



United Nations Environment Programme

**Mid-term Evaluation of the UNEP GEF Project:
Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River
Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area**

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIMF	<i>L'Association Internationale des Maires Francophones</i>
APNP-VRB	Action Plan for the National Part of the VRB
CBO	Community-based organisation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CCA	Causal chain analysis
CHM	Clearing house mechanism
DEPI	Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (UNEP)
DEWA	Division of Early Warning and Assessment (UNEP)
DGEF	Division of GEF Coordination (UNEP)
DGRE	<i>Direction Générale de Ressources en Eau</i> (Burkina Faso)
DNH	<i>Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique</i> (Mali)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FFEM	<i>Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial</i> (French GEF)
FMO	Fund Management Officer
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GWP	Global Water Partnership
HYCOS	Hydrological Cycle Observation System
IBRM	Integrated river basin management
ICARM	Integrated coastal area and river basin management
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IW	International Waters
IWRM	Integrated water resources management
KEOC	Kenya Operations Centre (UNOPS)
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MOA	Memorandum of agreement
NC	National Coordinator
NFP	National Focal Point
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIC	National Implementation Committee
NOFP	National Operational Focal Point
PAGEV	<i>Projet d'Amélioration de la Gouvernance de l'Eau dans le Bassin de la Volta</i> (IUCN)
PAPADEV	Partners in Participatory Development (NGO)
PDF	Project Development Funds (Type A & B)
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTF	Project Task Force
RBO	River basin organisation
ROtI	Review of Outcomes to Impact
RPC	Regional Project Coordinator
SAP	Strategic action programme
SIAAP	<i>Syndicat Interdépartemental pour l'Assainissement de l'Agglomération de Paris</i>
TDA	Transboundary diagnostic analysis
TdE	Société Togolaise des Eaux
TOR	Terms of reference
TM	Task Manager
UDC	UNEP DHI Centre for Water and Environment
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VBA	Volta Basin Authority
VB-ISS	Volta Basin Information Sharing System
VBO	Volta Basin Observatory
VRB	Volta River Basin
WRC	Water Resources Commission (Ghana)
WRCU	Water Resources Coordination Unit (ECOWAS)

Project Identification Table

Geographical Scope:	Regional/Multi country (Africa)		
Participating Countries:	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo		
GEF project ID:	1111	IMIS number:	GFL/2328-2731-4957
Focal Area(s):	International waters	GEF OP #:	9 - Integrated Land and Water Multiple Focal Area
GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:	IW-2	GEF approval date:	7 August 2006
Implementing Agency	UNEP	Executing Agency	UNOPS
Approval date:	May 2007	First Disbursement:	31 July 2007
Actual start date:	July 2007	Planned duration:	48 months
Intended completion date:	July 2011	Actual or Expected completion date:	December 2012
Project Type:	FSP	GEF Allocation:	\$5,347,380
PDF GEF cost:	\$497,500	PDF co-financing:	\$151,000
Expected FSP Co-financing:	\$10,871,231	Total Cost:	\$16,867,111
Mid-term review/eval. (planned date):	During 2009 ¹	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	N/A
Mid-term review/eval. (actual date):	May – September 2011	No. of revisions:	Two revisions approved by Project Steering Committee
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	07-08 April 2011	Date of last Revision:	08 April 2010
Disbursement as of 30 June 2011 (UNEP):	\$2,656,250	Date of financial closure:	N/A
Date of Completion:	N/A	Actual expenditures reported as of 30 April 2011 (UNOPS)	\$2,663,579
Total co-financing realized as of 15 July 2011:	\$2,939,829 ²	Actual expenditures entered in IMIS as of 30 June 2011:	Not available
Leveraged financing:	US\$440,000		

¹ Based on allocation of budget in Inception Report

² Includes VRB country co-financing up to 31 December 2010

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. The full size project, *Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area*, is a foundational project designed to produce a Strategic Action Programme for equitable and sustainable management of water resources and other connected natural resources in the Volta River Basin (VRB) and its downstream coastal area as well as to contribute to the creation of enabling conditions for its implementation.
2. The project was designed to be implemented in four years and has been extended once to December 2012, implying an operational phase of five years. This mid-term evaluation was undertaken three and a half years into implementation of the project and three years after the adoption of the project Inception Report by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
3. Key actors in the project are the implementing agency, the United Nations Environment Agency (UNEP); the executing agency, UNOPS, which established a Project Management Unit in hosted by the Ghana Water Resource Commission; and, the governments of the six riparian countries, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo. Other key partners are the Volta Basin Authority (VBA) that was established in 2006 shortly before the project was approved, and the UNEP-DHI Centre on Water and Environment (UDC) that has provided technical support during project design and implementation.
4. The Project Document identified GEF financing for the full-sized project of US\$5 347 380 and GEF financing for project development (PDF-A and PDF-B) of US\$497 500. Pledged co-financing including funding for the PDF-B phase totalled US\$11 022 231 or 65 percent of the anticipated total cost of US\$16 867 111. Expenditure on the GEF financing as of 30 April 2011 was US\$3 161 079 corresponding to 54 percent of the GEF project financing.

Findings and Conclusions

5. The key questions for this evaluation concern how well the project is progressing towards achievement of its three specific objectives, challenges to project implementation and timing. Progress towards each of the project objectives is addressed in [Part II Section A](#) of this report while explanatory factors and challenges are addressed in [Part II](#).
6. The *moderately unsatisfactory* ratings on *attainment of outputs and planned results and effectiveness* ([Part II Section A](#)) reflect significant concerns regarding delivery of activities and outputs and whether the project is on track to deliver its objectives, particularly objectives 2 and 3, within its current timeframe. At the same time, it is clear that the four year duration of the project was optimistic, since five years is already considered an ambitious timeframe for completion of a transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) and strategic action programme (SAP) for transboundary river basins in Africa.
7. **In terms** of challenges, time constraints have been exacerbated by a number of factors including an exceptionally dynamic set of elements that were outside the control of project. These range from the need for extensive redesign of the project during the inception phase as a result of creation of the VBA in 200) through to the political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. The persistence and solution-oriented approach of the project management unit (PMU) and particularly the RPC with regard to this difficult operating context is commendable.
8. Other challenges affecting performance that are addressed in the lessons and recommendations include:
 - Insufficient technical support to the PMU, which is addressed as part of recommendation 1 related to the project extension and associated budget revision, and recommendation 2 related to development of the SAP.
 - Insufficient appropriation of the project at national level including as a result of poor individual motivation. This is taken up under lessons and in recommendations 3 and 4.1.

- The shortfall in country co-finance combined with the limited payment of annual dues to the VBA presents a risk factor in terms of financial sustainability and is taken up in recommendation 4.2 and 4.3.
9. The overall rating for this project based on the evaluation findings is **Moderately Unsatisfactory**. The ratings in [Table 1](#) reflect consideration of the full set of issues affecting or characterising project performance and impact that are discussed in Part II of the report. The summary comments highlight aspects of the assessment that best illustrate the rationale for the rating given. The full summary comments in Part III highlight aspects of the assessment that best illustrate the rationale for the rating given.
10. It should be emphasised that there is potential to substantially improve this rating during the ongoing implementation of the project. Nevertheless the option to recommend closing the project was considered in view of the substantial risks to achieving a satisfactory outcome to this project associated with limited ownership and appropriation (Criterion E).

Table 1. Summary of Ratings based on Performance Criteria

Criterion	Rating
A. Attainment of project objectives and results	Moderately Unsatisfactory
1. Effectiveness	Moderately Unsatisfactory
2. Relevance	Highly Satisfactory
3. Efficiency	Moderately Unsatisfactory
B. Sustainability of project outcomes (<i>See B1</i>)	Moderately Unsatisfactory
1. Financial	Moderately Likely
2. Socio-political	Moderately Unlikely
3. Institutional framework	Likely
4. Environmental	Likely
C. Catalytic role (<i>See B2</i>)	Moderately Satisfactory
D. Stakeholders involvement(<i>See C3</i>)	Moderately Satisfactory
E. Country ownership / drivenness (<i>See C4</i>)	Moderately Unsatisfactory
F. Achievement of outputs and activities (<i>See A</i>)	Moderately Unsatisfactory
G. Preparation and readiness (<i>See C1</i>)	Moderately Satisfactory
H. Implementation approach (<i>See C2</i>)	Moderately Satisfactory
I. Financial planning and management (<i>See C5</i>)	Moderately Unsatisfactory
J. Monitoring and Evaluation (<i>See C7</i>)	Moderately Satisfactory
1. M&E Design	Moderately Satisfactory
2. M&E Plan Implementation	Moderately Satisfactory
3. Budgeting and funding for M&E activities	Satisfactory
K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping (<i>See C6</i>)	Moderately Satisfactory

Lessons

11. The lessons in [Part III](#) of the report relate to some of the key constraints experienced during this project and to related shortcomings in project design. The ongoing implementation of the project is expected to generate further insights on a wide range of implementation issues.
12. The GEF Volta project had an extended project development phase based on three successive PDF applications approved over a period of more than six years. This has had implications for the project's overall relevance in view of the creation of the VBA prior to project approval. It has affected continuity in view of institutional and personnel changes and loss of institutional memory that may be one factor behind difficulties in mobilising co-finance. A first lesson to be drawn here is that, in situations where there is an extended between GEF Council and GEF CEO approval, it is desirable to renew letters of commitment from Governments. Second, it is also important to keep clear records for future reference of how partner contributions in terms of in kind and cash support were calculated.
13. Extending the GEF Volta project will have repercussions for activities that were intended to contribute towards creating an enabling environment for SAP implementation as a result of the

need to reallocate project funding towards to core costs. Building on the experience of the GEF Volta project as well as remarks made in the Lake Chad project evaluation, a general lesson for design of any TDA and SAP (IW-2 type) project in transboundary basins in Africa is to plan for a post-inception operational phase of at least five years.

14. The idea of developing transboundary demonstration projects was innovative in that it promised to encourage bilateral collaboration in the context of the larger regional project. In practice this proved to be a risky strategy since all three bi-national projects have been affected by circumstances affecting implementation in one of the partner countries. The main lesson related to this experience is either to ensure that any demonstration projects which involve bi-national collaboration are justified in their own right and can continue regardless of progress of the project in the partner country.
15. The question of remuneration for project staff has been raised at all three PSC meetings and was in meetings with national partners undertaken for this evaluation. In practice it is not possible for the GEF agencies to address expectations related to staff top-ups or bonuses in this project in view of GEF regulations. The lesson is to work with National GEF Focal Points to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the nature of funding available for staff remuneration in order to manage expectations from the outset of the project and, where appropriate, to allow for allowances to be built into national co-financing in order to be in harmony with other development partners' practices.

Recommendations

16. The following recommendations address issues that require a decision to be taken by the PSC and/or executing and implementing agencies. They are oriented towards ensuring a satisfactory asset of outputs at the close of the project as a basis for continuation of the initiative including though mainstreaming of the SAP at national and regional levels.

Project Extension

17. The project is unlikely to deliver its key outputs unless it is extended by an estimated 6-12 months over the current extension to December 2012.
18. **Recommendation 1:** The PMU should develop a detailed proposal for a project extension of 6 to 12 months based on a realistic workplan for completion of the demonstration projects and SAP and submit this to the PSC for their comments and approval by 15 January 2012. The proposal should include a revised budget or budget options highlighting the reallocations associated with extending the project for 6 to 12 months. Additional actions related to this recommendation will include formalization of the project extension and revised budget through a project revision, based on the decision of the PSC, and extension and possible revision of the MOAs with country partners, with the UNEP DHI Centre for Water and Environment (UDC) and with the demonstration project partners.
19. The associated need for funding reallocation will require some tough decisions, including cutting back on well thought-out and undoubtedly worthwhile activities. [Box 1](#) in [Part III](#) suggests a minimum set of activities and budget lines where expenditures may be cut or streamlined. They also represent a necessary refocusing of the PMU efforts towards the completion of the TDA, SAP development, and support to existing demonstration projects.

Development of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP)

20. The acid test for effectiveness of the GEF Volta project will be the validation of the regional SAP that will mark the culmination of the analysis and planning efforts at national and regional levels and provide a platform for continuation of the initiative.
21. **Recommendation 2:** The PMU should prepare a workplan which strongly focuses its efforts and other available resources such as technical support on the process of SAP development and adoption during the remainder of the project lifetime, and submit this to the PSC for their comments and approval by 15 January 2011.

22. Specific suggestions include dovetailing the process of TDA validation and SAP launching through convening of a multi-stakeholder meeting in the last quarter of 2011 or first quarter of 2012; simplifying the approach to development of action plans for the national part of the Volta river basin (APNP-VRBs) and having the national operational focal points (NOFPs) play a lead role in their development; refocusing technical support from UDC and making provision for expanded technical support at the regional level through task teams for each of the 3-5 priority SAP themes.

Adoption of the SAP as a basis for its Future Mainstreaming

23. Adoption and implementation of the SAP will depend on adequate engagement of the full range of stakeholders expected to play or who could usefully play a role in its implementation at national and regional levels. Adoption of project outputs is anticipated in the cooperation agreement signed with the VBA but modalities have not yet been fully defined and the relationship between the SAP and the VBA-led Master Plan for the basin needs further clarification.
24. **Recommendation 3.1:** The PMU should liaise with the VBA Executive Secretary in order to define the modalities and strategy for SAP adoption by the VBA Council of Ministers in 2013, and develop a proposal for consideration by the PSC in early 2012.
25. **Recommendation 3.2:** The NOFPs should undertake a rapid assessment of government and non-government actors who are likely to play a role in SAP implementation, and actively engage them in project activities including through invitations to participate in NICs.

Project Ownership and Mobilisation of Co-finance

26. The issue of limited country ownership and appropriation has been identified as a substantial risk to the project) This is in part a result of poor individual motivation linked to remuneration; an issue that cannot be resolved by the executing or implementing agency but may be addressed by country co-finance .
27. **Recommendation 5.1.** The PSC should undertake a frank assessment of constraints to country ownership and appropriation of the project at its next meeting and develop suggestions as to how these may be addressed.
28. Several VRB country partners have reported difficulties in mobilising the cash co-finance specified in the MOAs and this has not only affected project performance but reflects badly on the level of commitment of the VRB countries to the project's overall objective. The following recommendations are intended firstly, to secure sufficient national budget allocations to ensure that personnel at the national level can be fully operational and, secondly, to encourage mobilisation of national investment in the basin through parallel support to the VBA.
29. **Recommendation 5.2:** National Coordinators should undertake consultations with the appropriate national authorities including GEF Focal Points in order to inform UNOPS and UNEP of any administrative actions they could undertake to improve the co-financing situation, and the agencies should follow up accordingly.
30. **Recommendation 5.3:** As a basis for possible PSC recommendation, National Coordinators should undertake consultations with the appropriate national authorities including GEF Focal Points to determine whether inclusion of VBA dues as country co-financing is acceptable at the national level and whether it is likely to facilitate the release of funds for VBA dues. Based on this information the PSC should determine whether it is appropriate to make a recommendation relating to payment of dues and follow up at the national level.

Demonstration Projects

31. Annex 6 includes eight recommendations related to the demonstration projects including recommendations related to the continuation of initiatives in Togo, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire. If it proves impossible to develop viable proposals for completion of the projects in Côte d'Ivoire and Benin, it is suggested that funds are reallocated at the earliest opportunity to other project activities in order to avoid having to return unspent funding to the GEF.

Part I. Evaluation Background

A. Context

32. Spanning six countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo), the Volta River Basin (VRB) is the ninth largest river basin in sub-Saharan Africa with an estimated area of 400,000 km². The region is one of the poorest in Africa, with *per capita* gross national product (GNP) ranging from US\$431 (Togo) to US\$1 106 (Cote d'Ivoire) per annum (World Bank, 2009). The VRB's population of over 20 million people is heavily dependent on agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing, and is exerting growing demands on land, water and forest resources. Increased urbanization and industrial and mining activities constitute additional pressures on ecosystem services.

B. The Project

Rationale

33. According to the Project Document, overuse and misuse of land resources in the VRB have resulted in decreased run-off and degraded water quality. The region's scarce water resources are increasingly overcommitted for domestic and industrial activities and irrigation, while at the same time these resources are dwindling as a result of decreased precipitation recent decades. The overuse and misuse of land and water resources in the VRB is affecting the region's rich biodiversity and contributing to the degradation of downstream coastal ecosystems. At the same time, a combination of climatic, ecological, economic and demographic problems makes the region particularly susceptible to environmental damage.
34. The need for a regional approach to basin management is accentuated by socio-economic and environmental linkages amongst the six countries stemming from but extending beyond the basin, including shared benefits of power generation and effects of modified flows on coastal areas.
35. The original Project Document approved by the GEF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) was modified in the light of the creation of the Volta Basin Authority (VBA) in July 2006, shortly after the project document had been submitted ([Paragraph 144](#)). This change in context and in the relevance of a number of planned activities necessitated revision of the project logframe, workplan and budget during an inception phase. The Inception Report was approved by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) at its first meeting in May 2008. The description of project objectives in the following paragraphs takes the Inception Report amendments into account.

Objectives

36. **The broad development objective** of the project identified in the Inception Report is, "to address the perceived major transboundary problems and issues of the Volta Basin leading to the degradation of the environment as a result of human activities, by reducing those activities that lead to water scarcity, land and water degradation, and to integrate environmental concerns with present and future development of the basin".
37. The project's **long-term goal** is, "equitable and sustainable management of water resources and other connected natural resources in the Volta River Basin and its downstream coastal area". Its **overall objective** is, "to enhance the ability of the riparian countries to plan and manage the Volta River Basin and its downstream coastal area (including aquatic resources and ecosystems) on a sustainable basis, by achieving sustainable capacity and establishing regional institutional frameworks for effective management; developing national and regional priorities; and effective legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks and management tools as a basis for action as well as initiating national and regional measures to achieve sustainable ecosystem management".
38. The original project was structured around three project components, each with an associated component objective. These were restructured in the Inception Report that identified the following three specific objectives.

- Specific Objective 1: Build capacity, improve knowledge and enhance stakeholders' involvement to support the effective management of the Volta River Basin;
 - Specific Objective 2: Develop river basin legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks and management instruments for addressing transboundary concerns in the Volta River Basin and its downstream coastal area;
 - Specific Objective 3: Demonstrate national and regional measures to combat transboundary environmental degradation in the Volta Basin.
39. Major planned outputs are the development of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Volta basin, development of Action Plans for the National Part of the VRB (APNP-VRBs), and implementation of three transboundary demonstration projects. The project is a foundational project towards future implementation of strategic actions to achieve the long term goal and broad development objective.

Intervention Areas and Target Groups

40. The project area is defined as the drainage basins of the tributaries of the Volta River and the coastal area of influence of the river. It therefore falls within six countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo. The project was intended to link freshwater basin management with coastal and marine ecosystem management and the project document considered the area of influence of the project to include the coastline of Benin, Ghana and Togo; part of the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem.
41. Neither the Project Document nor Inception Report defines the target population of the project. Nevertheless direct involvement of primary stakeholders in the project process, including the VBA, public sector, local government, NGOs, professional and the general public, is recognized as an integral requirement for successful project implementation. (See Section C3. Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness).

Milestones in Design, Implementation and Completion

42. The GEF Volta project was endorsed by the GEF CEO in August 2006, following a development process of just over six years (Paragraph 158). The project was approved by UNEP and UNOPS in May 2007. The Project Management Unit (PMU) was established in January 2008, which can be considered to be the project start date.
43. The planned project duration was four years. The project was extended to December 2012 based on a recommendation made by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) at its second meeting in April 2010.
44. There have been no formal revisions to the project since the Inception Report (Paragraph 35) but the PSC recommended an extension to December 2012 at its meeting in April 2010.

Implementation Arrangements and Main Partners

45. The Implementing Agency for the project is UNEP through its Division for GEF Coordination (DGEF). UNEP is responsible for overall project supervision and implementation support to ensure that the project remains on track and consistent with GEF and UNEP policies and procedures, and is expected to provide guidance on linkages with related UNEP and GEF funded activities.
46. The Executing Agency is UNOPS, through its Kenya Operations Centre (KEOC) in Nairobi. UNOPS is responsible for administrative and financial management of the project and timely production of financial and progress reports to UNEP. UNOPS established a small Project Management Unit (PMU) in Accra as the regional management structure of the project, hosted by

Ghana's Water Resources Commission. The PMU is headed by a Regional Project Coordinator (RPC), assisted by three full-time staff. The PMU is responsible for the overall implementation of the project including stakeholder outreach, overseeing and assisting the National Implementation Committees (NIC) and managing consultants and contractors. It is assisted in this role by National Coordinators (NCs), National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Operational Focal Points (NOFPs) in each of the basin countries.

47. The Project Document states that UNOPS would execute the project in close collaboration with 'UCC-Water', the UNEP-DHI Centre on Water and Environment (UDC), whose role was identified as assisting in key technical and scientific issues based on a budgeted input of 20 months. In practice, UDC was contracted to support the project in August 2010 with a total input of four man months over the remaining 27 months of the project lifetime.
48. The project partners are the governments of the six riparian countries, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo. The project document was endorsed in 2003 by the GEF Operational Focal Points for each of the countries. Memoranda of agreement (MOAs) for project implementation were signed with each country in 2008, in most cases with one of the government agencies responsible for water or environment.
49. The main financial partners were the Global Environment Facility (GEF). IUCN – the International Union for the Conservation of Nature - and the ECOWAS Water Resources Coordination Unit (WRCU) committed parallel co-finance through complementary project-based activities. International partners identified at a later stage for the demonstration projects include the *Syndicat Interdépartemental pour l'Assainissement de l'Agglomération de Paris* (SIAAP) and the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA).

Financing

50. The Project Document identified GEF financing for the full-sized project of US\$5 347 380 and GEF financing for project development (PDF-A and PDF-B) of US\$497 500 (Table 2). Pledged co-financing including funding for the PDF-B phase totalled US\$11 022 231 or 65 percent of the anticipated total cost of US\$16 867 111.
51. The anticipated co-finance total was amended in the Inception Report to US\$6 601 229, or 53 percent of the revised total project cost of US\$12 446 109 (Paragraph 222).
52. Expenditure on the GEF financing as of 30 April 2011 was US\$3 161 079 corresponding to 54 percent of the total. Expenditure during the implementation phase of US\$2 663 579 corresponds to 50 percent of the GEF financing available for this phase.

Table 2. GEF grant allocation to components / specific objectives (US\$)

Project Component / Specific Objective	Initial (Project Document)	Revised (Inception Report)	Expenditure to 30 April 2011
1	2 779 190	1 557 129	<i>Not reported by specific objective</i>
2	1 299 270	1 931 630	
3	1 268 920	1 858 622	
TOTAL	5 347 380	5 347 380	2 663 579
PDF (A)	25 000	25 000	25 000
PDF (B)	472 500	472 500	472 500
Total Project Financing	5 844 880	5 844 880	3 161 079

Source: Project Document, Inception Report, cash advance request of May 2011

53. Reported co-financing as of 30 June 2011 was US\$2 939 829, about 45% of the total amount anticipated in the Inception Report (Paragraph 225). The project has leveraged additional co-financing from SIAAP.
54. The project budget was originally developed in 2003. The project has been somewhat affected by the fluctuating value of the dollar with a roughly 20 percent drop in value relative to the CFA (used in five of the six basin countries) since May 2003 when the budget was first approved, and by inflation.

C. The Evaluation

Purposes

55. The purposes of this mid-term evaluation are (i) to provide evidence of results to date and of the likelihood of outcomes and impact in the future, to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to identify the challenges and risks to achievement of the project objectives and to derive corrective actions if needed for the project to achieve maximum impact and sustainability.

Criteria and Key Questions

56. Key questions for the evaluation identified in the evaluation terms of reference (Annex 1) are:
- a) *In how far has the project built national and regional capacity (at individual, organisational and enabling environment level) for sustainable environmental management and monitoring of the VRB? How effective is the project in promoting stakeholder participation in the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) process?*
 - b) *What progress was made on the development of regional legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks and management instruments for addressing transboundary concerns in the VRB and its downstream coastal area? What is the status on the TDA? Is it a robust synthesis of technical information on the VRB useful to support the SAP process? How well advanced is the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) process? To what extent have countries started preparations to develop their Action Plans for the National Part of the VRB (APNP-VRBs)?*
 - c) *What is the status of the demonstration projects? What can realistically be achieved in each country in the time remaining to the project? Do the demonstration projects have a good strategy in place for monitoring, lesson learning and replication?*
 - d) *What are the key challenges to project implementation and what remedies can be proposed? How well has the project adapted to changes in the VRB? Is technical backstopping to the PMU useful and cost-effective? Where do we stand on the creation of partnerships with international and national organizations, the private sector and other projects? Is the project adding value to the work of these partners? How well are these partnerships functioning?*
 - e) *Can the project realistically achieve its intended outputs and objectives within the time remaining? If not, what would be a more realistic time frame or what activities should be prioritized so that the main outputs and objectives can still be achieved in a timely manner?*
57. Questions a) to c) relate to progress towards the three specific objectives and are addressed in Part II section A of the report, with supplementary information in related annexes including an extended report on the demonstration projects (Annex 6). Challenges to project implementation are addressed Part II Section C of the report. Finally the question of timing is addressed in Part II Section A, under efficiency. Further feedback on these questions is provided in the evaluation conclusions and recommendations.
58. Annex 1 includes a specific list of review criteria used for this evaluation that are reflected in the structure of this report.

