



United Nations Environment Programme

**Terminal Evaluation  
of the Project**

**“Capacity Building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania”**

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## Project Identification Table

### Project “Capacity building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania”

<b>GEF project ID:</b>	3895	<b>IMIS number:</b>	GFL/2328-2716-4B76
<b>UNEP Focal Area(s):</b>	Environmental governance	<b>Project Type:</b>	MSP
<b>GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:</b>	GEF 4: BD3 –SP6 (Biosafety)	<b>GEF approval date:</b>	27/05/2010
<b>UNEP approval date:</b>	02/02/2011	<b>First Disbursement:</b>	25/07/2011
<b>Actual start date:</b>	25/07/2011	<b>Planned duration:</b>	48 months
<b>Planned completion date:</b>	02/02/2015	<b>Actual or Expected completion date:</b>	02/12/2015 (extension of 10m approved in 04/2015)
<b>Planned project budget at approval:</b>	863,800 USD	<b>Total expenditures reported as of 30/09/2015</b>	755.115 (87,4%)
<b>GEF Allocation:</b>	557,200 USD	<b>GEF grant expenditures reported as of 30/09/2015</b>	499.965
<b>Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing:</b>	306,000 USD	<b>Secured MSP co-financing reported as 30/09/2015</b>	255.150
<b>Leveraged extra financing:</b>	-	<b>No. of Audits (last Audit reported)</b>	2 (last: 2013, rep. 05/2014))
<b>Mid-term review/eval. (planned date):</b>	September 2013	<b>Mid-term review/eval. (actual date):</b>	January 2013 (FOM)
<b>No. of revisions:</b>	5	<b>Date of last Revision:</b>	16/04/2015
<b>Date of last Steering Committee meeting</b>	13/03/2014	<b>Terminal Evaluation (actual date):</b>	September – November 2015
<b>Date of financial closure:</b>	Na		

## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANUBIS	A New UNEP Biosafety Information System
BCH	Biosafety Clearing House
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
DCM	Decision of the Council of the Ministries
EA	Expected Accomplishments (of UNEP)
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EO	Evaluation Office (of UNEP)
EU	European Union
FFP	Food, Feed and Processing (GMOs for)
FMO	Fund Management Officer (of UNEP)
GCD	General Customs Directorate
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
IT	Information Technology
LMO	Living Modified Organism
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MOEFWA	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration (now Ministry of Environment)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NBC	National Biosafety Committee
NBF	National Biosafety Framework
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCA	National Competent Authority
NCC	National Coordinating Committee
NEA	National Executing Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Project Coordinator
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MTS	Medium Term Strategies (of UNEP)
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PoW	Programme of Work (of UNEP)
ProDoc	Project Document
RA	Risk Assessment
RM	Risk Management
ROtI	Review of Outcomes to Impact
SCBD	Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

## Executive Summary

1 This is the final report of the Terminal Evaluation of the Project “Capacity Building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania” (GFL/2328-2716-4B76). The Project was approved by GEF in 05/2010 for a duration of 4 years (2010-14) and a total budget of USD 863.800, the 64.5% of which represents the GEF allocation (USD 557.200), with the remaining 35.5% (USD 306.600) provided by the Government of Albania (of which, 100.000 USD in cash).

2 The first disbursement and actual operational start only occurred in July 2011 (nearly six months after UNEP approval) and a no-cost extension of ten months was granted on account of the initial delay, shifting the expected completion date to December 2015. Some misunderstanding on financial procedures and institutional arrangements at the beginning of the Project brought about initial delays, until a new Project Team took over in October 2012, speeding up and smoothly implementing Project’s operations until their completion (02/12/2015), actually executing virtually all the activities in three years of operations, instead of four.

3 The Evaluation took place in the period between September and November 2015 and included a mission to Albania from 27/10/2014 to 31/10/2015. The Evaluation Team consisted of one consultant specialist of projects evaluation in the environmental sector (See Annex 6) working under the methodological guidance of the Evaluation Office (EO) of UNEP.

4 Albania, as a Candidate Country to the EU, has prepared the Environmental Legislation Plan for Approximation in order to synchronize much of its legislation with the corresponding EU Directives, including those on Biosafety. At the same time, the country has defined its Integrated Planning System and its National Strategy for Development and Integration, with sectoral and inter-sectoral strategies. More specifically, a National Strategy on the Environment, where Biosafety is included as a priority, was produced and a new Law on Environment Protection entered into force in January 2013. Similarly, the sectoral Strategy of Agriculture and Food (2007) was also prepared, which contains relevant aspects with a bearing on Biosafety, such as Food Safety (with a new Law approved in 2013).

5 The National Executing Agency (NEA) was the Ministry of Environment (MoE), which is also the focal point to the CPB and the National Competent Authority (NCA). A National Biosafety Committee (NBC) was established and defined by Ministry Order in July 2013.

6 The Project has contributed to the elaboration of the specific provisions on Biosafety contained in the national Law on Environment Protection (approved in 2011 and entered into force in January 2013) and to specifically address the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment by a Government Decree, namely a Decision of the Council of the Ministries (DCM), which has been extensively discussed among the line-ministries and is currently ready to be approved and published in the Official Journal.

7 The evaluation has, nevertheless, remarked that clear provisions for GMOs FFP (GMOs for Food, Feed and for Processing, under article 11 of the CPB and its Annex II), are not expressly contemplated neither in the Law on Environment (which only address the deliberate release into the environment), nor in the Law on Food recently entered into force (2013), the application of which falls under the responsibility of the National Food Authority. This is an area of concern that needs to be addressed, probably through a specific Regulation. It is therefore important that the Ministry of Environment works closely with the National Food Authority to address this issue through a bridging regulation.

8 The Project has also actively supported relevant actions of training and capacity building (three Guidelines produced and several workshops) and has largely contributed to the consolidation of the National Competent Authority (NCA), the Ministry of Environment. A positive coordination exists with other main

Biosafety stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the General Customs Directorate (GCD), though fully operational systems for handling applications, Risk Assessment and Risk Management, Monitoring and Enforcement have yet to be proved effective when challenged by GMOs applications and development in the country.

9 The National Biosafety Committee (NBC) has been formally established by Ministerial Order (2013), but its structure is unbalanced, with just one representative of Civil Society out of 12 members and no representatives from the Private Sector. The NBC, too, has to prove more effective and dynamic in responding to more challenging situations. In that case, forms of technical and more flexible coordination (e.g. working group, task force) will possibly have to be deployed in order to support the NBC in its pivotal role of strategic guidance, and decision-making and in all aspects of GMOs management.

10 Public awareness and participation has surely been addressed by the Project through the setting of a comprehensive “Guidance for public awareness”, which has oriented several awareness raising activities (workshops, meetings, posters, etc.) targeting a diversified public (technical staff, students, NGOs). Building on that, the evaluation judges that a more active participation of Civil Society could benefit the implementation of biosafety agenda in the country, by contemplating a more significant presence of Civil Society organisations in the NBC and other innovative forms of exchange and partnership between the MoE and national NGOs. The updating of the BCH is also an impellent need.

11 The Evaluation has concluded that the country has steadily and positively moved in the implementation of a workable and transparent National Biosafety Framework (NBF). Outstanding results have been achieved so far and there is a promising setting of factors that can contribute to socio-political and institutional sustainability, while the degree of financial sustainability will depend on the level of funding attributed to Biosafety in the Medium-Term Budget Planning of the NBSAP 2015-2020.

12 As requested by the TOR of the Evaluation, twenty-two different evaluation criteria have been rated, as shown in the Table of Chapter 5.1 of the Report (Conclusions). As a whole, the Project can be rated as Highly Satisfactory (HS). The summary assessment and the rating of some of the main evaluation criteria are synthetized here below.

Criteria	Summary Assessment	Rating
<b>A. Strategic relevance</b>	The Project confirms all its relevance in addressing challenging and crucial issues and needs in the area of biodiversity’s sustainable use, in achieving internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals, in contributing to fulfil UNEP’s mandate and policy, as well as GEF priorities and strategies. It is also relevant to support the country in its integration to the EU (see 4.1)	<b>HS</b>
<b>B. Achievement of outputs</b>	The Evaluation concludes that virtually all main Outputs have been successfully delivered (see Table 1 in 4.2)	<b>HS</b>
<b>C. Effectiveness: Attainment of project objectives and results</b>	The Project has moved steadily towards the achievement of all its expected Outcomes. Overall the NBF is being implemented and responds to the current needs of the country, though it has to be proved under more challenging situations (no GMOs Applications so far in Albania).	<b>S</b>
<b>D. Sustainability and replication</b>	Sustainability is overall likely to occur with some feasible improvements on the Institutional Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the insertion of Biosafety within the NBSAP 2015-20 provides elements of optimism for Financial Sustainability, since Biosafety can be included in the Medium-Term Budget Planning of Min. of Finance;</li> <li>- The final approval of the DCM on Biosafety will surely bring about increased socio-political sustainability. The agenda for the integration of Albania into the EU has also given a substantive step in 2014, when Albania has been granted the official status of EU candidate;</li> <li>- Institutional Sustainability: relevant partnerships have been established, though Biosafety Governance has to be tested under different and more demanding circumstances.</li> </ul>	<b>L</b>

<b>E. Efficiency</b>	All planned activities completed and outputs delivered in the established time-frame. (see 4.5)	<b>HS</b>
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13 Major and positive lesson learned regards the full integration of the Project Team in the Biodiversity Unit of the MoE, which has been a major key-driver for the achievement of the results. The team has picked excellent skills, which will be useful not only for future challenges in Biosafety agenda, but also for other GEF projects in Albania.

14 The Evaluation has presented four Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: to UNEP

**Recommendation 1:**

In order to fully complete the planned activities and the imminent termination of the Project (02/12/2015) it is strongly recommended to proceed with the urgent transfer to the Project of the last instalment foreseen.

Recommendation 2: to MoE

**Recommendation 2:**

It is recommended to address the currently unbalanced composition of the NBC by increasing the representation of Civil Society in the Committee and to foster the implementation of joint initiatives between the MoE and Civil Society organisations. It is equally recommended to take in consideration the enlargement of NBC membership to the Private Sector, too.

Recommendation 3: to MoE, to the Government and to UNEP

**Recommendation 3:**

It is recommended to address the lack of explicit provision for GMOs FFP (GMOs for Food, Feed and for Processing, under article 11 of the CPB) through appropriate normative instruments (e.g. specific Regulation).

Recommendation 4: to MoE and UNEP

**Recommendation 4:**

It is recommended to update the information present in the BCH and to take appropriate measures to make the BCH fully operational, taking into account the tools and applications implemented through the UNEP/GEF BCH Project.



## 1 Introduction

1. In its capacity as an Implementing Agency of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), UNEP has been providing administrative and technical assistance to countries participating in the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) for the development and implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF). The frameworks are a combination of policy, legal, administrative and technical instruments enabling the countries to manage the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) from modern biotechnology<sup>1</sup>.
2. This is the final report of the Terminal Evaluation of the Project “Capacity Building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania” (GFL/2328-2716-4B76). The Project was approved by GEF in 05/2010 for a duration of 4 years (2010-14) and a total budget of USD 863.800, the 64.5% of which represents the GEF allocation (USD 557.200), with the remaining 35.5% (USD 306.600) provided by the Government of Albania (of which, 100.000 USD in cash).
3. The Evaluation took place in the period between September and November 2015 and included a mission to Albania from 27/10/2014 to 31/10/2015. The Evaluation Team consisted of one consultant specialist of projects evaluation in the environmental sector (See Annex 6) working under the methodological guidance of the Evaluation Office (EO) of UNEP.

## 2 The Evaluation

4. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Manual and following the Guidelines for GEF Agencies on Conducting Terminal Evaluations, the Terminal Evaluation has been undertaken upon completion of the Project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, the GEF and their executing partners – the National Executing Agency (Ministry of Environment) and the national partners.
5. The report follows the format for Terminal Evaluations provided by the UNEP Evaluation Office. According to the UNEP evaluation methodology, most criteria have been 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 is rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU).
6. As requested by the UNEP’s methodology for Terminal Evaluations, an Inception Report was produced at the beginning of the mission, containing a review of the project context, of the quality of project design, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, the evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.
7. According to the TOR received, a participatory approach has been used since the preparation of the field mission, through a preliminary exchange of evaluation tools with the National Project Coordinator and the joint preparation of the agenda for the country visit. Once fielded, the mission provided the opportunity to meet with relevant stakeholders and to collect and discuss first-hand information, opinions and suggestions or recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> In this Report, the terms LMO (Living Modified Organism) and GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) are considered synonymous and indifferently used.

8. Quantitative and qualitative methods and indicators have been used, taking into account that the Project was expected to mostly deliver institutional and capacity building outputs and outcomes. As a result, quantitative outputs were also assessed against their quality and effectiveness, particularly their capacity to drive and sustain changes at higher level of objectives. As far as possible, the information received has been triangulated among the stakeholders and with the existing written reports available in the ANUBIS platform.
9. The main methods and tools used in the Evaluation have been:
  - A Desk Review of all project documents and tools the consultant has access to (see Annex 4), including the ANUBIS platform.
  - Exchanges with the Project Management Team at UNEP, namely the Task Manager.
  - A Country Visit, which included:
    - Meetings and continuous exchange with the Project Team and the MoE Officers of the Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas, where the Project Team is inserted, particularly the CPB Focal Point (Head of the Biodiversity Unit), who is the main liaison officer between the Project Secretariat and the Ministry;
    - Meetings with the Head of the Ministry Cabinet (at the beginning of the mission) and with the General Secretary of the MoE (at the final de-briefing);
    - Relevant meetings with the main national stakeholders, such as representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (MoA) and of the Center for Genetic Resources of the Agricultural University of Tirana (previously part of the MoA), of national NGOs and of UNDP Programs. The GEF National Focal Point was unfortunately not in the country at the time of the country visit;
    - A visit to the Laboratory of Genetic and Biotechnology of the Agricultural University.

### **3 The Project**

#### **3.1 Context**

10. Though relatively small, Albania enshrines a notably high biodiversity, due to the variety of existing ecosystems, landscapes and habitats in its two major biogeographical regions (Mediterranean and Alpine). Actually, the country has a strong, on-going programme to establish and improve Protected Areas that currently cover 16% of the national territory. The unregulated introduction of products of modern biotechnology could represent a threat for the agro-biodiversity of the country, where 24% of the land is used for agricultural purposes and Agriculture still contributes to 18.9% of the country's GDP (WB, 2015), with a large predominance of small, family-run exploitations.
11. Albania ratified the Cartagena Protocol in 2005 and participated in the UNEP/GEF project “Development of a National Biosafety Framework for Albania” that set the pillars for the establishment of a national strategy and policy on Biosafety and for the drafting of a National Biosafety Law. A UNEP/GEF Project on strengthening the capacity and effective participation to the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) was also implemented.
12. Moreover, Albania, as a Candidate Country to the EU, has prepared the Environmental Legislation Plan for Approximation in order to synchronize much of its legislation with the corresponding EU Directives, including those on Biosafety. At the same time, the country has defined its Integrated Planning System and its National Strategy for Development and Integration, with sectoral and inter-sectoral strategies. More specifically, a National Strategy on the Environment, where Biosafety is included as a priority, was produced and a new Law on Environment Protection entered into force in January 2013. Similarly, the sectoral Strategy of Agriculture and Food (2007) was also prepared, which

contains relevant aspects with a bearing on Biosafety, such as Food Safety (with a new Law approved in 2013).

13. The current project was conceived to support the full integration of Biosafety into the national strategies and policies, through the effective implementation of the National Biosafety Framework, the enacting of the draft National Biosafety Law and the adoption and implementation of essential regulations, procedures and mechanisms to make the draft Law on LMOs workable and consistent with country's needs and with European and international obligations. Particular emphasis was given in the Project Document to capacity building aspects.

### **3.2 Objectives and components**

14. According to the ProDoc (Project Document), the Project objective is that "Albania has a workable and transparent National Biosafety Framework, in line with its national development priorities and international obligations". The Project was conceived with six (6) main components:

1. Stocktaking Assessment
2. Integration and incorporation of biosafety into national plans and policies
3. A full regulatory regime for biosafety is designed and approved
4. Consolidation of a functional national system for handling requests, perform risk assessment, decision-making, perform administrative tasks
5. Follow-up mechanisms (monitoring of environmental effects and enforcement: control and inspections)
6. Public participation

### **3.3 Target areas/groups**

15. The Project is essentially an Institutional & Capacity Building Project aiming at strengthening national capacities to fulfil the national and international obligations of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). Main target groups are the national institutions involved in the implementation of the NBF, particularly the Ministry of Environment (MoE), former Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration at the time of Project drafting), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the General Customs Directorate (GCD) of the Ministry of Finance and the University of Agriculture. A large programme of capacity building has targeted the national human resources that have the responsibility of decision-making and policy making, detection and inspection tasks, risk assessment and risk monitoring.
16. Civil Society organisations, though plenty in quantity, are still in a process of affirmation and consolidation in the national socio-political arena. They also have been targeted by the Project through awareness raising and training activities concerning Biosafety.

### **3.4 Milestones/key dates in project design and implementation**

17. The Project was approved by GEF on the 27/05/2010 but, as already pointed out by the Mid-term Review<sup>2</sup> (2013), has experienced serious delays in its signing and commencement. The UNEP approval only occurred in February 2011 (8 months after GEF approval) and the first disbursement and actual operational start occurred in July 2011 (nearly six months after UNEP approval), due to delays in the opening of the Bank Account of the Project (it was initially foreseen that funds should be channelled through UNDP).

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<sup>2</sup> UNEP Biosafety FMO Report (L. Eibl-Kamolleh), February 2013

18. The expected duration was 48 months (4 years) but a no-cost extension of ten months was granted on account of the initial delay, shifting the expected completion date to December 2015. Some misunderstanding on financial procedures and institutional arrangements at the beginning of the Project brought about initial delays, until a new Project Team took over in October 2012, speeding up and smoothly implementing Project's operations until their completion (02/12/2015), actually executing virtually all the activities in three years of operations, instead of four.
19. The Change of Government occurred in 2013 has not substantially produced any delay in Project operations and significant laws entered into force during the Project life-time (Environmental Law in January 2013, Food Safety Law also in 2013).

