targets, stakeholder engagement, gender responsiveness, safeguards and knowledge management, required for the GEF portal.

<p>(iii) Utility and Actionability of the Recommendations:</p> <p>Purpose: to present proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results.</p> <p>Consider how well the lessons achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when include at least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions represent a measurable performance target in order that the UNEP Unit/Branch can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations. <p>NOTES:</p> <p>(i) In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance.</p> <p>(ii) Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.</p>	<p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</p> <p>The recommendations are based on actual findings in the report. Although they present a specific action, they are mostly missing an element that explains “why the proposed action is important” within the recommendation statement. In some instances, there is a mismatch between the priority level and the proposed timeframe (e.g., priority level - high, proposed timeframe – in the future). In other cases, there is mismatch between the recommendation and the identified responsible party (e.g., the recommendation for continued capacity-building and awareness-raising for the usage of the e-toolkit, would be better directed to the SBR Secretariat than UNEP).</p>	4
<p>Quality of Report Structure and Presentation</p> <p>(i) Structure and completeness of the report:</p> <p>To what extent does the report follow the UNEP Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?</p>	<p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</p> <p>The report is complete and follows the Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines.</p>	6
<p>(ii) Writing and formatting:</p> <p>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?</p>	<p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</p> <p>The report is written in a clear language and professional tone, with just a few run-on sentences through the body of the report. Visual aids include the use of tables and diagrams.</p>	6
<p>OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING</p>		4.9

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 review report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.