59. An important analytical tool used in this evaluation is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) tool which is presented in Part II A of the evaluation report and is used to inform analyses on sustainability and stakeholder engagement. Information used in the wider evaluation is evidence-based and efforts have been made to triangulate information and opinions from interviews.

60. The evaluation includes a review of the demonstration projects as [Annex 6](#).

Timeframe, data collection and limitations of the evaluation

61. The evaluation took place between 19 May and 31 July 2011. The list of persons interviewed during the course of evaluation is provided in [Annex 2](#) and the itinerary and evaluation timeline in [Annex 3](#).

62. The findings of the evaluation were based on the following:

- A desk review of Project Documents, including but not limited to the following. (See also [Annex 4, List of references](#)):
 - Relevant background documentation, including UNEP and GEF policies, strategies and programmes pertaining to international/transboundary waters; the Volta basin Convention and Statutes and Strategic Plan for the Volta Basin Authority; and the preliminary TDA and SAP prepared under the PDF-B grant preceding the project;
 - Project design documents including the Project Document, the Project Inception Report, and Annual Work Plans and Budgets;
 - Project reports including progress and financial reports from countries to the PMU and from UNOPS to UNEP; Steering Committee meeting minutes; annual Project Implementation Reviews and relevant correspondence;
 - Documentation related to project outputs including the latest drafts of the national and regional TDAs.
- Face to face and telephone interviews and email exchanges (See [Annex 2, List of Interviewees](#)) with:
 - Project management and support staff in the PMU (Accra);
 - UNEP Task Manager and Fund Management Officer (Nairobi), the UNOPS Deputy Director of Programme (Nairobi);
 - UDC Director and Integrated Water Resources management (IWRM) Specialist;
 - Executive Directorate of the Volta Basin Authority (VBA);
 - Country lead execution partners, including the National Coordinators and the National Focal Points, and other relevant partners;
 - Relevant staff of GEF Secretariat;
 - Representatives of project partners (IUCN, SIAAP, MCA) and other relevant organisations;
 - Project consultants (TDA, Task Force).
- Visits to two of the three demonstration projects (Ghana for the joint project with Côte d'Ivoire; Togo for the intended joint project with Benin).

63. In terms of constraints, the evaluation was organized at relatively short notice in order to accommodate prior commitments of the PMU and it was not possible to meet with some key actors owing to their own scheduling conflicts. The evaluator did not visit Côte d'Ivoire in view of prevailing security advice and did not receive any response to emails sent to the National Focal Point.

64. The support of the PMU in facilitating the evaluation and availability of the project team and partners for meetings including during weekends and bank holidays is greatly appreciated.

Part II. Project Performance and Impact

65. Part II of the evaluation report is organised in four sections representing the four main categories of evaluation criteria, namely attainment of objectives and planned results, sustainability and catalytic role, processes affecting attainment of project results, and complementarities with the UNEP Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work.

A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

66. The technical implementation of the Volta River basin project started in January 2008. The following paragraphs look at achievement of outputs and activities, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and a review of the pathway from project outcomes to impacts.

Achievement of Outputs and Activities

67. The revised project logframe developed as part of the project Inception Report details 14 outputs and some 90 associated activities under the three project objectives. This framework was used for reporting in the 2008 Annual Report (with minor changes to activities and activity numbering), but was subsequently revised, simplifying the description of the intervention logic but without essentially changing it.

68. The 2009 and 2010 Project Implementation Reports (PIR)¹ each detail nine outputs with 40 associated activities and expected completion dates. The 2009 Annual Report prepared by the PMU reports on delivery of the same nine outputs or 'results' with 41 associated activities. Reporting in the 2010 Annual Report corresponds to the 38 activities in the 2010 workplan. The 2011 workplan includes a further reconfiguration of activities, with several new activities introduced related to Objective 3 (Demonstration Projects) reflecting the anticipated focus of work in 2011. One effect of the above changes is that different activity numbers are used for the same activity in the various project plans and reports.

69. [Annex 5](#) presents a tabulated overview of progress towards outputs and activities using the configuration of outputs and activities reported in the PIRs. The table includes an estimation of the implementation status of each activity (as percentage completed), a description of progress against the activity and an indicative rating. Further detail on Specific Objective 3 (Demonstration projects) is provided in [Annex 6](#).

70. The following paragraphs provide a synthesis of activities and outputs by specific objective. Timing issues are addressed in more detail under efficiency below.

Specific Objective 1

71. There are three outputs under Objective 1 – establishment and operation of the PMU (Output 1.1); strengthening of capacity and participation of stakeholders in VRB management (1.2), and expansion of the knowledge base and establishment of basin-wide communications (1.3).

72. With the exception of establishment of the PMU and governance structures that was completed in 2008, the four activities designed to project management and coordination (Output 1.1) are of an 'ongoing' nature. Different aspects of project management are examined in more detail in Section C of this report, including under the sub-sections on '*implementation approach*' (C2); '*stakeholder participation and public awareness*' (C3) and '*monitoring and evaluation*' (C7). From the perspective of overall performance of the project it is worth highlighting the strategic partnership with VBA as a strong point, and challenges in securing consistent technical support to PMU as a limitation.

¹ The PIR is in essence an annual report compiled by the Executing Agency, reviewed by the Implementing Agency and submitted to the GEF Secretariat for monitoring purposes.

73. With regard to Output 1.2, one of the early activities of the project – to develop stakeholder engagement and capacity building plans for the GEF Volta project at the national and regional level – was not completed as a result of the failure of national consultants in three countries to deliver contracted reports. The subsequent decision to reallocate this activity to the VBA and later to the Volta Basin Observatory (VBO) has changed the orientation of the output from providing strategic guidance for the project partners in implementing the GEF Volta project to providing information to the VBA. This is expected to be a useful output but does leave a gap in terms of strategic guidance for the project itself. The gap has been partially addressed by the national and regional institutional analyses completed in late 2009, which included a proposal for capacity building of institutional actors. However, the absence of guidance for systematic stakeholder engagement and capacity building in the project presents a risk that key stakeholders may be overlooked during the SAP process.
74. Stakeholder involvement is addressed in detail in [Part II Section C3](#) of this report. The project has made substantial efforts to overcome prevailing sectoral approaches to water resources management through the PSC that brings together NFPs from both water and environment agencies, and through the establishment of NICs, as well through consultation processes linked to preparation of the TDAs.
75. Planned capacity building activities identified in the inception report included conducting three training courses directly related to the project's activities (TDA/SAP process; data management, and SAP implementation) as well as development of training materials on IWRM and integrated river basin management (IRBM) and delivery of training for national institutions and stakeholders.
76. Training in the SAP and TDA process was organised in September 2008, and brought together at least two and in most cases three participants (NFPs and NOFPs) from each of the basin countries as well as the support team. Participant evaluations were favourable across ten criteria including relevance and different aspects of content. Training in data management was conducted in March 2010 in collaboration with the VBO with the support of two experts from the UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA). Some 22 trainees from the six basin countries took part in the five day course that focussed on the proposed Volta Basin Information Sharing System (VB-ISS). Training in SAP implementation has not yet been organised.
77. It was agreed in a VBA-facilitated coordination meeting that the planned IWRM training should be taken up in the context of the EU-funded ECOWAS/WRCU *Volta Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project* and training courses were conducted for national institutions and for journalists. In addition the PMU collaborated in IWRM-related training activities organised in Burkina Faso and Ghana by the IUCN PAGEV project (*Projet d'Amélioration de la Gouvernance de l'Eau dans le Bassin de la Volta*) in May 2009 and October 2010. Efforts in this area are not on track to accomplish the stated (and ambitious) outcome, that 'institutions have the capacity to implement the SAP and APNP-VRBs'.
78. The project has made good efforts to contribute to establishment of a knowledge base (Output 1.3) in a context where one of the original activities, to undertake a feasibility study for creation of a Volta Basin Observatory, was overtaken by events (since the establishment of the Observatory has been supported by French GEF (FFEM) funding). The Observatory has been working with a number of different partners on information management and the VBA has stated its intention to use the platform proposed by the project, referred to in this context as the VB-ISS, which has functioned well in other regions². The six national reports and regional synthesis data and information as well as training provided by the project and support to development of the VB-ISS by UNEP DEWA have been useful contributions to establishment of a knowledge base supported by a community of experts in the VRB region.
79. Finally, it was agreed in a VBA-facilitated coordination meeting that the planned thematic studies, including notably the development of hydrological and coastal hydrodynamic models of the Volta Basin and its downstream coastal areas, would be carried out through the EU-funded *Volta Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project*. However, these were not completed as a result of the early closure of that project. There are some prospects for these to be taken up by

² In April 2011, the VBA confirmed its interest in support to the purchase of ArcGIS software, which is an integral part of the platform.

the VBO through another collaboration project but it is regrettable in a context where the primary rationale for the project was concerns about water scarcity and impacts on coastal areas, that work that would have provided detailed understanding of hydrodynamics is not available as input to the regional TDA and SAP.

Specific Objective 2

80. Activities and outputs under Specific Objective 2 focus on improving the legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks and management instruments for addressing transboundary concerns in the VRB. They include finalisation of the TDA, preparation of the SAP, integration of the SAP into the VBA work plan and preparation of the APNP-VRBs.
81. The GEF Volta Project's contribution to VRB coordination mechanisms (Output 2.1) has been significant and includes support to the development of the VBA Strategic Plan that was adopted by the VBA Council of Ministers in December 2009, including through an organisation of a workshop in August 2009. The GEF Volta project is a member of the VBA's Technical and Financial Partners Consultative Group, and has signed a collaboration framework with the VBA that anticipates VBA's adoption of the project outputs (e.g. TDA and SAP) (Paragraphs 146 and 182).
82. The TDA/SAP development process (Outputs 2.2 & 2.4) has broadly followed the sequence of activities described in Annex 6. A review of the draft TDA and SAP developed during project development based on other examples of river basin TDAs and SAP from Africa was completed in December 2008, and a detailed methodology for the Volta basin process was developed.
83. Regional TDA Consultants (team leader, water resources expert, ecosystems expert, governance expert and socio-economist) were appointed through an open recruitment process in 2009 and six national consultants were recruited following national selection processes. A regional TDA 'starting workshop' organised in December 2009 was well attended including by two representatives from each of the basin countries as well as the consultants and other experts. TDA working groups were established in each country and two experts were recruited to support the national consultant. National TDA workshops were organised in each of the basin countries in the first quarter of 2011.
84. Progress to date on the remaining TDA-related activities is substantially behind schedule. Weaknesses in the first drafts of the national TDA reports were compounded by difficulties faced by the consultants in accessing national data as well as by data gaps. The reports were substantially revised with the support of the PMU and some members of the regional TDA team.
85. Priority transboundary issues at the regional level were identified at a causal change analysis (CCA) workshop involving the national and regional consultants in September 2010, and a causal chain developed for each of these. The workshop also provided an opportunity to review the latest drafts of the national reports and it was agreed these would be submitted by the end of the month once gaps – particularly related to governance - had been addressed.
86. Well-attended national validation workshops were organised in five of the six VRB countries in November and December 2010, and final drafts of the national reports were submitted to the PMU. Finalisation and validation of the report for Côte d'Ivoire has been held up as a result of the political crisis. Unfortunately the TDA team leader resigned in early 2011.
87. It has not been possible to undertake a comprehensive review of these reports that include a very detailed description of the basin characteristics based on the agreed common format, as well as a 'diagnostic analysis' and recommendations. The reports are based on secondary sources where information is sometimes dated, and usually restricted to data held at the national level. References to sources and dates of the compiled data and figures are incomplete and this will affect the utility of some data. The reports can nevertheless be considered to be an admirable effort given the limited time available and fragmentation of information at the national level. The assessment of UDC is that once supplemented by data available at regional level that has been compiled through other projects these reports are a satisfactory basis for preparation of the regional TDA.

88. The PSC was presented with an update on the TDA process at its meeting in April 2011. There was some discussion as to whether the eight priority themes identified during the Causal Chain Analysis (CCA) workshop were too many particularly given thematic overlaps in some of the general and more specific issues. UDC was tasked with providing advice on this issue. At this stage their pragmatic approach of maintaining the eight priority themes in order to ensure that the concerns addressed in the national TDAs are given equal prominence, while simplifying the causal analysis for the purpose of SAP development, seems sensible.
89. A planning meeting was organised with the four regional thematic experts later in April 2011 providing the team with an opportunity to discuss outstanding issues on the drafts (e.g. some overlap in content). First drafts of the four regional thematic reports were submitted to the PMU in the second quarter of 2011. These are now going through an in depth review by the PMU and were not available for this evaluation. The process for their finalisation will be agreed with the new TDA team leader who is expected to be recruited by early August 2011.
90. The process for development of the SAP (Output 2.2) and APNP-VRBs (Output 2.4) has not yet started though these will clearly be able to build on the analyses done to date as well as the recommendations in the TDA reports. There is some scope to save time by dovetailing finalisation of the regional TDA with initiation of the planning phase, as well as to streamline development of the SAP and APNP-VRBs ([Paragraph 127](#)).

Specific Objective 3

91. Activities under Specific Objective 3 have been designed to initiate measures to combat environmental problems in the VRB through demonstration projects (Output 3.1), and to derive lessons learned and incorporate a replication strategy into the SAP and national action plans (APNP-VRBs), and to develop concepts for six further demonstration projects (Output 3.2).
92. The 2003 Project Brief approved by the GEF Council anticipated three transboundary demonstration projects that UNEP was asked to further develop prior to GEF CEO approval of the project. The following three concepts were elaborated with the support of UDC and through a regional workshop based on a supplemental PDF-B grant approved in February 2005.
- DP1. Joint management by Burkina Faso and Mali of a flow release warning system in the Sourou river valley (tributary of Black Volta River or Mouhoun);
 - DP2. Installation and comparison of technological models of waste water treatment in the Cities of Kara (Togo) and Natitingou (Benin);
 - DP3. Restoration and protection of river beds of the Black Volta River (Côte d'Ivoire & Ghana) and its tributaries through participative campaigns of reforestation.
93. A detailed presentation of progress on each of the demonstration projects is provided as [Annex 6](#) which includes recommendations for the individual projects.
94. In terms of key developments for DP1, the project in Burkina Faso is proceeding with Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) support, and a hydrological model was in collaboration with the GEF Volta Project, the *Direction Générale de Ressources en Eau* (DGRE Burkina Faso), the VBO and *Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique* (DNH Mali). An MOA was signed in June 2010 for the work in Mali and field work commenced in May 2011 when the area became accessible after the rainy season. Collaboration between the two countries will be vital for the project results to be achieved. Two coordination meetings have been organised but there is not yet a regular working relationship between the two countries and there is some risk that cooperation with Mali will become sidelined in Burkina Faso given the larger focus of the project.
95. Benin pulled out of DP2 in early 2009 since this did not correspond well with local priorities. In Togo, the PMU has liaised closely with the Kara *Mairie* and with SIAAP, which is supporting development of a sewerage system in Kara. An MOA for construction of the treatment plant is expected to be signed with SIAAP in October 2011 and the installation is expected to be

completed by mid-2012. Meantime there has been only slow progress towards developing a viable alternative project in Benin.

96. Finally, for DP3, MOAs were signed with project partners for Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana in mid-2010. Activities are now well underway in Ghana following recruitment of a project manager in November 2010 and development of agreements with key partners. A second season of planting is envisaged in mid-2012, which is beyond the lifetime of the current MOA. Activities in Côte d'Ivoire were stalled as a result of the political changes at national level and associated insecurity in the project area.
97. A detailed report on implementation progress for the demonstration projects is provided in [Annex 6](#). Some of the main findings are the following:
- The demonstrated approaches are relevant, replicable, and, although not very original, do all have some innovative aspects that supplement the existing body of knowledge on how to tackle transboundary problems through local interventions.
 - The intended transboundary collaboration in all three projects has been affected by circumstances that were largely beyond the control of the project.
 - The PMU has invested significant time and effort in supporting the establishment of the demonstration projects. Much of the burden of this work has fallen on the RPC since the working language for five of the six initiatives is French³. Two partners did comment that capacity in the PMU appears to be stretched in terms of workload.
 - Only one of the projects – Kara – is likely to be completed within the timeframe envisaged in the MOA and in the remaining lifetime of the overall GEF Volta project. There are still substantial hurdles to be overcome to ensure successful completion of the demonstration projects in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali.
 - The late start of the demonstration projects and lack of tangible results at this stage in the regional project has affected its visibility with repercussions in terms of national support and interest ([Paragraph 196](#)).
98. With respect to the other activities planned under specific objective 3 (Output 3.2), this mid-term evaluation is the first systematic assessment of the demonstration projects' implementation. Lessons that can be drawn to date thus relate more to the establishment of the demonstration projects than to implementation.
99. Activities related to development of a replication strategy of the projects have not yet commenced. The delays in launching the demonstration projects mean it is unlikely that a replication strategy could be developed in time for its integration into the APNP-VRBs and SAP (See [Paragraphs 154 & 155](#)).
100. The overall rating on delivery of activities and outputs is **moderately unsatisfactory** in view of significant concerns around the slow progress and ongoing risks to completion of the TDA/SAP and demonstration projects.

Relevance

101. The case for the VRB project is well articulated in the Project Document, that states that “the overuse and misuse of land and water resources in the Volta basin is affecting the region's rich biodiversity and degrading downstream coastal ecosystems” (Para 6) and that “a combination of the climatic, ecological, economic and democratic problems makes the region susceptible to environmental damage when inappropriately managed”. These statements, that underpin the relevance of the project, were supported by information summarised in the Project Document as well as by the preliminary TDA and SAP that were developed as part of the PDF-B process.
102. The signature of the Volta Basin Convention and creation of the Volta Basin Authority in July 2006 shortly before CEO approval of the GEF Volta project fundamentally altered the institutional landscape for the project and rendered some of its activities obsolete ([Paragraph 145](#)). Changes

³ The Scientific and Information Officer has limited spoken French ability

to the project strategy were addressed at the programmatic level in the project inception report and the PMU has collaborated closely with the VBA's interim Executive Directorate. However the perceived relevance of the project and the role that activities related to institutional development may have played as a focus for regional collaboration in the project are diminished.

103. The project as implemented has remained relevant in the context of the UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design, as referred to in the Project Document. Specifically the project approach and scope has:
- Continued to be supportive of two of the five Strategic Objectives of the *UNEP GEF Action Plan on complementarity*⁴, namely (i) relating national and regional environmental priorities to the global environmental objectives of the GEF; and (ii) promoting regional and multi-country cooperation to achieve global environmental benefits;
 - Remained consistent with the *Integrated Coastal Area and River Basin Management (ICARM)* approach developed by UNEP, which was used to develop the preliminary SAP;
 - Broadly contributed to the themes of the *UN System Wide Special Initiative for Africa*⁵ (declared in 1996) and specifically the theme, Urgency on Survival Issues;
 - Supported the decision taken at the 20th UNEP Governing Council to focus on the needs of Africa in the field of freshwater; and,
 - Built on the assessments undertaken through the UNEP GEF GIWA project.
104. Further details on the projects contribution to UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (2010-2013) and related Programme of Work are provided in [Part II Section D](#).
105. The project was identified in the context of the GEF Operational Programme 9, *Integrated Land and Water Multiple Focal Area*, in view of its focus on integrated approaches to the use of better land and water resource management practices on an area-wide basis. It was intended to contribute to all four outputs envisaged from international waters (IW) projects under this programme, namely: comprehensive transboundary environmental analysis, strategic action programmes, documentation of stakeholder participation, implementation of measures. The project as designed and as currently being implemented has remained relevant in this context both in terms of strategic approach and in term of the thematic issues being tackled.
106. In addition the project was seen as being consistent with the first two priorities identified in the Draft GEF International Waters Focal Area- Strategic Priorities in Support of WSSD Outcomes for FY 2003-2006, that addressed "foundational capacity building ... on cross cutting aspects of Africa transboundary waters...", and "innovative demonstrations for reducing contaminants". The project is delivering in support of priority 1 and the demonstration projects can be expected to support priority 2.
107. Based on the current GEF International Waters (IW) priorities, the project is contributing to Strategic Priority IW-2, *Expand global coverage for foundational capacity building; support for targeted learning*.
108. The overall rating on relevance is **highly satisfactory**.

Effectiveness

109. The following paragraphs look at whether the project is on track to achieve its overall objective, to enhance the ability of the riparian countries to plan and manage the Volta River Basin and its downstream coastal area (including aquatic resources and ecosystems) on a sustainable basis, and its three specific objectives as listed in [Paragraph 38](#).
110. The project logframe in the Inception Report included fifteen indicators of achievement for the project's overall objective that correspond to a list of 'key expected outcomes' in the main body of

⁴ See UNEP/GC.23/INF/24, available at www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-INF24.doc

⁵ See <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/sgreport/siabckgr.htm>

the report. A slightly modified set of indicators has been used in the PIRs⁶ and project annual reports as indicators for the nine project outputs. The basic assessment in [Table 7.1 in Annex 7](#) uses the mid-term targets for each of these indicators as a benchmark for assessing progress, while recognising that the project is now 3.5 years into implementation while the mid-term targets were designed to measure progress at the end of two years.

111. Based on this assessment the overall rating on Objective 1 is *moderately satisfactory*, while the rating for Objectives 2 and 3 is *moderately unsatisfactory*. However it should be noted that this analysis is constrained by the limited resolution provided by the mid-term and end-of-term milestones used in the PIR and provides a limited perspective on prospects for achieving results by the end of the project. For example, the indicators do not do justice to the value and strategic importance of the VBA partnership.
112. Another way of looking at effectiveness is to use the GEF IW Tracking Tool that uses a generic set of indicators for each Strategic Priority. The GEF Volta project is categorised as an SP-2 project, aimed at enabling or fostering transboundary cooperation. [Table 7.1 in Annex 7](#) shows the results of application of the indicators for SP-2 projects based on a predefined scale. The level selected is based on the description that best matches progress in the GEF Volta project.
113. In terms of a regional management framework, the project scores very well (3/3) on adoption of a regional legal agreement, in view of the Convention signed in 2006 and which entered into force in 2009. The project has contributed to capacitation of VBA as the corresponding regional management organisation (RMO), which is functioning, but this is rated only 1/3 since countries are contributing fees only on a limited basis. At the national level that project has catalysed creation of national inter-ministry committees, the NICs, but these are so far functioning only on an informal basis (2/3).
114. In terms of planning, the rating for agreement on transboundary priorities and root causes (TDA development and completion) is 2/3 based on progress to date towards validation of the TDA⁷. The rating on SAP approval is zero since the SAP has not yet been developed.
115. The acid test for effectiveness of Objective 2, and indeed of the whole project, will be validation of the regional SAP that will mark the culmination of the analysis and planning efforts at national and regional levels and provide a platform for continuation of the initiative. A major concern at this stage is whether the remaining time for the project will be sufficient to deliver this outcome, even if resources and effort and technical support are concentrated in this area ([Paragraph 126](#)).
116. Looking ahead to adoption of the SAP, the relationship between this and the 'sustainable Master Plan' anticipated in the VBA's 2010-2014 strategic plan needs further consideration and clarification at an early stage in the SAP process. The VBA regards the Master Plan as responding to its mandate for sustainable development of the basin including though investment projects (infrastructure, irrigation etc). In this context the SAP can be expected to contribute to but not to substitute for that Master Plan.
117. Finally, regarding on-the-ground results (through demonstrations and investments), progress amongst the projects is variable. The description best suited to progress across the portfolio of projects is 'designed and agreed with stress indicators and targets set' that applies for five of the six demonstration projects. The rating is thus 1/3.
118. In view of substantial concerns about delivery on the SAP and demonstration projects, the overall rating on effectiveness is **moderately unsatisfactory**. There is still scope to deliver the key project outcomes – a quality TDA and SAP – if resources and effort are focussed in these areas and if the project is extended by at least 6 months.

⁶ The outcomes used for reporting against progress at objective level in the PIR are the same as the nine project outputs, which in practice are a mixture of outputs and first order outcomes. The indicators of achievement for these outputs/outcomes are based on the outcomes listed in the original report, reflecting confusion in use of the terms in the project design.

⁷ This is a more subjective judgment since the indicators given combine the quality of the final TDA with progress towards reaching agreement and are not fully applicable.