### **3.5 Implementation arrangements**

20. The National Executing Agency (NEA) is the Ministry of Environment (MoE), which is also the focal point to the CPB and the National Competent Authority (NCA). A National Coordinating Committee (NCC) was foreseen to be established by the NEA with the responsibility "to advice and guide the implementation of the project" by overseeing the achievement of the expected results, catalysing national support and ensuring national ownership, approving work plans and budget and making recommendations. The composition of the NCC was not specified in the Project Document. As a matter of fact, the NCC was replaced by the National Biosafety Committee (NBC) established and defined by Ministry Order in July 2013.
21. According to the ToR, the National Executing Agency (NEA) has appointed the National Project Coordinator (NPC), established the Project Steering / Coordinating Committee and provided the necessary support for its work. The NPC, with the support of a Project Financial Assistant, has been responsible for the coordination and supervision of all the activities of the Project, such as the preparation of work plans and budgets, communication with authorities and stakeholders, organization and supervision of the external technical assistance, monitoring and reporting to UNEP. Progress in implementation has been monitored against the work plan and half yearly project progress reports and quarterly expenditure reports were produced.

### **3.6 Project financing**

22. The Project had an estimated cost of USD 863.800, the 64,5% of which was the GEF allocation (USD 557.200), while the remaining 35,5% (USD 306.000) was provided by the Government of Albania, partly in kind (USD 206.000) and partly in cash (USD 100.000), in order to cover the costs of the Project Team. No other sources of funding were foreseen.

### **3.7 Project partners**

23. The National Executing Agency (NEA), i.e. the Ministry of Environment (MoE), has been the main partner, particularly the Biodiversity Unit of the Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas. Synergies have been created with the Unit of Protected Areas. Other main partners have been the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (MoA), the General Customs Directorate (GCD) of the Ministry of Finance (already partner of the MoE in other initiatives, such as the CITES<sup>3</sup> enforcement), the University of Agriculture of Tirana and some NGOs active in the environmental field and in Organic Agriculture.

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<sup>3</sup> Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species

### 3.8 Changes in design during implementation

24. The project was expected to assist the country in the approval and implementation of a “stand alone” Biosafety Draft Law, as specified in the Project Document. Albania has, meanwhile, changed strategy, opting for a different legal framework. A new Law on Environment Protection was approved in 2011 and entered into force in January 2013 and contains provisions on GMOs issues, namely its art. 36, stating that the endorsement of procedures for the deliberate release into the environment of the GMOs should be done by the means of a Government Decree (actually a DCM, Decision of the Council of the Ministries). The DCM has been extensively discussed among the line-ministries and is currently prepared and ready to be approved and published to the Official Journal early in 2016.
25. The shifting of the legal framework has been discussed during the evaluation, not only with Project and MoE staff, but also with the Head of the Ministry Cabinet of the MoE. This relevant issue will be discussed more in depth in chapter 4.3.2 regarding the achievement of Project Outcomes, namely Immediate Outcome 3 (Regulatory regime).

### 3.9 Reconstructed Theory of Change of the project

26. In the Inception Report of the mission<sup>4</sup>, the consultant presented a reconstructed Theory of Change (TOC) of the Project, based on the project design, other UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit documents and the comments received from UNEP Evaluation Office. As a result, the mapping of the possible pathway of change from the projects outputs to the expected outcomes, up to the intended impact, was produced. The reconstructed TOC has been a valuable instrument of analysis all along the evaluation exercise and its design has been tested and revised by the consultant during the evaluation. It has particularly contributed to assess the effectiveness and the sustainability of the project’s results, as well as the likelihood to achieve the intended impact, as discussed in Chapter 4.3 (Effectiveness) of this report.
27. As mentioned above (see 3.2), the project’s objective is that “Albania has a workable and transparent National Biosafety Framework, in line with its national development priorities and international obligations”. Therefore, “A workable and transparent National Biosafety Framework (NBF)” can be considered as the main Project Outcome to be achieved.
28. The National Biosafety Framework (NBF) is a comprehensive institutional instrument that guides the country towards the achievement of the objective of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB), as stated in the art. 1 of the Protocol<sup>5</sup>, and eventually towards the Global Environmental Benefit representing the Intended Project Impact: the “Enhanced conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in Albania”.
29. The exercise of reconstruction of the Theory of Change has permitted to identify the overall causal pathway between Outputs<sup>6</sup> and Outcomes<sup>7</sup>, with six groups of Outputs conducing to each of the six Immediate/Direct Outcomes and eventually to the main Project Outcome, as described and illustrated in Chapter 4.3.2 and Diagram 1.

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<sup>4</sup> Inception Report of the Terminal Evaluation of the Project “Capacity Building for the implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania”, C. Risoli, July 2015

<sup>5</sup> Art. 1 of CPB: “Adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and specifically focusing on transboundary movements”.

<sup>6</sup> Outputs : the goods and services that the project must deliver in order to achieve the project outcomes (“the ROTI Handbook”, GEF, 2009)

<sup>7</sup> Outcomes: the short to medium term behavioural or systemic effects that the project makes a contribution towards, and that are designed to help achieve the project’s impacts (“the ROTI Handbook”, GEF, 2009)

30. The TOC also depicts the pathway from Outcomes to Impact and any intermediate change required between them, called intermediate states. It permits to appreciate to what extent the project has to date contributed, and is likely in the future to further contribute, to changes in stakeholders behaviour as a result of the project's direct outcomes, and the likelihood of those changes in turn leading to environmental benefits (impact). The pathway is described in chapter 4.3.3 and Diagram 2. The TOC further defines the external factors that influence change along the pathways, called drivers (when the project has a certain level of control) or assumptions (when the project has no control).

## 4 Evaluation Findings

### 4.1 Strategic relevance

#### *4.1.1 Sub-regional environmental issues and needs*

31. Biosafety has become an increasingly relevant issue in Albania, particularly after the country entered the process of EU Integration that obliges it to harmonize its legislation with the EU normatives<sup>8</sup>. The National Plan for the adaptation of the Albanian legislation to the European Union legislation, approved in 2005, defined the legislative and institutional measures to be taken at short term (2005-2006), middle term (2007-2008) and long term (2009-2014).

32. As largely known, EU policy on GMOs has been quite restrictive and conservative so far. In that context, Biosafety was incorporated as a priority in the new National Strategy on the Environment (2008). The National Biosafety Framework was prepared (2006) with the support of the previous global GEF/UNEP project "Development of National Biosafety Frameworks" and a draft Law on Biosafety was also prepared at that time (see chapter 3.8). Biosafety is currently included in the new Law on Environmental Protection (2013) and regulated through an "ad hoc" DCM to be approved.

#### *4.1.2 UNEP mandate and policies*

33. UNEP has a rich history of assisting governments in advancing national and regional implementation of environmental objectives, enhancing global and regional environmental cooperation, as well as developing and applying national and international environmental law. Biosafety has become an increasingly relevant sector of UNEP intervention since the first group of Pilot Biosafety Enabling Projects started in 1997 in 18 countries. From 2000 onward, UNEP has supported around 140 countries to develop and implement their National Biosafety Framework (NBF) and/or to participate and benefit from the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH).

34. At the time of Project design, Biosafety was one of the main areas where UNEP was playing its strategic role of Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The implementing role was strongly affirmed by the development of the global, GEF-funded initiative to establish National Biosafety Frameworks in more than 120 countries worldwide, starting from 2001. However, biosafety was not formally and explicitly recognized as thematic priority in any of UNEP's instruments of strategic planning that were, in those years, also in a phase of progressive restructuring.

35. Eventually, Biosafety was contemplated in Biennial PoW 2010-11, Sub-Programme Environmental Governance, Expected Accomplishment (EA) B: The capacity of States to implement their environmental obligations and achieve their environmental priority goals, targets and objectives through strengthened laws and institutions is enhanced). Namely:

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<sup>8</sup> Countries aspiring to join the European Union must align their national laws, rules and procedures ("approximation of law") in order to give effect to the entire body of EU law contained in the "*acquis communautaire*". The *acquis communautaire* includes the directives, regulations, and decisions adopted on the basis of the various Treaties which together make up the primary law of the European Union. (source: <http://www.env-net.org/environmental-acquis>)

- Output 2: Legal and policy instruments are developed and applied to achieve synergy between national and international environment and development goals). Biosafety Frameworks are mentioned and targeted as follows: *“Biosafety frameworks are implemented in 50 countries”*.
- Output 3: Countries’ legislative and judicial capacity to implement their international environmental obligations is enhanced through implementation of policy tools. Biosafety is included as follows: 1) *“The capacities of countries in risk assessment and management of modern biotechnology products under the biosafety programme is enhanced”* and 2) *“Capacity-building and support are provided to developing country Parties to enable their participation in the Cartagena Protocol’s Biosafety Clearing House”*.
- Output 4: Capacity of government officials and other stakeholders for effective participation in multilateral environmental negotiations is enhanced. CPB is contemplated as follows: *“Continued support is provided to developing countries to enable them to meet their planning and reporting obligations under the Convention on Biological diversity, the Cartagena Protocol and the Framework Convention on Climate Change”*.

36. Similarly, in the biennial PoW for 2012–2013, Sub-Programme Environmental Governance, Expected Accomplishments (EA) A, Biosafety is included as one of the priority areas for Output 5: *Priority areas of multilateral environmental agreements are increasingly reflected in policies and actions of bodies, funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, including their strategies and activities in countries (Five Priority Areas)*.

37. The current UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2014-17 presents a table comparing the strategic focus and expected accomplishments of the 2014–2017 MTS and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020. In that table, National Biosafety Frameworks appear under Target 17 (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, NBSAPs adopted as policy instrument).

38. Moreover, the Project is absolutely instrumental to the achievement of the five strategic objectives of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the Period 2011-2020: 1. Facilitating the establishment and further development of effective biosafety systems for the implementation of the Protocol; 2. Capacity-building; 3. Compliance and review; 4. Information sharing; 5. Outreach and cooperation.

#### 4.1.3 GEF Biodiversity focal area, strategic priorities and operational programme(s)

39. As the financial mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is also called upon under the Biosafety Protocol to serve as its financial mechanism. At its meeting in November 2000, the GEF adopted the “Initial Strategy for Assisting Countries to Prepare for the Entry into Force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety”, the main objectives of which are: to assist countries in the establishment of national biosafety frameworks; to promote information sharing and collaboration (in particular at the regional and sub-regional level); and, to promote collaboration with other organizations to assist in capacity building for the Protocol.

40. The Strategy for Financing Biosafety was approved by the GEF Council on an interim basis in December 2006 and became part of the GEF Focal Area Strategies and Strategic Programming for GEF-4 approved by the GEF Council in June 2007 (Focal Area 3: Biodiversity; Strategic Programme 6: Biosafety). Under GEF-5, the strategy for the Biodiversity Focal Area contemplates as its Objective 3: “Build Capacity for the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB)”. To achieve this Objective, a comprehensive Projects Support structure was established, including three types of Projects: Single-country project, Regional or sub-regional projects, Thematic projects. The Project

under current evaluation is therefore strategically relevant to GEF priorities. According to data displayed in GEF web site, in the last ten years (2005-2015) the Biodiversity portfolio (including Biosafety) represented around 20% of the GEF Portfolio in Albania.

#### 4.1.4 Overall Strategic Relevance

41. As discussed above, the Project, in retrospect, confirms all its relevance in addressing challenging issues and needs in:
- Improving the national capacity to implement regulatory and administrative system for Biosafety management;
  - Supporting and enhancing country's capacity for integration into the European Union;
  - Achieving internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals, in compliance with country's obligations towards Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;
  - Contributing to fulfil UNEP's mandate and policy, as well as GEF priorities and strategies.

As a whole, the strategic Relevance of the Project can be rated as HS (Highly Satisfactory).

## **4.2 Achievement of outputs**

42. The Evaluation has assessed the delivery of Project Outputs against the planned Outputs of the Results Framework (Ann. A of the ProDoc - Results Framework and Appendix 7 - Costed M&E Work Plan Summary for Albania) in close collaboration with the National Project Team and the relevant MoE officers. The revision of the outputs produced (e.g. trainings report, training material, awareness material, etc.), their good level of systematisation and filing (also in ANUBIS), as well as the interviews with different stakeholders have permitted to confirm the quality of the outputs and the participatory process of their production.
43. Table 1 that follows, produced by the Project Team<sup>9</sup>, discussed and revised during the country visit, synthesises the main findings on Outputs delivery, under each of the expected Outcomes of the Results Framework. As clearly showed by the Table, the Project has satisfactorily delivered virtually all the expected outputs. We highlight:
- The definition of a national Policy on Biosafety and the inclusion of Biosafety in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-2020;
  - The explicit inclusion of Biosafety in the new National Law on Environment and the preparation of the DCM regulating the deliberate release of the GMOs in the Environment (in its final way to be approved in early 2016);
  - The publication of three relevant Technical Guidelines (on handling requests and RA/RM, on Inspection and Monitoring and on Public Awareness) ;
  - The initial upgrading of an existing laboratory (University of Tirana) for GMO detection;
  - The high number of Ministries officers, inspectors and different staff sensitised and/or trained on Biosafety-related issues;
  - A number of information and awareness raising activities, including the production and dissemination of communication material.
44. It is widely recognized that the main key-drivers have been the high dedication of the team and the strong institutional anchorage and support received by the NCA (MoE), particularly the Biodiversity Unit, which, in sum, have created a favorable environment for the setting and implementation of the

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<sup>9</sup> Based on a format that the Consultant has shared with the team of the Project before the country visit



Biosafety Agenda in the country. The Evaluation has concluded that virtually all main Outputs (except 6.4) have been successfully delivered (rating: Highly Satisfactory / HS).

**Table 1: Assessment of Outcomes / Outputs Delivery Project “Capacity Building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania”** (based on Ann. A of the ProDoc / Results Framework and Appendix 7 - Costed M&E Work Plan Summary for Albania

<b>Expected Outcomes / Outputs</b>	<b>Baseline conditions</b>	<b>End of Project Target</b>	<b>Outputs delivered (evidence-based) by the Project (September 2015)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Outcome 1:</b> <i>Assessment of current needs in Albania in the field of biosafety</i>				
<i>1.1) Stocktaking assessment which analyses the current status of biotechnology and biosafety in Albania, strengths and weaknesses in existing capacities is conducted.</i>	<i>Reviews carried out during project “Development of a National Biosafety Framework for Albania”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Stocktaking report is produced, containing a needs assessment evaluation on current resources, infrastructure, legislation in place, as well as existing gaps.</i></li> <li><i>Eventual project proposal is effectively and efficiently targeted to needs identified in the stocktaking</i></li> </ul>	Stocktaking report produced in 2013 by a national consultant.	
<b>Outcome 2:</b> <i>Biosafety policy formally approved and guiding development of safe use of modern biotechnology across sectors</i>				
<i>2.1) A stand-alone biosafety policy is developed</i>	<i>There is no biosafety policy in Albania</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Biosafety policy is produced and approved by the government</i></li> </ul>	The National Biosafety Policy has been elaborated and endorsed by the National Biosafety Committee. The Policy defines the overall national strategy on Biosafety.	No need to be officially endorsed by the Government, which has taken substantive steps (legislation, guidelines, etc.) according to the policy.

<p>2.2) Biosafety priorities deriving from the newly developed biosafety policy are integrated into other national policies</p>	<p>No policy, plans and strategies incorporate Biosafety currently</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biosafety priorities are integrated in the National Environmental Strategy, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan , Agricultural Development Strategy, National Strategy for Development and Integration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biosafety priorities are included as planned in the National Environmental Strategy (NES). The NES was revised in 2013 by the new Government and includes a Monitoring Plan.</li> <li>National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-20 has been completed, agreed upon by the line ministries and expected to be approved by the Prime Ministry Cabinet.</li> <li>The NBSAP contains a budget including Biosafety program that will be secured through the Medium-Term Planning Budget of the Government.</li> <li>The National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) has been revised and updated in July 2015; it will be approved in January 2016. It includes Biodiversity Strategy.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Albania has a fully functional and responsive regulatory regime in line with CPB, other relevant international agreements and national regulations</p>				
<p>3.1) A full regulatory regime for biosafety is designed and approved (i.e. in place)</p>	<p>Draft law is prepared during Project “Development of the NBF for Albania”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft law is approved and published</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The national legal framework for Biosafety has been re-shaped in consideration of the early stage of Biosafety agenda in the country, which could not consistently include a “stand alone” Biosafety institutional framework (a specific Law, a Biosafety Office relatively independent from line ministries, etc.).</li> </ul>	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new Law on Environment Protection prepared in 2011 entered into force in January 2013. In its article 36 the Law determines that the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment would be defined by a Government Decree (DCM, Decision of the Council of Ministers).</li> <li>• The DCM has been prepared based on EU directives on Biosafety, largely discussed with all relevant national stakeholders and is expected to be finally approved in early 2016.</li> </ul>	<p>Law n. 10431 (09/06/2011)</p> <p>The country has also approved in 02/2013 a Food Law, which improves previous existing Food Law through alignment with European acquis. However, the Law does not explicitly mentions GMOs Food and clear provisions on GMOs for FFP (Food, Feed and Processing) are still lacking in the country. (the issue is addressed under Institutional Sustainability, Conclusions §102 and Recomm. 3)</p>
	<p><i>Existing secondary legislation in 2004, has been surveyed and analyzed during the development project and potential bylaws to be amended have been identified,</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Secondary legislation and amendments to existing regulations have been approved by the parliament and published</i></li> </ul>	<p>The DCM to be shortly approved foresees the elaboration of specific Regulations (Secondary Legislation), still premature at this stage.</p>	
<p><b>Outcome 4:</b> <i>Albania has an operational institutional structure for effective decision-making, for handling requests, perform risk assessment and administrative tasks</i></p>				

<p>4.1) Establishment of a body responsible for biosafety</p>	<p>There is currently no government structure responsible for biosafety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The competent national authority for LMOs and the National Biosafety Committee (or other as defined by regulations) is created and is functional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Ministry of Environment (MoE) is the NCA for the CPB.</li> <li>The National Biosafety Committee (NBC) has been established and approved by Ministerial Order in July 2013. It is chaired by the NCA and currently includes more eleven members, mainly from Ministries and Governmental Agencies (6), some University and Research Institution (4) and only one Civil Society representative.</li> </ul>	<p>The list of membership of NBC has been provided.</p> <p>Enlarged membership of Civil Society in the NBC has been discussed during the Evaluation also at higher level (MoE Secretary General).</p>
<p>4.2) Design of technical guidelines for handling LMO's</p>	<p>No technical guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of technical guidelines for handling of requests (including Risk Assessment/Risk Management guidelines)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The “Technical guidelines for handling requests, for RA/RM and to assist in decision-making” have been produced, largely discussed with national stakeholders and presented in national workshops. It has been published in form of booklet. (no date of publication on the booklet)</li> </ul>	<p>Very exhaustive document, produced (in English) with the financial support of UNEP and MoE and the assistance of a national consultant, based on existing material from UNEP and SCBD.</p>
<p>4.3) Providing necessary knowledge and enabling practice of selected individuals and immediate stakeholders on handling LMO's.</p>	<p>Existing laboratories at the Faculty of Natural Sciences, or few other institutions, possess some basic equipment for molecular testing, but none of them can specifically deal with LMOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization of national and international training workshops for stakeholders on RA/RM, decision-making regarding LMO's, and handling administrative tasks</li> </ul>	<p>30 training workshops organized in total, with an average of 25 participants / each, addressing Ministries staff, national and international agencies, NGOs and Private Sector.</p>	<p>Trainers were national consultants from Ministries and University.</p>
<p>4.4) Creating the necessary infrastructure and facilitating the equipping, set up and certification of a LMO laboratory which will enable the fulfillment of obligations of CPB in regards to handling requests and performing risk</p>	<p>No laboratory is dealing with LMO's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LMO laboratory is set up and functional with qualified staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing laboratory for Genetic and Biotechnology at the Agricultural University of Tirana has been upgraded by the Project and is functional with qualified staff (visited during the evaluation).</li> <li>The Faculty of Natural Sciences is also equipped by other donors' project and is fully functional.</li> </ul>	<p>Also supported by Austrian Cooperation (training and research). No current activity on GMOs.</p> <p>There is still no recognized reference laboratory for GMOs. Existing labs do</p>

<i>assessment and management</i>				not yet fulfil requirements for that purpose.
<b>Outcome 5:</b> <i>Albania has a functional national system for enforcement, monitoring and emergency response</i>				
<i>5.1) Establishment of mechanisms for sectorial monitoring, enforcement and emergency response , such as guidelines for monitoring and emergency response plans</i>	<i>The law on Food Nr. 9863 can be referred to in creating these mechanisms for biosafety(no other mechanisms in place)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Technical guidelines for monitoring developed and distributed to responsible personnel</i></li> <li>• <i>Emergency response plans established</i></li> </ul>	The “Guidelines for inspection and monitoring GMOs in Albania” have been developed and distributed to the staff of the General Customs Directorate. They are published in form of booklet. (no date of publication on the booklet).	<p>Very exhaustive document, produced (in English) with the financial support of UNEP and MOE and the assistance of a national consultant, based on existing material from UNEP and SCBD.</p> <p>There are 10 border posts in the country (8 land posts and 2 harbor posts), plus the Int. Tirana Airport</p>
<i>5.2) Set up of a responsible body for enforcement, monitoring and emergency response</i>	<i>Currently there is no such structure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The responsible body members are nominated</i></li> <li>• <i>Availability of training manuals and technical documents for monitoring and inspection.</i></li> <li>• <i>Monitoring and inspection are included in work plan and strategies of relevant enforcement agencies.</i></li> </ul>	<p>The General Customs Directorate (GCD) is the enforcement body responsible for border control of GMOs.</p> <p>Phytosanitary and Veterinary Inspectors also exist and operational in the country.</p> <p>Referral system to MoE (NCA) is clear.</p>	CMD inspectors are already operational on CITES inspections.
<b>Outcome 6:</b>				

<i>Albania has a functional national system for public awareness and participation, in line with the CPB requirements</i>				
<i>6.1) Organization of several workshops on different issues, such as legislative framework on LMOs, RA/RM, law enforcement, monitoring and emergency response</i>	<i>Numerous workshops have been organized during the two previous projects, thus providing a basis for stakeholder participation, through increasing interest</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Workshops are organized and wide stakeholder participation is ensured</i></li> </ul>	25 workshops have been organized with a large participation of Farmers (particularly Organic Farmers), Schools, Students of the Faculty of Biology, Consumers Association. Lobby and Advocacy activities with Ministries staff has also been carried out	
<i>6.2) Defining the best means to involve wider stakeholder representatives in biosafety issues, through the preparation of a public awareness guidance document</i>	<i>There is no public awareness strategy or policy paper dealing with LMO's</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Preparation and distribution of public awareness guidance document</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The booklet "Public awareness guidance to enhance public awareness on Biosafety in Albania" has been produced and distributed during the workshops (no date of publication on the booklet).</li> <li>Three Posters, one video and one leaflet have also been produced</li> </ul>	Very exhaustive document, produced (in English) with the financial support of UNEP and MoE and the assistance of a national consultant, based on existing material from UNEP and SCBD.
<i>6.3) Identify responsible government body to serve as a structure to promote public participation in decision making, through receiving comments, complaints, etc.</i>	<i>The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration has the necessary experience and trained personnel</i>	<i>The responsible body members are nominated</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Communication sector at the MoE has been identified as responsible unit</li> <li>MoE website is active and updated, yet does not contemplate a window for a forum of discussions and comments</li> <li>There is one IT person in MoE</li> </ul>	The MoE has already a good record of publications and communication tools regarding Natural Resources Protection, Protected Areas, etc.
<i>6.4) Enable the use of national BCH and continuous update on LMOs for transport</i>	<i>The existing nBCH is nonfunctional, but data has been uploaded in that web page during the Development project. The central BCH has been updated during the BCH project, successfully completed</i>	<i>National BCH and central BCH are updated</i>	BCH is not properly updated	Recognized weakness to be addressed through the implementation of the tools and applications developed by the UNEP/GEF BCH Project.

### 4.3 Effectiveness: Attainment of project objectives and results

#### 4.3.1 *Achievement of direct Outcomes*

45. The Evaluation has assessed to what extent the delivery of the Outputs (Table 1) has produced the short to medium term institutional changes and systemic effects (Outcomes) designed to achieve higher level of results (Impact). The achievement of the planned Outcomes of the Projects has been analysed and discussed during the country visit. On this basis, the following sub-chapter 4.3.2 presents a qualitative analysis and interpretation of the Outcomes achieved in the light of the reconstructed Theory of Change (TOC) from Outputs to Outcomes, depicted in Diagram 1. Similarly, Diagram 2 illustrates the TOC from Outcome to Impact and sub-chapter 4.3.3 discusses and makes an assessment of the Likelihood of Impact.
46. Overall, based on the assessment contained in the following sub-chapter 4.3.2, the Evaluation considers that the attainment of project objectives and results (Effectiveness) of the Project is Satisfactory (S).

#### 4.3.2 *Project outcomes from reconstructed TOC*

47. As mentioned in chapter 3.9, the reconstruction of the TOC has permitted to streamline the results framework of the Project, by grouping Outputs in six clusters and identifying six Immediate/Direct Outcomes that contribute to the main Project Outcome, as shown in Diagram 1 that follows. The expected Immediate Outcome 1 “Biosafety baseline established through a stocktaking report” has been fully achieved and considered very positive by all stakeholders. It has permitted to assess the current needs of the country in terms of Biosafety and to proceed towards subsequent Immediate Outcomes.
48. Immediate Outcome 2 “A National Policy on Biosafety that integrates main national plans and policies” has also been successfully achieved. A Policy document was produced and endorsed by the main national stakeholders through the National Coordinating Committee set up by the Project. Biosafety priorities are reflected in the National Environmental Strategy (NES) and, most importantly, in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2020 (NBSAP) that has been already approved by all the line-ministries and will be shortly approved by the Prime Ministry Cabinet. The second National Strategy for Development and Integration 2014-2020 (NSDI II), which presents the national vision for the social and economic development of the country and explains how Albania plans to achieve it through government policies and actions in view of European Accession, has been updated in 2015 and includes a Biodiversity Strategy.
49. Immediate Outcome 3 “A fully functional and responsive regulatory regime in place” has been achieved, as mentioned in chapter 3.8, through a different approach and legal framework than initially foreseen in the Project, where a stand alone Biosafety Law was envisaged. Actually, the country opted for integrating Biosafety in the new Law on Environment Protection (approved in 2011 and entered into force in January 2013) and to specifically address the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment by a Government Decree, namely a Decision of the Council of the Ministries (DCM), which has been extensively discussed among the line-ministries and is currently ready to be approved and published to the Official Journal early in 2016.
50. The change is considered by the Government more appropriate to the existing, national legal framework and more adequate to the current needs of the country, where GMOs development did not occur so far. Actually, a stand alone Law on Biosafety involving a new and different institutional framework, as foreseen in the Biosafety Draft Law, would have involved political decisions and implementation costs that the Government did not consider opportune to assume at present. The on-



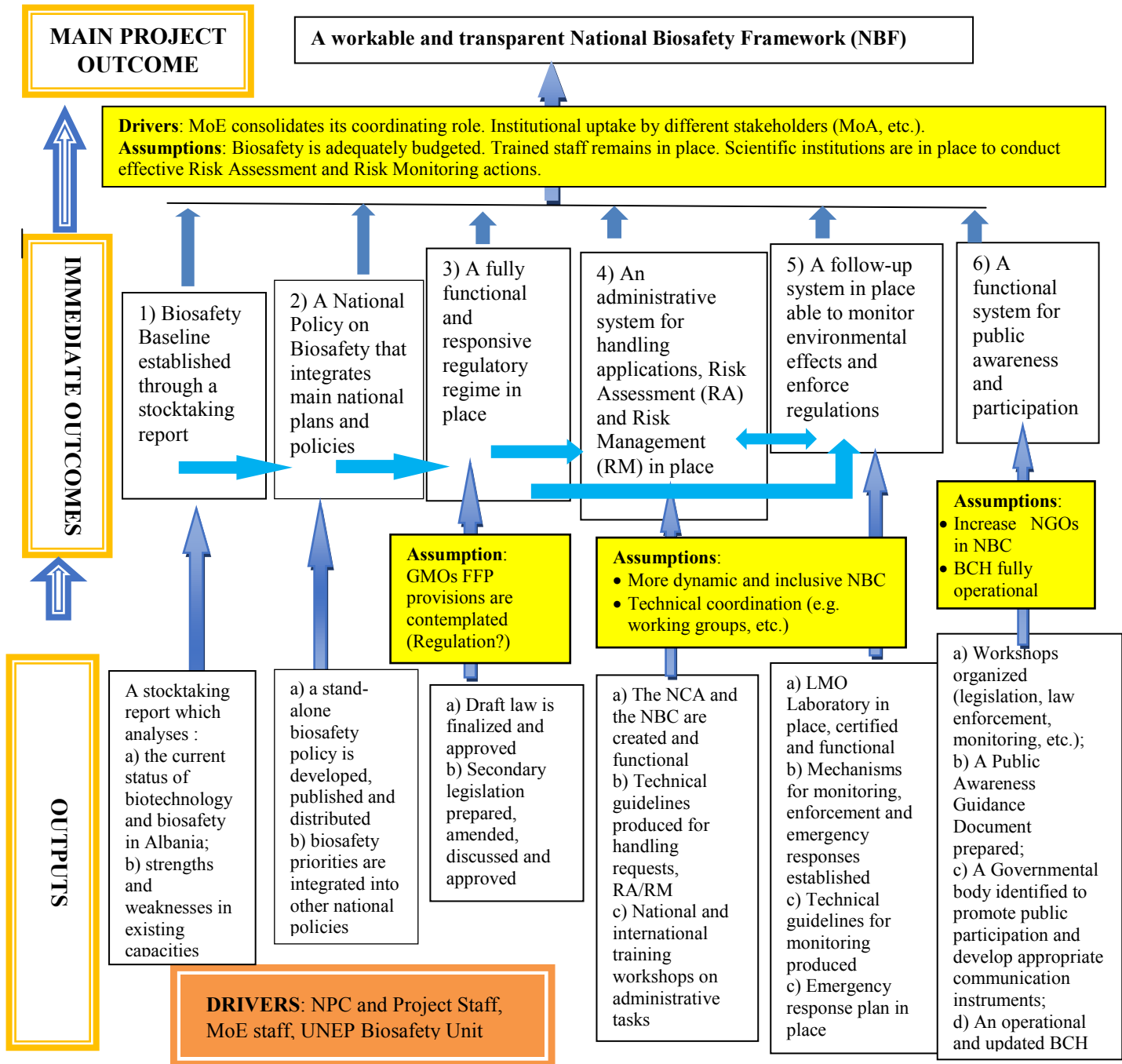
going process of integration of Albania into the EU and the subsequent alignment of the National Law with the European legislation, is also a relevant factor considered by the Government, suggesting that opportunities for integrating and modifying the presently adopted legal framework could be more smoothly undertaken with a DCM than with a Law, if needed.

51. The Evaluation agrees on that the shifting in the Biosafety legal framework responds to the needs and the priorities of the country, providing a more flexible and practical legal instrument, without excluding a more ambitious one (e.g. a specific Biosafety National Law) in the future, when and if the need would arise. It has, nevertheless, to be stressed that the DCM only deals with the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment, leaving aside the issue of GMOs for Food, Feed and Processing (FFP), which is another relevant aspect to be tackled according to the CPB, possibly more topical in the current situation of Albania. Unfortunately, the recent Law on Food (2013) that amends previous ones (of 1998 and of 2005) still does not make any explicit reference to GMOs for FFP purposes, leaving therefore an important legislative void that needs to be addressed (see also Inst. Sustainability and Recommendations). As a whole, Immediate Outcome 3 can be considered as partially achieved.
52. Immediate Outcome 4 “An administrative system for handling applications, Risk Assessment (RA) and Risk Management (RM)” has been approached through relevant initiatives in terms of training and capacity building (Guideline produced, workshops), as well as the consolidation of the National Competent Authority (NCA), i.e. the Ministry of Environment, and the formal establishment of the National Biosafety Committee (NBC) by Ministerial Order in 2013. The MoE has undoubtedly become the pivotal national institution in charge of Biosafety in Albania, referral point for any institutional or private actor dealing with GMOs in the country. This is a major achievement.
53. Moreover, a positive coordination exists with other main Biosafety stakeholders, namely the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the General Customs Directorate (GCD). Nevertheless, a fully operational system (as defined in Outcome 4) has yet to be proved effective when challenged by GMOs applications and development in the country. The same goes for the effective functioning of the NBC that, though formally established, did not have the opportunity to be particularly active, so far. Moreover, the structure of the NBC is highly unbalanced, with just one representative of Civil Society out of 12 members. These issues will be discussed under chapter 4.4.3 (Institutional Sustainability). As a whole, relevant foundations have been built up, yet Outcome 4 can be considered partially achieved.
54. Immediate Outcome 5 “A follow up system in place able to monitor environmental effects and enforce regulations” has also been approached through training and capacity building activities (guidelines for inspection, workshops, lab equipment provided). Actually, cooperation already exists between the MoE and the GCD, for instance in the enforcement of the CITES. Different institutions carry on inspection activities of different kind related to border control, to food quality, to hygiene and human health, to phytosanitary and veterinary issues, to seeds control and to environmental inspections for permits, among others. The full achievement of Outcome 5 is therefore depending on the effective definition and coordination of the specific roles of each of those entities.
55. Immediate Outcome 6 “A functional system for public awareness and participation” has also been addressed by some relevant initiatives, such as the document of Guidance for public awareness, which has been published as a booklet and has oriented several awareness raising activities (workshops, meetings, editing of posters and of a video on Biosafety, among others) with a large range of public (technical staff, students, NGOs, etc.). The MoE has its own website, which is maintained by an IT staff of the Ministry. The opening of a “window” for receiving comments and questions is not currently foreseen, but could surely enhance the linkage between MoE and civil society (as also pointed out by a representative of a national NGO). Unfortunately, the page of the country in the BCH is poor and not updated. Relevant information, such as the current laws mentioned before (on Environment and on Food) are not posted and the link to the website of MoE is not working. The issue has been discussed with MoE staff and should be adequately addressed. The implementation of the tools and applications

developed by the UNEP/GEF BCH Project would be suitable. A recommendation is issued in that sense by the current report. As a whole, Outcome 6 can be considered partially achieved.

56. From the above analysis regarding the six Immediate Outcomes, it can be concluded that the country has steadily moved towards the achievement of the main Project Outcome “A workable and transparent National Biosafety Framework (NBF)”. All the necessary conditions have been set, yet its full achievement will require the consolidation and the practical application of the systems put in place, which did not have many concrete opportunities to be challenged and proved so far, given the early stage of GMOs development in the country. Notwithstanding these limitations, the achievement of the Outcome can be considered overall as certainly Satisfactory (S) and promising, if the strength and motivation of the key-drivers are maintained and some conditions are fulfilled, as described below and visualized in Diagram 1 that follows.
57. The Evaluation considers that the main **key-drivers** of the implementation process have been:
- the technical and methodological assistance of the Project (the National Project Coordinator/NPC and her team);
  - the NEA (MoE, Min. of Environment), particularly the Biodiversity Unit that has completely fulfilled its leading and coordinating role;
  - the strong and effective integration of the Project Team in the MoE and the motivation of the staff involved;
  - the effective guidance and supervision provided by UNEP Management Officers (Biosafety Unit).
58. In our understanding, the full achievement of the six Direct/Immediate Outcomes (particularly the last four that have only partially been achieved so far) would need the fulfilment of some **assumptions**, namely (see diagram 1):
- The National Biosafety Committee (NBC) becomes a more dynamic and inclusive institution, for a more solid institutional up-taking of Biosafety in the country;
  - Forms of technical and more flexible coordination are explored (e.g. working group, task force, technical / scientific committee,) in order to strengthen the existing coordination and to increase the responsibilities of other national stakeholders in running the Biosafety agenda;
  - Clear provisions for GMOs FFP (GMOs for Food, Feed and for Processing, under article 11 and Annex II of the CPB), are contemplated in the regulatory regime of the country, since neither the Law on Environment, nor the Law on Food are currently addressing the issue; a specific Regulation could appropriately address the issue, for instance through EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) guidance and support;
  - Civil Society organisations are given more opportunities to interact with public institutions both in formal terms (accrue participation in the NBC) and through increased opportunities of participation (e.g. MoE website, partners in initiatives, etc.);
  - The Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) page of Albania is regularly updated with all relevant information on Biosafety implementation in the country.
59. The subsequent achievement of the main Project Outcome (A workable and transparent National Biosafety Framework) requires that the MoE, now clearly empowered as the formal NCA for Biosafety in Albania, consolidates its coordination and proactive role, while the institutional uptake by the main stakeholders has to be maintained and strengthened, in view of more challenging conditions. In this process, both MoE and National Stakeholders should play a **key-driver** role. That would happen under certain **assumptions**, among which we highlight (see Diagram 1):
- Biosafety is adequately budgeted in the Medium-Term Planning of the NBSAP (Nat. Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan) 2015-2020 (further discussed under chapter 4.4, Sustainability);
  - Trained staff remains in place and operational in the respective institutions;
  - Scientific institutions are in place to conduct effective Risk Assessment and Risk Monitoring actions.