Efficiency

Cost Effectiveness

119. The cost effectiveness of the GEF Volta project has been enhanced by its building on existing studies undertaken at the regional level and on the experience of the PMU and wider technical support in other GEF IW projects and in the integrated water resources management in West Africa. Specifically, the project has been able to draw on learning from other projects including through selection of consultants with experience in other GEF IW projects in Africa (e.g. Okavango, Niger, and Senegal basins), through working with expert trainers and resource persons such as the UNEP DEWA team specialised in development of clearing house mechanisms⁸, and by using training materials developed for sharing through IW:Learn.
120. The SAP and TDA were intended to update the preliminary TDA and SAP that in turn built on the assessments undertaken through the UNEP GEF Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA) project for the Guinea current and its catchments. Disappointingly, it has not always been possible to access data held at the national level since agencies holding such data operate on a cost recovery basis. Data gaps in the national TDAs will be partly addressed through data gathered through earlier Danida-supported IWRM initiatives, and further data is available through initiatives such as the current GLOWA (Global Change and hydrological cycle) Volta project.
121. The creation of the VBA in 2006 has provided a vehicle for regional coordination and partnership development that the project has both contributed to and benefitted from. It also allowed for the project activities and budget to be allocated amongst fewer activities and for certain activities to be transferred to other projects developed in support of the VBA such as the ECOWAS/WRCU EU project and FFEM project in support of the VBO. Opportunities to enhance synergies with the VBA are discussed elsewhere in this report ([Paragraphs 183 & 229](#)).
122. The PMU has been conscious of the need to manage financial resources carefully in the face of inflation since the project budget was approved in 2003, and of the falling dollar value. Examples of cost savings range from encouraging use of online translation services to the decision to disband the technical expert group established in 2008 in favour of a more flexible approach to technical support.

Timeliness of Execution

123. The GEF Volta Basin project was endorsed by the GEF CEO in August 2006 and was approved by the UNEP as GEF Agency and by UNOPS some nine months later in May 2007. The first cash advance to UNOPS was received on 31 July 2007. The Regional Project Coordinator (RPC) was appointed in November 2007 and the Project Management Unit (PMU) was established in January 2008 which is considered to be the project start date.
124. Changes in context since the project design – notably the creation of the VBA in 2006 – necessitated a substantial reorientation of the project in the first months of 2008. The project Inception Report was approved at the first Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting in May 2008 and the project really got off the ground in the third quarter of 2008 when contracts were issued for a series of technical studies and a project Task Force was appointed. Legal agreements with each of the country partners were concluded in September and October 2008, more than two years after GEF CEO approval of the project.
125. As seen above, there have been significant delays in delivery of key project activities and outputs. Based on the workplan in the inception report, the demonstration projects were expected to start at the beginning of 2008 (before the approval of the inception report by the PSC) and be completed by the end of 2010; the TDA was supposed to be approved by the first quarter of 2010; the SAP process was expected to start at the beginning of 2009 and the SAP was to be submitted to the PSC and Ministers of Water and Environment at the end of 2011.

⁸ A clearing house mechanism is an information-exchange mechanism to assist parties to an international agreement to facilitate sharing of information and to implement the provisions of the agreement.

126. It is clear that timing was ambitious and this is reflected in the one year⁹ no-cost extension of the project, to the end of 2012, proposed by the PSC at their second meeting in April 2010. Further explanations for delays experienced to date include:

- Unrealistic start times for the demonstration projects compounded by the need to revisit the proposals in 2009 in the light of continuing changes in context and because the situation analyses undertaken during project development were considered inadequate (See also, Annex 6).
- Administrative delays in selecting national consultants and establishing contracts as well as in delivery of results. In a number of cases draft reports were rejected due to poor quality and had to be redrafted based on extensive review comments. In other cases consultants struggled to access data and information.
- The decision to run the TDA and SAP process as sequential rather than overlapping processes as had been envisaged in the inception report and detailed methodology.
- Resignation of the TDA regional consultant in early February, in part due to ongoing concerns about timing and quality of inputs.
- Limited capacity in the PMU that has at times been overwhelmed by its workload and the need to respond simultaneously on multiple fronts.
- Finally, the unrest in Côte d'Ivoire from November 2010 into mid-2011 has blocked progress of one demonstration project and it has not yet been possible to organise the workshop for endorsement of the national TDA that is a required input for the regional TDA.

127. Based on the current workplans including the July 2010 TDA workplan, the regional TDA can be expected to take from 4-6 months to be completed and endorsed at country level while the SAP and parallel APNP development can be expected to take another two years. There is potential to save up to four months if the SAP and TDA processes are overlapped as envisaged in the Inception Report and methodology. Further time could be saved if the project partners take a streamlined approach to development of the APNP-VRBs, as was done in the WIO-LaB project¹⁰. However it should also be noted that the timing in workplan on activities completed to date has proved unrealistic and achieving this result in two years will require a concerted effort by all parties.

128. It has not been possible to carry out a systematic comparison in terms of cost and time over results ratios with other TDA/SAP projects undertaken in similar river basin projects. However the following observation in the World Bank's terminal evaluation for the Lake Chad project¹¹, a project that involved five countries and completed a SAP in five years, does put the concern about timing into context: "*This result is commendable as few Basins in Africa have been able to complete a SAP in five years.*"

129. A further project extension to accommodate completion of the SAP will have implications in terms of shifting resources from project activities to core costs that will be considered later in this report. By way of illustration, the revised budget that was approved in 2010 with the extension includes an increase in PMU staff cost of roughly 20 percent that was offset by a decrease in the budget allocated for consultancies (Paragraph 200).

130. The overall rating on efficiency is **moderately unsatisfactory**, in view of the likely requirement of a further project extension to ensure delivery of the SAP, and of the related budgetary implications.

Review of Outcomes to Impacts

⁹ Based on the date of first disbursement, this would be considered an 18-month extension. References to timing in this report generally refer to a start date of January 2008 when the PMU was established.

¹⁰ See recommendations

¹¹ <http://www.gefonline.org/ProjectDocs/M&E/PIR/2009%20PIR/WB/AFR/Completion%20Reports/ICR%20P070252.pdf>

131. The following paragraphs examine progress made towards project impacts using a Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) analysis. The 15 outcomes listed in the project Inception Report and used as indicators for the overall objective in the project logframe (Paragraph 110) reflect the foundational nature of the GEF-Volta project. They describe both outputs (studies, databases, proposals) and first order outcomes such as adoption of the SAP at Ministerial level.

132. Figure 1 in Annex 8 illustrates a causal chain towards environmental impacts for the GEF Volta Project.

- The three project strategies are based on the mutually supportive strategic objectives of the project addressing capacity building and stakeholder engagement, development of institutional frameworks and management instruments, and demonstration of measures to combat transboundary degradation.
- The project outcomes are derived from the list of outcomes in the inception report that were used as indicators of achievement for the overall objective¹². Two outcomes related to stakeholder awareness were added to reflect first order outcomes of project efforts concerned with stakeholder involvement (Outcome: *Decision makers and other stakeholders are aware of and better understand transboundary issues*) and development of a replication strategy for the demonstration projects (Outcome: *Decision makers and other stakeholders are aware of effective and replicable solutions to common transboundary issues*).

133. The SAP itself will identify the desired environmental outcomes for the VRB, which can be considered as the impacts of the project, and will describe strategies to achieve these. The intermediate states presented in the causal chain, which describe creation of an enabling environment for SAP implementation, are therefore rather generic in nature. Similarly is not yet possible to fully identify drivers and assumptions in the theory of change for SAP implementation and these again are rather generic: sufficient funding and sufficient stakeholder incentives.

134. Two of the outcomes of the original (2006) project – establishment of the VBA including its legal framework and approved feasibility study for creation of the VBO – are shown as impact drivers for further progress of the project since the project is continuing to provide support to these structures that were created through complementary initiatives. Two further impact drivers related to sufficient capacity and sufficient stakeholder engagement have been added even though these are addressed in direct project outcomes (*'national institutions had capacity to implement SAPs and APNPs', 'relevant sectors agree to sectional harmonisation'*). This is intended to flag that capacity building efforts and stakeholder awareness activities of this project are not alone sufficient to achieve these outcomes at a level that would guarantee progress towards the intermediate outcomes and impacts. In other words, the project can influence these conditions but cannot alone accomplish these.

135. Figure 2 in Annex 8 shows the results of the Review of Outcomes to Impact (ROtI). The overall likelihood of impact achievement at this stage in the project is rated on a six-point scale as **moderately unlikely** (DC). This rating is based on the following observations:

- The rating on achievement of outcomes is D, since the project outcomes have not yet been delivered. The outcomes of this foundational project were designed from the outset to feed into a continuing process with specific allocation of roles and responsibilities expected to be addressed in the SAP and through the ongoing VBA process. If the outcomes are achieved there is potential for an A rating at the end of the project.
- The C rating on intermediate states reflects that measures have been designed to move toward intermediate states have started but have not yet produced results. This is to be expected at this stage in the project life.
- Impact: A rating for achievement of stress reduction impacts in the basin is not applicable at this stage since it is too early for the institutional achievements and demonstration

¹² The number of outcomes was reduced in view of the sequential nature of some of the outcomes and because some of the listed outcomes were outputs, falling within the control of the project.

projects to have had any discernable impact. The demonstration projects are expected to deliver local impacts that are relevant and replicable at the basin level.

136. The DC and resulting **moderately unsatisfactory** presents an unduly pessimistic picture of the potential for the project to provide a foundation for future delivery of significant environmental impacts. Arguably, the ROTI rating system is not well suited to a mid-term evaluation, since progress towards intermediate states and impacts would not necessarily be expected at this relatively early stage in a project. This is particularly the case in IW foundational projects given the emphasis on planning in complex transboundary context rather than on delivery on the ground.

B. Sustainability and catalytic role

B1. Sustainability

Socio-political Sustainability

137. The Project Document identified several socio-political factors that may present a risk to sustainability, notably conflicts, civil strife, political unrest and localised disputes caused by transhumance. Political unrest in Côte d'Ivoire in 2010 and early 2011 has had impacts on project progress at the national level particularly in the implementation of the demonstration project and validation of the national TDA study. Burkina Faso was affected in the first half of 2011 by localised unrest but this has not had a discernable effect on project progress. Clearly conflicts of this kind would strongly impact project sustainability at the national level as well and reduce the effectiveness of regional processes. However, all six countries in the region are currently stable and the risk to sustainability is therefore considered to be moderate. At the regional level, collaboration over water resources can be seen as a factor in promoting regional stability.

138. A second key factor for socio-political sustainability is ownership of the SAP and APNP-VRBs at the national and regional level. At the regional level, the project has made strong efforts to engage the VBA that is committed to the SAP process and to adopting the project outcomes (See [Institutional Framework](#) below). At the national level, VRB countries were actively engaged in project development and continue to stress the relevance of the project. NFPs were expected to help assure inter-sectoral coordination within their country while NICs were established to broaden participation in the development and validation of the SAP and APNP-VRBs. However, at this stage the limited national appropriation of the project raises concerns about the extent to which countries will commit to SAP and APNP-VRB implementation. This is discussed in more detail in [Section C4](#).

139. Finally, related to the question of ownership is stakeholder engagement. The extent of stakeholder engagement at the national level including of key actors in the public sector with a significant interest in and potential to influence development in the VRB (e.g. agencies responsible for planning, agriculture and energy) has been limited to date. This is discussed in more detail in [Section C3](#). There is an opportunity to intensify stakeholder engagement during TDA finalisation and SAP development.

140. This dimension of sustainability is rated as **moderately unlikely**. National ownership and stakeholder engagement will need to be actively addressed in the SAP development phase to ensure the broad body of engagement and commitment necessary for the SAP to be successfully implemented.

Financial Resources

141. There are two main factors in financial sustainability, namely, the allocation of national funding through government budgets and the potential to raise external funding. Even at this relatively early stage in the process, there are already good prospects of international funding for SAP implementation in view of the continued interest of bilateral and multilateral donors in integrated water resource management and land degradation. VBA and UDC have identified a number of

leads in this respect¹³ and VBA has an ongoing dialogue with a number of potential partners, supported by the PMU. The six basin countries are looking ahead to SAP implementation and envisage requesting further support from GEF.

142. Despite the strong interest in SAP implementation, prospects for national budget allocations are uncertain in the context of the economic downturn and competing priorities for government funding. The basin countries have not been able to secure regular contributions to the VBA. This combined with the limited mobilisation of co-finance in this project (Paragraph 228) raises the issue as to whether countries will be able to mobilise the required counterpart funding and co-finance for a follow on project.
143. This dimension of sustainability is rated as **moderately likely** reflecting the need for and risks associated with continued external funding but also the continued interest of the international community in this area.

Institutional Framework

144. The idea of establishing a river basin organisation (RBO) with a mandate for management of the Volta Basin was at the heart of the original project that aimed *to create a regional institutional framework for the effective management of the Volta basin and to establish policy, legal and regularity frameworks for addressing transboundary concerns in the Volta basin and its downstream area*. Related activities included drafting a framework document for a Volta Basin Agency or Commission and obtaining national endorsements and baseline budgets, and development and ratification of a convention protocol for rational management of the basin.
145. In July 2006 the Ministers of the six the Volta basin countries responsible for water resources approved a Convention and Statutes for the VBA, headquartered in Ouagadougou, and appointed an Interim Executive Directorate. The Convention was signed by the Heads of State of the six countries in January 2007 and the VBA Statutes were signed by the Council of Ministers in November 2007. The Convention entered into force in August 2009 following ratification by five of the basin countries between October 2007 and June 2009. Ratification by Côte d'Ivoire has been delayed as a result of the recent political changes.
146. The Volta Basin Convention and Authority provides a framework for institutionalising the project results, including notably the TDA and SAP, and for building on these. Though not explicitly defined as such, this can be seen as the basis of a project exit strategy. The GEF Volta project has worked closely with the VBA (Paragraphs 80 & 182) and the collaboration framework signed with the VBA in 2009 anticipates VBA's endorsement of the project activities and outcomes. Looking ahead one concern is the extent to which the VBA – like other RBOs – will be able to address the full range of sectoral issues (such as energy, agriculture and forestry) affecting the basin given its primary focus on water resources.
147. The rating on this dimension of sustainability is rated as **likely** reflecting the existence and good collaboration with the VBA, as a recently created and active RBO.

Environmental Sustainability

148. The future flow of project benefits will be affected by climate change and increasing water scarcity in the basin. These issues were identified in the project document and though not specifically highlighted as issues in the TDA, the SAP can be expected to incorporate strategies that will improve ecological and socio-economic resilience in the basin as compared to the situation without any action.
149. The rating on this dimension of sustainability is rated **likely**.

¹³ Including Danida and USAID

B2. Catalytic Role and Replication

Catalytic Role

150. The GEF Volta project is foundational in nature, combining a process to establish national and regional priorities and strategies with improved knowledge and information management, enhanced stakeholder engagement and demonstrated solutions to common and widespread environmental problems in the basin.
151. The major catalytic outcome of the original project was to have a convention or protocol signed as a basis for addressing transboundary concerns in the basin. The fact that a Convention was signed and the VBA established before the project was launched has altered the focus from the high profile result of policy approval to the more mundane but nevertheless important process of policy implementation. In this respect the project has played an important role in supporting the VBA as a nascent basin organisation including in development of its strategic plan and strengthening of partnerships.
152. At the national level, the development of APNP-VRBs will complement and enrich existing integrated water resource management (IWRM) plans and processes in all six basin countries. The National Implementation Committees (NICs), while not fully functional, have provided a good framework for inter-sectoral collaboration and stakeholder engagement. The engagement of both environment and water agencies as NFPs and in the PSC is an innovative aspect of this project that may pave the way for wider sectoral engagement in the VBA and SAP implementation processes.
153. As seen above under *Financial Sustainability* there are good prospects of international funding for SAP implementation with continued interest of bilateral and multilateral donors in integrated water resource management and land degradation.

Replication

154. The foundational approach of the GEF Volta project ([Paragraph 150](#)) is broadly replicable in other transboundary river and lake basins without RBOs or with emerging RBOs and facing widespread and shared environmental issues. The RPC is planning to prepare a review of experiences and lessons from the TDA preparation process for wider dissemination and learning and has shared information on the experience to date at a range of regional and international events.
155. The demonstration projects – particularly DP2 and DP3 – are addressing solutions to common environmental issues in the VRB and in this sense are suitable for scaling up at local and national levels and for replication at the basin level. Although not highly original each of the projects has innovative aspects that could contribute to the growing bodies of experience in their areas ([Annex 6](#)). DP1 on flood management has the potential to provide a model approach for transboundary collaboration on dam operations.
156. The project workplan includes development of a replication strategy for the demonstration projects and to integrate their experiences into SAP development. However the relatively late start of the demonstration projects means it is uncertain whether this can be fully accomplished during the life of the project and this activity may need to be postponed to a later phase of the VRB process (such as development of a SAP implementation project) as well as into mainstreaming activities that would form part of a SAP implementation project.
157. The rating on catalytic role and replication is **moderately satisfactory** based on the foundational nature of the project and modest potential for catalytic outcomes.

C. Processes affecting attainment of project results

C1. Preparation and Readiness

158. The GEF Volta Basin project had an extensive preparation period starting in 1998 by the Ghana Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology which approached UNEP for support in developing the project and remained closely involved in the PDF-A and PDF-B stages of the project. A PDF-A grant was awarded in May 1999 and project development proceeded through organisation of an inter-ministerial meeting leading to the Accra Declaration on collaboration on the integrated management of the Volta Basin and the establishment of a working group comprising representatives of the six riparian countries. A PDF-B grant was awarded in February 2000 and used to undertake a preliminary TDA and causal chain analysis and develop a draft SAP. The first draft of the project brief was submitted to the GEF Council in April 2003.
159. The GEF council approved the project in May 2003 but requested that the demonstration projects be defined in more detail prior to CEO approval. A supplemental PDF-B grant was received for development of the projects in February 2005. The project was resubmitted March 2006 and received CEO endorsement in August 2006, more than three years after the project was first approved.
160. In retrospect, it is clear this extended development period affected the quality at entry of the project with repercussions for the relevance of the project objectives and institutional set up, in view of the creation of the VBA in June 2006. This in turn resulted both in a delay in agency approval and in the need for the project to be substantially revised during the inception phase. The project proponents were aware of the parallel process to create the VBA by the time the project was submitted, but with project development funds exhausted, decided it would be simpler to revise the project document during an inception phase.
161. At the national level, the project has been affected by the turnover in personnel of the VRB government partners that is associated with a loss of institutional memory. There was also some loss of confidence in the project, with one consequence being the decision by the government of Burkina Faso to incorporate the planned demonstration project into a programme supported by the MCA. The delay also had implications for the financial status of the project as a result of inflation, the falling value of the US dollar and revised co-finance commitments ([Paragraph 222](#)).
162. The Project Document included a detailed and coherent description of implementation arrangements, describing the roles of the implementing agency, executing agency, UDC, project steering committee and PMU at the project level, and of National Inter-ministerial Implementation Committees, focal points, and project coordinators at the national level. In retrospect, the role of UDC, which is named as a co-executing agency, can be seen to have been insufficiently defined and interviews conducted for this evaluation revealed that there was not a common understanding as to what had been agreed regarding its role during implementation.
163. The project's logframe, workplan and budget were revised during the inception phase to take account of the changes in context within the constraints of the approved budget and timeframe. Apart from some confusion in the logframe terminology, the resulting document was coherent and was approved by the PSC as a foundation for moving forward with project implementation. In retrospect it is evident that the project duration and consequently the budget were not sufficient to accomplish the project even with some of the original activities cancelled or reassigned as a result of the VBA creation.
164. The rating on preparation and readiness is **moderately satisfactory**, reflecting the need for substantial reorientation during the inception phase despite thorough preparation of the project as well as weaknesses in terms of clarity and feasibility of the partnership and implementation arrangements and the under-estimated project duration and budget requirements that have affected project delivery.

C2. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

Regional Level

165. The implementation and partnership arrangements described in the Inception Report were largely adopted from the Project Document, with two significant changes being i) the decision to

appoint a project technical Task Force and to scale back the anticipated support from UDC, and ii) a revision to the implementation arrangements at national level.

166. The PMU was established in January 2008, comprising of four well-qualified staff: a Regional Project Coordinator, a Scientific and Information officer, an Administrative assistant and a Bilingual Secretary. The PMU has been active and committed throughout the life of the project, and can be commended for the progress made to date in a difficult and sometimes rapidly changing operating environment. The team has at times struggled to manage peaks in their heavy workload but at the same time has sometimes regarded DGEF efforts to support their work as excessive or disempowering (See also, [Paragraph 177](#)).
167. The project has had to adapt to a wide range of developments in the basin, both prior to the inception phase and during implementation, at regional, national and local levels. This has necessitated a considerable effort in liaising with existing and incoming partners and stakeholders in order to establish how best the project can provide support. Some seemingly straightforward initiatives such as establishment of the VB-ISS or development of a demonstration project in Benin have proved time consuming in the face of interests and expectations of incoming actors.
168. The PMU reports to and is supported administratively by the UNOPS Kenya Operations Centre (KEOC) that has authority for approval and administration of all contracting and disbursements. The RPC has expressed frustration with his limited level of financial authority. For example, the PMU does not have a local bank account and has at times borrowed funds from its host organisation to cover urgent cash payments such as travel advances. However at this stage in the project the RPC has suggested there would be limited value in changing these arrangements in view of the additional administrative burden.
169. The relationship between the PMU and KEOC has at times been strained as a result of delays and miscommunications that have affected relationships with consultants and suppliers ([Paragraph 220](#)). KEOC has recognised that there have been delays in reporting and processing of payments particularly in 2009 and 2010 and is undertaking to remedy the situation including by asking the RPC to play a more proactive role in financial oversight (such as following up on contracting and payments) and by training the Administrative Assistant in use of *Atlas*¹⁴. At the same time while all parties are anxious to ensure effective delivery, there is something of a mismatch in organisational cultures between the PMU's project-focused technical orientation and KEOC's operational orientation spanning a large and diverse portfolio of projects. Both the PMU and KEOC have emphasised the importance of timely and constructive communications.
170. Management within the PMU is relatively informal. Individual quarterly workplans and task lists are developed and the team members operate in a collegial and flexible manner in order to respond to changing circumstances. There is scope to reallocate and share responsibilities amongst the well-qualified and motivated team including to ensure that the project can function effectively during the absence of key staff, notably the RPC and Administrative Assistant.
171. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) was established in early 2008. Its membership comprises the two National Focal Points from each of the VRB countries and the project implementing and executing agencies. Key partners such as VBA act as observers. The PSC held its first meeting in May 2008, with subsequent meetings in April 2010 and April 2011. The PSC reviewed and approved the project inception report as well as annual project and workplans and budgets and annual reports. Members have both reported on and maintained an overview of project progress and implementation constraints. The PSC's substantive recommendations have included the extension of the project to December 2012.

National level

172. Each of the VRB countries nominated two national focal points (NFPs); a representative of the ministry in charge of water and representative of the ministry in charge of environment. This is an innovative approach designed to promote stronger dialogue and integration between the sectors in the IWRM context. One of the NFPs was assigned by the government to serve as the national

¹⁴'Atlas' is the name given to the enterprise resource management (ERM) system used by a number of UN agencies that handles billing, contracts, grants and cash management (amongst numerous other functions).

coordinator (NC). In practice, three countries identified an NC in the water agency and three in environment. It was agreed at the first PSC meeting to recruit National Operational Focal Points (NOFPs) to support the NCs in their role, based on an update of the terms of reference included in the Inception Report. A National Implementation Committee (NIC) was established in each country with role to guide project implementation and ensure inter-sectoral coordination and as step towards sustainability including through engagement of a broad range of government agencies and civil society.

173. National implementation arrangements have functioned moderately well but have been affected in some countries by recurrent changes in nominated officers, which are not always communicated to the PMU, and by motivation issues linked to limited remuneration. Reporting on progress at the national level has been poor in four of the six countries (Paragraph 215) and is not fully representative of progress. For example, many of the project deliverables – including reports and studies, key national meetings, and the TDA review process – have been subject to separate contracts. Progress at the country level has been affected by poor performance of consultants in terms of both quality and timing of deliverables and this has had repercussions on overall progress.
174. Day to day communications between the NFPs in the water and environment agencies have reportedly worked best where there was an established working arrangement between the agencies at national level. At worst NFPs of a given country meet only in the context of the PSC meetings. One NC observed that the structure of dual focal points was rather heavy and several NFPs expressed dissatisfaction with the unbalance caused by having a single NOFP (See also, Paragraph 196). NICs have met on an occasional basis and can be expected to play a stronger role in SAP development.