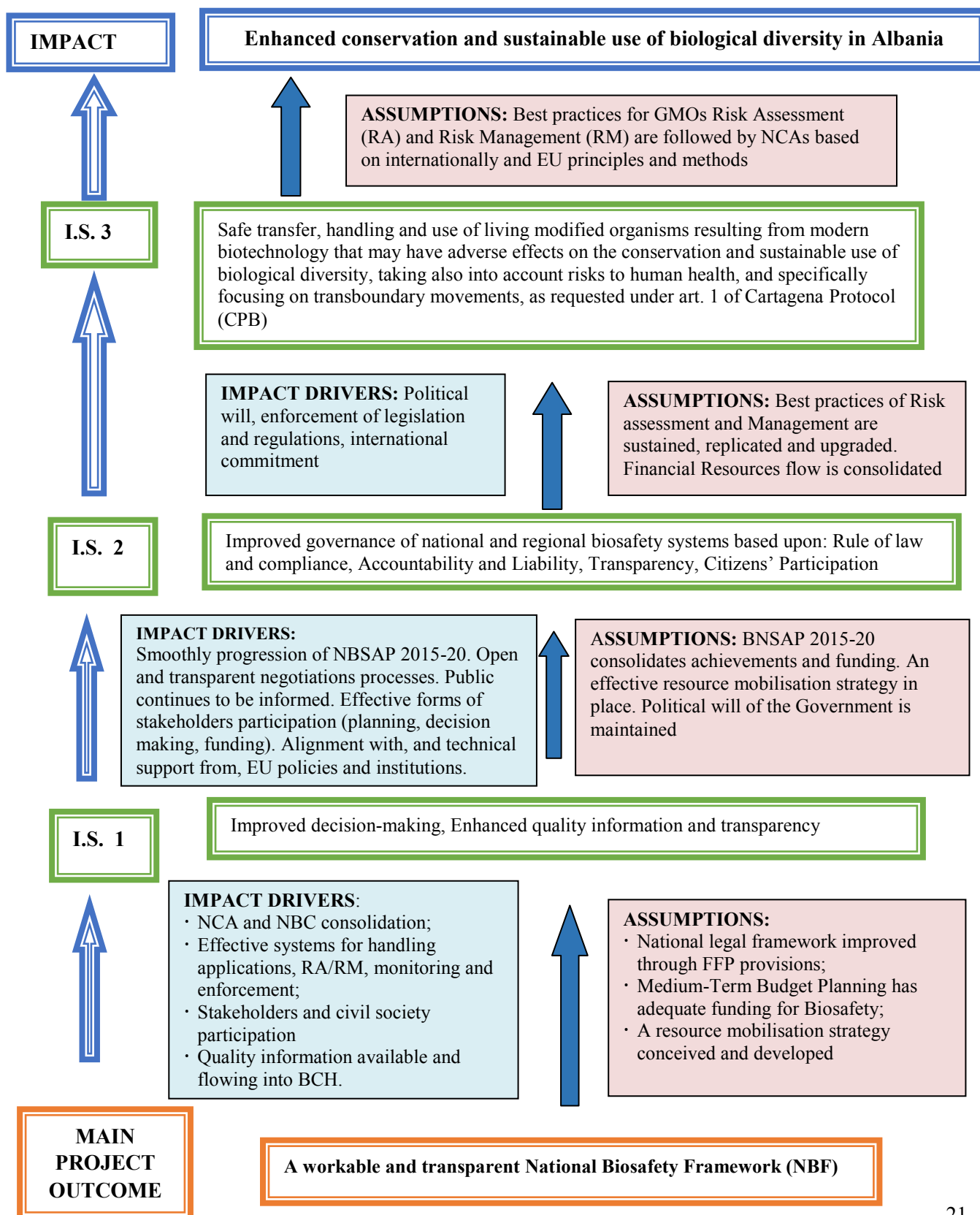
**Diagram 1: Theory of Change Project “Capacity Building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania”: From OUTPUTS TO OUTCOMES**



#### 4.3.3 *Likelihood of impact using ROtI and based on reconstructed TOC*

60. The intended impact of the project is the Global Environmental Benefit to which it contributes: the enhanced conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in Albania. The pathway from the Project Outcome (a fully operational NBF) to the intended Impact is not a straightforward process: transitional conditions (called Intermediate States) have to be fulfilled, as shown in Diagram 2, which presents our understanding of the causal logic and of the pathway from Outcome to Impact. To be observed that some of the main assumptions outlined in the previous sub-chapter and visualised in Diagram 1, if fulfilled, can become key-driving forces in the progress towards Impact.
61. Three main Intermediate States (I.S.) have been identified. The first I.S. (**I.S. 1**) “Improved decision-making processes for GMOs approval and enhanced quality information and transparency” can be achieved through NCA and NBC consolidation, improved stakeholders and civil society participation and the flowing into BCH of available quality information. That would happen under the conditions that a) the national legal framework is improved through specific provisions regarding GMOs for FFP, b) Medium-Term Budget Planning makes available adequate funding for Biosafety and c) a resource mobilisation strategy is conceived and developed.
62. Improved decision-making will lead to “Improved Governance of National/International Biosafety systems based upon: Rule of Law and Compliance, Accountability and Liability, Transparency and Citizens’ Participation” (**I.S. 2**), under the assumption that a) the political will of the Governments is not missing, b) BNSAP 2015-20 consolidates its achievements and funding and c) an effective resource mobilisation strategy is put in place by the NCA. The main impact drivers at that stage will be a) the smooth implementation of the NBSAP; b) effective forms of stakeholders participation (in planning, decision making, funding) conducive to open and transparent information flows and negotiation processes at different levels c) public continues to be informed and d) the alignment with, and technical support from, EU policies and institutions.
63. The Intermediate State 3 (**I.S. 3**) is the Objective of the Protocol itself, as stated in its art. 1: “The safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and specifically focusing on transboundary movements”. Political will, enforcement of legislation and regulations and international commitment will act as impact drivers at that level, under the main assumptions that a) the NCA’s decision-making persists based on rigorous Risk Assessment and Risk Management best practices and b) financial resources flow into Biosafety programs mechanisms is consolidated.
64. Under the main assumption that best practices for GMOs Risk Assessment (RA) and Risk Management (RM) are kept and upgraded by NCAs based on internationally and EU principles and methods, the **Project Impact** (Enhanced Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity in Albania) can be achieved.

**Diagram 2: Theory of Change Project “Capacity Building for the Development of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania”: From OUTCOME to IMPACT**



65. According to the TOR of the Evaluation, the Evaluation has to assess the likelihood of the Project to achieve the expected Impact, by using the rating scales of Table 3 and 4 that follow. Based on the analysis presented in this chapter and despite some Immediate Outcomes have only been partially achieved, the Evaluation deems that the Project deserves a rating “A”. In fact, further achievements are in progress and the allocation of responsibilities is clear after Project completion. The progress towards Intermediate States has been rated “B”, considering that sustainability measures like the NBSAP are in place, yet the process is at an initial stage. As a result, the aggregate rating is “AB”.

**Table 3. Rating scale for outcomes and progress towards ‘intermediate states’**

<b>Outcome Rating</b>	<b>Rating on progress toward Intermediate States</b>
D: The project’s intended outcomes were not delivered	D: No measures taken to move towards intermediate states.
C: The project’s intended outcomes were delivered, but were not designed to feed into a continuing process after project funding	C: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started, but have not produced results.
B: The project’s intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, but with no prior allocation of responsibilities after project funding	B: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which give no indication that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.
A: The project’s intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding.	A: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which clearly indicate that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.

66. According to the used methodology, the rating obtained is translated onto the usual six point rating scale used in all UNEP project evaluations, as follows, resulting that the Project can be considered “Highly Likely” to achieve the expected Impact.

**Table 4. ‘Overall likelihood of impact achievement’ on a six point scale.**

Highly Likely	Likely	Moderately Likely	Moderately Unlikely	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely
AA <b>AB</b> BA CA BB+ CB+ DA+ DB+	BB CB DA DB AC+ BC+	AC BC CC+ DC+	CC DC AD+ BD+	AD BD CD+ DD+	CD DD

#### 4.4 Sustainability and replication

67. The evaluation has analysed to what extent follow-up work has been initiated and how project results could be sustained and enhanced over time. Four aspects of sustainability have been addressed: a) Socio-political sustainability, b) Financial sustainability, c) Institutional sustainability, d) Environmental sustainability.

#### 4.4.1 *Socio-political sustainability*

68. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Project has given substantive steps in putting forward the Biosafety Agenda in the country at different levels and with a range of national partners: Governmental institutions, Academic world, NGOs, Schools and Youth, General Public. As a matter of fact, taking into account the baseline situation, remarkable progress has to be acknowledged. The change of government in 2013 did not minimally affect the development of the Project, well on the contrary, which is also a proof of the socio-political sustainability of the Biosafety agenda in the country.
69. The final approval of the DCM on Biosafety foreseen in early 2016 (see 4.3.2) will surely bring about increased socio-political sustainability, as well as the continuation of awareness raising and information initiatives among the general public, the youth and some relevant Civil Society organizations like those of Farmers and of Consumers. The agenda for the integration of Albania into the EU has given a substantive step in 2014, Albania being granted the official status of EU candidate. Approximation and integration of Albania to EU is surely a major element of sustainability for Biosafety, given the European interest to the issue. Guidance and technical support from EFSA could play a strategic role in that perspective. Overall, socio-political sustainability is rated L (Likely).

#### 4.4.2 *Financial sustainability*

70. As previously mentioned in the Report, Biosafety priorities are reflected in the National Environmental Strategy (NES) and, most importantly, in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2020 (NBSAP). Based on that, the Medium-Term Planning Budget will be the financial instrument that should contemplate adequate funds for Biodiversity and Biosafety. Though the mechanism is clear, it is evident that Financial Sustainability will essentially depend on the level of its funding. Some concerns may exist, due to the general slowing of economic development in the last years, which has also affected Albania. The strong commitment of the country and the donors to Biodiversity Conservation in Albania gives ground to optimism. Financial Sustainability is rated L (Likely).

#### 4.4.3 *Institutional sustainability*

71. Institutional sustainability is crucial for the progress of the results achieved so far. The current anchorage of Biosafety within the Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas of the MoE looks solid and the insertion of Biosafety priorities within the NBSAP, as described in 4.3.2, is a pivotal element of sustainability.
72. Relevant partnerships have been already put in place with other Governmental institutions, mainly the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the General Customs Directorate (GCD) and the University of Tirana. The GCD controls 13 border points (ten land borders, two sea-ports and the Tirana Airport), most of them with two land-locked countries (Macedonia and Kosovo). As a consequence, the good partnership with GCD will be essential for Biosafety institutional sustainability and effectiveness. The partnership between MoE and CGD is already positively on-going for the application of CITES.
73. As already mentioned, Biosafety Governance has to be tested under different and more demanding circumstances. The lack of provisions for GMOs FFP (see 4.3.2) in the recent Law on Food is surely an area of concern. The repartition of responsibilities between MoE and MoA deserves attention, not to jeopardise existing and most suitable synergies between Food Safety (responsibility of the Food Authority linked to the MoA) and Biosafety, under MoE jurisdiction. It is therefore important that the Ministry of Environment works closely with the Food Authority to address this issue through a bridging regulation just as other EU Countries do<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> See, for instance the case of Latvia [http://old.su.lt/bylos/mokslo\\_leidiniai/soc\\_tyrimai/2008-12/melece%20romanova.pdf](http://old.su.lt/bylos/mokslo_leidiniai/soc_tyrimai/2008-12/melece%20romanova.pdf)

74. The existing National Biosafety Committee (NBC) includes representatives of MoE, MoA, National Food Authority, Customs, Port and Airport Authorities (for a total of 7 members including the Chairperson), Academic and Research Public Institutions (4 members) and one NGO (The Organisation for Organic Food and Agriculture). A stronger participation of Civil Society Organisations and the future inclusion of Private Sector in the NBC could redress the current unbalance (see Recommendations), promote larger partnerships and contribute to Institutional Sustainability. Overall, Institutional Sustainability is rated ML (Moderately Likely).

#### 4.4.4 Environmental sustainability

75. Albania is strongly committed to the preservation of its Biodiversity, as proved by the large number of Protected Areas covering the 16% of its surface, largely supported by EU and bi-lateral programs of cooperation. The country is also active in the preservation of its Plant Genetic Resources (*in situ* and *ex situ*) through its Center for Genetic Resources (currently attached to the University of Agriculture) that maintains a Gene Banks of local varieties and produces improved *cultivars* of crops like maize, through crossbreeding of local varieties.

76. The country adopts a precautionary approach to GMOs and Biosafety. Due to the institutional anchorage of Biosafety within the Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas a strong linkage exists between Biosafety and Biodiversity Conservation, with a promising sector of organic agriculture and organic food growing. Environmental Sustainability is rated Likely (L).

#### 4.4.5 Catalytic role and replication

77. The Project has surely been a strong catalyser in the definition and implementation of the legal and institutional framework of Biosafety in the country, by specifically supporting national institutions and promoting the capacity building of a high number of human resources in governmental and academic institutions. It has equally promoted the diffusion of knowledge and complex scientific concepts to a large public through information campaigns.

78. The Project has equally represented an extraordinary opportunity for motivated individuals to be catalytic of changes in their own country, to substantively upgrade their technical and managerial capacities and to participate to activities of exchange and information at regional and international level. Overall, the catalytic role and replication is considered Highly Satisfactory (HS).

### 4.5 Efficiency

79. The Project suffered from initial delays, as showed by the intervals between GEF approval (mid 2010), UNEP approval (February 2011) and the actual start of the operations (July 2011), due to the concomitance of different administrative and procedural impediments. The first year of implementation was also slow, until a new dynamic team (Project Coordinator and Financial Assistant) was recruited in 2012 and formally took over in December 2012.

80. Since then, the Project has been run very efficiently, catching up on the initial delay and practically developing all the activities foreseen in just three years (completion due in December 2015), instead of the four years initially planned. UNEP and Government disbursements have also been timely and the project team has been regularly paid through Government's contribution. As a whole, after the initial delay, Project Efficiency has been rated Highly Satisfactory (HS).



## 4.6 Factors affecting performance

### 4.6.1 *Preparation and readiness*

81. The quality of project design in the Project Document was assessed in the Inception Report, according to UNEP format and scoring criteria. Despite scoring quite satisfactorily in the relevant section of Intended Results and Causality, the Project Design quality was overall considered somewhat poor. Relevant aspects like Sustainability, Risk identification, Governance and Management did not receive a proper treatment in the ProDoc and the chapter on stakeholders analysis and participation was excessively generic. Despite the Project being conceived to complete the external support already given for the development of the NBF and of BCH, the ProDoc did not focus on that issue.
82. At the beginning of 2013 the Project organised and implemented an Inception Workshop with a very high participation (62 participants) from different public institutions (Ministry of Environment, National Environmental Agency, Institute of Public Health, General Directorate of Customs, regional food control departments and representatives of ports and airports authorities) and the Faculty of Natural Sciences of Tirana. The Financial Management Officer of UNEP Biosafety Unit was also present. At the issue of the workshop, the project work plan and respective budget lines were reviewed and updated in February 2013.

### 4.6.2 *Project implementation and management*

83. The mechanisms of project implementation have followed those outlined in the project document. The guiding/oversight role of the MoE (NCA and also NEA of the Project) has been fulfilled, while the Project Team has been coordinating activities' implementation and the financial management. The Project Team has been directly paid through Government's contribution at the same level of the corresponding Ministry's staff and has been located in the Biodiversity Unit's office, which has been a positive element of integration between the Project team and the MoE staff.
84. Overall, project implementation has not presented major constraints and the triangulation between NEA (MoE), UNEP and Project Team has been adequately and efficiently managed. Project implementation and management is considered Highly Satisfactory (S).

### 4.6.3 *Stakeholder participation and public awareness*

85. A Project Standing (Steering) Committee has been put in place and has been quite active, holding six meetings during the project life-time. Meanwhile, a National Biosafety Committee (NBC) has been officially created in July 2013 by Ministerial Order, virtually with the same membership of the Project Committee (see 4.4.3) and with overall functions of strategic guidance and coordination of Biosafety in the country. With the termination of the Project, possible areas of duplication and overlapping between the two bodies will disappear and the new NBC (some members have changed due to the Government's change in 2013) is expected to gain dynamics to fulfil its guidance and coordination role.
86. Based on the nature of the NBC it may be useful to have technical sub committee(s) or experts' working groups who can provide technical advice to facilitate the decision making work of the Committee.
87. The unbalanced composition of the NBC has already been discussed under 4.4.3 (Inst. Sustainability) and the increased participation of Civil Society (and Private Sector) within the Committee will certainly benefit its dynamic functioning. Moreover, there is certainly room for creating more opportunities of partnerships with national NGOs around specific projects and initiatives. The shortcomings found in BCH's functioning have already been discussed (see 4.3.2). Overall, stakeholders participation can be rated Moderately Satisfactory (MS).

#### 4.6.4 *Country ownership and driven-ness*

88. Country ownership is surely strong and made effective through the leading role of the MoE, as previously explained under Sustainability (4.4.3). The existing legal and policy framework is a proof of that, particularly the BNSAP. The NBC has still to prove its effectiveness, as well as the national systems for handling applications and carrying out GMOs monitoring and enforcement, but the institutional instruments are there and the country is surely prepared and willing to drive the process. Overall, country ownership is strong, rated Highly Satisfactory (HS).

#### 4.6.5 *Financial planning and management*

89. As previously remarked under the chapter on Efficiency (chapter 4.5), the Project has been able to efficiently and timely execute the planned activities. That has been possible also due to application of proper standards of transparency and clarity in the financial planning, management and control. We can mention:

- The appropriate use of the ANUBIS platform, allowing quarterly financial reporting from the Project to UNEP and subsequent replenishment by UNEP, as well as the aggregate financial statement at any point in time (updated to the end of the previous trimester);
- The regular and fast disbursement from UNEP after the Project requests (five instalments so far, lacking the final one, due to the problems experienced in 2015 by the new UN enterprise resource system , UMOJA);
- The regular contribution of the Government (MoE), both in kind and in cash, monthly, assuring the payment of the Project team's salaries;
- The Financial Audit carried out at the end of 2013, which certified the regularity of financial management.

90. By comparing financial planning with actual project costs, the rate of expenditures (at 30/09/2015) has been nearly 90% (97% of the funds actually received), due to the delay in delivery the last instalment (see previous paragraph), not yet received by the Project. The delay, in fact, is causing the postponement of the last training activities of the Project (see Recommendations).

91. Five budget revisions have been approved to take into account the shift in the legal framework and other minor changes. Co-financing of the Government has materialised according to the originally planned (rate of delivery at 83% until September 2015). The table in Annex 5 summaries co-finance information and a statement of project expenditure. Notwithstanding the initial UNEP delay, Financial planning and management scores Highly Satisfactory (HS).

#### 4.6.6 *UNEP supervision and backstopping*

92. National stakeholders consider UNEP supervision and backstopping of high quality, for the following reasons:

- The technical and administrative backstopping of the Biosafety Unit has been constant and effective, through prompt replies and advise (skype and email);
- The support received through the field missions of UNEP Fund Management Officer during the Inception Workshop (January 2013);
- The organization of regional meetings for the Projects' Teams in Istanbul/Turkey (2011), Amman/Jordan (2013) and Tirana/Albania (2015), which are considered a valuable moment of exchange, horizontal learning and technical and administrative updating.

93. Overall, UNEP supervision and backstopping is rated Highly Satisfactory (HS).

#### 4.6.7 *Monitoring and evaluation*

94. The quality of the logical framework of the Project was considered quite satisfactory in the assessment of the Project Design presented in the Inception Report. The framework contains all the standard

elements (Outcomes and Outputs, Objectively Verifiable Indicators, Means of Verification Important Assumptions), though with some evident shortcomings, like the lack of quantification of some of the Outputs (amended through the Project Work Plan).

95. The ProDoc contemplates a Budget Table that specifies the yearly and total amount for Monitoring and Evaluation and also for Audits, which is considered adequate. Budget provisions exist both for Mid-term and Terminal Evaluation. They have both materialised through the mission of the UNEP FMO (2013) and the current Terminal Evaluation.
96. The Project team considers that the UNEP/GEF Monitoring system in place (progress reports) has been useful and effective in following Project’s implementation. Overall, the Monitoring and Evaluation score is Highly Satisfactory (HS).

#### 4.7 Complementarity with UNEP strategies and programmes

97. As discussed under 4.1.2, the Project relates to Sub-Programme Environmental Governance in PoW 2010-11, particularly its Expected Accomplishment (EA) b : “The capacity of States to implement their environmental obligations and achieve their environmental priority goals, targets and objectives through strengthened laws and institutions is enhanced”. More specifically, Project’s expected results are related to Outputs 2 and 3 of EA b, as showed in the following comparative table:

Expected Accomplishment b, Output 2	Project contribution (how)
Legal and policy instruments are developed and applied to achieve synergy between national and international environment and development goals	Through the inclusion of Biosafety in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), in the National Environmental Strategy and in the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI)
Expected Accomplishment b, Output 3	Project contribution (how)
Countries’ legislative and judicial capacity to implement their international environmental obligations is enhanced through implementation of policy tools:  ... ...The capacities of countries in risk assessment and management of modern biotechnology products under the biosafety programme is enhanced...  ...Capacity-building and support are provided to developing country Parties to enable their participation in the Cartagena Protocol’s Biosafety Clearing House....	Through the setting of Biosafety Policy and Biosafety legal framework in Albania (Environmental Law with Biosafety provisions, technical guidelines)  Through publication of Guidelines on Risk Assessment and Risk Monitoring, training of national human resources and upgrading of national laboratory  Through the identification of the BCH National Focal Point and the development of the BCH (to be improved)

98. The Project maintains its alignment to PoW 2014-15, regarding Sub-programme Environmental Governance, as showed in the comparative table here below:

Expected Accomplishment (EA) b	Project contribution (how)
“The capacity of countries to develop and enforce laws and strengthen institutions to achieve internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals and comply with related obligations is enhanced....	Through the setting of Biosafety Policy and the Biosafety legal framework in Albania, mainly through Environmental Law with Biosafety provisions, technical guidelines, Biosafety institutions’ empowerment and strengthening, capacity building.

<p>...a particular focus will be placed on supporting efforts of Governments to achieve internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals through strengthened law and institutions.”</p>	<p>By effectively contributing to the process of Albania’s approximation and integration into the European directives on Biosafety and through country’s meaningful participation in the fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law, known as the Montevideo Programme IV</p>
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99. Given its focus on Capacity Building and, to some extent, on Technology Support (for instance training in Risk Assessment, Risk Monitoring, Laboratory upgrading) the Project is surely aligned with Bali Strategic Plan (BSP). Actually, the project has been active in addressing many of the cross-cutting issues listed in Section D of the Plan, such as the Strengthening of national institutions, the Development of national law and regulations and the Compliance with obligations under multilateral environmental agreements. Gender issues were not specifically addressed by the Project.

## 5 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

100. The UNEP-GEF funded Project “Capacity Building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania” has successfully supported the country in enhancing the national capacities to implement the National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF). In accordance with national priorities and needs, the Project has contributed to the elaboration of the specific provisions on Biosafety contained in the national Law on Environment Protection (approved in 2011 and entered into force in January 2013) and to specifically address the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment by a Government Decree, namely a Decision of the Council of the Ministries (DCM), which has been extensively discussed among the line-ministries and is currently ready to be approved and published in the Official Journal.
101. Regarding the overall Biosafety legal framework in the country, the evaluation has remarked that clear provisions for GMOs FFP (GMOs for Food, Feed and for Processing, under article 11 of the CPB and its Annex II), are not expressly contemplated neither in the Law on Environment (which only address the deliberate release into the environment), nor in the Law on Food recently entered into force (2013), the application of which falls under the responsibility of the National Food Authority. This is an area of concern that needs to be addressed, probably through a specific Regulation. It is therefore important that the Ministry of Environment works closely with the National Food Authority to address this issue through a bridging regulation, just as other EU Countries do (e.g. Latvia, see footnote 10).
102. The Project has also actively supported relevant actions of training and capacity building (three Guidelines produced and several workshops) and has largely contributed to the consolidation of the National Competent Authority (NCA), the Ministry of Environment. A positive coordination exists with other main Biosafety stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the General Customs Directorate (GCD), though fully operational systems for handling applications, Risk Assessment and Risk Management, Monitoring and Enforcement have yet to be proved effective when challenged by GMOs applications and development in the country.
103. The National Biosafety Committee (NBC) has been formally established by Ministerial Order (2013), but its structure is unbalanced, with just one representative of Civil Society out of 12 members and no representatives from the Private Sector. The NBC, too, has to prove more effective and dynamic in responding to more challenging situations. In that case, forms of technical and more flexible coordination (e.g. working group, task force) will possibly have to be deployed in order to support the NBC in its pivotal role of strategic guidance and decision-making, in all aspects of GMOs management (see § 101, here above).

104. Public awareness and participation has surely been addressed by the Project through the setting of a comprehensive “Guidance for public awareness”, which has oriented several awareness raising activities (workshops, meetings, posters, etc.) targeting a diversified public (technical staff, students, NGOs). Building on that, the evaluation judges that a more active participation of Civil Society could benefit the implementation of biosafety agenda in the country, by contemplating a more significant presence of Civil Society organisations in the NBC and other innovative forms of exchange and partnership between the MoE and national NGOs. The updating of the BCH is also an impellent need (see Outcome 6 in 4.3.2).
105. From all the above, the Evaluation concludes that the country has steadily and positively moved in the implementation of a workable and transparent National Biosafety Framework (NBF). Outstanding results have been achieved so far and there is a promising setting of factors that can contribute to socio-political and institutional sustainability, while the degree of financial sustainability will depend on the level of funding attributed to Biosafety in the Medium-Term Budget Planning of the NBSAP 2015-2020.
106. As requested by the TOR of the Evaluation, the overall ratings table for the different evaluation criteria is presented hereafter. The country has the capacity and the willingness to effectively address the issues still in need of improvement, pointed out in the present report, and the Project can overall be rated Highly Satisfactory (HS).

Criteria	Summary Assessment	Rating
<b>A. Strategic relevance</b>	The Project confirms all its relevance in addressing challenging and crucial issues and needs in the area of biodiversity’s sustainable use, in achieving internationally agreed environmental objectives and goals, in contributing to fulfil UNEP’s mandate and policy, as well as GEF priorities and strategies. It is also relevant to support the country in its integration to the EU (see 4.1)	<b>HS</b>
<b>B. Achievement of outputs</b>	The Evaluation concludes that virtually all main Outputs have been successfully delivered (see Table 1 in 4.2)	<b>HS</b>
<b>C. Effectiveness: Attainment of project objectives and results</b>	The Project has moved steadily towards the achievement of all its expected Outcomes. Overall the NBF is being implemented and responds to the current needs of the country, though it has to be proved under more challenging situations (no GMOs Applications so far in Albania).	<b>S</b>
1. Achievement of direct outcomes	They have been attained at a variable extent, some of them (e.g. Regulatory Regime, Administrative System, Public Participation) needing the fulfilment of some conditions / assumptions not yet completely in place. Overall, fully or partially achieved, but, at any rate, satisfactorily in progress. (see 4.3.2, Diagram 1)	<b>S</b>
2. Likelihood of impact	Highly likely to occur, particularly considering the priority that the country is giving to Biodiversity conservation and its progressive integration into EU. (see 4.3.3, Diagram 2)	<b>HL</b>
<b>D. Sustainability and replication</b>	Sustainability is overall likely to occur with some feasible improvements on the Institutional Framework	<b>L</b>
1. Financial	The insertion of Biosafety within the NBSAP 2015-20 provides elements of optimism, since Biosafety can be included in the Medium-Term Budget Planning of Min. of Finance. Despite the budget assigned to Biosafety in the future cannot currently be foreseen, there are reasons for optimism, view the strong commitment of the country to Biodiversity Conservation (see 4.4.2)	<b>L</b>
2. Socio-political	Substantive steps have been taken in putting forward the Biosafety	<b>L</b>

	Agenda at different levels and with a range of national partners. Taking into account the baseline situation, remarkable progress has to be acknowledged. The final approval of the DCM on Biosafety (see 4.3.2) will surely bring about increased socio-political sustainability. The agenda for the integration of Albania into the EU has also given a substantive step in 2014, when Albania has been granted the official status of EU candidate (see 4.4.1)	
3. Institutional framework	Relevant partnerships have been established, particularly with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the General Customs Directorate (GCD) and the University of Tirana. Nevertheless, Biosafety Governance has to be tested under different and more demanding circumstances. The lack of provisions for GMOs FFP in the recent Law on Food is an area of concern. The repartition of responsibilities between MoE and MoA deserves attention. The existing National Biosafety Committee (NBC) is in need of a stronger participation of Civil Society in the NBC (see 4.4.3).	<b>ML</b>
4. Environmental	Solid insertion of Biosafety in the Biodiversity programs of the country, Precautionary Principle well reflected. (see 4.4.4)	<b>L</b>
5. Catalytic role and replication	The Project has surely been a strong catalyser in the definition and implementation of the legal and institutional framework of Biosafety in the country, through capacity building and public awareness (see 4.4.5)	<b>HS</b>
<b>E. Efficiency</b>	All planned activities completed and outputs delivered in the established time-frame. (see 4.5)	<b>HS</b>
<b>F. Factors affecting project performance</b>		
1. Preparation and readiness	The Project Document shows shortcomings in relevant aspects like Sustainability, Risk identification, Governance & Management and Stakeholder analysis and participation. (see 4.6.1)	<b>MU</b>
2. Project implementation and management	Overall, project implementation has not presented major constraints and the triangulation between NEA (MoE), UNEP and Project Team has been adequately and efficiently managed. (see 4.6.2)	<b>HS</b>
3. Stakeholders participation and public awareness	A Project Standing (Steering) Committee has been put in place and has been quite active. The National Biosafety Committee (NBC) has been officially created in July 2013 but should become more dynamic to fulfil its guidance and coordination role. Unbalanced composition of the NBC with room for increased participation and partnership with Civil Society representatives. Shortcomings found in BCH's functioning (see 4.3.2).	<b>MS</b>
4. Country ownership and driven-ness	Country ownership is surely strong and an undeniable factor of sustainability. (see 4.6.4)	<b>HS</b>
5. Financial planning and management	Proper standards of transparency and clarity have been applied in the financial planning, management and control. Good use of financial monitoring tools (ANUBIS, etc.). Rate of expenditure and Co-financing closed to 100%. (see 4.6.5)	<b>HS</b>
6. UNEP supervision and backstopping	High quality, through constant coaching, in-country mission, NPC meetings (see 4.6.6)	<b>HS</b>
7. Monitoring and evaluation	Monitoring properly planned and executed, Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation planned and executed (see 4.6.7)	<b>HS</b>
a. M&E Design	Project Design quite satisfactory, with certain shortcomings (quantification of outputs) that have been overcome in the Work	<b>HS</b>

	Plans	
b. Budgeting and funding for M&E activities	Appropriate	<b>HS</b>
c. M&E Plan Implementation	See answer 7	<b>HS</b>
<b>Overall project rating</b>	Despite some challenges and everything considered, particularly the baseline situation, the Project has been surely successful	<b>HS</b>

## 5.2 Lessons Learned

107. The full integration of the Project Team in the Biodiversity Unit of the MoE has been a major key-driver for the achievement of the results and this is an extremely important and positive lesson from the Project. The team has picked excellent skills, which will be useful not only for future challenges in Biosafety agenda, but also for other GEF projects in Albania.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the main Findings and Conclusions, the evaluation mission's recommendations are the following:

### Recommendation 1: to UNEP

#### **Findings / Conclusions (4.6.5)**

Disbursement from UNEP to the Project have constantly been regular and fast. However, due to the problems experienced in 2015 by 2015 by the new UN enterprise resource system (UMOJA) and despite all efforts made by the Biosafety Unit at UNEP, the final instalment has not yet materialised, hampering the implementation of the last training already planned and the full completion of all due closure activities of the Project (expected the 02/12/2015). The rate of expenditures (at 30/09/2015) has been nearly 90% (97% of the funds actually received).

#### **Recommendation 1:**

In order to fully complete the planned activities and the imminent termination of the Project (02/12/2015) it is strongly recommended to proceed with the urgent transfer to the Project of the last instalment foreseen.

108. Recommendation 2: to MoE

#### **Findings / Conclusions (4.4.3, 4.6.3 and Conclusion §103)**

The National Biosafety Committee (NBC) has been formally established by Ministerial Order (2013), but its structure is unbalanced, with just one representative of Civil Society out of 12 members and no members from the Private Sector. The increased participation of Civil Society and Private Sector within the Committee will certainly benefit its dynamic functioning and open the ground for more opportunities of partnerships around specific projects and initiatives.

#### **Recommendation 2:**

It is recommended to address the currently unbalanced composition of the NBC by increasing the representation of Civil Society in the Committee and to foster the implementation of joint initiatives between the MoE and Civil Society organisations. It is equally recommended to take in consideration the enlargement of NBC membership to the Private Sector, too.

109. Recommendation 3: to MoE, to the Government and to UNEP

#### **Findings / Conclusions (4.3.2 § 51, 4.4.3 § 73 and Conclusion § 101)**

The overall Biosafety legal framework in the country lacks clear, specific provisions for GMOs FFP (GMOs for Food, Feed and for Processing, under article 11 and Annex II of the CPB), not expressly contemplated neither in the Law on Environment (which only address the deliberate release into the environment), nor in the Law on Food recently entered into force (2013), the application of which falls under the responsibility of the National Food Authority. This is an area of concern that needs to be addressed, probably through a specific

Regulation. It is therefore important that the Ministry of Environment works closely with the National Food Authority to address this issue through a bridging regulation, just as other EU Countries do (e.g. Latvia).

**Recommendation 3:**

It is recommended to address the lack of explicit provision for GMOs FFP (GMOs for Food, Feed and for Processing, under article 11 of the CPB) through appropriate normative instruments (e.g. specific Regulation).

110. Recommendation 4: to MoE and UNEP

**Findings / Conclusions (4.3.2 § 55 and Conclusion §104)**

Albania's page in the BCH is not updated and functional. Relevant information, such as the current Law on Environment Protection (in force since 2013) is not posted and the link to the website of the MoE is not working. The updating of the BCH, required under art.20 of the CPB, is an impellent need.

**Recommendation 4:**

It is recommended to update the information present in the BCH and to take appropriate measures to make the BCH fully operational, taking into account the tools and applications implemented through the UNEP/GEF BCH Project.