Technical Support

175. A Project Task Force comprising six subject-matter experts was appointed to support the PMU on technical issues such as reviewing consultancy TORs and reports, preparing the TDA, SAP, APNP-VRBs and associated documents and providing technical and scientific advice. The Task Force has been on standby since the end of 2008 due to concerns regarding the variable quality of inputs, its cost effectiveness and whether support could be adequately accounted for. From the perspective of the PMU this has left a void in technical support from regional experts.
176. The anticipated role of UDC was scaled back significantly during the inception phase, with a fourfold reduction in the budget allocation for their support (Paragraph 219), a decision that they believe was taken without adequate consideration of the repercussions in terms of continuity of technical support to the PMU. Delays were experienced on all sides in resolving differences regarding the most appropriate institutional modalities for engaging UDC in the project and agreement was reached on UDC's roles only in mid-2010. UDC has followed up to provide technical support that builds on its extensive experience in IWRM issues in the region.
177. The RPC has stressed in annual reporting that the technical capacity within the PMU is limited and needs to be strengthened and has underscored the unsatisfactory arrangements for technical support. Organisational partners have also raised concerns as to whether the PMU has sufficient personnel.

Other Constraints

178. The VRB project is being implemented in a bilingual region with one Anglophone and five Francophone countries. The RPC and project bilingual secretary are able to operate in both English and French. Simultaneous English-French interpretation is provided at more formal events such as PSC meetings but not at smaller technical meetings, an issue highlighted by one NC as a constraint to effective communication with the PMU at such meetings. Technical reports produced in the national language and regional reports produced in the lead consultant's language have generally been translated, though the quality of translations has not always been satisfactory.

179. The rating on implementation approach and management is **moderately satisfactory**. While a number of sources of dissatisfaction have been identified, these are covered in the ratings for other sections of this report, and the overall project structure has proved functional and able to adapt to changing circumstances.

C3. Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness

Identification and Engagement of Stakeholders

180. The Project Document anticipated involvement of a wide range of sectoral interests in the public sector, local government authorities, non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), professionals, the private sector, and the public. A stakeholder participation plan was developed during project preparation indicating how the different stakeholders would be involved and at what level. The plan is available in summary form in the 2003 Project Brief. Stakeholder and institutional analyses were also undertaken as part of the preliminary TDA, though as pointed out in the 2008 review of that document ([Paragraph 82](#)), the scope of the analysis was limited and strongly skewed toward government institutions.

181. The RPC undertook an inception mission in January and February 2008 and met with national partners, organisational partners identified during the project development phase, and potential new partners, within the Volta basin region and in Paris. These meetings served as input for the project Inception Report and to establish ongoing working relationship and partnerships. Two key partners at the regional level have been the VBA and IUCN.

182. The collaboration with VBA was formalised through a collaboration framework signed in 2009 and the project was appointed to and signed the framework for the Technical and Financial Partners' Consultative Group of the VBA in April 2010. Coordination is assured through regular contact and through the participation of each partner in the others governance structures. At practical level the project has assisted the VBA in development and publication of its Strategic Plan (programme of work) for the period 2010-2014, has collaborated in the development of the VB-ISS and strengthening of the Volta Basin observatory and collaborated in organisation of a study tour to the Orange-Senqu basin in early 2011.

183. Looking ahead the relationship with the VBA will be particularly important in terms of adoption and institutionalisation of the SAP. The acting Executive Director has been consulted on and provided formal feedback and approval of the TDA process and there is an agreement in the collaboration framework that the VBA will adopt the project results but the modalities for this to occur have not been fully defined. The VBA Council of Ministers brings together Ministers responsible for Water Resources and the GEF Volta project NFPs in the water agencies are the same individuals who serve as national focal points for the VBA. In this context there is a need and potential to develop stronger linkages between the GEF Volta and VBA governance structures as a basis for SAP adoption.

184. Collaboration with IUCN has been principally through the IUCN- PAGEV Project (*Project for Improving Water Governance in the Volta basin*) that operates in Togo, Burkina Faso and Ghana and collaborates closely with the VBA. Activities have included mutual participation in the other project's steering committee meetings, and technical and financial support of the PMU to training activities and workshops. PAGEV is exploring a role in the Benin demonstration project and has helped with formulation of ideas through joint missions. The PAGEV project is expected to end in December 2011, but will be built on as part of IUCN's regional programme. IUCN welcomes the basin wide perspective of the GEF VRB project and forthcoming SAP as a framework for its activities. It has suggested that the relationship between IUCN's regional programme and the project could be formalised through an MOU.

185. The importance of broader stakeholder participation does not appear to have been fully appreciated at project level nor in the basin countries and has tended to be treated as an activity rather than a strategic approach. A specific weakness has been the failure to develop the full regional stakeholder involvement plan ([Paragraph 73](#)). The PMU did commission six national reports that were expected to include identification of relevant stakeholder groups, an approved

plan for stakeholder involvement, a needs assessment for capacity building, and an approved operational plan for information, education/training and public awareness. In practice just three of these plans were produced (for Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo). After one year, the activity was transferred to the VBA which is now conducting a study on the involvement of stakeholders in water resources management as part of the establishment of the Observatory, which is supported by the French GEF (FFEM). This is a worthwhile activity but has taken the focus away from providing guidance to the PMU and national partners in implementing the GEF Volta project.

186. Nevertheless, a range of regional professionals have been involved in the background studies and TDA development as consultants and advisors. The regional TDA starting meeting involved government representatives, researchers and experts spanning a range of disciplines, and regional institutions. Draft TDAs for each country were reviewed through reader groups representing different sectoral interests. Based on the records available the validation workshops were well attended though with participation biased towards government agencies including both technical agencies and strategic agencies such as finance. NICs have also been appointed in each country; these were expected to meet annually but appear to have met only infrequently to date. It will be important to maintain and build on this level of engagement during the SAP development process in order to ensure relevance, generate ownership and identify incentive-based approaches¹⁵ as well as regularity and investment-based approaches¹⁶ to implementation.
187. Finally at local level, local government authorities, national and local NGOs and branches of international NGOs such as *Eau Vive*, and CBOs have been involved in the demonstration projects. There has been limited engagement of the private sector except as a supplier. However, lessons learned through constructive engagement of the private sector in Kara may have wider applicability.

Public Awareness Activities

188. There have been limited efforts towards public awareness in this project with efforts to date targeted towards specific stakeholder groups such as the communities involved in the demonstration project areas, potential partners, and professional and technical audiences. This is pragmatic given the broad thematic scope and vast geographical area covered by the project.
189. The project website was created in 2008 and is currently hosted by the IW:Learn site that also provides background information about the project on its project database. The English and French language project website provides informative and well-presented content on the project background and includes project documentation up to 2008. The website link to the GEF Volta 'Geonetwork' is not yet functional. At present it is not possible for the PMU to update the project website remotely and this is reflected in some sections of the site being out of date; an issue that is reportedly being resolved through changes to the IW:Learn platform.
190. Other communication efforts include:
- Presentation of the project at a wide range of regional and international venues;
 - Production of stickers, leaflets, and information folders in English and French, distributed at meetings and via the NFPs;
 - Participation of journalists in opening and/or closing sessions of meetings and events;
 - Participation of the RPC in radio and television interviews around events such as World Water Day;
 - Planning of a documentary film suitable for national television.
191. The overall rating on stakeholder engagement can be considered **moderately satisfactory**, reflecting the absence of a planned and systematic approach to engagement of stakeholders. It will be important to engage a full range of stakeholders in SAP development in order to generate ownership of the plan and ensure that this can be implemented through combined actions of the public and private sector as well as user groups.

¹⁵ e.g. Based on demonstrated short to mid-term economic benefits of improved management

¹⁶ e.g. investment in infrastructure such as wastewater treatment

C4. Country Ownership and Drivenness

192. Country ownership during the development phase of the project was strong, with the project initiated within the VRB region (Paragraph 158) and the VRB countries developing and signing the Accra Declaration, expressing their commitment to joining forces towards formulation of a strategic action plan and framework agreement of co-operation for the integrated management of the Volta River Basin. Letters of endorsement from the GEF Operational Focal Points for each of the riparian countries were received in February and March 2003 and were submitted with the project brief in 2003 and project document in 2006.
193. The Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) signed with each of the VRB countries in September and October 2008 reiterated the countries' commitment to the project, setting out the responsibility of each country and reconfirming the revised levels of co-finance agreed during the project inception phase in the first half of 2008 (Paragraph 220). The identification of the lead agency for the project was undertaken at national level. National coordinators and NOFPs were appointed accordingly, with the other sectoral agency appointing a NFP (Paragraph 172).
194. Despite this promising start, the drive and vision for the project now appear to rest primarily with the PMU and key partners such as VBA rather than with the VRB countries. Taken alone, the low level of reporting against the MOAs (Paragraph 215) and uncertainty around co-financing commitments (Paragraph 227) present a rather negative picture of the extent to which countries have assumed responsibility for the project. On the other hand, project activities have advanced in all six countries with a significant milestone in five countries being the validation of the TDA and there are some high levels of individual commitment to the project. All six countries have participated regularly and actively in the PSC meetings.
195. In terms of national governance arrangements, although National Implementation Committees (NICs) have met only occasionally, task groups have been established for activities such as the TDA review. The breadth and depth of engagement of other stakeholders such as NGOs has been limited outside the demonstration projects (See C3 above).
196. A number of reasons have been presented for the limited appropriation of the project:
- *Extended start up period:* Government agency staff and configurations have changed since the project was designed and institutional memory and initial political commitment have been diluted. At the same time the relevance of and potential political dividend from the project have diminished with creation of the VBA prior to the project commencement.
 - *Low visibility of the project:* With its focus on transboundary issues, the VRB project has low visibility compared to national projects and it is more difficult to justify and explain national involvement to decision makers. This has been exacerbated by the late start of the demonstration projects that would normally provide a tangible focus for presenting the wider initiative.
 - *Management style associated with lack of trust:* Several respondents suggested the project management has been top down in nature, undermining the responsibility of the countries and discouraging their taking any initiative. Some activities – such as development of a revised demonstration project in Benin – do appear to have been delayed as it is unclear whether the PMU or NC is expected to take the initiative. At least one respondent suggested it would have been preferable to have the MOAs structured around outputs (including the full set of national studies) rather than inputs (such as staff time and meetings costs), though arguably the approach taken is more compatible with an adaptive approach to overall project implementation and to ensuring coordinated and synchronised delivery of key outputs.
 - *Inability to mobilise co-finance or flexible in kind resources at activity level:* Some national focal point institutions have faced difficulty in mobilising resources to enable them to visit the

basin area, which in some cases is far from the national capital, and to support the activities of national consultants.

- *Poor motivation:* National project representatives (NCs, NFPs and/or NOFPs) from several VRB countries raised the question of motivation of key staff on this project linked to remuneration, an issue that has been raised at the three PSC meetings. The project pays a salary for an NOFP, as assistant to the NC, but there are no direct benefits to the NC or to the NFP in the second focal point institution. This is because these positions are government employees and top-ups are not permitted by GEF regulations. At least two national coordinators presented the lack of motivation as a severe risk to the project (with reference to the other VRB countries).

197. The rating on country ownership and drivenness at this stage in the project progress is **moderately unsatisfactory**, in view of the limited appropriation of the project which is viewed as presenting a substantial risk to achieving the project outcomes.

C5. Financial Planning and Management

Application of Standards

Budgeting

198. The Project Document includes a detailed budget as well as a summary budget organised by project component and activity as part of its incremental cost analysis. The total budget including the PDF-A and B costs together with the project management cost, corresponded to the total GEF financing of US\$5 719 880.

199. A revised budget was prepared as part of the Inception Report showing budget allocation both by specific objective and by year. Operational budget lines such as 'consultants', 'travel', and 'meetings' were itemised to the level of individual project outputs. While the total budget was the same as that in the project document, the component budget lines were significantly altered with funding for component 1 roughly halved and funding for components 2 and 3 increased by around 40% each.

200. The budget was revised to cover a five year period in 2009. Corresponding increases in the salaries for PMU staff (of roughly 20%) was more than offset by a decrease in the allocation for consultants. Other notable changes included a reduction in the communications budget line of some 20%, and elimination of the budget for activities related to collaboration with regional research organisations and projects, and for a joint workshop with UNESCO. An allocation was made for a project vehicle which was actually purchased in 2010 but which was not yet servicing the project as of June 2011.

201. Further incremental changes to the budget were made in the 2010 Annual Budget, where a notable change was a reduction of 24% in the budget for the three demonstration projects, with a corresponding reallocation in component totals, and in the 2011 Annual Budget.

202. [Table 9.1 in Annex 9](#) shows a summary of budget changes and includes the ratio between budget lines presented in 2011 and those in the Inception Report. In many cases the variance, as a result of incremental changes, is over the 20% threshold and would normally have required a formal budget revision (See [Paragraph 239](#)). Budget lines at activity level have sometimes been renamed or added, making direct comparisons with previous budgets difficult.

Expenditure and Reporting

203. [Table 9.2 in Annex 9](#) provides a breakdown of expenditure of the GEF grant by budget line component as of 30 April 2011, with both the Inception Report budget and 2011 Budget presented as reference points. Expenditure from January to April 2011 is based on data in the latest of five cash advance requests to UNEP, dated 31 May 2011.

204. In terms of items that stand out for expenditure higher than or lower than what may be expected:
- The rate of expenditure on project personnel is high relative to the 2008 budget, but is more or less on track based on the 2011 Budget that reflects the project extension proposed in 2011.
 - Expenditure on MOAs has been low and reflects the limited reporting on and, consequently, limited disbursement of funds committed under MOAs signed with the partner countries ([Paragraph 215](#)) as well as the late start of the demonstration projects and agreement with UDC. However funding on this budget line is now quite heavily committed.
 - Expenditure on non-expendable items is high in view of the decision to purchase a project vehicle;
 - Substantial savings have been made on miscellaneous expenses and there is potential to reallocate funding for this component after taking the allowances for audits and evaluations into consideration.
205. UNOPS provides quarterly financial reports as well as certified annual financial reports to UNEP. UNEP has reported significant delays in receipt of financial reports that in turn led to a delay in the processing of cash requests since it was not always possible to verify proper usage of previously transferred funds when reviewing a request for the next tranche of the budget.
206. Reported expenditure up to 30 April 2011 of US\$2 663 579 corresponds to 50 percent of the GEF financing available for implementation. Expenditure in 2008 was 50 percent of the amount envisaged for that year in the Inception Report, and increased in 2009 and 2010 to 55 percent and 63 percent respectively of the amounts envisaged in the workplans for those years.
207. There have been four cash advances to UNOPS based on cash advance statements submitted to UNEPS totalling US\$2 621 117. The fifth advance based on the payment request submitted on 1 June was being processed at the time of evaluation. UNEP also retained funds in 2011 towards the mid-term evaluation.

Project Revisions

208. The project Inception Report was approved by the PSC at its first meeting in May 2008. At its second meeting in April 2010, the PSC recommended to UNOPS and UNEP to extend the project to the end of 2012 and approved the associated 2010 budget covering the period to December 2012.
209. There have not yet been any formal project revisions or extensions formalising the PSC decisions. The RPC had expected UNEP to instigate the process while the FMO in UNEP has advised that this needs to be initiated through a formal request from UNOPS with evidence that the content has been approved by the PSC. While the FMO did receive PSC-approved budget revisions, he was not able to complete the due diligence process required to formalise the budget revision in the absence of up to date expenditure reports from UNOPS.

Audit

210. Financial provision was made in the Inception Report budget for audits in year 2 and year 4 of the project. No audit has yet been undertaken and funds are allocated in the 2011 Budget for audits in 2011 and 2012.

Other Administrative Processes

211. The cover sheet of the project document was co-signed by UNOPS on 10 May 2007 and by UNEP on 22 May 2007. The project was anticipated to run from June 2007 to July 2011. The RPC was employed from 1 December 2007, starting one week earlier on a voluntary basis, and spent four weeks in Nairobi at the start of his contract to meet with colleagues in UNOPS KEOC and UNEP and discuss administrative issues. The PMU was established in January 2008, comprising three additional and well-qualified staff ([Paragraph 165](#)).

212. The PMU is hosted by the Water Resources Commission in Ghana which provides office space that was renovated for this purpose. There is no specific agreement covering this hosting arrangement, which is considered to be covered by the MOA signed in September 2008 but there was an exchange of letters in July 2008 confirming the PMU's use of office space and contribution to utilities.
213. MOAs with the VRB country partners were signed in September and October 2008 covering the period 1 August 2008 to 31 January 2012. NOFPs were recruited at the national level based on TOR developed by the PMU and updated following the first PSC meeting. Their salaries are covered under the MOA budgets.
214. The MOAs include a calendar for payments in eight tranches with the first payment based on signature of the agreements and subsequent payments based on periodic submission of progress and expenses reports. Though not explicitly required in the MOA, the VRB countries also provided brief monthly progress reports in 2008, a practice that only Benin has continued up to 2011.
215. Based on the documentation provided by the PMU, the situation as regards reporting is rather mixed:
- Benin has submitted five expenses reports with supporting documentation according to the agreed schedule. Expenditure has been lower than anticipated and UNOPS has only needed to replenish funding in response to three of the reports.
 - The funds supposed to be advanced to Mali in response to its fourth report were sent to a bank account in Benin; a situation that has taken several months to resolve during which time the project has functioned on a goodwill basis.
 - Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana have submitted two reports and Burkina Faso just one.
 - The second financial report from Togo was rejected since the supporting documentation was insufficient. The NC for Togo has observed that suppliers are reluctant to sign the vouchers that are required for reporting under the MOU if they have already signed a standard receipt for payments.
216. The PMU organised a training session for NOFPs on UNOPS procedures, rules and regulations in November 2009 in view of the challenges experienced with administrative issues. However there is still some tension around the documentation requested for country reporting (receipts and vouchers) which is regarded by at least one country partner as indicative of UNOPS' lack of trust in the VRB partners since it was observed that the PMU is not required to observe the same level of financial justification.
217. Over forty consulting contracts have been issued during the course of the project. Detailed terms of reference have been developed by the PMU for each consulting assignment and open recruitment processes administered with significant input by the host country in the choice of consultants employed to undertake national studies. Contracts have been issued by UNOPS KEOC, copied to the PMU. Consultants have sometimes continued work despite contracts having expired. There appears to have been limited recourse where consultants have failed to deliver adequate and timely deliverables, though at least three contracts (for national stakeholder reports) were cancelled.
218. Some NCs requested that they be copied on the contracts issued to national consultants so that they are aware of the nature and timing of deliverables that they are expected to sign off on, and are better placed to deal with any complaints from consultants related to late payments.
219. The Project Document anticipated that UNOPS would subcontract UDC at the start of the project for some 20 man months of technical support. The budget was reduced by 75% in the Inception Report. A contract was concluded with UDC in August 2010 covering four months support for the project and related travel costs.

220. Payments are made by UNOPS KEOC based on financial reporting according to PMU memoranda approving expense reports based on the MOAs (Paragraph 215), invoicing from suppliers, and on confirmation of delivery of services by consultants. The processes put in place to assure timely approval of expenditures and payments have not always functioned to the satisfaction of the various parties leading to frustration on all sides, complaints from suppliers, and in some cases friction between consultants and the PMU. This appears to be due to a range of reasons, including last minute requests for approval, procedural delays compounded by a failure to communicate the urgency of payments, inconsistent payment methods (using suppliers bank accounts or channelling payments through the UNDP Atlas system), and at least one misdirected payment.

Co-financing

221. The Project Document identifies total co-financing, including funding for the PDF-B phase, of US\$11 022 231 or 65 percent of the anticipated total cost (Table 3). The US\$7 639 040 figure for total country co-financing stated at the front of the Project Document was based on an estimation of co-finance included in Annex 1 of the Project Document. However, this total was not supported by the letters of support received from countries that represent a total pledge of US\$6 006 141, or in other words, a shortfall of US\$1 632 899. Specifically, the letter from Burkina Faso does not specify the amount of co-finance, the letter from Mali specifies a significantly lower figure (in CFA), and the letter from Côte d'Ivoire specifies a higher figure.

222. The co-finance total was amended in the Inception Report to US\$6 601 229, or 53% of the anticipated total project cost¹⁷. The revised figure for country co-finance in the inception report, of USD 3 424 739, is reflected in the Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) signed with each of the basin countries in August and September 2008. However the letters of commitment from participating countries were not renewed and, apparently, no records were kept as to how partner contributions were initially estimated.

223. The main deviation from the Project Document is in the co-finance pledge from Ghana, reduced from nearly US\$4 million to US\$690 000 since Ghana's anticipated support to hosting the VBA was obviated when the Authority was established in Burkina Faso. Other notable differences include a decrease in funding anticipated from Burkina Faso of nearly US\$1.2 million (based on the figure provided in the Project Document Annex) and an increase in funding anticipated from Cote d'Ivoire of US\$365 000 to correspond with the amount stated in the letter of support. These totals do not take account of separate co-financing anticipated in the MOAs for the demonstration projects signed with Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mali, which is not yet being tracked.

224. The Inception Report anticipates co-financing totalling US\$3 053 500 from organisational partners, notably IUCN (less than anticipated in the Project Document), the ECOWAS Water Resources Coordination Unit (WRCU) EU project (more than anticipated in the Project Document as a result of the falling value of the US dollar relative to the Euro), and SIAAP (not anticipated in the Project Document).

225. Table 9.3 in Annex 9 and Table 3 below provide a summary of the co-financing that has materialised during the course of the project based on information received by the PMU up to 15 July 2011. Co-financing information was compiled by the PMU based on correspondence with partners and using information recorded by the country partners in a pro-forma spreadsheet provided by the PMU that is completed and submitted to the PMU at the end of each calendar year. The co-financing reported to date of US\$2 939 829 amounts to 45% of the total amount anticipated in the Inception Report.

226. The total co-finance raised from the VRB countries as of 31 December 2010 was US\$1 555 878, representing to 45% of the amount pledged in the MOAs, with amounts for individual countries varying from 16% (Mali) to 56% (Côte d'Ivoire). The proportion of cash co-finance raised in three years is just 7% of the US\$800 926 pledged, while the proportion of in kind co-finance raised is 57% of the US\$2 626 803 pledged over lifetime of the project.

¹⁷ The figures provided in the Inception Report do not include the unspecified co-finance for the PDF-B Phase that was included in the co-finance summary in the Project Document (US\$151 000).

Table 3. Summary of Co-finance

Cash and In-Kind Co-financing :	Anticipated in Project Document	Anticipated in Inception Report/MOAs	Reported (as of 15 July 2011)¹⁸
VRB Countries			
Benin	418 200	418 200	137'388
Burkina Faso	1 463 658	267 353	121'025
Côte d'Ivoire	550 000	915 000	509'170
Ghana	3 888 270	690 000	306'045
Mali	541 452	314 270	48'825
Togo	777 460	822 906 ¹⁹	433'426
Sub-total	7 639 040	3 427 729	1'555'878
Other Sources			
Government of Czech Republic	50 000	50 000	0
Government of Hungary	10 000	10 000	0
UNEP	60 000	60 000	Not reported
IUCN	1 612 191	620 000	Not reported
ECOWAS /WRCU EU project	1 500 000	1 962 500	472 694
SIAAP	-	471 000	911 256
PDF B (all sources)	151 000	-	-
Sub-total	3 383 191	3 173 500	1 383 950
TOTAL	11 022 231	6 601 229	2 939 829

227. All six VRB countries have modified the figures for anticipated co-finance in the spreadsheets that they have provided to the PMU, resulting in reduced totals. The revised total of US\$2 809 441 represents a reduction of 41% in the cash co-finance anticipated the MOAs, and of 7% in the in kind co-finance. In three cases, this reduction is offset by national co-financing anticipated in the MOAs signed with for the demonstration projects that is not yet being tracked.

228. Several VRB country partners have reported difficulties in mobilising cash co-finance. This is partly a result of the global economic downturn but also because countries have not taken the required actions to incorporate the project into their own departmental planning and budget requests, with some suggesting this requires further action on the part of UNOPS or UNEP²⁰. Some noted that this was problematic in view of the relatively low visibility of the project. Two countries reemphasised a point raised at the 3rd PSC meeting, namely that they need to be able to present data on the value of the project at national level in order to get co-finance earmarked. The RPC has been reluctant to provide such estimates since this fails to recognise the added value of the project at regional level.

229. One solution proposed by UNEP at the 3rd PSC meeting is that country contributions to the VBA be considered as a (cash) contribution to the country co-finance commitments. The VBA Acting Executive Director is very supportive of this suggestion that may serve to encourage countries to pay their VBA dues.

230. The co-finance commitment of the Government of the Czech Republic was intended for the calendar year 2003, and efforts to follow this up in the inception phase were unsuccessful. The 2003 co-finance letter from the government of Hungary indicated that funds had already been

¹⁸ See Table 9.3 in Annex 9 for comments. IUCN has subsequently reported on co-financing for the period 2004-2008.