## **Annexes**

1. Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the evaluators
2. Evaluation ToR (without annexes)
3. List of people met
4. Bibliography
5. Summary co-finance information and a statement of project expenditure by activity
6. Brief CV of the consultant

**ANNEXE 1**

**Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the evaluators**

**NA**

TERMS OF REFERENCE<sup>11</sup>**Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF projects**

- Capacity building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania
- Capacity Building for the Development of the National Biosafety Framework of Macedonia
- Support for Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework for Egypt

## 1. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

### (a) Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

<b>UNEP PIMS ID:</b>		<b>IMIS number:</b>	GFL/2328-2716-4B76 GFL/2328-2716-4954 egypt GFL/2328-2716-4B91 macedonia
<b>Sub-programme:</b>	Environmental governance <sup>12</sup>	<b>Expected Accomplishment(s):</b>	
<b>UNEP approval date:</b>	03/02/2011 27/04/2011 30/10/2006	<b>PoW Output(s):</b>	
<b>GEF project ID:</b>	3895 4103 2824	<b>Project Type:</b>	MSP
<b>GEF OP #:</b>	Biodiversity 5 (for Egypt, prior to 2007)	<b>Focal Area(s):</b>	SP6
<b>GEF approval date:</b>	27/05/2010 09/11/2010	<b>GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:</b>	SO3
<b>Expected Start Date:</b>	November 2010 February 2011 October 2006	<b>Actual start date:</b>	25/07/2011 28/06/2011 01/07/2007
<b>Planned completion date:</b>	02/05/2015 27/08/2014 29/10/2010	<b>Actual completion date:</b>	02/12/2015 26/01/2015 29/09/2015
<b>Planned project budget at approval:</b>	863,800 USD 643,000 USD 2,297,100 USD	<b>Total expenditures reported as of [date]:</b>	
<b>GEF Allocation:</b>	557,200 USD 407,000 USD 908,100 USD	<b>GEF grant expenditures reported as of [date]:</b>	499,746.00 134,161.02 475,920.37

<sup>11</sup> TOR template version of February 11 2015

Legend: yellow=GEF only; green=UNEP only; purple=MTE only; blue=TE only; red=Info to be added

<sup>12</sup> Not specified for Egypt as it was a 2006 project, but stated in the other two ProDocs

<b>PDF GEF cost:</b>		<b>PDF co-financing:</b>	
<b>Expected MSP co-financing:</b>	306,600 USD 236,000 USD 1,389,000 USD	<b>Secured MSP co-financing:</b>	
<b>First Disbursement:</b>	27/07/2011 11/07/2011 02/07/2007	<b>Date of financial closure:</b>	tbc
<b>No. of revisions:</b>	5 4 13	<b>Date of last revision:</b>	16/04/2015 26/08/2014 01/01/2015
<b>Date of last Steering Committee meeting:</b>			
<b>Mid-term review/ evaluation (planned date):</b>	September 2013 January 2013	<b>Mid-term review/ evaluation (actual date):</b>	20/10/2009 (E)
<b>Terminal Evaluation (actual date):</b>	August – November 2015		

**(b) Projects rationale**

**Albania** - At the time of the preparation of the project document, Albania was importing foods and seeds mainly from European countries, especially from neighboring ones that did not produce LMOs or have restrictions towards LMOs. However, the extent to which unregulated or unauthorised LMOs could have been present in seed and foodstuffs entering Albania was unknown. Being a small country and having a noticeably high biodiversity, Albania intended to put in place all necessary means to protect its biodiversity. Additionally, Albania has been a party to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety since 2005 and thus has international obligations to put in place a regulatory system that ensures, as much as possible, the safe use of the products of modern biotechnology, especially in relation to transboundary movements. At the time of project development, Albania lacked the capacity to either detect or regulate movements of LMOs into or use within the country. At the time of approval of this project, the draft law on biosafety prepared during the previous biosafety project was still going through the process of consultation with main stakeholders and public representatives, as well as review by the scientific and international community.

This implementation project intended to help Albania put in place a stand-alone biosafety policy, a completed regulatory regime on biosafety, including the approved draft law, and establish mechanisms for risk assessment and management by putting in place a competent national authority and respective institutions. It also intended to create a sustainable mechanism to fulfill obligations of the Cartagena Protocol regarding public awareness and information, specifically through the use of the BCH. In addition, the setting up of a laboratory on LMO detection, as well as training of key experts on LMO expertise, was meant to be one of the activities that would have the most impact on the setting up of a functional infrastructure to deal with LMO's.

**Macedonia** – Even though Macedonia's land area is relatively small, it exhibits a great biodiversity and agricultural varieties and is not exempt from the global, regional and national processes which cause the loss of biodiversity. The inclusion of modern biotechnology in the overall national development policy has required the country to agree on measures that ensure the safe handling and use of LMOs.

The Republic of Macedonia ratified the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in 2005. However, after signing the CPB, Macedonia lacked any legislative, administrative, institutional and technical procedures on biosafety and would not be able to take any decisions on use of modern biotechnology, even for a field trial. The previous biosafety project developed a policy, a regulatory regime, a system to handle notifications of requests for authorisations, mechanisms for monitoring and enforcement and for promoting public awareness. A draft law on GMOs was also prepared. This project intended to finalise the NBF and to operationalize it.

**Egypt** - Egypt hosts one of the oldest agricultural communities in the world and is among the centres of origin/diversity for important crop plants. In its quest for increasing food production, overcoming significant constraints of agricultural productivity and releasing pressure on natural ecosystems, the country embarked on the development and application of relevant biotechnologies as well as acquisition of biotechnologies and biotechnology products developed elsewhere.

A Law was formulated under the GEF-funded enabling activity "National Biosafety Framework for Egypt" in 1999. The Draft Biosafety Law sets out basic rules as well as implementing structures and broad outlines of procedures in relation to LMOs, details of which will be elaborated in Executive Directive Regulations to be decreed by the Prime Minister. The Draft Biosafety Law sets out basic rules as well as implementing structures and broad outlines of procedures in relation to LMOs. Egypt subsequently ratified the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in December 2003 and was in need to develop a workable and transparent biosafety framework to comply with international standards. This project intended to support the establishment of a fully functional biosafety framework.

### (c) Project objectives and components

**7. Albania:** This project has the objective to complete the development, and prepare for implementation of the National Biosafety Framework in line with national priorities and obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The project will contribute to the finalisation of the biosafety policy, the elaboration of the regulatory regime, the completion and pilot testing of the administrative system and put in place systems for monitoring and enforcement, as well as raising public awareness of biosafety and improving public participation in biosafety decision-making.

**Macedonia:** This project had the objective to build capacity to Macedonia for the development of a National Biosafety Framework for the safe use of modern biotechnology in line with international obligations, including the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

**Egypt:** The project objective was that by 2009 (then postponed to 2011, 2014 and now 2015) Egypt has a workable and transparent national biosafety framework, in line with its national development priorities and international obligations. In Albania, the project is structured around 6 components (plus monitoring and evaluation), in Egypt the project comprises 4 outcomes and in Macedonia the projects has 5 components. The following tables summarise the structures of the three projects

**Table 2 – Projects components/outcomes and outputs – Albania**

Project component	Outputs
Stocktaking Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A stocktaking report which analyses the current status of biotechnology and biosafety in Albania, strengths and weaknesses in existing capacities is conducted</li> </ul>
Integration and incorporation of biosafety into national plans and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A stand-alone biosafety policy is developed with the help and guidance of a multisectorial working group, published and distributed</li> <li>Biosafety priorities deriving from the newly developed biosafety policy are integrated into other national policies, i.e. National Environmental Strategy, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan , Agricultural Development Strategy, National Strategy for Development and Integration</li> <li>Existing capacities and gaps identified through the stocktaking assessment are addressed by the biosafety policy</li> </ul>
A full regulatory regime for biosafety is designed and approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft law is finalized and approved by the Parliament</li> <li>Secondary legislation prepared, amended and discussed through stakeholders representatives and approved</li> </ul>
Consolidation of a functional national system for handling requests, perform risk assessment, decision-making, perform administrative tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The competent national authority for LMO's, the National Biosafety Committee (or other as defined by regulations) is created and is functional</li> <li>Creation of technical guidelines for handling of requests (including Risk Assessment/Risk Management guidelines)</li> <li>Organization of national and international training workshops for immediate stakeholders on RA/RM, decision-making regarding LMO's, and handling administrative tasks</li> <li>Creating the necessary infrastructure and facilitating the equipping, set up and certification of a LMO laboratory which will enable the fulfillment of obligations of CPB in regards to handling requests and performing risk assessment and management</li> </ul>
Monitoring and enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of mechanisms for sectorial monitoring, enforcement and emergency responses.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical guidelines for monitoring developed</li> <li>• Emergency response plans established</li> </ul>
Public awareness and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of several workshops on different issues, such as legislative framework on LMO's, RA/RM, law enforcement, monitoring and emergency response</li> <li>• Defining the best means to involve wider stakeholder representatives in biosafety issues, through the preparation of a public awareness guidance document</li> <li>• Identify responsible government body to serve as a structure to promote public participation in decision-making, through receiving comments, complaints, etc.</li> <li>• Enable the use of national BCH and continuous update on LMO's for transport and release on the market.</li> </ul>

**Table 3 – Projects outcomes and outputs – Egypt**

Project outcome	Outputs
Egypt has a fully functional and responsive regulatory regime in line with CP and national needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of the status of relevant existing laws and regulations, research and trials and release of LMOs and products thereof in Egypt carried out;</li> <li>• Legal translation of the Biosafety Law into English carried out;</li> <li>• One four-day workshop organised for 24 technical, administrative and legal experts to examine the Biosafety Law and provide draft Executive Directive Regulations based on an outline of options;</li> <li>• One four-day consultative workshop carried out for 25 government stakeholders (representatives of the nine ministries involved in biosafety, legal experts) to discuss the first draft Executive Directive Regulations of the Biosafety Law and the revision of the existing ministerial decrees;</li> <li>• One four day-workshop organised for 25 legal, technical and trade specialists, legislators, managers and administrators to discuss, advise and provide inputs to the second draft Executive Directive Regulations and its administrative structure;</li> <li>• Finalisation of the Executive Directive Regulations and its administrative structure and the revision to the existing ministerial decrees relating to biosafety for presentation to Prime Minister for approval and translation into English;</li> <li>• Four day training workshop carried out for 24 legal officers/experts on the application and implementation of the biosafety law and the executive directive regulations;</li> <li>• Analysis on the legal steps to be taken to regulate the interaction of the Biosafety Law with the contained use and confined release of potentially hazardous genetically modified related organisms is carried out and steps for legal actions indicated.</li> </ul>
Egypt has a functional national system for handling request for permits for LMOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A five-day technical workshop for 8 specialists carried out to draft and finalise implementation procedures for risk assessment and risk management for LMOs organised; technical guidelines on methodologies for RA/RM protocols drafted and published; an internal “Manual on procedures for handling requests of LMOs in Egypt prepared;</li> <li>• Two five-day training courses organised for 30 participants/course (members of the NBC, Ministries, including representatives of civil society and private sector) on handling requests for permits, including RA/RM;</li> <li>• Two five-day training courses organised for 30 administrative officers/course from the biosafety office and relevant Ministries, on the administrative processing related to the handling of requests (including administrative aspects related to monitoring and inspections, a training manual is published)</li> </ul>
Egypt has a functional national system for “follow-up”, namely monitoring of environmental effects and inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manual on procedures/ methodologies for monitoring of environmental effects and inspections prepared finalised and published;</li> <li>• Survey of existing facilities at universities and research centres for designation of operational reference laboratories carried out; Criteria/procedure for the selection and certification of two reference laboratories established; additional equipment purchased for the laboratories certified for LMOs detection,</li> </ul>

	<p>including post-release monitoring and enforcement, a training guide for LMOs detection in laboratories, including sampling and analysis drafted finalised and published;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two senior scientist trained for 10 days at a well established laboratory in procedures for analysis and detection;</li> <li>• Two training programs (2 weeks each) for 10 selected staff of the two reference laboratories in LMO detection carried out;</li> <li>• A five-day training course organised for 40 custom officials and inspectors on LMOs investigation and inspection techniques; a guide for legal personnel on enforcement, settlement of disputes and handling of court cases is produced;</li> <li>• Two - day training workshops for 8 selected judges held.</li> </ul>
Egypt has a functional national system for public awareness, education, participation and access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public education and involvement plan prepared and approved;</li> <li>• Materials on biosafety prepared and disseminated;</li> <li>• The biosafety committee web site set up and data entry protocols formulated and operational;</li> <li>• Two two-day information workshops organised for 40 local administrators on public awareness education and involvement in biosafety;</li> <li>• Two one-day workshops organised for 35 participants, including parliamentarians, media and NGO representatives on the Legislation and its implementing Directives.</li> </ul>

**Table 4 – Projects components, outcomes and outputs – Macedonia**

Project component	Outcomes	Outputs
Stocktaking report	The project design and execution fills gaps and completes the NBF thus allowing decisions on the safe use of modern biotechnology to be taken in line with CBP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A stocktaking assessment which analyses the current status of biotechnology and biosafety in Macedonia, in order to improve project design and targeting of project activities.</li> <li>• Amended national policies connencted to biosafety and prepared biosafety policy/strategy</li> </ul>
Regulatory regime	Legislative system for risk assessment/ risk management, handling of LMO applications in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biosafety regulations approved Competent authorities (CA) and Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) mandated</li> </ul>
Handling requests for authorization (including administrative processing for risk assessment and informed decision-making)	Safe use of modern biotechnology is possible through full compliance of Macedonian biosafety legislation with the CPB and the corresponding regulations of the EU, administrative system for handling of applications, RA/RM is in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines, methodologies and manuals on risk assessment and risk management prepared</li> <li>• Training on procedures for risk assessment and risk management</li> <li>• Internet portal functional for data collection, input and analysis for risk management and risk communication purposes.</li> <li>• National procedures required in order to use the Biosafety Clearing- House Mechanism and provide information to the Biosafety Clearing House in force</li> </ul>
Follow-up mechanisms (monitoring of environmental effects and enforcement: control and inspections)	Macedonia has public confidence in biosafety regulatory system enhanced due to effective monitoring and surveillance of intentional and non-intentional LMO presence and use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laboratory equipment purchased and reference laboratories equipped to carry out LMO detection and monitoring</li> <li>• Monitoring and inspection system for LMOs established, human resources for monitoring, inspections, border controls, compliance to</li> <li>• Biosafety Law and the Protocol and emergency response improved</li> <li>• Guidelines, methodologies and manuals on monitoring, inspections and</li> </ul>

		<p>emergency response prepared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration system with unique identifiers to trace back LMOs established</li> </ul>
Public participation and awareness	Macedonia has a functional system for public awareness and participation established for biosafety such that the level of public awareness on biosafety and participation in implementation of NBFis improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public awareness action plan of NBF updated</li> <li>• National BCH strengthened</li> <li>• Increased raising public awareness through newsletters, videos, brochures, website and ensuring that the public are consulted for their views.</li> <li>• Best practices and lessons learnt disseminated.</li> </ul>

Source: project documents

### (d) Executing Arrangements

The **Implementing Agency** for the three projects was the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In this capacity, UNEP had overall responsibility for the implementation of the projects, project oversight, technical support and co-ordination with other GEF projects.

In Albania, the executing agency was the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, in Egypt, the Egyptian Environment Affairs Agency, part of the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs, in Macedonia, the Agency of Environment of the Ministry of Environment and Physical planning. In Albania, the project was implemented through UNDP Albania, which served as implementation partner, with the purpose of facilitating the procurement and financial actions of the project.

The three countries established a **National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC)**. These bodies were established by the National Executing Agencies (NEAs) to advise and guide the implementation of the projects. These committees should have included representations of all government agencies with mandates relevant to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and representations from the private and public sectors. They were intended to be multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral, covering all fields relevant to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

The **National Project Coordinators** were responsible for the overall co-ordination, management and supervision of all aspects of the National Project. He/she had to report to the National Co-ordinating Committee and UNEP, and liaise closely with the chair and members of the National Coordinating Committee and National Executing Agency in order to coordinate the work plan for the National Project. He/she was responsible for all substantive, managerial and financial reports from the National Project. He/she had to provide overall supervision for any staff in the NBF Team as well as guiding and supervising all other staff appointed for the execution of the various National Project components. Bhutan and Mongolia also appointed a National Project Director, a government employee with the responsibility to provide policy advice and overall direction to the project, as well as coordinating project activities with relevant government agencies.

### (e) Project Cost and Financing

The three projects fall into the medium-size project category. They were expected to mobilise 306,600 USD (100,000 in cash, 206,600 in kind - Albania), 1,389,000 USD (in kind – Egypt) and 236,000 USD (in kind – Macedonia) respectively. The estimated projects costs at design stage and associated funding sources are presented in Table 5, 6 and 7.

**Table 5. Estimated project cost in Albania (USD)**

Financing source	Amount	Agency fee	Total
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GEF	558,000	55,800	613,800
Cofinancing	306,600		306,000
Total			864,600

**Table 5. Estimated project cost in Egypt (USD)<sup>13</sup>**

Financing source	Amount
GEF	908,000
Cofinancing	1,308,900
Total	2,297,100

**Table 5. Estimated project cost in Macedonia (USD)**

Financing source	Amount
GEF	407,000
Cofinancing	236,000
Total	643,000

## (f) Implementation Issues

**Albania:** the project activities are being completed as planned. A short extension was required, but no major challenges or delays have been observed. The elections in 2013 did not appear to have slowed down the rate of implementation. No mid-term review was carried out due to the size of the project and smooth implementation of activities. **Egypt:** the project was severely delayed, partially due to the political instability of the country in the wake of the Arab Spring. It should however be noted that even prior to the Arab Spring, the mid-term review (2009) noted that the passage of the Biosafety Law was being delayed and proposed an alternative interim measure in case of further delays. According to the recent PIR, the pace of implementation has picked up again, but the project is now in its eight year of implementation, compared to the initial duration of four years. **Macedonia:** according to the latest PIR, the project suffered delays due to election activity in 2014. A leadership change seems to be posing major obstacles in the implementation of the project. The evaluation should consider the extent to which it is possible to propose alternative courses of action and the use of adaptive management in order to overcome the impasse and close the project.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION

### (a) Objective and Scope of the Evaluation

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy<sup>14</sup> and the UNEP Programme Manual<sup>15</sup>, the Terminal Evaluations are undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and the main project partners in each country. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially for the additional phases of the biosafety projects, if applicable.

It will focus on the following sets of **key questions**, based on the projects' intended outcomes, which may be expanded by the consultants as deemed appropriate:

<sup>13</sup> Annexes 2a and 2b suggest that total budget was actually 908,000 USD

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPevaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP\\_Programme\\_Manual\\_May\\_2013.pdf](http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf)

1. To what extent were the projects able to support Albania, Macedonia and Egypt in establishing a national biosafety framework in accordance with national development priorities and international obligations?
2. To what extent were the projects able to assist Albania, Macedonia and Egypt to establish and consolidate a fully functional and responsive regulatory regime in line with the Cartagena Protocol and national needs and priorities?
3. To what extent were the projects able to assist Albania, Macedonia and Egypt to establish and consolidate a functional national system for handling requests, perform risk assessments, testing of GMOs, decision-making and performing administrative tasks?
4. To what extent were the projects able to assist Albania, Macedonia and Egypt to establish and consolidate a functional national system for “follow-up”, namely monitoring of environmental effects and enforcement?
5. To what extent were the projects able to assist Albania, Macedonia and Egypt to establish and consolidate a functional national system for public awareness, education, participation and access to information?

### **(b) Overall Approach and Methods**

The Terminal Evaluation of the Project will be conducted by independent consultants under the overall responsibility and management of the UNEP Evaluation Office in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager and the Sub-programme Coordinators of the Environmental Governance and Ecosystem Management.

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

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

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

- Relevant background documentation, inter alia inter alia UNEP and GEF-3 and GEF-4 policies, strategies and programmes pertaining to biosafety at the time of the project’s approval
- 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 etc.;
- Project outputs
- MTR in the case of the project implemented in Egypt
- Evaluations/reviews of similar projects

A.

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

- UNEP-GEF Task Manager
- Project management team
- UNEP Fund Management Officer;
- Project partners, including national executing agencies, project coordinators, members of the NCCs;
- Relevant resource persons;

**Field visits** of 4-5 days in each country to be scheduled in September in the following order: Albania, Macedonia and Egypt.

B.

### **(c) Key Evaluation principles**

Evaluation findings and judgements should be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the evaluation report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible, and

when verification was not possible, the single source will be mentioned. Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

The evaluation will assess the project with respect to a **minimum set of evaluation criteria** grouped in six categories: (1) Strategic Relevance; (2) Attainment of objectives and planned result, which comprises the assessment of outputs achieved, effectiveness and likelihood of impact; (3) Sustainability and replication; (4) Efficiency; (5) Factors and processes affecting project performance, including preparation and readiness, implementation and management, stakeholder participation and public awareness, country ownership and driven-ness, financial planning and management, UNEP supervision and backstopping, and project monitoring and evaluation; and (6) Complementarity with the UNEP strategies and programmes. The evaluation consultants can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

**Ratings.** All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Annex 3 provides guidance on how the different criteria should be rated and how ratings should be aggregated for the different evaluation criterion categories.

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

**The “Why?” Question.** As this is a terminal evaluation and a follow-up project is likely or similar interventions are envisaged for the future, particular attention should be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the “Why?” question should be at the front of the consultants’ minds all through the evaluation exercise. This means that the consultants need to go beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance was, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance was as it was, i.e. of processes affecting attainment of project results (criteria under category F – see below). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project. In fact, the usefulness of the evaluation will be determined to a large extent by the capacity of the consultants to explain “why things happened” as they happened and are likely to evolve in this or that direction, which goes well beyond the mere review of “where things stand” at the time of evaluation.

(d) A key aim of the evaluation 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 evaluation process and in the communication of evaluation findings and key lessons.

(e) **Communicating evaluation results.** Once the consultant(s) has obtained evaluation findings, lessons and results, the Evaluation Office will share the findings and lessons with the key stakeholders. Evaluation results should be communicated to the key stakeholders in a brief and concise manner that encapsulates the evaluation exercise in its entirety. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and preferences regarding the report. The Evaluation Manager will plan with the consultant(s) which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key evaluation findings and lessons to them. This may include some or all of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of an evaluation brief or interactive presentation.

## (f) Evaluation criteria

### 3. Strategic relevance

The evaluation will assess, in retrospect, whether the project’s objectives and implementation strategies were consistent with global, regional and national environmental issues and needs.

The evaluation will assess whether the project was in-line with the GEF Biodiversity focal area’s strategic priorities and operational programme(s).

The evaluation will also assess 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. 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 Subprogrammes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes [known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs)] of the SubProgrammes. The evaluation will assess whether the project makes a tangible/plausible contribution to any of the EAs specified in the MTS 2010-2013 and 2014-2017. The magnitude and extent of any contributions and the causal linkages should be fully described.

The evaluation should assess the project's alignment / compliance with UNEP's policies and strategies. The evaluation should provide a brief narrative of the following:

6. *Alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP)*<sup>16</sup>. The outcomes and achievements of the project should be briefly discussed in relation to the objectives of the UNEP BSP.
7. *Gender balance*. Ascertain to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to and the control over natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation. Are the project intended results contributing to the realization of international GE (Gender Equality) norms and agreements as reflected in the UNEP Gender Policy and Strategy, as well as to regional, national and local strategies to advance HR & GE?
8. *Human rights based approach (HRBA) and inclusion of indigenous peoples issues, needs and concerns*. Ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on HRBA. Ascertain if the project is in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and pursued the concept of free, prior and informed consent.
9. *South-South Cooperation*. This is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries. Briefly describe any aspects of the project that could be considered as examples of South-South Cooperation.

Based on an analysis of project stakeholders, the evaluation should assess the relevance of the project intervention to key stakeholder groups.

#### **4. Achievement of Outputs**

The evaluation will assess, for each component, the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and milestones as presented in Table 2,3,4 above, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness.

Briefly explain the reasons behind the success (or failure) of the project in producing its different outputs and meeting expected quality standards, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section F (which covers the processes affecting attainment of project results). Were key stakeholders appropriately involved in producing the programmed outputs?

#### **5. Effectiveness: Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results**

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project's objectives were effectively achieved or are expected to be achieved.

The **Theory of Change** (ToC) of a project depicts the causal pathways from project outputs (goods and services delivered by the project) through outcomes (changes resulting from the use made by key stakeholders of project outputs) towards impact (long term changes in environmental benefits and living conditions). The ToC will also depict any intermediate changes required between project outcomes and impact, called 'intermediate states'. The ToC further defines the external factors that influence change along the major pathways; i.e. factors that affect whether one result can lead to the next. These external factors are either drivers (when the project has a certain level of

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf>

control) or assumptions (when the project has no control). The ToC also clearly identifies the main stakeholders involved in the change processes.

The evaluation will reconstruct the ToC of the projects based on a review of project documentation and stakeholder interviews. The evaluator will be expected to discuss the reconstructed TOC with the stakeholders during evaluation missions and/or interviews in order to ascertain the causal pathways identified and the validity of impact drivers and assumptions described in the TOC. This exercise will also enable the consultant to address some of the key evaluation questions and make adjustments to the TOC as appropriate (the ToC of the intervention may have been modified / adapted from the original design during project implementation).

The assessment of effectiveness will be structured in three sub-sections:

- (a) Evaluation of the **achievement of outcomes as defined in the reconstructed ToC**. These are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of project outputs. For these projects, the main question will be to what extent the projects have contributed to the immediate outcomes (see tables 2,3,4). Additional questions would be to what extent the projects were able to successfully use available drivers to ensure progress towards the adoption of the relevant regulatory systems, even in the wake of political changes.
- (b) Assessment of the **likelihood of impact** using a Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) approach<sup>17</sup>. The evaluation will assess to what extent the projects have to date contributed, and are likely in the future to further contribute, to intermediate states, and the likelihood that those changes in turn to lead to positive changes in the natural resource base, benefits derived from the environment and human well-being. The evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead to unintended negative effects .

Evaluation of the **achievement of the formal project overall objective, overall purpose, goals and component outcomes** using the project's own results statements as presented in the Project Document<sup>18</sup>. This sub-section will refer back where applicable to the preceding sub-sections (a) and (b) to avoid repetition in the report. To measure achievement, the evaluation will use as much as appropriate the indicators for achievement proposed in the Logical Framework (Logframe) of the project, adding other relevant indicators as appropriate. Briefly explain what factors affected the project's success in achieving its objectives, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section F. Most commonly, the overall objective is a higher level result to which the project is intended to contribute. The section will describe the actual or likely **contribution** of the project to the objective.

The evaluation should, where possible, disaggregate outcomes and impacts for the key project stakeholders. It should also assess the extent to which HR and GE were integrated in the Theory of Change and results framework of the intervention and to what degree participating institutions/organizations changed their policies or practices thereby leading to the fulfilment of HR and GE principles (e.g. new services, greater responsiveness, resource re-allocation, etc.)

## **6. Sustainability and replication**

Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived results and impacts after the external project funding and assistance ends. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of benefits. Some of these factors might be direct results of the project while others will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not under control of the project but that may condition the sustainability of benefits. The evaluation will ascertain that the project has put in place an appropriate exit strategy and measures to mitigate risks to sustainability. The reconstructed ToC will assist in the evaluation of sustainability, as the drivers and assumptions required to achieve higher-level results are often similar to the factors affecting sustainability of these changes.

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<sup>17</sup> Guidance material on Theory of Change and the ROtI approach is available from the Evaluation Office.

<sup>18</sup> Or any subsequent **formally approved** revision of the project document or logical framework.

Four aspects of sustainability will be addressed:

- (a) *Socio-political sustainability.* Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of projects' results and progress towards impacts? Is the level of ownership by the main stakeholders sufficient to allow for the projects' results to be sustained? Are there sufficient government and other key stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to implement biosafety frameworks in each country? Did the projects conduct 'succession planning' and implement this during the life of the project? Was capacity building conducted for key stakeholders? Did the interventions' activities aim to promote (and did they promote) positive sustainable changes in attitudes, behaviours and power relations between the different stakeholders? To what extent has the integration of HR and GE led to an increase in the likelihood of sustainability of projects' results?
- Financial resources.* To what extent are the continuation of projects' results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on financial resources? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources<sup>19</sup> will be or will become available to use capacities built by the projects? Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of projects' results and onward progress towards impact?
- Institutional framework.* To what extent is the sustenance of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? How robust are the institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact on human behaviour and environmental resources, goods or services?
- Environmental sustainability.* Are there any environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of projects' benefits? Are there any projects' outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits? Are there any foreseeable negative environmental impacts that may occur as the project results are being up-scaled?

**Catalytic role and replication.** The *catalytic role* of UNEP interventions is embodied in their approach of supporting the creation of an enabling environment and of investing in pilot activities which are innovative and showing how new approaches can work. UNEP also aims to support activities that upscale new approaches to a national, regional or global level, with a view to achieve sustainable global environmental benefits. The evaluation will assess the catalytic role played by this project, namely to what extent the project has:

- (a) *catalyzed behavioural changes* in terms of use and application, by the relevant stakeholders, of capacities developed;
- provided *incentives* (social, economic, market based, competencies etc.) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behaviour;
- contributed to *institutional changes*, for instance institutional uptake of project-demonstrated technologies, practices or management approaches;
- contributed to *policy changes* (on paper and in implementation of policy);
- contributed to sustained follow-on financing (*catalytic financing*) from Governments, private sector, donors etc.;
- created opportunities for particular individuals or institutions ("*champions*") to catalyze change (without which the project would not have achieved all of its results).

*Replication* is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in different geographic areas) or scaled up (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in the same geographic area but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources). The evaluation will assess the approach adopted by the project to promote replication effects and determine to what extent actual replication has already occurred, or is likely to occur in the near future. What are the factors that may influence replication and scaling up of project experiences and lessons?

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Those resources can be from multiple sources, such as the national budget, public and private sectors, development assistance etc.

## **7. Efficiency**

The evaluation will assess the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. It will describe any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to bring the project as far as possible in achieving its results within its (severely constrained) secured budget and (extended) time. It will also analyse how delays, if any, have affected project execution, costs and effectiveness. Wherever possible, costs and time over results ratios of the project will be compared with that of other similar interventions. The evaluation will also assess the extent to which HR and GE were allocated specific and adequate budget in relation to the results achieved.

The evaluation will give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. For instance, the previous phases of biosafety support received by the countries.

## **8. Factors and processes affecting project performance**

**Preparation and readiness.** This criterion focusses on the quality of project design and preparation. Were project stakeholders<sup>20</sup> adequately identified and were they sufficiently involved in project development and ground truthing e.g. of proposed timeframe and budget? Were the projects' objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of the projects identified? Were the capacities of executing agencies properly considered when the project was designed? Was the project document clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities) and enabling legislation assured? Were adequate project management arrangements in place? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? What factors influenced the quality-at-entry of the project design, choice of partners, allocation of financial resources etc.? Were any design weaknesses mentioned in the Project Review Committee minutes at the time of project approval adequately addressed?

**Project implementation and management.** This includes an analysis of implementation approaches used by the project, its management framework, the project's adaptation to changing conditions and responses to changing risks including safeguard issues (adaptive management), the performance of the implementation arrangements and partnerships, relevance of changes in project design, and overall performance of project management. The evaluation will:

- (a) Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document have been followed and were effective in delivering project milestones, outputs and outcomes. Were pertinent adaptations made to the approaches originally proposed?  
Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and how well the management was able to adapt to changes during the life of the project.  
Assess the role and performance of the teams and working groups established and the project execution arrangements at all levels.  
Assess the extent to which project management responded to direction and guidance provided by the UNEP Task Manager and project steering bodies including the NCCs.  
Identify operational and political / institutional problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project, and how the project tried to overcome these problems.

**Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships.** The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of mechanisms for information sharing and cooperation with other UNEP projects and programmes, external stakeholders and partners. The term stakeholder should be considered in the broadest sense, encompassing both project partners and target users of project products. The TOC and stakeholder analysis should assist the evaluators in identifying the key

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<sup>20</sup> Stakeholders are the individuals, groups, institutions, or other bodies that have an interest or 'stake' in the outcome of the project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by the project.

stakeholders and their respective roles, capabilities and motivations in each step of the causal pathways from activities to achievement of outputs, outcomes and intermediate states towards impact. The assessment will look at three related and often overlapping processes: (1) information dissemination to and between stakeholders, (2) consultation with and between stakeholders, and (3) active engagement of stakeholders in project decision making and activities. The evaluation will specifically assess:

- (a) the approach(es) and mechanisms used to identify and engage stakeholders (within and outside UNEP) in project design and at critical stages of project implementation. What were the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches with respect to the projects' objectives and the stakeholders' motivations and capacities?
- (b) How was the overall collaboration between different functional units of UNEP involved in the project? What coordination mechanisms were in place? Were the incentives for internal collaboration in UNEP adequate?
- (c) Was the level of involvement of the Regional, Liaison and Out-posted Offices in project design, planning, decision-making and implementation of activities appropriate?
- (d) Has the project made full use of opportunities for collaboration with other projects and programmes including opportunities not mentioned in the Project Document<sup>21</sup>? Have complementarities been sought, synergies been optimized and duplications avoided?
- (e) What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during design and implementation of the project? This should be disaggregated for the main stakeholder groups identified in the inception report.
- (f) To what extent has the project been able to take up opportunities for joint activities, pooling of resources and mutual learning with other organizations and networks? In particular, how useful are partnership mechanisms and initiatives to build stronger coherence and collaboration between participating organisations?
- (g) How did the relationship between the projects and the collaborating partners (institutions and individual experts) develop? Which benefits stemmed from their involvement for project performance, for UNEP and for the stakeholders and partners themselves? Do the results of the projects (strategic programmes and plans, monitoring and management systems, sub-regional agreements etc.) promote participation of stakeholders, including users, in environmental decision making?

**Communication and public awareness.** The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of any public awareness activities that were undertaken during the course of implementation of the project to communicate the project's objective, progress, outcomes and lessons. This should be disaggregated for the main stakeholder groups identified in the inception report. Did the project identify and make use of existing communication channels and networks used by key stakeholders? Did the project provide feedback channels?

**Country ownership and driven-ness.** The evaluation will assess the degree and effectiveness of involvement of government / public sector agencies in the project, in particular those involved in project execution and those participating in NCCs:

- (a) To what extent have Governments assumed responsibility for the projects and provided adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received from the various public institutions involved in the project?

How and how well did the project stimulate country ownership of project outputs and outcomes?

[Any other project-specific questions]

**Financial planning and management.** Evaluation of financial planning requires assessment of the quality and effectiveness of financial planning and control of financial resources throughout the project's lifetime. The assessment

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<sup>21</sup> [If the ProDoc mentions any opportunities for collaboration with other projects and programmes, present these here in the footnote]



will look at actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. The evaluation will:

- (a) Verify the application of proper standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) and timeliness of financial planning, management and reporting to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources were available to the project and its partners;
- (b) Assess other administrative processes such as recruitment of staff, procurement of goods and services (including consultants), preparation and negotiation of cooperation agreements etc. to the extent that these might have influenced project performance;

Present the extent to which co-financing has materialized as expected at project approval (see Table 1). Report country co-financing to the project overall, and to support project activities at the national level in particular. The evaluation will provide a breakdown of final actual costs and co-financing for the different project components (see tables in Annex 4).

Describe the resources the project has leveraged since inception and indicate how these resources are contributing to the project's ultimate objective. Leveraged resources are additional resources—beyond those committed to the project itself at the time of approval—that are mobilized later as a direct result of the project. Leveraged resources can be financial or in-kind and they may be from other donors, NGO's, foundations, governments, communities or the private sector.

Analyse the effects on project performance of any irregularities in procurement, use of financial resources and human resource management, and the measures taken by UNEP to prevent such irregularities in the future. Determine whether the measures taken were adequate.

**Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping.** The purpose of supervision is to verify the quality and timeliness of project execution in terms of finances, administration and achievement of outputs and outcomes, in order to identify and recommend ways to deal with problems which arise during project execution. Such problems may be related to project management but may also involve technical/institutional substantive issues in which UNEP has a major contribution to make.

The evaluator should assess the effectiveness of supervision, guidance and technical support provided by the different supervising/supporting bodies including:

- (a) The adequacy of project supervision plans, inputs and processes;  
The realism and candour of project reporting and the emphasis given to outcome monitoring (results-based project management);  
How well did the different guidance and backstopping bodies play their role and how well did the guidance and backstopping mechanisms work? What were the strengths in guidance and backstopping and what were the limiting factors?

**Monitoring and evaluation.** The evaluation will include an assessment of the quality, application and effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, including an assessment of risk management based on the assumptions and risks identified in the project document. The evaluation will assess how information generated by the M&E system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensuring sustainability. M&E is assessed on three levels:

- (a) *M&E Design.* The evaluators should use the following questions to help assess the M&E design aspects:  
Arrangements for monitoring: Did the project have a sound M&E plan to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives? Have the responsibilities for M&E activities been clearly defined? Were the data sources and data collection instruments appropriate? Was the time frame for various M&E activities specified? Was the frequency of various monitoring activities specified and adequate?  
How well was the project logical framework (original and possible updates) designed as a planning and monitoring instrument?  
SMART-ness of indicators: Are there specific indicators in the logframe for each of the project objectives? Are the indicators measurable, attainable (realistic) and relevant to the objectives? Are the indicators time-bound?

Adequacy of baseline information: To what extent has baseline information on performance indicators been collected and presented in a clear manner? Was the methodology for the baseline data collection explicit and reliable? For instance, was there adequate baseline information on pre-existing accessible information on global and regional environmental status and trends, and on the costs and benefits of different policy options for the different target audiences? Was there sufficient information about the assessment capacity of collaborating institutions and experts etc. to determine their training and technical support needs?