¹⁹ This figure is taken from the 2008 MOA; the figure given in the earlier inception report summary table is US\$819 916.

²⁰ The Director of DGEF did follow up this issue in writing to the Ministers of Environment of each of the VRB countries in 2009.

transferred but there is no available record of a funding agreement, or whether or how these funds were used during project development.

231. Forty four per cent of the anticipated co-finance from organisational partners has been reported on to date. As of 15 July 2011, there was not yet any formal documentation related to co-finance from UNEP or IUCN. Co-finance from the ECOWAS/WRCU EU project is lower than anticipated since the project closed before activities were completed and unspent funds were returned to the donor. However, the ECOWAS WRCU has also reported some US\$266 000 in parallel co-finance based on support it provided to the VBA in the lead up to and during the EU project. The reported co-financing from SIAAP for the demonstration project activities in Kara is nearly twice the expected amount.
232. While there is a medium to substantial risk that country and partner co-financing will fall short of the expected amount, there are already some clear sources of leveraged funding at the individual donor level, including some US\$440 000 in additional funding from SIAAP, a figure that may increase in the coming years. UDC has committed to in kind and cash support respectively for expert input (US\$25 000) and travel costs (US\$4 375) in the contract it signed with UNOPS in August 2010. The demonstration projects may leverage additional partner funding, notably in Benin where there is interest from a number of potential partners including the national office of the Global Water Partnership. Finally, potential for leveraged funding for follow up activities is discussed in [Paragraph 141](#).
233. The rating on financial planning and management is **moderately unsatisfactory**. This rating reflects a number of concerns including, whether the amount of co-finance anticipated in the inception report will be realised, the failure to formalise the project extension and budget revisions, weak country reporting, as well as delays in reporting and receipt of project payments that have at times strained relationships amongst project partners. UNOPS is committed to and has already undertaken steps to improve the latter issue.

C6. UNEP Supervision and Backstopping

234. The Project Document and Inception Report include a brief definition of the roles and responsibilities of UNEP as implementing agency, including: overall project supervision to ensure consistency with GEF and UNEP policies and procedures; provision of guidance on linkages with related UNEP and GEF funded activities; regular liaison with the executing agency on substantive and administrative matters, and provision of assistance and advice to the executing agency on project management (e.g. revisions of work plan and budgets) and policy guidance in relation to GEF procedures, requirements and schedules; clearance and transmission of financial and progress reports to the GEF Secretariat; review and approval of all substantive reports produced in accordance with the schedule of work; and, participation in meetings and workshops as appropriate
235. Two successive Task Managers (TM) within the UNEP Division of GEF Coordination (DGEF) provided for oversight and accountability throughout the duration of the project, with the support of a Fund Management Officer (FMO). In early 2011, the TM and FMO were reassigned to the Freshwater & Marine Ecosystems Branch in the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) as a result of internal restructuring in UNEP. This has not had any impact on the nature or level of project supervision during the first half of 2011.
236. While no specific supervision plans have been developed for this project, the TM has been actively engaged in the project at all stages. The first TM was closely involved in development of the project inception report and the inception phase appears to have been well supported with staff recruited, a fully functional office established, the PSC established and operational, and the Inception Report approved by the PSC. The TM has attended each of the subsequent PSC meetings and has taken the opportunity to meet with the PMU when in Ghana for other project meetings²¹ as well as to visit the demonstration project sites.

²¹ The Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem project is based in Ghana and has organised several meetings in Accra

237. Two Project Implementation reports (PIRs) have been completed covering the periods to June 2009 and June 2010. The PIR report for 2011 was being prepared at the time the evaluation was conducted. The TM has provided detailed feedback on preparation of the PIRs and used these as a basis to discuss progress issues. The ratings are generally frank though the use of 'not applicable' ratings in 2010 for activities that had not started was sometimes misleading given that a number of these activities should by then have started according to the latest workplan. The TM rated a significant number of risks in the 2010 PIR at a higher level than the PMU, reflecting her wider experience of GEF projects ([Paragraph 256](#)).
238. The TM has taken an interest in key project processes including development of TOR for key consultancies such as the TDA development that could benefit from her wider experience in GEF project oversight, at times presenting perspectives on good practice that have proved challenging and led to some push back from the RPC. The PMU has expressed a concern that the TM's involvement has led to delays particularly during the changeover phase in the first half of 2009, which at times appears to reflect a different understanding of expectations²². Nevertheless it should be noted that the TM has reported that she has been unable to give the project as much attention as she would like in view of her current heavy workload.
239. One area where supervision or at least communication, appears to have fallen short is in transmission of the administrative requirements related to the project extension and associated revision of the budget in 2010 ([Paragraph 209](#)).
240. The rating on UNEP supervision and backstopping is **moderately satisfactory**. This moderate rating is intended to highlight that there is insufficient flexibility in the support system to accommodate providing sufficient time to fully address the range of issues experienced in this project. It also reflects concerns about the effectiveness of communication related to GEF procedures, notably with respect to project revisions and formalisation of the extension recommended by the PSC.

C7. Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E Design

241. The original project logframe matrix had an unusual structure with a series of outputs contributing to each of three project components (worded as objectives), that in turn roll up to an overall objective, four environmental outcomes (or impacts), and four outputs. The Project Document also included more classical logical frameworks for each of the demonstration projects.
242. The logframe was substantially revised during the inception phase. The long term objective was reformulated and the original three components were restructured into three specific objectives that took account of the creation the VBA and also set out to eliminate the overlaps in the original components. Outputs/results are detailed for each of the objectives. The resulting framework is logical and coherent but there is some confusion in terminology and as a consequence outcomes have been taken as equivalent to outputs in the PIRs. Similar logframes were developed for each of the demonstration projects.
243. Objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) as well as sources of verification are provided for each of the outputs/results, and at overall objective level. The indicators are specific, relevant, and in most cases timebound (or can be assumed to refer to the end of the project). Indicators at the outputs level are generally measurable. The indicators for the overall project objective were attainable based on the planned inputs and activities of the project and assumptions set out in the logframe, though in retrospect some of these assumptions now look too optimistic. Some of the indicators of impact for demonstration projects 2 and 3 were not realistic given the timeframe of the projects and would also have been expensive to measure.

²² For example, related to the approval of technical reports.

244. There is evidence that a detailed baseline²³ for the project was developed in the incremental cost analysis attached to the 2003 Project Brief. Baseline levels for the OVIs were not included in the Inception Report but were added to the PIR template that was first completed in 2009. Mid-term and end-of-project targets were added at outcome level but are not very informative, as can be seen in [Section A1 /Effectiveness](#).
245. Arrangements for monitoring, reporting and evaluation are described in Section 6 of the Project Document and Annex E of the Inception Report, which were based on the standard template for GEF projects. The M&E plan identifies responsible parties and a timeframe for the principal M&E activities described, namely the half yearly and annual project reports (APR), tripartite review, PIRs, and mid-term and final evaluations, terminal report, financial reports and audit. The monitoring and reporting section also describes roles and responsibility of UNOPS and UNEP related to management reports (half-yearly progress reports, terminal report, and substantial reports) and financial reports (quarterly financial reports and co-financing reports). Partners are bound in legal agreements to collaborate in the audit. The plan thus places an emphasis on upwards reporting rather than on the monitoring of activities, results, threats and opportunities required for effective day-to-day management of the project both at the regional and national level.
246. The project mid-term and terminal evaluations were anticipated in the Project Document which states that the generic terms of reference for a terminal evaluation, included as an appendix, would be adapted as appropriate.
247. The rating on M&E design and arrangements is **moderately satisfactory**, by following the prevailing template for M&E in GEF projects which lacks provisions for monitoring to inform day-to-day management of the project.

Budgeting and funding for M&E activities

248. The Inception Report included a detailed costing of M&E activities as Annex E, totalling US\$640 000 (excluding staff time). This corresponds to 5.1% of the total budget and 10.9% of the GEF funding. Additional funding for evaluation and reporting has been allocated in the budgets for each of the demonstration projects.
249. The budgets for reporting and communication, PSC meetings, evaluations and audits – budget lines that can be broadly related to M&E – have been incrementally revised during the annual budget revisions with a decrease in funding available for reporting, a small increase in funding for the PSC, an increase in funding for the mid-term and terminal evaluation, and a small decrease in funding for audits.
250. The amount of funding allocated to M&E is adequate given the process orientation of project activities and the rating on budgeting and funding for M&E is **satisfactory**.

M&E Implementation.

251. The M&E system envisaged in the Project Document and Inception Report is largely operational and all required reports are being produced. This includes three annual reports covering calendar years 2008, 2009 and 2010; two Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports were in 2009 and 2010 (with the 2011 report in preparation) and financial reports as described in [Paragraph 205](#). Three meetings of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) have been organised with the first of the meetings in April 2008 serving as the project inception meeting.
252. Day to day tracking of progress, opportunities and threats as a basis for guiding day-to-day management efforts is undertaken through regular contact with project partners driven by individual activities. As seen above ([Paragraph 214](#)), only Benin has continued to provide monthly reports based on the system established when MOAs were first signed.

²³ This baseline analysis addresses management scenarios with and without the project intervention and does not include indicators of environmental status as such.

253. At the agency level, the TM in UNEP has maintained record of progress relative to the GEF 3 International Waters Tracking Tool (against Strategic Priority 2, *New Waters/Foundational Projects*). UNOPS has recently instigated a quarterly engagement assurance report – with emphasis placed on client satisfaction. The reports are internal to UNOPS and were not available for this evaluation.
254. The PIRs include a summary of the financial status of the project as well as progress reporting with ratings against outcomes, relative to the baseline, mid-term and end of project targets, and against activities based on a percentage scale for implementation status. The reports are largely accurate though the implementation status (percent) for some activities appears exaggerated in the 2010 report and, as noted above ([Paragraph 237](#)), the use of N/A ratings is sometimes misleading.
255. The project logframe identifies a number of assumptions, including quite common assumptions such as *willingness of partners and stakeholders to collaborate* and more specific assumptions such as *willingness of national authorities to share data*. The latter assumption proved rather optimistic in some cases. Risks identified at the project management level (Output 1.1) included *riparian countries failing to participate fully* and *GEF funds not adequately complemented by other donors and country commitments*, both of which are a current concern ([Paragraph 194 & 228](#)). In addition the assumption of *a clear line of responsibility to ensure project implementation* has been affected by the perception of lack of confidence between the different parties (e.g. [Paragraphs 166, 196](#)).
256. Risks are also addressed in the PIR which considers ratings on a set of internal and external risks were. Three risks were rated as substantial by the RPC and TM in 2010: *co-finance, capacity issues, and social, cultural and economic factors* (with reference to the economic situation). The TM rated some internal risks as more serious than the RPC, including *workflow* that the TM rated as a substantial risk, *budget, and financial management* that she rated as moderate risks. The PIRs have not yet included a risk management plan.
257. The rating on M&E implementation based on the original M&E plan is **moderately satisfactory**, reflecting good overall reporting but the absence of a systematic approach to tracking project progress on a day to day basis and of a system for risk management.

D. Complementarities with the UNEP Medium Term Strategy & Programme of Work

Linkage to UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and POW 2010-2011

258. The GEF Volta project was formulated some eight years prior to the publication of the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2010-2013 and related Programme of Work (PoW) for the period 2010-2011. Nevertheless, there are complementarities with the expected accomplishments outlined in the Strategy under a number of themes. Specifically the project is expected to contribute to the following accomplishments:
- Under the *climate change* objective: increased carbon sequestration as a result of reduced land degradation;
 - Under the *ecosystem management* objective: integration of river basin management, as an ecosystem management approach, into development and planning processes; increased capacity utilise ecosystem management tools such as hydrological models; and, realignment of environmental programmes and financing to address degradation of priority ecosystem services.
 - Under the *environmental governance* objective: strengthened institutions for achievement of environmental priorities, through support to and adoption of the SAP by the VRB; and, mainstreaming of environmental sustainability in national development processes through the APNP-VRBs, and improved access of stakeholders to science and police advice through the VB-ISS.

Alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP)

259. The project is contributing in a general sense to Objective A of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building adopted in December 2004, in strengthening the capacity of governments of developing countries to achieve their environmental goal, targets and objective as a result of individual and institutional capacity building. Technology support (Objective B) has been provided to the VBA and VBO through the VB-ISS. The project has also encouraged a participatory and multi-stakeholder approach with full national ownership (Objectives D and F); an area that is expected to be strengthened during development of the SAP.

Gender

260. There is only limited evidence of consideration during the project design of gender inequalities, the specific vulnerabilities of different genders and age groups, and the distinct roles that men and women can play in natural resource management, and in the activities of the project. The Project Document refers in general terms to women's issues being a priority in the water sector and identifies representatives of women's groups amongst the primary stakeholders in the public and private sector. In addition the gender approach was reported to be one of 16 criteria applied during identification and selection of the demonstration projects though the actual scoring results are not available. The Project Document for DP3 (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) includes detailed consideration of the role of women in the project. Neither gender nor the specific concerns of women and children are raised in the Inception Report.

261. Consideration of gender-specific concerns has been incorporated into the implementation of the demonstration projects in Bole, Ghana (DP3) and Kara, Togo (DP2). Specifically, the need to consider equality amongst men and women was considered in the allocation of remunerated responsibilities in the Bole project and an existing women's association is expected to play a role in coordinating women's engagement at the local level including by planting species cultivated primarily by women, with potential long term effect. In Kara, women were found to be more receptive to education and awareness efforts related to sanitation and have been targeted accordingly in communications and awareness work. The challenge of gender mainstreaming was raised at the GEF Volta PSC in the context of lessons from the IUCN PAGEV programme and will need to be taken into consideration in community level projects in Côte d'Ivoire and Benin.

262. In terms of monitoring, none of the project indicators at the regional level specifically considered women issues but there is one indicator related to involvement of women for DP3. No specific lessons related to gender have been raised under the relevant sections in the PIRs.

South-South Cooperation

263. As a regional project the GEF Volta project is designed to increase cooperation amongst the Volta basin countries including through its support to the VBA and to the VBO that are long term platforms for South-South Cooperation. Technical meetings related to the TDA process as well as the PSC meetings have provided formal and informal face-to-face opportunities for exchange of knowledge.

264. In early 20110, the project facilitated a study tour involving the VBA and other regional partners to the Orange-Senqu basin in Southern Africa.

265. The paired demonstration projects were explicitly designed to facilitate cooperation including through sharing of technology and know-how amongst basin countries. In addition the demonstration projects have provided an opportunity to engage other partners such as IUCN-PAGEV, *Eau Vive* and the Global Water Partnership who bring in a wealth of experience from programme activities in the sub-region and beyond.

266. At the project management level, there have been opportunities for exchanges of knowledge with other International Waters projects through the IW:Learn website and meetings and through UNOPS project managers meetings.

Part III. Conclusions and Recommendations

A. Conclusions

267. The full size project, *Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area*, is a foundational project designed to produce a Strategic Action Programme for equitable and sustainable management of water resources and other connected natural resources in the Volta River Basin (VRB) and its downstream coastal area as well as to contribute to the creation of enabling conditions for its implementation.
268. The project was designed to be implemented in four years and has been extended once to December 2012, implying an operational phase of five years. This mid-term evaluation was undertaken three and a half years into implementation of the project and three years after the adoption of the project Inception Report by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
269. The key questions for this evaluation concern how well the project is progressing towards achievement of its three specific objectives, challenges to project implementation and timing (Paragraph 56). Progress towards each of the project objectives is addressed in Part II Section A of this report while explanatory factors and challenges are addressed in Part II Section C.
270. The *moderately unsatisfactory* ratings on *attainment of outputs and planned results* and *effectiveness* (Part II Section A) reflect significant concerns regarding delivery of activities and outputs and whether the project is on track to deliver its objectives, particularly objectives 2 and 3, within its current timeframe.
271. It is clear that the four year duration of the project was optimistic, since five years is already considered an ambitious timeframe for completion of a transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) and strategic action programme (SAP) for transboundary river basins in Africa (Paragraph 128). At this stage a realistic timeframe for completion of the project is approximately two years, with potential for time savings of up to four months if the SAP launch is run concurrently with TDA finalisation (Paragraph 127). This implies a further project extension of upwards of 6 months, with 12 months considered more realistic. There are significant implications in terms of focussing effort and shifting financial resources from project activities to core costs (Paragraph 129).
272. One strategic consideration that may affect the quality of project results is the failure to develop a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan for the project (Paragraph 73), since this activity was re-orientated as a consequence of its transfer to the Volta Basin Authority (VBA) following failure to deliver by three of the six consultants commissioned to prepare engagement plans for the VRB countries. A related shortcoming in delivery is the fragmented approach to training (Paragraph 77), an issue that may be difficult to address at this stage in the project owing to increasing funding constraints associated with the proposed extension.
273. Turning to challenges, time constraints have been exacerbated by a number of factors including an exceptionally dynamic set of elements that were outside the control of project. These range from the need for extensive redesign of the project during the inception phase as a result of creation of the VBA (Paragraph 35), through ongoing redesign of activities to accommodate developments such as the creation and wider partner involvement in the VBO (Paragraph 78), early closure of the EU-supported ECOWAS WRCU project (Paragraph 79), and integration of the demonstration project in Burkina Faso into a larger MCA-supported initiative (Paragraph 94), to the political situation in Côte d'Ivoire (Paragraph 126). The persistence and solution-oriented approach of the project management unit (PMU) and particularly the RPC with regard to this difficult operating context is commendable.
274. Almost all of the project actors – consultants, national partners, the PMU, UNOPS KEOC and UNEP – expressed dissatisfaction with administrative aspects of the project. In particular, operational delays related to administration of payments and contracts have aggravated relations amongst actors (Paragraph 220). UNOPS KEOC has acknowledged and undertaken to address these concerns in collaboration with the PMU and as a result there is no specific recommendation in this area.

275. Other challenges affecting performance that are addressed in the lessons and recommendations include:

- Insufficient technical support to the PMU (Paragraph 126 & 177). This is addressed as part of recommendation 1 related to the project extension and associated budget revision, and recommendation 2 related to development of the SAP.
- Insufficient appropriation of the project at national level (Paragraph 196), including as a result of poor individual motivation, which is taken up in lessons and in recommendations 3 and 4.1.
- Concerns about mobilisation of co-finance (Paragraph 232). The shortfall in country co-finance combined with the limited payment of annual dues to the VBA also presents a risk factor in terms of financial sustainability (Paragraph 142) and is taken up in recommendation 4.2 and 4.3.

276. Finally, an issue that has affected relationships in the project is the perceived lack of trust or confidence of the PMU in country partners (e.g. Paragraph 196) and of UNOPS KEOC and UNEP in the PMU. The issue appears to be more one of interpretation than reality and it is therefore difficult to make a specific recommendation in this regard, except to reiterate, as the partners have, the importance of open and constructive communications, and to encourage the partners to assume their responsibilities as a means to build confidence.

277. The overall rating for this project based on the evaluation findings is **Moderately Unsatisfactory**. The ratings in Table 4 reflect consideration of the full set of issues affecting or characterising project performance and impact that are discussed in Part II of the report. The summary comments highlight aspects of the assessment that best illustrate the rationale for the rating given.

278. It should be emphasised that there is potential to substantially improve this rating during the ongoing implementation of the project. Nevertheless the option to recommend closing the project was considered in view of the substantial risks to achieving a satisfactory outcome to this project associated with limited ownership and appropriation (Criterion E). These issues as well as the need to focus effort and remaining funds need serious consideration by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).

Table 4. Summary of Ratings based on Performance Criteria described in Part II

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Attainment of project objectives and results	<i>The overall rating is based on the effectiveness rating²⁴.</i>	MU
1. Effectiveness	The rating reflects substantial concerns about whether the project is on course to deliver the SAP and demonstration projects during its lifetime.	MU
2. Relevance	The project is relevant at the basin level and is contributing to the UNEP and GEF strategies identified in the Project Document as well as to GEF Strategic Priority IW-2.	HS
3. Efficiency	The rating reflects the likely requirement of a further project extension to ensure delivery of the SAP, with related budgetary implications.	MU
B. Sustainability of project outcomes (See B1)	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on the weakest rating for sub-criteria</i>	MU
1. Financial	The rating on this dimension of sustainability reflects the need for and risks associated with continuing external financing to implement the SAP.	ML
2. Socio-political	Countries in the region are currently stable. However there is a need to reinforce country ownership and stakeholder engagement in SAP development in order to secure ownership that will be required for its implementation,	MU
3. Institutional framework	The project is supporting and collaborating effectively with the VBA, as a recently created and active river basin organisation.	L
4. Environmental	The project itself addresses environmental issues that will affect the continued follow of benefits.	L
C. Catalytic role (See B2)	This rating is based on the foundational nature of the project and modest potential for catalytic outcomes	MS
D. Stakeholders involvement (See C3)	The rating reflects the the absence of a planned and systematic approach to engagement of stakeholders.	MS
E. Country ownership / drivenness (See C4)	The rating reflects the limited appropriation of the project which is viewed as presenting a substantial risk to achieving the project outcomes.	MU
F. Achievement of outputs and activities (See A)	This rating reflects significant concerns about the slow progress of the SAP development (Specific Objective 2) and launch of the demonstration projects (Specific Objective 3).	MU
G. Preparation and readiness (See C1)	Despite thorough preparation of the project there was a need for substantial reorientation during the inception phase.	MS
H. Implementation approach (See C2)	The overall implementation structure is functional and has been able to adapt moderately well to changing circumstances.	MS
I. Financial planning and management	This rating reflects a number of concerns including, whether the amount of co-finance anticipated	MU

²⁴ The overall rating in this category cannot exceed the ratings given in the ratings provided for either relevance or effectiveness

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
(See C5)	in the inception report will be realised, the failure to formalise the project extension and budget revisions, weak country reporting, as well as delays in reporting and receipt of project payments	
J. Monitoring and Evaluation (See C7)	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on rating for M&E Implementation</i>	MS
1. M&E Design	The logframe in the Inception Report was coherent despite some confusion in terminology and the Report included a detailed description of planned reporting and M&E activities. But no provisions for monitoring of activities, threats and opportunities to inform day to day management at regional and national levels.	MS
2. M&E Plan Implementation	The rating reflects good overall reporting but the absence of a systematic approach to risk management	MS
3. Budgeting and funding for M&E activities	The Inception Report included a detailed budget for M&E which is supported by budget lines in the project budget.	S
K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping (See C6)	This rating reflects concerns with the amount of time the TM has been able to dedicate to this project and concerns about the effectiveness of communication related to GEF procedures.	MS

General Ratings

HS = Highly Satisfactory
S = Satisfactory
MS = Moderately Satisfactory
MU = Moderately Unsatisfactory
U = Unsatisfactory
HU = Moderately Unsatisfactory

Ratings for sustainability sub-criteria

HL = Highly Likely: There are no risks affecting this dimension of sustainability
L = Likely: There are minor risks affecting this dimension of sustainability
ML = Moderately Likely: There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability
MU = Moderately Unlikely: There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability
U = Unlikely: There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability
HU = Highly Unlikely: There are very severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability

B. Lessons Learned

279. The following lessons are based on the above findings and relate to some of the key constraints experienced during this project. As seen above, the GEF Volta project has operated under rapidly changing circumstances. In view of the relatively early stage in project implementation, the following lessons are largely based on straightforward issues that have emerged related to the project design. The ongoing implementation of the project is expected to generate further insights on a wide range of implementation issues.

Extended Development Phase

280. The GEF Volta project is an extreme example of extended duration of the project development phase, which in this case was based on three successive PDF applications approved over a period of more than six years (Paragraph 158). The extended development phase has had implications for the project's overall relevance in view of the creation of the VBA prior to project approval and has affected continuity in view of institutional and personnel changes and loss of institutional memory (Paragraph 159).

281. The loss of continuity and institutional memory may be one factor behind difficulties in mobilising co-finance. Although revised co-finance commitments were included in the MOAs, the letters of commitment from participating countries were not renewed and, apparently no records were kept as to how partner contributions were initially estimated (Paragraph 222). In addition the projects financial reach has been weakened by inflation in the period since it was approved in 2003 (Paragraph 54).

282. The experience of this project highlights the desirability of streamlining project development to avoid issues associated with an extended development phase. It is not unusual for GEF projects that were first conceived in the early 2000s to still be under implementation in 2011. The GEF Secretariat has introduced a new approach to project development that is expected to reduce the duration of project development and consequently there are no new lessons to be drawn in this area. However the issue has been highlighted since it had a significant impact on quality-at-entry of the project with continuing repercussions.

283. A first lesson to be drawn here is that, in situations where there is an extended period (e.g. more than two years) between GEF Council and GEF CEO approval, it is desirable to renew letters of commitment from Governments. Second, it is also important, in any case, to keep clear records for future reference of how partner contributions in terms of in kind and cash support were calculated.

Project Duration

284. As seen above, the need to extend the GEF Volta project will have repercussions on the implementation of activities that were intended to contribute towards creating an enabling environment for SAP implementation as a result of the need to reallocate project funding towards to core costs (Paragraph 129 & 271).

285. Building on the experience of the GEF Volta project as well as remarks made in the Lake Chad project evaluation (Paragraph 128), a general lesson for design of any TDA and SAP (IW-2 type) project in transboundary basins in Africa is to plan for a post-inception operational phase of at least five years.

Transboundary Demonstration Projects

286. The idea of developing transboundary demonstration projects was innovative in that it promised to encourage bilateral collaboration in the context of the larger regional project. In practice this proved to be a risky strategy since all three projects have been affected by

circumstances affecting implementation in one of the partner countries ([Paragraph 97](#) and [Annex 6](#)).

287. The main lesson related to this experience is either to ensure that any demonstration projects which involve bi-national collaboration are justified in their own right and can continue regardless of progress of the project in the partner country, or to secure agreement from national authorities that any demonstration projects identified in a project document will be maintained as an integral part of the overall project if the overall project is approved within an agreed period (e.g. 18 months) after submission.

Remuneration for Project Partners

288. The question of remuneration for project staff has been raised in all three PSC meetings and was raised consistently in meetings with national partners undertaken for this evaluation ([Paragraph 196](#)). In practice it is not possible for the GEF agencies to address expectations related to staff top-ups or bonuses in this project in view of GEF regulations that do not permit GEF funds to be used to pay top-ups to salaries of government employees involved in GEF projects, regardless of practice or expectations in the country concerned.

289. An underlying issue beyond the scope of this project is that of harmonization of practices between international development partners. Where one partner pays top-ups to Government staff, and another doesn't, the latter will inevitably encounter staff motivation problems. At this stage the only option within the GEF Volta project is to provide allowances through national co-financing. There is no direct recommendation in this area since UNOPS and UNEP are not in a position to provide a solution that would satisfy partners.

290. A lesson of general relevance during the development of the budget for GEF projects is to work with National GEF Focal Points to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the nature of funding available for staff remuneration in order to manage expectations from the outset of the project and, where appropriate, to allow for allowances to be built into national co-financing in order to be in harmony with other development partners' practices.

C. Recommendations

291. The PMU has worked on an adaptive basis throughout the life of the project responding to sometimes rapid and unforeseeable changes in the project context as well as delays in delivery of key outputs such as the national TDA reports. This report has highlighted a substantial number of issues for potential follow up ranging from strategic interventions with partners to more straightforward management actions such as development of a risk management strategy and potential for greater delegations and sharing of responsibility amongst team members.
292. The following recommendations address issues that require a decision to be taken by the PSC and/or executing and implementing agencies. They are oriented towards ensuring a satisfactory asset of outputs at the close of the project as a basis for continuation of the initiative including though mainstreaming of the SAP at national and regional levels.

Project Extension

293. As seen above, the project is unlikely to deliver its key outputs unless it is extended by an estimated 6-12 months over the current extension to December 2012 ([Paragraph 271](#)).
294. **Recommendation 1:** The PMU should develop a detailed proposal for a project extension of 6 to 12 months based on a realistic workplan for completion of the demonstration projects and SAP and submit this to the PSC for their comments and approval by 15 January 2012. The proposal should include a revised budget or budget options highlighting the reallocations associated with extending the project for 6 to 12 months. Additional actions related to this recommendation will include formalization of the project extension and revised budget through a project revision, based on the decision of the PSC, and extension and possible revision of the MOAs with country partners, with the UNEP DHI Centre for Water and Environment (UDC) and with the demonstration project partners.
295. The major direct expenses associated with project extension will be PMU salaries and office running costs; these are estimated to be in the order of US\$380 000 for 12 months. UNOPS and UNEP will also face additional costs related to supporting the project extension, a situation UNOPS has already indicated it is prepared to accept. At the national level the cost for extension of National Operational Focal Point (NOFP) salaries could be covered by the memorandum of agreement (MOA) budget allocation for meetings, a budget line over which the PMU has retained oversight and which has not yet been used. Related to [Recommendation 2](#), it is also suggested that additional funds of up to US \$ 80 000 are allocated for regional consultancy support for SAP development (such as honoraria for thematic task teams) and for meetings.
296. The associated need for funding reallocation will require some tough decisions, including cutting back on well thought-out and undoubtedly worthwhile activities. There is an evident tradeoff in the extent to which project activities will need to be cut or scaled back and the duration of the extension. Based on the detailed 2011 Budget, [Box 1](#) suggests a minimum set of activities and budget lines where expenditures may be cut or streamlined. The figures in brackets are indicative of potential savings and add up to potential savings of around US\$ 425 000. They also represent a necessary refocusing of the PMU efforts towards the TDA, SAP and support to existing demonstration projects.

Box 1. Potential Budget Cuts to allow for Project Extension

General:

- Substantially cut back on international travel to other IW projects and international meetings and conferences (Lines 1601, 1618). (At least US\$ 30 000)
- Reduce or cut contribution to IUCN PAGEV for activities in Togo and Benin, particularly in 2012 when the PAGEV project is expected to have closed (Line 1205). (Up to US\$ 36 000)

SAP and APNP-VRB Process:

- Linked to Recommendation 2 to streamline the SAP and APNP's process rationalize PMU regional travel (courtesy visits, TDA, APNP & SAP related activities) (Lines 1602, 1606-1611). (US\$ 30 000)
- Merge meetings for regional TDA validation and SAP kickoff (Line 3310, 3311). (US\$ 35 000)
- Consider postponing 'high level training sessions on SAP/NAPs implementation' (Line 3208) to a future SAP implementation project. (US\$48 000)

Training and meetings:

- Streamline and substantially cut plans for group training and awareness activities since there is no longer sufficient time or budget to consider the full set of activities related to development and conduct of a training module (Line 3101-3103) (Up to US\$ 90 000K)
- Cut support to IWRM meetings in 3 countries (Line 3317) (US\$ 20 000)

Reporting:

- Reduce reporting costs (Line 5201) while retaining sufficient funds to publish and translate key documents (TDA summary, SAP, and project DVD) ((US\$50 000)

Activity 3.2.2. Development of six new demonstration projects (US\$68 000)

- Cut travel associated with development of six new demonstration projects (Line 1617); this activity can be postponed to the PPG phase of a TWAP implementation project.
- Cut consultancy linked to development of 6 new demonstration projects (Line 1222)
- Cut workshops associated with validation of new demonstration projects (Line 3318)

Activity 3.2.1. Develop a plan for the replication of demonstration projects

- Cut the regional consultancy associated with this activity and instead streamline the work into APNP-VRB development (Line 1224) (US\$ 7 000)

Finally, based on the rate of expenditure to date there is some potential to save on other 'miscellaneous costs' (Budget components 5100 and 5300), after taking the allowances for audits and evaluations. (US\$ 12 000)

Development of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP)

297. The acid test for effectiveness of the project will be the validation of the regional SAP that will mark the culmination of the analysis and planning efforts at national and regional levels and provide a platform for continuation of the initiative ([Paragraph 115](#)).

298. **Recommendation 2:** The PMU should prepare a workplan which strongly focuses its efforts and other available resources such as technical support on the process of SAP development and adoption during the remainder of the project lifetime, and submit this to the PSC for their comments and approval by 15 January 2011.

299. The workplan can be based on the existing SAP methodology. Specific suggestions are:

- To dovetail the process of TDA validation and SAP launching through convening of a multi-stakeholder meeting in the last quarter of 2011 or first quarter of 2012.
- To simplify the approach to development of action plans for the national part of the Volta river basin (APNP-VRBs) and have the national operational focal points (NOFPs) play a lead role in their development under the guidance of NCs. It is suggested that the APNP-VRBs

are focused on identifying strategic actions for mainstreaming of the SAP at national level and on identification of catalytic interventions, including demonstration activities, as a basis for development of one or more SAP implementation projects.

- To refocus contracted technical support from UDC on the SAP TDA process.
- To make a budgetary provision for expanded technical support at the regional level through task teams established for each of the 3-5 priority themes expected to be identified for the SAP during the SAP launch workshop (See also [Paragraph 295](#) on related budget allocation).

Adoption of the SAP as a basis for its Future Mainstreaming

300. Adoption and implementation of the SAP will depend on adequate engagement of the full range of stakeholders expected to play or who could usefully play a role in its implementation at national and regional levels ([Paragraphs 140 & 191](#)). Adoption of project outputs is anticipated in the cooperation agreement signed with the VBA but modalities for this have not yet been fully defined ([Paragraph 183](#)) and the relationship between the SAP and the VBA-led Master Plan for the basin needs further clarification ([Paragraph 116](#)). This could be undertaken through a joint meeting of Ministers responsible for environment and water, building on relationships established through development of formal linkages between the GEF Volta and VBA governance structures.
301. **Recommendation 3.1:** The PMU should liaise with the VBA Executive Secretary in order to define the modalities and strategy for SAP adoption by the VBA Council of Ministers in 2013, and develop a proposal for consideration by the PSC in early 2012.
302. **Recommendation 3.2:** The NOFPs should undertake a rapid assessment of government and non-government actors who are likely to play a role in SAP implementation, and actively engage them in project activities including through invitations to participate in NICs.

Project Ownership and Mobilisation of Co-finance

303. The issue of limited country ownership and appropriation has been identified as a substantial risk to the project ([Section C4](#) and [Paragraph 278](#)). This is in part a result of poor individual motivation linked to remuneration; an issue that cannot be resolved by the executing or implementing agency but may be addressed by country co-finance ([Paragraph 289](#)).
304. **Recommendation 4.1.** The PSC should undertake a frank assessment of constraints to country ownership and appropriation of the project at its next meeting and develop suggestions as to how these may be addressed.
305. Several VRB country partners have reported difficulties in mobilising the cash co-finance specified in the MOAs ([Paragraph 228](#)) and this has not only affected project performance ([Paragraph 196](#)) but reflects badly on the level of commitment of the VRB countries to the project's overall objective ([Paragraph 194](#)). The following recommendations are intended firstly, to secure sufficient national budget allocations to ensure that personnel at the national level can be fully operational and, secondly, to encourage mobilisation of national investment in the basin through parallel support to the VBA.
306. **Recommendation 4.2:** National Coordinators should undertake consultations with the appropriate national authorities including GEF Focal Points in order to inform UNOPS and UNEP of any administrative actions they could undertake to improve the co-financing situation, and the agencies should follow up accordingly (NCs working in collaboration with GEF focal points, by 31 October 2011; UNOPS and UNEP follow up by 15 December 2011 or earlier if timing is critical in view of budget cycles).
307. **Recommendation 4.3:** As a basis for possible PSC recommendation, National Coordinators should undertake consultations with the appropriate national authorities including GEF Focal Points to determine whether inclusion of VBA dues as country co-financing is acceptable at the national level and whether it is likely to facilitate the release of funds for VBA dues. Based on this information the PSC should determine whether it is appropriate to make a recommendation

relating to payment of dues and follow up at the national level. (NCs working in collaboration with GEF focal points, by 31 October 2011; PSC follow up by 15 November 2011).

Demonstration Projects

308. Table 6.6 in Annex 6 compiles a set of eight recommendations related to the demonstration projects. The following subset of recommendations includes those that have particular implications for the overall progress and budget of the GEF Volta project. If it proves impossible to develop viable proposals for completion of the projects in Côte d'Ivoire and Benin, it is suggested that funds are reallocated at the earliest opportunity to other project activities in order to avoid having to return unspent funding to the GEF.

- **Recommendation 5.1:** *The GEF Volta Project should proceed as envisaged to sign an MOU with SIAAP in October 2011 for construction of the water treatment plant in Kara, Togo.*
- **Recommendation 5.2:** *A focussed concept for a demonstration project Benin be developed in the third quarter of 2011 using a consultant or small team of consultants under the oversight of the PMU and Benin NC and based on stakeholder consultation including in the project area*
- **Recommendation 5.3:** *The PSC should ask the National coordinator (NC) for Côte d'Ivoire to provide a frank and detailed assessment of prospects for re-launch of the project based on activities that can be undertaken with project partners in collaboration with Ghana, and provide one or more viable options and proposals for moving forward with the project by the end of November 2011.*

309. It should also be noted that extensions are proposed for the projects in Mali and Ghana based on the timeframe agreed for the overall project extension and based on realistic prospects for collaboration with their sister projects in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire.

List of Annexes

1. The Evaluation Terms of Reference including evaluation criteria
2. List of interviewees
3. Evaluation timeline
4. List of documents reviewed / consulted
5. Summary of progress towards outputs and activities
6. Summary of progress towards the Demonstration Projects
7. Measures of effectiveness
8. Details of the project's 'impact pathways' and 'ROtl' analysis
9. Summary co-finance information and a statement of project expenditure
10. Brief CV of the consultant

Annex 1. Evaluation Terms of Reference

A. Objective and Scope of the Evaluation

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy²⁵ and the UNEP Evaluation Manual²⁶ Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) of the Project “Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area” is undertaken half way through project implementation to analyze whether the project is on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required. The MTE will assess project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and impacts, including their sustainability.

The MTE has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to date and of the likelihood of outcomes and impact in the future, to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to identify the challenges and risks to achievement of the project objectives and to derive corrective actions if needed for the project to achieve maximum impact and sustainability. In addition, the MTE is expected to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, UNOPS, UDC-Water, the GEF and their partners. It will focus on the following sets of **key questions**, based on the project’s revised Logframe and current implementation issues, which may be expanded by the consultants as deemed appropriate:

- In how far has the project built national and regional capacity (at individual, organisational and enabling environment level) for sustainable environmental management and monitoring of the VRB? How effective is the project in promoting stakeholder participation in the TDA process?
- What progress was made on the development of regional legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks and management instruments for addressing transboundary concerns in the VRB and its downstream coastal area? What is the status on the TDA? Is it a robust synthesis of technical information on the VRB useful to support the SAP process? How well advanced is the SAP process? To what extent have countries started preparations to develop their APNP-VRBs?
- What is the status of the demonstration project? What can realistically be achieved in each country in the time remaining to the project? Do the demonstration projects have a good strategy in place for monitoring, lesson learning and replication?
- What are the key challenges to project implementation and what remedies can be proposed? How well has the project adapted to changes in the VRB? Is technical backstopping to the PMU useful and cost-effective? Where do we stand on the creation of partnerships with international and national organizations, the private sector and other projects? Is the project adding value to the work of these partners? How well are these partnerships functioning?
- Can the project realistically achieve its intended outputs and objectives within the time remaining? If not, what would be a more realistic time frame or what activities should be prioritized so that the main outputs and objectives can still be achieved in a timely manner?

B. Overall Approach and Methods

The MTE of the Project “Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area” will be conducted by independent consultants under the overall responsibility and management of the UNEP Evaluation Office (Nairobi), in consultation with the UNEP GEF Coordination Office (Nairobi), and the UNEP DEPI Task Manager.

²⁵ <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

²⁶ <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationManual/tabid/2314/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

The MTE 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.

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

- A **desk review** of project documents²⁷ including, but not limited to:
 - Relevant background documentation, *inter alia* UNEP and GEF policies, strategies and programmes pertaining to international/transboundary waters; the Abidjan Convention documents; the Accra Declaration (1998); the Convention and Statutes for the Volta Basin Authority; and the preliminary TDA and SAP prepared under the PDF-B grant preceding the project;
 - Project design documents including the Project Document, the Project Inception Report, the (draft) Stakeholder participation plan²⁸; Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the logical framework and project financing;
 - Project reports such as progress and financial reports from countries to the PMU and from the RUC and UNOPS to UNEP; Steering Committee meeting minutes; annual Project Implementation Reviews and relevant correspondence;
 - Documentation related to project outputs such as: the latest draft of the TDA, the SAP for the VRB and the NPAs etc.
- **Interviews**²⁹ with:
 - Project management and execution support in the PMU (Ghana);
 - The Project Task Force experts;
 - UNEP Task Manager and Fund Management Officer (Nairobi), the UNOPS Deputy Director of Programme (Nairobi) and UDC Task Manager;
 - Volta Basin Authority (Ouagadougou)
 - Country lead execution partners, including the National Project Coordinators and the National Focal Points, and other relevant partners;
 - Relevant staff of GEF Secretariat;
 - Representatives of multilateral agencies – formal project partners (IUCN, SIAPP and Volta Basin Observatory) and other relevant organisations.
- **Country visits to demonstration projects.** The evaluation team will visit all three demonstration projects security permitting (Mali and Burkina Faso; Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire; and Togo and Benin).

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 mentioned³⁰. 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 four categories: (1) Attainment of objectives and planned results, which comprises the assessment of outputs achieved, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency and the review of outcomes towards impacts; (2) Sustainability and catalytic role, which focuses on financial, socio-political, institutional and ecological factors conditioning sustainability of project outcomes, and also assesses efforts and achievements in terms of replication and up-scaling of project lessons and good practices; (3) Processes affecting attainment of project results, which covers project preparation and readiness, implementation approach and management, stakeholder participation and public awareness, country ownership/driven-ness, project finance, UNEP supervision and backstopping, and project monitoring

²⁷ Documents to be provided by the UNEP and UNDP are listed in Annex 7.

²⁸ The responsibility to prepare a stakeholder participation plan was transferred to the Volta River Basin Authority.

²⁹ Face-to-face or through any other appropriate means of communication

³⁰ Individuals should not be mentioned by name if anonymity needs to be preserved.

and evaluation systems; and (4) Complementarity with UNEP strategies and programmes. The lead consultant can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

Ratings. All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. However, complementarity of the project with UNEP strategies and programmes is not rated. Annex 2 provides detailed guidance on how the different criteria should be rated and how ratings should be aggregated for the different evaluation criterion categories.

In attempting to attribute any outcomes and impacts to the project, 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 and trends in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. This 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 and trends 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.

Particular attention should be given to identifying implementation challenges and risks to achieving the expected project objectives and sustainability. Therefore, when reviewing progress to date, the **“why?” question** should be at 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 is to date, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance is as it is, i.e. of processes affecting attainment of project results (criteria under category 3 presented below). This should provide the basis for the corrective actions recommended by the evaluation and 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 assessment of “where things stand” today.

D. Evaluation criteria

Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

The evaluation should assess the relevance of the project’s objectives and the extent to which these were effectively and efficiently achieved or are expected to be achieved.

- *Achievement of Outputs and Activities:* Assess, for each component, the project’s success in producing the programmed outputs as presented in Table 2 above, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness. Briefly explain the degree of success of the project in achieving its different outputs, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section 3 (which covers the processes affecting attainment of project results). The status of the TDA and the SAP, as well as progress made on the demonstration projects will receive particular attention.
- *Relevance:* Assess, in retrospect, whether the project’s objectives and implementation strategies were consistent with: i) Sub-regional environmental issues and needs related to the use and management of the VRB; ii) the UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; and iii) the GEF International Waters focal area, strategic priorities and the relevant operational program(s).
- *Effectiveness:* Assess whether the project is on track in achieving its main objective **to enhance the ability of the riparian countries to plan and manage the Volta catchment areas within their territories and aquatic resources and ecosystems on a sustainable basis**, and its specific objectives as presented in Table 2 above. Briefly explain what factors affected the project’s success in achieving its objectives, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section 3.
- *Efficiency:* Assess the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution to date. Describe any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to implement the project within its programmed budget and (extended) timeframe. Analyse how delays

have affected project execution, costs and effectiveness. Wherever possible, compare the cost and time over results ratios of the project with that of other similar projects – e.g. the time needed to finalize a TDA or SAP in transboundary river basins of comparable size and complexity. 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.

- *Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI)*: Reconstruct the logical pathways from project outputs over achieved objectives towards impacts, taking into account performance and impact drivers, assumptions and the roles and capacities of key actors and stakeholders, using the methodology presented in the GEF Evaluation Office's ROtI Practitioner's Handbook³¹ (summarized in Annex 6 of the TORs). Appreciate to what extent the project has to date contributed, and is likely in the future to further contribute to changes in stakeholder behaviour as regards: i) Regional Coordination of management efforts of the VRB; ii) Biodiversity conservation measures; ii) Reduction of causes of land and water degradation; and the likelihood of those leading to changes in the natural resource base: a) reduced water scarcity; b) prevented degradation or recovery of degraded land and water; and c) conserved biological diversity.

Sustainability and catalytic role

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 sustainability of benefits. The evaluation should ascertain to what extent an exit strategy for the project has been prepared and how project results will be sustained and enhanced over time. The evaluation will have to ascertain that the project is looking further than its immediate outputs, for instance at how the SAP and NAPs developed under the project are going to be carried out after the project ends. Application of the ROtI method will assist in the evaluation of sustainability.

Four aspects of sustainability will be addressed:

- *Socio-political sustainability*. Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts? Is the level of ownership by the main national and regional stakeholders sufficient to allow for the project results to be sustained? Are there sufficient government and stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to execute, enforce and pursue the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? What is the project doing to ensure this socio-political sustainability of results and benefits?
- *Financial resources*. To what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources³² will be or will become available to implement the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact? What concrete efforts is the project making to ensure financial sustainability of results and benefits?
- *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 so far, such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability

³¹ http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Impact_Eval-Review_of_Outcomes_to_Impacts-RotI_handbook.pdf

³² Those resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, other development projects etc.

frameworks etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact on human behaviour and environmental resources? How is the project contributing to the sustainability of these institutional achievements?

- *Environmental sustainability.* Are there any environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of project benefits? Are there any project outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits? How is the project dealing with these?

Catalytic Role and Replication. The *catalytic role* of GEF-funded and UNEP-implemented 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 and the GEF also aim 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 is:

- *catalyzing behavioural changes* in terms of use and application by the relevant stakeholders of: i) technologies and approaches show-cased by the demonstration projects; ii) strategic programmes and plans developed; and iii) assessment, monitoring and management systems established at a national and sub-regional level;
- providing *incentives* (social, economic, market based, competencies etc.) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behaviour;
- contributing to *institutional changes*. An important aspect of the catalytic role of the project is its contribution to institutional uptake or mainstreaming of project-piloted approaches in the national demonstration projects;
- contributing to *policy changes* (on paper and in implementation of policy);
- contributing to sustained follow-on financing (*catalytic financing*) from Governments, the GEF or other donors;
- creating opportunities for particular individuals or institutions ("*champions*") to catalyze change (without whom the project would not have achieved all of its results).

Replication, in the context of UNEP and GEF projects, 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 appreciate to what extent actual replication has already occurred or is likely to occur in the near future, with special attention to the three demonstration projects conducted under the VRB project. What are the factors that may influence replication and scaling up of project experiences and lessons? In this particular case, the evaluation will assess how the project has made sure that plans, programmes, institutions, agreements and management systems developed or under development are going to be put to good use in the subsequent SAP implementation project(s).

Processes affecting attainment of project results

Preparation and Readiness. Are the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of executing agencies properly considered when the project was designed? Is the project document clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation? Are the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities well negotiated? Are counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities) and enabling legislation assured? Are adequate project management arrangements in place? Have lessons from other relevant projects been properly incorporated in the project design and implementation? Are lessons learned and recommendations from Steering Committee meetings adequately being integrated in the project approach? What factors influenced the quality-at-entry of the project design, choice of partners, allocation of financial resources etc.?

Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management. This includes an analysis of approaches used by the project, its management framework, the project's adaptation to changing conditions (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:

- Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document are being followed and are effective in delivering project outputs and outcomes. Have pertinent adaptations been made to the approaches originally proposed?
- Assess the role and performance of the units and committees established and the project execution arrangements at all levels;
- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of project management by UNOPS at the regional level, and by the Lead Agencies at country level. How well is management able to adapt to changes during the life of the project?
- Assess the extent to which project management is responsive to direction and guidance provided by the Steering Committee and UNEP;
- Assess the extent to which the project management is responsive to other developments within the VBA;
- Identify administrative, operational and/or technical problems and constraints that influence the effective implementation of the project, and how the project partners try to overcome these problems.

Stakeholder³³ Participation and Public Awareness. The term stakeholder should be considered in the broadest sense, encompassing project partners, government institutions, private interest groups, local communities etc. The assessment will look at three related and often overlapping processes: (1) information dissemination between stakeholders, (2) consultation between stakeholders, and (3) active engagement of stakeholders in project decision making and activities. The evaluation will specifically assess:

- the approach(es) used to identify and engage stakeholders in project design and implementation. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches with respect to the project's objectives and the stakeholders' motivations and capacities? What is the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during the course of implementation of the project?
- the effectiveness of any public awareness activities that are being undertaken by the project;
- how the results of the project (strategic programmes and plans, monitoring and management systems, sub-regional agreements etc.) engage VRB users' communities and their institutions in improved management and sustainable use of the natural resource base of the VRB.

The ROTl analysis should assist the consultants in identifying the key stakeholders and their respective roles, capabilities and motivations in each step of the causal pathway from activities to achievement of outputs and objectives to impact.