To what extent did the project engage key stakeholders in the design and implementation of monitoring? Which stakeholders (from groups identified in the inception report) were involved? If any stakeholders were excluded, what was the reason for this? Was sufficient information collected on specific indicators to measure progress on HR and GE (including sex-disaggregated data)?

Did the project appropriately plan to monitor risks associated with Environmental Economic and Social Safeguards?

Arrangements for evaluation: Have specific targets been specified for project outputs? Has the desired level of achievement been specified for all indicators of objectives and outcomes? Were there adequate provisions in the legal instruments binding project partners to fully collaborate in evaluations?

Budgeting and funding for M&E activities: Determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and was funded in a timely fashion during implementation.

*M&E Plan Implementation.* The evaluation will verify that:

the M&E system was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period;

PIR reports were prepared (the realism of the Task Manager's assessments will be reviewed)

Half-yearly Progress & Financial Reports were complete and accurate;

Risk monitoring (including safeguard issues) was regularly documented

the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs.

## **9. The Consultants' Team**

For this evaluation, the evaluation team will consist of one consultant. The consultant should have experience in project evaluation. A Master's degree or higher in the area of environmental sciences or a related field and at least 15 years' experience in environmental management, with a preference for specific expertise in the area of biosafety and biodiversity is required.

By undersigning the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the consultants certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units.

## **10. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures**

The evaluation team will prepare an **inception report** (see Annex 2(a) of TORs for Inception Report outline) containing a thorough review of the project context, project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, the evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.

It is expected that a large portion of the desk review will be conducted during the inception phase. It will be important to acquire a good understanding of the project context, design and process at this stage. The review of design quality will cover the following aspects (see Annex 7 for the detailed project design assessment matrix):

Strategic relevance of the project

Preparation and readiness;

Financial planning;

M&E design;

Complementarity with UNEP strategies and programmes;

Sustainability considerations and measures planned to promote replication and up-scaling.

The inception report will present a draft, desk-based reconstructed Theory of Change of the project. It is vital to reconstruct the ToC *before* most of the data collection (review of progress reports, in-depth interviews, surveys etc.) is done, because the ToC will define which direct outcomes, drivers and assumptions of the project need to be assessed and measured – based on which indicators – to allow adequate data collection for the evaluation of project effectiveness, likelihood of impact and sustainability.

The inception report will also include a stakeholder analysis identifying key stakeholders, networks and channels of communication. This information should be gathered from the Project document and discussion with the project team. See annex 2 for template.

The evaluation framework will present in further detail the overall evaluation approach. It will specify for each evaluation question under the various criteria what the respective indicators and data sources will be. The evaluation framework should summarize the information available from project documentation against each of the main evaluation parameters. Any gaps in information should be identified and methods for additional data collection, verification and analysis should be specified. Evaluations/reviews of other large assessments can provide ideas about the most appropriate evaluation methods to be used.

Effective communication strategies help stakeholders understand the results and use the information for organisational learning and improvement. While the evaluation is expected to result in a comprehensive document, content is not always best shared in a long and detailed report; this is best presented in a synthesised form using any of a variety of creative and innovative methods. The evaluator is encouraged to make use of multimedia formats in the gathering of information eg. video, photos, sound recordings. Together with the full report, the evaluator will be expected to produce a 2-page summary of key findings and lessons.

The inception report will also present a tentative schedule for the overall evaluation process, including a draft programme for the country visit and tentative list of people/institutions to be interviewed.

The inception report will be submitted for review and approval by the Evaluation Office before the any further data collection and analysis is undertaken.

**The main evaluation report** should be brief (no longer than 40 pages – excluding the executive summary and annexes), to the point and written in plain English. The report will follow the annotated Table of Contents outlined in Annex 2. It must explain the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used (with their limitations). The report will present evidence-based and balanced findings, consequent conclusions, lessons and recommendations, which will be cross-referenced to each other. The report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. Any dissident views in response to evaluation findings will be appended in footnote or annex as appropriate. To avoid repetitions in the report, the authors will use numbered paragraphs and make cross-references where possible.

**Review of the draft evaluation report.** The evaluation team will submit a zero draft report to the UNEP EO and revise the draft following the comments and suggestions made by the EO. Once a draft of adequate quality has been accepted, the EO will share this first draft report with the Task Manager, who will alert the EO in case the report would contain any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Office will then forward the first draft report to the 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. It is also very important that stakeholders provide feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Comments would be expected within two weeks after the draft report has been shared. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to the UNEP EO for collation. The EO will provide the comments to the evaluation team for consideration in preparing the final draft report, along with its own views.

The evaluation team will submit the final draft report no later than 2 weeks after reception of stakeholder comments. The team will prepare a **response to comments**, listing those comments not or only partially accepted by them that could therefore not or only partially be accommodated in the final report. They will explain why those comments have not or only partially been accepted, providing evidence as required. This response to comments will be shared by the EO with the interested stakeholders to ensure full transparency.

**Submission of the final evaluation report.** The final report shall be submitted by Email to the Head of the Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office will finalize the report and share it with the interested Divisions and Sub-programme Coordinators in UNEP. The final evaluation report will be published on the UNEP Evaluation Office web-site [www.unep.org/eou](http://www.unep.org/eou).

As per usual practice, the UNEP EO will prepare a **quality assessment** of the zero draft and final draft report, which is a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants. The quality of the report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in Annex 3.

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

At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a Recommendations Implementation Plan in the format of a table to be completed and updated at regular intervals by the Task Manager. After reception of the Recommendations Implementation Plan, the Task Manager is expected to complete it and return it to the EO within one month. (S)he is expected to update the plan every six month until the end of the tracking period. As this is a Terminal Evaluation, the tracking period for implementation of recommendations will be 18 months, unless it is agreed to make this period shorter or longer as required for realistic implementation of all evaluation recommendations. Tracking points will be every six months after completion of the implementation plan.

### **11. Logistical arrangements**

This Terminal Evaluation will be undertaken by two independent evaluation consultants contracted by the UNEP Evaluation Office. The consultants will work under the overall responsibility of the UNEP Evaluation Office and will consult with the EO on any procedural and methodological matters related to the evaluation. It is, however, the consultants' individual responsibility to arrange for their travel, visa, obtain documentary evidence, plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

### **12. Schedule of the evaluation**

Table 7 below presents the tentative schedule for the evaluation.

**Table 7. Tentative schedule for the evaluation**

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Inception Reports	7 August 2015
Evaluation Missions – Tirana, Skopje, Cairo	September 2015
Telephone interviews, surveys etc.	1 September 2015
Zero draft report	5 October 2015
Draft Report shared with UNEP Task Manager	9 October 2015
Draft Report shared with stakeholders	16 October 2015
Final Report	6 November 2015

## ALBANIA – LIST of PEOPLE MET (28-29-30/10/2015)

NAME	POSITION & INSTITUTION
Mr Argent Alltari	Head of Ministry Cabinet (MoE) Kabineti@moe.gov.al
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Mr Belul Gixhari	Resp. for Gene Banks & Focal Point for FAO at the Center for Gen. Resources Bgixhari.agb@gmail.com
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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Documents consulted during the main evaluation phase:

**Albania:**

- Terms of Reference of the Terminal Evaluation
- Project Document “Capacity Building for the Development of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania (GFL/2328-2716-4B76) and Annexes
- Documents produced by the Project:
  - Technical Guidelines for handling requests, for RA/RM and to assist in decision-making;
  - Guidelines for Inspection and Monitoring of GMOs in Albania;
  - Public awareness Guidance to enhance public awareness on Biosafety in Albania
- From ANUBIS: PIRs, Budget Revisions, Audit Reports, Consultants’ Reports.
- National Biosafety Framework, 2006
- “Albania and the GEF”, from GEF Website, 2012
- GEF website (Albania page) <http://www.gefonline.org/Country/CountryProfile.cfm>
- National BCH (<https://bch.cbd.int/about/countryprofile.shtml?country=al>)
- “Status of Agricultural Biotechnology and Biosafety in Selected Countries of the Balkans, the Caucasus and Moldova”, FAO, 2003

**Global:**

- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB)
- Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity- building
- Status of capacity-building activities, UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9, September 2010
- Environment Fund budgets: proposed biennial programme and support budget for 2008–2009, UNEP
- Proposed biennial programme and support budgets for 2010-2011, UNEP
- UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013, “Environment for Development”
- Proposed biennial programme of work and budget for 2012–2013
- Strategic plan of CPB 2011-20
- A Comparative Analysis of Experiences and Lessons from the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Projects, 2006, UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit
- Guidance towards Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks: Lessons Learned from the UNEP Demonstration Projects, 2008, UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit
- Learning from experience, the global UNEP-GEF BCH Capacity building project, 2008, UNEP-GEF
- Public Participation and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, A review for DfID and UNEP-GEF (IDS)
- An Explanatory Guide to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, IUCN, 2003
- “Legal Aspects of Implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety “, Cordonier Segger, Perron-Welch, C. Frison, Cambridge Univ. Press, 2013

## Project costs and co-financing tables (30/09/2015) \*\*

(\*\*last instalment still due by UNEP at the time of the Evaluation)

## Project Costs (USD)

Component/sub-component	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
A. Biosafety Policy	32.500	31.821,52	
B. Regulatory regime	36.000	39.736,73	
C. Handling requests for authorizations	309.200	271.559,03	
D. Follow-up mechanisms	44.000	40.219,27	
E. Public awareness & participation	44.000	59.750,28	
F. Project coordination	55.000	47.378,08	
G. Monitoring and Evaluation	36.500	9.500	
<b>Total</b>	<b>557.200</b>	<b>499.964,91</b>	<b>90%</b>

## Co-financing (at 30/09/2015)

Co financing (Type/Source)	IA own Financing		Government		Other		Total		Total Disbursed
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
- Grants (cash) ***			113.100	126.819			113.100	126.819	126.819
- Loans									
- Credits									
- Equity investments									
- In-kind support			193.500	128.331			193.500	128.331	128.331
- Other									
<b>Totals</b>			<b>306.600</b>	<b>255.150</b>			<b>306.600</b>	<b>255.150</b>	<b>255.150</b>

\*\*\* Salary of the Project Staff paid by the Government

### CV profile Camillo Risoli

Camillo Risoli (Italy, 1953) is a seasoned international expert in rural development and environmental management. He has a long experience (more than 30 years) in the implementation, coordination and management of projects and programs in Africa and Latin America, with different donors and agencies. Capacity and Institution Building for Rural Development is his main area of expertise.

Camillo has worked as an expert, a chief technical adviser and an independent consultant for UN agencies (FAO, UNEP), Bi-lateral Cooperations (SDC – Swiss Cooperation, Italian cooperation, EC Delegations) and for International NGOs. He has been Team Leader in Long-Term Missions in Nicaragua (1980-82), Cape Verde (1986-96), Mozambique (1996-99) and Zimbabwe (2003-2005).

Food Security and Poverty Reduction have been at the core of his professional commitment, through Community-based projects and participatory actions, Organization & training of rural associations, Sustainable land use and agriculture, Partnership strengthening and networking (Public, Private, Civil Society) for decentralised and participatory local development.

Mainstreaming Environmental issues in Pro-Poor Strategies has been a main component of his action, through Soil & water conservation projects, Reforestation and agro-forestry initiatives, Watershed management and land use planning, Sustainable management of natural resources (soil, water, forests and bio-diversity).

Camillo has acquired a robust experience in advising on national policies and strategic planning for rural development, a solid background in PCM (Programme Cycle Management) and strong skills in Project Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E).

Since 2005, he works as an Independent Consultant and has carried out and led relevant Evaluation missions, such as the Mozambique National Action Plan for Food Security (FAO), the LADA Project - Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands - (FAO/UNEP-GEF) in Argentina and China, the Post-Conflict Rural Development in Ivory Coast (FAO/ADB), the setting of the M&E System for FAO/CLCPRO Program (Commission for Locust Control in Western Africa and Maghreb Region), the Biosafety National Frameworks Evaluation (UNEP-GEF) in Kenya, Namibia, Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Mongolia, Bhutan, Lao PDR, the terminal evaluation of the FAO Programme of Food Security through Commercialization in West Africa (Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone), the Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization in Latin America & the Caribbean.

Camillo has a graduate degree in Agricultural Sciences, a Post-Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management at London University and a PhD in Adult Education. He has published with FAO training manuals and methodological guides for trainers and extensionists.



## Annex 7: UNEP Evaluation Quality Assessment

Evaluation Title:

Evaluation of three Projects: Capacity Building for the Development of the National Biosafety Frameworks of Albania, Macedonia, Egypt

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. The quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants.

The quality of both the draft and final evaluation report is assessed and rated against the following criteria:

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Draft Report Rating	Final Report Rating
<b>Substantive report quality criteria</b>			
A. <b>Quality of the Executive Summary:</b> Does the executive summary present the main findings of the report for each evaluation criterion and a good summary of recommendations and lessons learned? (Executive Summary not required for zero draft)	<b>Final report:</b> Good summary		6
B. <b>Project context and project description:</b> Does the report present an up-to-date description of the socio-economic, political, institutional and environmental context of the project, including the issues that the project is trying to address, their root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being? Are any changes since the time of project design highlighted? Is all essential information about the project clearly presented in the report (objectives, target groups, institutional arrangements, budget, changes in design since approval etc.)?	<b>Draft report:</b> Good overview, changes described and precise presentation of key points. <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
C. <b>Strategic relevance:</b> Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of strategic relevance of the intervention in terms of relevance of the project to global, regional and national environmental issues and needs, and UNEP strategies and programmes?	<b>Draft report:</b> Very good and detailed analysis <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
D. <b>Achievement of outputs:</b> Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of outputs delivered by the intervention (including their quality)?	<b>Draft report:</b> Detailed assessment <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
E. <b>Presentation of Theory of Change:</b> Is the Theory of Change of the intervention clearly presented? Are	<b>Draft report:</b> ToC reconstruction of very good quality <b>Final report:</b>	6	6

causal pathways logical and complete (including drivers, assumptions and key actors)?	Same as above		
F. <b>Effectiveness - Attainment of project objectives and results:</b> Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the achievement of the relevant outcomes and project objectives?	<b>Draft report:</b> Yes, good assessment <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
G. <b>Sustainability and replication:</b> Does the report present a well-reasoned and evidence-based assessment of sustainability of outcomes and replication / catalytic effects?	<b>Draft report:</b> Yes all dimensions considered <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
H. <b>Efficiency:</b> Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency? Does the report present any comparison with similar interventions?	<b>Draft report:</b> Yes, but no comparisons <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
I. <b>Factors affecting project performance:</b> Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of all factors affecting project performance? In particular, does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used; and an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?	<b>Draft report:</b> Good analysis <b>Final report:</b>	5	5
J. <b>Quality of the conclusions:</b> Do the conclusions highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect those in a compelling story line?	<b>Draft report:</b> Conclusions highlight key points <b>Final report:</b> Extensive effort to verify possible way forwards in Macedonia and Egypt as both projects presented specific and rather complex challenges	5	6
K. <b>Quality and utility of the recommendations:</b> Are recommendations based on explicit evaluation findings? Do recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented?	<b>Draft report:</b> R are targeted and useful and in two case aim at resolving a stalling situation <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	6	6
L. <b>Quality and utility of the lessons:</b> Are lessons based on explicit evaluation findings? Do they suggest prescriptive action? Do they specify in which contexts they are applicable?	<b>Draft report:</b> Lessons are useful and will contribute to the ongoing evaluation of entire biosafety portfolio as well. <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	6	6
<b>Report structure quality criteria</b>			
M. <b>Structure and clarity of the report:</b> Does	<b>Draft report:</b>	5	5

the report structure follow EO guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included?	Very good structure <b>Final report:</b> Same as above		
N. <b>Evaluation methods and information sources:</b> Are evaluation methods and information sources clearly described? Are data collection methods, the triangulation / verification approach, details of stakeholder consultations provided? Are the limitations of evaluation methods and information sources described?	<b>Draft report:</b> Yes good description <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
O. <b>Quality of writing:</b> Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)	<b>Draft report:</b> Good writing style, could increase cross-referencing <b>Final report:</b> Same as above	5	5
P. <b>Report formatting:</b> Does the report follow EO guidelines using headings, numbered paragraphs etc.	<b>Draft report:</b> Good formatting for draft stage <b>Final report:</b> Good formatting overall	5	5
<b>OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING</b>		5.2	5.3

The quality of the evaluation process is assessed at the end of the evaluation and rated against the following criteria:

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments		Rating
<b>Evaluation process quality criteria</b>			
Q. <b>Preparation:</b> Was the evaluation budget agreed and approved by the EO? Was inception report delivered and approved prior to commencing any travel?	Yes, except budget allocation seems to have encountered problems beyond the control of the Evaluation Office which remain unresolved after more than three months, not allowing any payment to the consultant		5
R. <b>Timeliness:</b> Was a TE initiated within the period of six months before or after project completion? Was an MTE initiated within a six month period prior to the project's mid-point? Were all deadlines set in the ToR respected?	Yes, except one country (Egypt) requested a significant extension due to very low rate of expenditure and minimal implementation after 9 years of project activity. This means that the project will now terminate in 6-9 months. A review of the Egypt report will be conducted then.		5
S. <b>Project's support:</b> Did the project make available all required documents? Was adequate support provided to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Yes		5
T. <b>Recommendations:</b> Was an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations prepared? Was the implementation plan adequately communicated to the project?	Yes, including several discussions in the case of Egypt and Macedonia		6
U. <b>Quality assurance:</b> Was the evaluation peer-reviewed? Was the quality of the	Yes		5

draft report checked by the evaluation manager and peer reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments? Did EO complete an assessment of the quality of the final report?			
V. <b>Transparency:</b> Were the draft ToR and evaluation report circulated to all key stakeholders for comments? Was the draft evaluation report sent directly to EO? Were all comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the EO and did EO share all comments with the commentators? Did the evaluator(s) prepare a response to all comments?	Yes		5
W. <b>Participatory approach:</b> Was close communication to the EO and project maintained throughout the evaluation? Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately communicated?	Yes		6
X. <b>Independence:</b> Was the final selection of the evaluator(s) made by EO? Were possible conflicts of interest of the selected evaluator(s) appraised?	Yes		5
<b>OVERALL PROCESS RATING: 5.2</b>			

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1

The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.