Country Ownership and Driven-ness. The evaluation will assess the performance of the Governments of the 6 countries sharing the VRB, namely:

³³ 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.

- in how the Governments are assuming responsibility for the project and providing adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received so far from the various lead institutions in the countries involved in the project and the timeliness of provision of counter-part funding to project activities;
- to what extent the political and institutional framework of the participating countries has been conducive to project performance. Look, in particular, at the extent of the political commitment to enforce (sub-) regional agreements promoted under the project;
- to what extent the Governments have promoted the participation of communities and their non-governmental organisations in the project; and
- how responsive the Governments have been to UNOPS regional coordination and guidance, and to UNEP supervision recommendations.

Financial Planning and Management. This requires the assessment of the quality and effectiveness of financial planning and control of financial resources throughout the project's lifetime. The MTE will look at actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. The evaluation will:

- 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 are available to the project and its partners;
- Appreciate 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 influence project performance;
- Present to what extent co-financing has materialized so far as compared to what was 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 actual costs and co-financing for the different project components (see tables in Annex 3).
- 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.

UNEP Supervision and 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 contribution to make. The evaluators should assess the effectiveness of supervision and administrative and financial support provided by UNEP including:

- The adequacy of project supervision plans, inputs and processes;
- The emphasis given to outcome monitoring (results-based project management);
- The realism and candour of project reporting and ratings (i.e. are PIR ratings an accurate reflection of the project realities and risks);
- The quality of documentation of project supervision activities; and
- Financial, administrative and other fiduciary aspects of project implementation supervision.

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 appreciate how information generated by the M&E system during project implementation is being used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensuring sustainability. In this case, the MTE will look specifically at the M&E provisions for the three demonstration projects. M&E is assessed on three levels:

- *M&E Design.* Projects should have sound M&E plans to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The timeframe for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should be specified. The evaluators will use the following questions to help assess the M&E design aspects:
 - Quality of the project logframe as a planning and monitoring instrument: compare and assess the Logframe in the Project Document and the Logframe used in the Project Implementation Review reports to report progress towards achieving project objectives;
 - SMART-ness of indicators: Are there specific indicators in the (revised) 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?
 - Arrangements for monitoring: Have the responsibilities for M&E activities been clearly defined? Were the data sources and data collection instruments appropriate? Was the frequency of various monitoring activities specified and adequate? In how far were project users involved in monitoring?
 - Arrangements for evaluation: Have specific targets and deadlines been specified for project outputs? Has the desired level of achievement been specified for all indicators of objectives and outcomes? Are 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 is funded in a timely fashion during implementation.
- *M&E Plan Implementation.* The evaluation will verify that:
 - the M&E system is operational and facilitates timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period;
 - annual project reports and Progress Implementation Review (PIR) reports are complete, accurate and with well justified ratings;
 - the information provided by the M&E system is really being used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs.

Complementarities with the UNEP strategies and programmes

UNEP aims to undertake GEF funded projects that are aligned with its own strategies. The evaluation should present a brief narrative on the following issues:

- *Linkage to UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and POW 2010-2011.* The UNEP MTS specifies desired results in six thematic focal areas. The desired results are termed Expected Accomplishments. Using the completed ROTI analysis, the evaluation should comment on whether the project makes a tangible contribution to any of the Expected Accomplishments specified in the UNEP MTS. The magnitude and extent of any contributions and the causal linkages should be fully described. Whilst it is recognised that UNEP GEF projects designed prior to the production of the UNEP Medium Term

Strategy (MTS)³⁴/ Programme of Work (POW) 2010/11 would not necessarily be aligned with the Expected Accomplishments articulated in those documents, complementarities may still exist.

- *Alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP)*³⁵. The current and intended outcomes and achievements of the project should be briefly discussed in relation to the objectives of the UNEP BSP.
- *Gender*. Ascertain to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring take 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. Appreciate whether the intervention is likely to have any lasting impacts on gender equality and the relationship between women and the environment. Are there any unresolved gender inequalities that could affect sustainability of project benefits?
- *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.

E. The Consultants' Team

For this evaluation, one independent consultant will be hired, with the following expertise and experience:

- Evaluation of environmental projects and good knowledge of UNEP GEF work;
- Expertise in regional planning, cooperation, institutions, treaties and politics in the field of international waters;
- Transboundary river systems management, river basins in particular; and
- Management of large regional development projects: planning, multi-stakeholder coordination, finances and administration, monitoring etc.

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

F. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The main evaluation report should be brief (no longer than 35 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 1. 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.

³⁴ <http://www.unep.org/PDF/FinalMTSGCSS-X-8.pdf>

³⁵ <http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf>

Assessment of the status of the 3 demonstration projects. A separate working paper will be annexed to the main report, covering the evaluation of the current status of the 3 demonstration projects conducted under the project. It is recommended that the working paper follows more or less the same structure -along the main evaluation criteria- as the main evaluation report (Annex 1).

Report summary. The consultant will prepare a 15-slide presentation summarizing the key findings, lessons learned and recommendations of the evaluation. This presentation will be presented at regional meeting of stakeholders (tentatively planned in September 2011). The purpose of this presentation is to engage the main project partners in a discussion on the evaluation results and obtain their buy-in into the MTE recommendations.

Review of the draft evaluation report. The consultant will submit the zero draft report latest by 31 July 2011 to the UNEP EO and revise the draft following the comments and suggestions made by the EO. The EO will then share the first draft report with the UNEP/DEPI Task Manager for review and comments. UNEP/DEPI will forward the first draft report to the other project stakeholders, in particular the Regional Coordination Unit of the project, UNOPS, the UDC-Water, the National Project Coordinators and their country-level host institutions, for review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. 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 Team Leader for consideration in preparing the final draft report. The Team Leader will submit the final draft report no later than 2 weeks after reception of stakeholder comments. The Team Leader will prepare a **response to comments** that contradict the findings of the evaluation team and could therefore not be accommodated in the final report. This response will be annexed to the MTE report to ensure full transparency.

Consultations will be held between the consultants, EO staff, the UNEP/GEF, UNEP/DEPI and key members of the project execution team, including UNOPS project staff. These consultations will seek feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons.

Submission of the final Mid-Term Evaluation report. The final report shall be submitted by Email to:

Segbedzi Norgbey, Head
UNEP Evaluation Office
P.O. Box 30552-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: (+254-20) 762 3387
Email: segbedzi.norgbey@unep.org

The Head of Evaluation will share the report with the following persons:

Maryam Niamir-Fuller, Director
UNEP/GEF Coordination Office
Nairobi, Kenya
Email: maryam.niamir-fuller@unep.org

Ibrahim Thiaw, Director
UNEP/DEPI
Nairobi, Kenya
Email: ibrahim.thiaw@unep.org

Patrick Fruchet
UNOPS Deputy Director of Programme
Nairobi, Kenya
Email: patrickf@unops.org

The final evaluation report will be published on the UNEP Evaluation Office web-site www.unep.org/eou and may be printed in hard copy. Subsequently, the report will be sent to the GEF Office of Evaluation for their review, appraisal and inclusion on the GEF website.

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 both GEF and UNEP criteria as presented in Annex 4.

The UNEP Evaluation Office will also prepare a **commentary** on the final evaluation report, which presents the EO ratings of the project based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the evaluation team and the internal consistency of the report. These ratings are the final ratings that the UNEP Evaluation Office will submit to the GEF Office of Evaluation.

G. Resources and Schedule of the Evaluation

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 they 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, obtain documentary evidence, meetings with stakeholders, field visits, and any other logistical matters related to their assignment. The PMU, UNEP Task Manager and regional and national project staff will provide logistical support (introductions, meetings, transport, lodging etc.) for the country visits where necessary, allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

For this assignment, the evaluation consultant will be hired for 11 weeks. (S)He will travel to Ghana, Burkina Faso (security permitting), Togo and Benin.

H. Schedule Of Payment

The consultant will be hired under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a fee-only basis and travel expenses will be covered separately by UNEP. Details on the payment schedule are provided in the Cover Note for this evaluation and the Guinea Current LME Terminal Evaluation, which forms integral part of these TORs.

In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these TORs, in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Head of the Evaluation Office until the consultant has improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

If the consultant fails to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP in a timely manner, i.e. within one month after the end date of the contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultant's fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard.

Annex 2. List of Interviewees

Name	Designation
UNOPS / Project Management Unit	
1. Hubert Onibon	Regional Project Coordinator
2. Olumide Akinsola	Science and Information officer
3. Abigail Sackar	Administrative Assistant
4. Angelika Quaye	Bilingual Secretary
UNOPS Kenya Operations Centre	
5. Patrick Fruchet	Deputy Director, KEOC
UNEP	
6. Kelly West	Task Manager, Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Branch
7. Rodney Vorley	Fund Management Officer (by email)
GEF Secretariat	
8. Al Duda	Senior Advisor, International Waters
UNEP-DHI Centre on Water and Environment	
9. Peter Koefoed Bjørnsen	Director, UNEP-DHI Centre on Water and Environment
10. Niels Henrik Ipsen	IWRM Advisor
VBA	
11. Charles Biney	Acting Executive Director, Volta Basin Authority
IUCN-PAGEV	
12. Alice Onadja	Specialist in Social Sciences and Participation Specialist
13. François Ouedraogo	Expert in Water Resources
14. Ferdinand Kola Tchendo	Expert in Water Resources
15. Désiré Bakyon	Communications Officer
Benin	
16. Jean Pierre Houélékou	Chef de Service des Politiques et Stratégies Environnementales, Direction Générale de l'Environnement, MEPN (NC)
17. Adam Sounon	NOFP, MEPN
18. Amande Zanou	Directrice de Politiques, Stratégies et Normes Environnementales, MEPN
19. Aurélien Tossa	Spécialiste en SIG et base de données, Direction Générale de l'Eau
20. Félix Azonsi	Former National Focal Point, Direction Générale de l'Eau
21. Flavien Lanhoussi	Acting National Focal Point, Direction Générale de l'Eau
22. Armand K. Houanye	Coordonnateur, National Water Partnership, GWP
Burkina Faso	
23. Sandrine Bassonom	Directrice de la Législation et du Suivi des Organismes de Gestion des Ressources en Eau, Direction Générale des Ressources en Eau (Former NC)
24. M. L. Wenceslas Somda	Chef de Service Suivi des Organismes de Bassin de la Volta, DGRE (NC)

Name	Designation
Ghana	
25. Ben Ampomah	Acting Executive Secretary, Water Resources Commission (National Coordinator)
26. Nicholas Iddi	Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (National Focal Point)
27. Solomon Danso-Ankamah	Bole Demonstration Project Manager, WRC
28. Kodjo Korang	District Manager, Forest Services Division, Forestry Commission, based in Bole
29. James Buronsum	Partners in Participatory Development (PAPADEV)
30. Abdallah Laminu Saladin	District Fire Officer, Ghana Fire and Rescue Service, based in Bole
Mali	
31. Navon Cisse	Senior Hydrologist, Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique
32. Alami Sinna Toure	GEF National Focal Point (NC), <i>Agence de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable</i> (AEDD)
33. Oumou Dicko	NOFP, Agence de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable (AEDD)
34. Togo	
35. Koffi Valley	Direction de l'Environnement (NC) (By email)
36. Dory-Daa E Amaou	Mairie de Kara
37. Kangni Attisoh	Mairie de Kara (Plan cadastre)
38. Benoît Joseph Dove	Mairie de Kara
39. Aklesso Justin Barcola	Mairie de Kara
40. Im'rana Sant'anna	Eau Vive, Kara
41. Dory-Daa E Amaou	Mairie de Kara
Others	
42. Athanase Compoaré	Member of Project Task Force
43. Moussa Sanon	Chargé en gestion de l'Eau et Irrigation, Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)
44. Daniel Malzbender	Director, African Centre for Water Research (TDA regional consultant) (By telephone)
45. Charlotte Bayle-Kalinowski	Responsable adjointe des Relations Internationales, SIAAP (By telephone)

Other stakeholders met in the course of the demonstration projects visits included:

- Mayor of Kara and Prefect of the Koza Region, Togo
- District Chief Executives and administrations of Bole and Sawla
- Traditional Chiefs and project facilitators in Bole district

Annex 3. Evaluation Timeline

The Evaluation took place between 19 May and 31 July 2011.

Dates	Activities
19-20 May Accra, Ghana	Preliminary meetings with VRB project team (PMU), DGEF, GEF Secretariat
23-31 May	Review of documents
1-3 June Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	Meeting with IUCN Meeting with former Project Task Force expert Meeting with current and former National Coordinators in DGRE
3-5 June Kara, Togo	Demonstration project visit, with Regional Project Coordinator and IUCN PAGEV Return to Ouagadougou and evening meeting with VBA
6-11 June Accra and Bole, Ghana	Demonstration project visit with Science and Information Officer Meeting with National Coordinator in Water Resources Commission Meeting with National Focal Point – Environment Meetings with PMU
12-14 June Cotonou, Benin	Meeting with National Coordinator and National Operational Focal Point, MEPN Meeting with retired National Focal Point and <i>ad interim</i> National Focal Point, DG Eau Meeting with National Water Partnership
15-16 June Bamako, Mali	Meeting with National Coordinator/ GEF Focal Point Environment Meeting with Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique Meeting with National Operational Focal Point
16-18 June Accra Ghana	Meetings with PMU Meeting with VBA
19 June Ouagadougou	Meeting with MCA
20 June – 31 July	Follow up interviews by phone and email Report preparation
27 September	Receipt of review comments

Annex 4. List of documents reviewed or consulted

Project Definition and Reporting

- Project Brief (April 2003) including incremental cost analysis, preliminary TDA and SAP
- PDF-A, PDF-B and PDF-B extension requests including Accra declaration
- Project Brief Annexes (April 2003)
- Project Document (March 2006), signed by UNOPs and UNEP in May 2007
- Project Document Annexes (March 2006) including logframe and budget
- Annual Reports (December 2008, 2009, 2010)
- Annual Workplans (for 2010, 2011) and Budgets (for 2009, 2010 and 2011)
- Project Implementation Reviews (PIR) (July 2009, 2010)
- Monthly reports produced by VRB countries
- Internal memos, trip reports, PMU monthly updates for 2011

Legal Instruments and Financial Reports

- MOAs signed with VRB Countries in September and October 2008
- Demonstration project MOAs signed with Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana & Mali in 2010
- VRB country financial reports and related documentation
- Contract signed with UDC in August 2010
- UNOPS Cash Advance Statement including summary of expenditure to date (May 2011)
- UNEP Summary of expenditures to 3 March 2011
- PMU records including co-finance tracking sheets

Reports and Documentation for Project Meetings

- Project Steering Committee meeting Reports (May 2008, April 2010, April 2011)
- Rapport de 1ere Réunion du Groupe des Experts du Projet (Sept 2008)
- Report of causal chain analysis meeting (Sept 2010)

Technical Outputs

- Regional Analysis of national institutions and ongoing or planned initiatives in the Volta Basin, dated November 2010 (English & French), plus six national reports
- Regional Study on the establishment of a regional system for exchange of data and information on the Volta Basin, dated December 2008 (2 Vols) (English & French), plus six national reports
- National studies on stakeholder involvement plan for the GEF- Volta project (Burkina Faso, Mali & Togo) dated December 2008
- Detailed review of the preliminary TDA, dated December 2008. UNEP/GEF/Volta/RR.2/2008
- Detailed methodology for TDA finalisation and SAP development, dated December 2008. UNEP/GEF/Volta/RR.3/2008
- National TDA reports dated November & December 2010 (5 final, Côte d'Ivoire draft)
- Consultancy Terms of Reference

Outreach and Promotional Outputs

- UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project (Project website) <http://gefvolta.iwlearn.org/>
- Project database entry at IW:LEARN http://iwlearn.net/iw-projects/Fsp_112799467803
- Platform for Volta Basin Information Sharing System (VB-ISS) <http://unepdewaags.unep.org/vbiss3/>
- Volta Basin Authority <http://217.76.144.27:10000/abv2>

Other Reports (Selected)

- UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013
- UNEP Proposed biennial programme and support budgets for 2010-2011
- Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building (February 2005)
- UNEP (2004) *Activities of the United Nations Environment Programme as an Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Facility*. UNEP/GC.23/INF/24

See [Annex 6](#) for additional demonstration project references

Annex 5. Progress on Activities and Outputs

The following summary of progress on activities and outputs complements [Part II, Section A](#) of the report. Columns 1 & 2 are taken from the PIR.

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
Objective 1: Build capacity, improve knowledge, enhance stakeholders' involvement to support the effective management of the VRB				
Output 1.1: Project Managed and coordinated to partners satisfaction				
Activity 1.1.1. Establish the Project Management Unit and governance system including: PMU, MOUs, PSC, PTF, NFP, NIC etc	Q2-2008	PMU - 100% Governance, MOAs, technical support ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The PMU was established in January 2008. - The PSC held its first meeting in May 2008 bringing together representatives from agencies responsible for environment and water resources. - The project task force was formed but subsequently disbanded as a standing structure in view of variable requirements and across themes and over time. Task force members provided input to the TDA process. - A contract for technical support from UDC was concluded in August 2010, with four months support anticipated in total compared to 20 months anticipated in the original project document (TOR & budget). - MOUs were established with country partners in September and October 2008; National Coordinators (NCs), National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Operational Focal Points (NOFPs) have been established for each country. - National Implementation Committees have responded to specific tasks but the level of coordination between water resources and environment agencies remains limited. 	MS
Activity 1.1.2. Develop and implement project monitoring and evaluation plan	Continuous	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An M&E plan with an accent on reporting was developed as part of the project Inception Report, and is being implemented. - See Evaluation Section C7 	MS
Activity 1.1.3. Identify linkages with other partners,	Continuous	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National and regional studies of institutions and 	S

³⁶ Planned completion dates are from on the 2010 PIR the extension of the project to December 2012

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
develop and implement collaboration plan			<p>ongoing initiatives were completed in 2009. There have been ongoing in discussions with a range of actual and potential partners at regional, national and demonstration project level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A collaboration framework was signed between the project and the VBA in 2009 and the project was appointed to and signed the framework for the technical and financial partners' consultative group of the VBA in April 2010. There is no specific plan for this collaboration. - The project has worked closely with the IUCN-PAGEV project that is active in 3 basin countries; - Some anticipated collaboration activities were scaled back and budgets reassigned. 	
Activity 1.1.4. Carry out project reports (inception report, Half Yearly and annual reports)	Continuous	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The inception report, annual workplans and budgets, detailed annual reports, and PIRs have been completed. While half yearly reports have not been completed, there has been regular internal reporting to UNOPS and UNEP since the beginning of 2011 	S
Output 1.2: Capacity & participation of stakeholders in VRB management strengthened				
Activity 1.2.1. Conduct training on TDA/SAP process for NFPs	Q3-2008	Completed (100%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training was conducted in September 2008 with NPCs, NOFPs and task force members, based on IW:Learn Modules. 	S
Activity 1.2.2. Analysis of national institutions and stakeholders and preparation of stakeholders involvement plan	Dec-2008	Activity closed but only partially delivered (60%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six national and one regional report on institutional and ongoing initiatives were completed in late 2009. - Stakeholder analysis and engagement plans were completed by national consultants for just 3 countries (Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo); the remaining 3 reports and regional report were cancelled after over a year's delay. - The VBA is expected to pursue development of the stakeholder involvement plan in the framework of its strategic plan and the project is continuing to collaborate with VBA in this area. 	MS

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
Activity 1.2.3. Conduct training sessions for national institutions and stakeholders on IWRM and IRB management	Q2-2009	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project has contributed to a wide range of training and awareness workshops organised by IUCN/PAGEV, the VB Observatory and VBA. - Support was provided to VBA for a Study and Exchange visit to ORASECOM (Orange-Senqu River Commission) in South Africa in early 2011. 	MS
Activity 1.2.4. Conduct training sessions for national institutions on data management and monitoring and, clearinghouse system	Q3-2009	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training on the VB ISS was organised on Ouagadougou with the support of UNEP/DEWA in March 2010. 	S
Activity 1.2.5. Conduct training on SAP implementation at national and regional levels	Q4-2011	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This activity is pending development of the TDA and SAP and is likely to be delayed by at least 18 months. 	N/A
Output 1.3: Knowledge base expanded & basin-wide communication mechanism in place				
Activity 1.3.1. Conduct study on data inventory and assessment	Dec-2008	Completed (100%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six national reports and a regional report were completed in December 2008 - The study was used to inform the process to establish the VB-ISS. Results have also been used by the national and regional consultants involved in preparation of the TDA 	S
Activity 1.3.2. Develop hydrological and coastal hydrodynamic model of the Volta basin and its Downstream Coastal Area	June 2010	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The modelling work was expected to be taken up under the ECOWAS EU project but was not completed. There is an understanding that this work will be taken up by the VBO. - The GLOWA Volta project can be expected to contribute to better understanding of factors influencing the hydrological cycle. 	MU
Activity 1.3.3. Carry out thematic study on relations between catchments area and stream flow	Q2-2010	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As above 	MU
Activity 1.3.4. Carry out thematic study on the relations between Volta basin and its Downstream Coastal Area, using ICARM concept	Q2-2010	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As above 	MU

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
Activity 1.3.5. Support and/or contribute to studies on the establishment of the Volta Basin Observatory through database, data collection and data sharing protocol	Continuous	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The VBO was established by the VBA. The GEF VRB project is one of severable projects and initiatives providing support for development a data exchange platform and collection and compilation of data; - A platform for Volta Basin Information Sharing System (VB-ISS) is hosted by UNEP http://unepdewaags.unep.org/vbiss3/ - The VBO has yet to decide whether to use the CHM platform proposed by UNEP DEWA and has recently launched a 'Geoportal' with GLOWA Project support. 	MS
Activity 1.3.6. Organize one scientific workshop in collaboration with UNESCO	Q3-2011	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This activity was cancelled in 2009 and funds reallocated. 	N/A
Activity 1.3.7. Develop and update project website	Continuous	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project website was created and is now hosted by the IW:Learn site that also provides background information on the VRB project on its project database. Some information is dated and there are no recent updates as a result of technical issues with the IW:Learn platform - See also Section C3 of the Evaluation 	MS
Objective 2: Develop river basin legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks, and management instruments for addressing transboundary concerns in the Volta River Basin and its downstream coastal area				
Output 2.1: VRB regional coordination mechanisms supported				
Activity 2.1.1. Advocate at Ministerial level and through project meetings, workshops and reports, the importance of ratifying the basin convention	Q4-2009	90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The VB convention entered into force on 14 August 2009, and has been ratified by all the basin countries except Côte d'Ivoire. - The GEF VRB project has played only a limited role in this process. 	S
Activity 2.1.2. Insert and mainstream the TDA, SAP and APNP-VRB into the VBA policies, strategies and plans	Dec 2011		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The collaboration framework signed with the VBA in 2009 anticipates endorsement of the GEF VRB Project activities and outcomes by the VBA - The VBA has been involved in the TDA/SAP process through its executive secretary and national focal points and submitted a letter agreeing to the process in 	MS

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
			<p>April 2009.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is potential to explore and programme closer linkages and synergies between the VBA statutory process and TDA endorsement and SAP process 	
Output 2.2: Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) updated and finalised				
Activity 2.2.1. Review the preliminary TDA, identify gap and prepare detailed methodology for TDA finalisation and SAP/APNP-VRB development	Dec 2008	Completed (100%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The review of the preliminary SAP was completed in December 2008, with other African SAPs used to provide a benchmark. - The methodology for TDA finalisation was completed in December 2008 and includes useful suggestions for running an overlapping TDA and SAP Process. 	HS
Activity 2.2.2. Organize starting regional/national workshops with national, regional and international institutions and stakeholders	Q2-Q3-2009	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A regional TDA planning workshop was organised in December 2009 and National TDA workshops were organised in each VRB country in the first quarter of 2010. 	MS
Activity 2.2.3. Update and complete the TDA document including situation analysis and causal chain analysis	Dec 2010	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed guidelines for the national and regional reports were prepared. - Final drafts of the national TDA reports were completed some six months later than expected in November and December 2010 after an extended review process that reflected the variable quality of the first drafts. - These reports, with additional information from previous regional initiatives are considered an adequate basis to for developing the regional reports. - National validation workshops were organised in five countries in late 2010; the process of political change made this impracticable for Côte d'Ivoire, - The Causal Chain Analysis (CCA) workshop was held in August/September 2010 - The consultant responsible for producing the overall TDA resigned in early 2011 and a replacement is being recruited by UNOPS. - A regional TDA experts' workshop was organised in 	MU

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
			<p>May 2011.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic reports on economic development, ecosystems, governance and water resources have been drafted and are being reviewed by the RPC. - Completion of this activity is expected to be delayed by 9-12 months, having already been extended by 12 months in 2010 	
Activity 2.2.4. Organize validation regional workshop with national, regional and international institutions and stakeholders	Dec 2010	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary plans have been made to hold the regional validation workshop in October 2011, though timing may prove ambitious. - Completion of this activity is expected to be delayed by 9-12 months, having already been extended by 12 months in 2010 	MS
Activity 2.2.5. Submit the TDA document to the PSC and VBA for approval	March 2011	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of this activity is expected to be delayed by 9-12 months, having already been extended by 12 months in 2010 	MU
Output 2.3: Action Plans for the National Parts of the VRB (APNP-VRB) developed				
Activity 2.3.1. Organize 6 workshops at country level (with national institutions and stakeholders) as input to the APNP-VRBs elaboration	Q1-2010	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This activity has not started pending completion of the TDA 	MU
Activity 2.3.2. Prepare the National Action Plans documents, including APNP-VRBs implementation guideline, monitoring & evaluation system for APNP-VRBs implementation, long term financing strategy for the APNP-VRBs	Q4-2010	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This activity has not started pending completion of the TDA 	MU
Activity 2.3.3. Organize APNP-VRB validation workshops in each riparian country	Q4-2011	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of this activity is expected to be delayed by 9-12 months, having already been extended by 12 months in 2010 	MU
Activity 2.3.4. Submit APNP-VRB document to national authorities for endorsement	Q4-2011	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of this activity is expected to be delayed by 9-12 months, having already been extended by 12 months in 2010 	MU

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
Output 2.4: <i>Strategic Action Programme (SAP) prepared</i>			.	
Activity 2.4.1. Organize starting regional/national workshops with national, regional and international institutions and stakeholders	Jan 2011	0%	- Completion of this activity is expected to be delayed by 9-12 months, having already been extended by 12 months in 2010	MU
Activity 2.4.2. Prepare the Strategic Action Programme document, including SAP implementation guideline, monitoring & evaluation system for SAP implementation, long term financing strategy for the SAP	Q4-2011	0%	- Completion of these activities is expected to be delayed by 12-18 months	MU
Activity 2.4.3. Organize validation regional workshop with national, regional and international institutions and stakeholders	Q4-2011	0%		N/A
Activity 2.4.4. Submit the SAP document to: i) the Steering Committee for approval and, ii) Ministers in charge of Water and Environment for the endorsement (ideally in conjunction with RBO Ministerial meeting)	Q4-2011	0%		N/A
Objective 3: Demonstrate national and regional measures to combat transboundary environmental degradation in the Volta Basin				
Output 3.1: <i>3 Demo Project successfully implemented</i>			- The completion date on all but activity 3.1.1. was extended by 12 months in 2010	
Activity 3.1.1. Review and update demo project documents (logframe, activities, budget, M&E plan and work plan) and prepare inception reports	Dec 2008	Completed	- Detailed reviews and updates of the project documentation for each of the demonstration projects were completed in 2009 based on field visits to the sites, taking recent developments into account. The PMU has reported that the work was affected by lack of engagement of national authorities. Nevertheless validation workshops were successfully organised in 2009. - Further adjustments were made to DP1 and DP2 in 2009 based on developments in the first half of the year (<i>See below</i>).	MS
Activity 3.1.2. Implement the Demo project no 1: Joint	Dec 2012	25%	- Activities planned in Burkina Faso were integrated into	Mali: MU

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
management by Burkina Faso and Mali of a flow release warning system in the Sourou river valley (tributary of Black Volta River or Mouhoun)			<p>a wider MCA initiative to support water resources management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the budget was reallocated to Mali in the framework of the MOA signed for the DP 1 implementation - An MOU was signed with the Government of Mali in May 2010 - Field activities in Mali got underway in May 2011 with installation of monitoring equipment purchased by the earlier HYCOS project. - The MCA supported work in Burkina Faso is well advanced. - A coordination meeting with the different actors was organised in October 2010 but there is need for follow up to secure firm agreements related to sharing of information and model results 	BF: N/A
Activity 3.1.3. Implement the Demo project no 2: Installing and comparing technological models of waste water treatment in the Cities of Kara (Togo) and Natitingou (Benin)	Dec 2012	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction of the sewerage network in Kara is over 80% completed through SIAAP support. - The GEF VRB project is expected to sign an MOA with SIAAP upon approval of SIAAP Board during its upcoming meeting (September 2011), one year later than originally anticipated. - The Natitingou project was abandoned following a visit of national authorities to the project area in mid-2009 that identified that the priority issue in the area was aquatic weeds. - Discussions have continued with Benin partners for the preparation of a project document for an ecosystem management project with various ideas still under discussion. 	Kara: MS Benin: U
Activity 3.1.4. Implement the Demo project no 3: Restoring and protecting the river beds of the Black Volta River (Côte d'Ivoire & Ghana) and its tributaries through participative campaigns of reforestation	Dec 2012	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MOAs were signed with Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana in February 2010. - Project inception was held up in Cote d'Ivoire since as a result of instability caused by the political crisis in 2010 and the first half of 2011. Records related to the 	Ghana: MS CI: MU

Outputs	Planned completion date ³⁶	Status as of 30 June 2011 (%)	Milestones and Comments	Progress rating
			<p>project have allegedly been lost and it is unclear whether advanced funds may have to be written off.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A project manager was recruited in Ghana in November 2009 and stationed in the Bole area. Project implementation is ongoing. 	
Activity 3.1.5. Evaluate the implementation of the three Demo projects	Dec 2012	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The limited progress in implementation to date has been examined as part of this mid-term review (See Annex 6) 	(N/A)
Output 3.2: Replication strategy for demonstration project developed and initiated			<p><i>These activities have not started pending implementation of the demonstration projects. It is unlikely that there will be results from all of the demonstration projects by mid-2012. Completion dates were extended by 12 months in 2010, except for Activity 3.2.4.</i></p>	N/A
Activity 3.2.1. Develop a plan for the replication of the Demo projects	Q2-2012	0%		
Activity 3.2.2. Develop six national Demo projects based on TDA/SAP priorities	Q3-2012	0%		
Activity 3.2.3. Submit the replication plan and National Demo Projects to riparian countries for approval	Q3-2012	0%		
Activity 3.2.4. Incorporate the replication plan in the SAP	Dec-2011	0%		

Annex 6. Summary of Progress towards the Demonstration Projects

Introduction

- 6.1. This technical paper is part of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNEP-GEF Project 'Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area' or GEF Volta project. The evaluation was undertaken between May and July 2011.
- 6.2. The paper provides an overview of status of the three demonstration projects based on a rapid assessment and is intended to help address the following questions raised in the overall project evaluation:
- *What is the status of the demonstration projects? What can realistically be achieved in each country in the time remaining to the project? Do the demonstration projects have a good strategy in place for monitoring, lesson learning and replication?*
 - *What are the key challenges to project implementation and what remedies can be proposed?*
- 6.3. The assessment is based on:
- A desk review of project documentation including the Project Brief and annexes, Project Document and Annexes, Project Inception Report, demonstration project proposals, meeting reports, MOAs, and reports produced by the projects.
 - Face to face and telephone interviews and email exchanges with the GEF Volta PMU, NFPs, NOFPs, and project teams and stakeholders;
 - Visits to the demonstration projects in Kara, Togo and Bole area, Ghana in June 2011.

Structure of the Report

- 6.4. The report is organised in three sections.
- Part 1 provides a general overview and background on the development of the demonstration projects.
 - Part 2 provides individual assessments of each of the projects with extended descriptions for the more advanced project. National components of the projects are dealt with separately in view of developments since the projects were first designed ([Paragraph 6.13](#))
 - Part 3 provides a summary of findings and conclusions.

PART 1. Overview of the Demonstration Projects

Rationale

- 6.5. Specific Objective 3 of the GEF Volta project is to *demonstrate national and regional measures to combat transboundary environmental degradation in the Volta Basin*. The activities under Specific Objective 3 are designed to deliver on two outputs: successful implementation of three demonstration projects and development of a replication strategy for the demonstration projects for incorporation into the SAP.
- 6.6. From a strategic perspective the demonstration projects are identified in the Project Document as intended to “stress the development of cross-sectoral management approaches which will address the requirements for institutional realignment and appropriate infrastructure; adoption of new modalities for sectoral participation; enhancement of regional capacity to manage the basin in a sustainable manner; linkages to the social and economic root causes of environmental degradation; and the overall need for sustainability”.
- 6.7. The demonstration projects were designed to contribute to the GEF International Waters Focal Area Strategic Priorities in Support of WSSD Outcomes for FY 2003-2006, and specifically to Priority 2: “Undertake innovative demonstrations for reducing contaminants and addressing water scarcity issues with a focus on engaging the private sector and testing public-private partnerships”.
- 6.8. The demonstration projects offered the potential to balance the long term orientation of the GEF Volta project on planning with immediate and tangible action on the ground, engaging a wide range of stakeholders and providing a focus for communications and awareness building activities.

Milestones in Design

- 6.9. The 2003 Project Brief approved by the GEF Council in May 2003 anticipated three transboundary demonstration projects that UNEP was asked to further develop prior to final GEF CEO approval of the overall project.
- 6.10. UNEP applied for Supplemental PDF-B grant of US\$ 125 00 in January 2005 with the support of the VRB countries. This was approved in February 2005. Demonstration projects were identified and selected through a regional workshop and using a set of 16 criteria. The selected concepts were then elaborated with the support of UDC.
- 6.11. The Project Document of 2006 envisaged three transboundary demonstration projects, each involving two of the basin countries and comprising a lead initiative and partner initiative with which lessons would be shared. The 2008 Project Inception Report approved by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) included revised project logframes, workplans, and budgets for the following three projects:
 - DP1. Joint management by Burkina Faso and Mali of a flow release warning system in the Sourou river valley (tributary of Black Volta River or Mouhoun);
 - DP2. Installation and comparison of technological models of waste water treatment in the Cities of Kara (Togo) and Natitingou (Benin);
 - DP3. Restoration and protection of river beds of the Black Volta River (Côte d’Ivoire & Ghana) and its tributaries through participative campaigns of reforestation.
- 6.12. The PMU recruited consultants to revise and update the project documents in 2009. Detailed studies were conducted by consultants in the early 2009 leading to a set of three extended proposals supported by a detailed situation analysis. Planning and validation workshops were organised Burkina Faso (DP1) Togo (DP2) and Ghana (DP3) in mid-2009.

Modifications to Design

- 6.13. In practice the innovative approach to encouraging transboundary collaboration has proved difficult for a number of reasons.
- The Government of Burkina Faso incorporated their activities under DP1 into a larger initiative that has been supported by the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). There is an ongoing collaboration with Mali but this is affected by the timing of the MCA-supported project.
 - Following a field visit in 2009, the Government of Benin decided to pull out of the joint project with Kara since this did not correspond to local priorities and in view of the nonexistence of a sewerage system that would serve the water treatment system.
 - The security situation in Côte d'Ivoire deteriorated in 2010 making follow up activities in the proposed project area impracticable.
- 6.14. Further developments for each project are discussed in the Part 2 of this report.

Overview of Funding

- 6.15. Table 1 presents an overview of financial data for the demonstration project, including budget allocations in the Inception Report and 2011 Workplan and Budget, commitments in the three MOAs signed to date, other reported co-finance, and GEF expenditure to date based on disbursements under the MOAs.
- 6.16. The direct allocation for the demonstration projects MOAs in the 2011 Workplan and Budget was US\$ 513 403, corresponding to 9.6 percent of the GEF implementation budget. Co-finance for the demonstration projects is expected to be more than two times the GEF investment. Expenditure to date is just under 20 percent of the 2011 allocation for the demonstration projects.

Table 6.1. GEF grant allocation to components / specific objectives (US\$)

Project	Inception Report Budget ^a	Current GEF Budget ^b	GEF Commitment in MOA	Government Co-finance in MOA ^c	Other Co-finance ^{c&d}	GEF Expenditure to date ^e
DP1 – Mali	110 100	61 000	61 000	35 500	43 640	15 000
DP1 - Burkina Faso			0	0	Not yet specified	0
DP2 - Kara	254 700	200 000	0	0	At least 911 256	0
DP2 - Benin			0	0	0	0
DP3 – Ghana	263 400	252 403	132 500	112 100	0	32 500
DP2 - Côte d'Ivoire			132 500	134 100	0	32 500
Total	628 200	513 403	326 000	303 700	911 256	80 000

Sources & Notes:

- a. Inception Report; b. 2011 Workplan and Budget; c. Covers DP MOAs only; d. SIAAP total provided by PMU; e. Disbursements against MOA

PART 2. The Individual Projects

Demonstration Project 1: Joint management by Burkina Faso and Mali of a flow release warning system in the Sourou river valley (tributary of Black Volta River or Mouhoun)

Overview of Project

- 6.17. The Sourou river valley forms which is part of upper basin of the Black Volta (Mouhoun), draining a basin area of approximately 15 400 km² in Mali and 5 600 km² in Burkina Faso. The basin has an unusual drainage pattern with flow direction depending on the level of water in the Mouhoun. The construction of the of the Léry dam in Burkina Faso provided opportunities for extensive irrigation in the lower basin. However the flood dynamics have not been fully understood and arable land in the basin has been subject to flooding in years of higher rainfall.
- 6.18. The overall objective of the DP1 is “to prevent and/or mitigate the risks of flooding in the Sourou catchment through a joint management system operated by the two riparian countries, Mali and Burkina Faso”.
- 6.19. The Project has two specific objectives:
- Specific Objective n° 1: Improve the monitoring of hydrometric data, the characterization of hydrological processes and the management of Léry dam
 - Specific Objective n° 2: Develop a framework convention for the joint management of the Sourou river valley.
- 6.20. A preliminary project logframe was developed during the PD-B stage for the GEF Volta project. It was modified during the inception phase of the project and further revised and elaborated during through the detailed study that was undertaken by a team of consultants from Burkina Faso and Mali and completed in March 2009.
- 6.21. During the planning and validation meeting in early 2009 The *Direction Générale de Ressources en Eau* (DGRE) in Burkina Faso informed the PMU that it had signed an agreement with the MCA to support water resources management development in the country, including activities previously expected to constitute the demonstration project. There was some discussion in September 2009 as to whether an alternative transboundary project should be delivered but instead funds budgeted for the Burkinabé part of the project were reallocated.
- 6.22. The focus of this assessment is on progress in Mali with reference to activities in Burkina Faso presented as context in view of the close relationship between the projects. Ratings are provided for Mali only.
- 6.23. The project is being implemented in Mali by the *Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique* with direct GEF financing of US\$ 61 000.

A. Project Performance

- 6.24. The project is at an early stage of implementation but builds on an extended development period that needed to take the changing context into account.
- 6.25. The DGRE in Burkina Faso is leading development of the hydrological model to be used for flood forecasting and management, rehabilitation and management of the Léry Dam, with support of the MCA. The model is being developed with the support of an international consulting company. The model was due in January 2011 and is thus several months behind schedule.

- 6.26. Within Mali, a project inception report was produced within six months of signature of the MOU in June 2010.
- 6.27. A coordination meeting was organised in Burkina Faso with the MCA and national authorities from both countries in October 2010. Participants reconfirmed the roles agreed in 2009 and agreed to establish a working relationship between the DGRE (Burkina Faso) and DNH (Mali).
- 6.28. Field activities in Mali were delayed due to the rainy season. Installation of monitoring equipment started in May 2011 and the project is set to gain momentum over the coming months. Hydrometric and rain gauge stations were provided by the now-closed Volta HYCOS Project.
- 6.29. The project has remained relevant in the wider GEF Volta project and contributes to several of the strategic aims for the demonstration projects (Paragraph 6.6). It has not explicitly addressed development of public-private sector partnerships as envisaged in the GEF IW Strategic priorities prevailing at the time the project was designed (Paragraph 6.7).
- 6.30. It is too early to comment on effectiveness. Based on the project design, the project is on track to achieve its objectives. However, this is heavily dependent on collaboration with the DGRE in Burkina Faso which does present some risks to delivery of results.
- 6.31. There are concerns with overall timing since the project logframe and workplan are based on a 3-year implementation period while the project MOU covers less than two years. In addition the timing of the project is largely in the hands of the Burkinabé partners in view of the ongoing model development. The *Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique* suggested that the project should be extended to at least the end of 2012 and if possible by one more year.

B. Sustainability and catalytic role

Sustainability

- 6.32. The project is designed to set up a long term response system to changing water levels and possible floods in the Sourou basin. To date the emphasis has been on establishing the technical and institutional foundations of the early warning system. Limited attention appears to have been paid to sustaining this system in the longer term.
- 6.33. In terms of institutional framework, the joint management framework will be a key outcome of the project that is expected to establish the basis and impetus for continued sharing of information and ensuring long term delivery of results. Functioning of the joint management framework can be expected to be integrated into government workplans.
- 6.34. In terms of socio-political sustainability, the value of the project will very much depend on the ability of users to use information regarding water levels to modify their activities. Changes in dam operating rules – and indeed proposed structural changes to the Léry dam to allow for level to be lowered to a greater extent than is currently possible – present a political dimension to the project that will need to be addressed in the joint management framework.
- 6.35. The financial costs of responding to information will be largely borne by users. Ongoing costs for data collection and dissemination of information will be relatively minor.
- 6.36. In terms of environmental sustainability, the project remains relevant even with the substantial anticipated changes to the Léry dam operations.

Catalytic Role and Replication

- 6.37. The project has potential to play an important catalytic role in terms of institutional change and potential related policy changes (Paragraph 6.33).

- 6.38. As regards replication, the project has the potential to provide a good example and case study of transboundary collaboration in water resources management. The proposed joint management framework could serve as a model for other areas within the basin and beyond, though the specificities of each case can be expected to vary considerably.

C. Processes affecting attainment of project results

C1. Preparation and Readiness

- 6.39. See 'Milestones in Design' in Part 1. The project was well prepared over an extended period.
- 6.40. Following the decision regarding the support of MCA to activities in Burkina Faso, a coordination meeting was organised in 2009, where it was agreed that the GEF Volta Project and MCA Burkina Faso would collaborate, harmonise and coordinate their support to Burkina Faso and Mali governments. The PMU Annual Report for 2010 reports that it was agreed that the GEF Volta Project – with its partners in Mali – would contribute technically through bathymetric /topographic measurements; a study on historic floods; different probable flooding scenarios based on data analysis and the early warning system and measures to mitigate flood impacts and improve the management of Léry dam based on identified scenarios. This agreement has not been formalised.

C2. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

- 6.41. The project in Mali is being implemented by the *Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique (DNH)*, led by an experienced and qualified project manager, in collaboration with the GEF Volta NC and NOFP in the *Agence de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable (AEDD)*. Despite initial concerns about reporting lines, a working relationship has been established between the AEDD as overall lead on the GEF Volta project and the DNH, which is contracted directly for this project.
- 6.42. The project has had to adapt to the integration of the Burkinabé component into the MCA-supported project. The scope of that project is broader, concerned with integrated water resource management (IWRM) in the upper Mouhoun basin, including construction of a new dam at Samandeni, structural alterations to the Léry dam and extensive agricultural developments.
- 6.43. At the national level, changes to the implementation (such as relocation of some monitoring stations) have been described and justified in the inception report.

C3. Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness

- 6.44. Stakeholders were consulted during the project development process. However it was not possible for the Mali national consultant to visit the project area. Stakeholder engagement during implementation has been with technical actors. An accord was developed with the local meteorology service.
- 6.45. The technical nature of this project means it has limited political visibility since results on the ground such as reduced flood impacts are expected only in the longer term.

C4. Country Ownership and Drivenness

- 6.46. Though covering less than 5% of Mali's surface, the Sourou basin has half a million inhabitants and is considered to be socially and economically important. Lack of information about floods has important economic repercussions at local and regional level. Support for the project – which is being driven at national level – is high.

C5. Financial Planning and Management

- 6.47. An MOA between UNOPS and a representative of the *Ministre de l'Environnement et de la Assainissement* in June 2010 covering the Period 1 July 2010 to 1 March 2012.
- 6.48. The first financial transfer of US\$ 15 000 was made shortly afterwards and the PMU is following up for a report to enable the second transfer that was due in April 2011.
- 6.49. The GEF grant for the project was US\$ 61 000 while the central GEF Volta project is expected to contribute US\$ 39 000 in services to the project. Anticipated national co-financing based on the MOA is US\$ 35 500 (US\$ 7 500 in cash and US\$ 28 000 in kind). The project budget also take account of co-financing through the HYCOS project of US\$ 43 640. Total co-finance thus corresponds to 38 percent of the overall project budget, or 50 percent of the expenditure within Mali.
- 6.50. Activities in Burkina Faso can be considered as parallel co-finance in that they contribute directly to the activities and results described in the GEF Volta Project Document and Inception Report. This contribution has not yet been calculated.
- 6.51. Co-finance contributions are not yet being systematically tracked given the early stage in the project implementation. However the failure to mobilise the national contribution to the project was identified as a concern by national authorities in the project inception report.

C6. PMU Supervision and Backstopping

- 6.52. The RPC worked closely with partners in Mali and Burkina Faso during the planning stages of the project, with the support of the wider PMU. The RPC is in regular contact with the project team in Mali.

C7. Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E Design & Budget

- 6.53. The project logframe is logical and coherent, with described results (a mixture of outputs and outcomes) sufficient to deliver the specific objectives that would over time deliver the overall objective. OVs are described for each output and are specific, measureable, relevant, and mostly timebound. They are also attainable though ambitious with some longer term results expected to take longer than the timing indicated.
- 6.54. The March 2009 project document included a basic M&E plan which envisaged a regular monitoring through visits of the national committees to the project areas as well as a mid-term and final evaluation. A baseline was described in terms of absence of measures proposed through the project.
- 6.55. Funding for field visits was allocated as part of the national cash and in-kind contribution to the project. The MOU indicates that mid-term and final evaluations will be funded through the central GEF Volta budget.
- 6.56. The MOU requires regular financial reporting according to an established schedule. A template is included for the project final report.

M&E Implementation

- 6.57. Field-based progress monitoring has not yet started in Mali due i) to the early stage of the project, and ii) because national co-finance that was expected to facilitate access to the project area – which is some 700km from Bamako – has not been forthcoming. Special arrangements had to be made between the AEDD and the PMU for the project manager's one visit to the project area to date.

- 6.58. In terms of reporting to date, an inception report was produced at the end of 2010. The PMU is following up for the first financial report.
- 6.59. As seen above, environmental monitoring is an integral part of this project and equipment that was provided by the now-closed HYCOS project is being installed.

D. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 6.60. The project activities in Mali are expected to gain momentum in 2011. However, the achievement of planned results in Mali remains heavily dependent on the progress of the sister project in Burkina Faso. The PMU has continued to liaise with the MCA and with the DGRE in Burkina Faso in order to ensure activities are dovetailed and roles and expectations the different parties were reaffirmed at a recent coordination meeting in Ouagadougou. However, there is not yet a regular working relationship between the two countries and is some risk that cooperation with Mali will become sidelined in Burkina Faso given the larger focus of the MCA project.
- 6.61. A summary of ratings for the project are provided in [Table 6.2.](#) below.

Recommendations

- 6.62. It is **recommended** that a follow up coordination meeting is organised in the third quarter of 2011 by DNH, with the support of the PMU, between the DGRE, DNH and AEDD and their parent Ministries if appropriate. The primary purpose should be to initiate development of the framework convention (Specific Objective 2) and secondary purpose to clarify data needs and modalities for data sharing for calibration of the model (Specific Objective 1).
- 6.63. It is **recommended** that the project budget and allocation of costs between the MOA parties (UNOPS & DNH) be reviewed and revised by the end of September 2011 by with the view to ensuring ready availability of resources to enable the project manager to visit the project area. The related issue of mobilisation of co-finance is addressed in the overall project evaluation.
- 6.64. It is **recommended** that the project is extended on a no-cost basis to the September 2012. DNH may request a with a further extension of up to six months if the PSC decides to extend the GEF Volta project and if this is justified based on the outcomes of discussions with DGRE.

Table 6.2. Summary of Ratings for DP1: Mali

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Attainment of project objectives and results	<i>The overall rating is based on the effectiveness rating³⁷.</i>	MU
1. Effectiveness	It is too early to gauge effectiveness of the project. The rating reflects risks related to the willingness to partners in Burkina Faso to collaborate and timeliness of that collaboration.	MU
2. Relevance	The need for better understanding of flood dynamics in the valley continues and is a valid issue to address in the context of the GEF Volta project.	S
3. Efficiency	The project started in October 2010. The MU rating reflects the timing in the context of the overall GEF Volta project and the likelihood of the project needing extension.	MU
B. Sustainability of project outcomes	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on the weakest rating for sub-criteria</i>	ML
1. Financial	Ongoing data collection costs are likely to be limited. Functioning of the joint management framework can be expected to be integrated into government workplans.	L
2. Socio-political	The political dimension of the project presents some risks.	ML
3. Institutional framework	It is too early to say whether the planned joint management framework will be established and function.	ML
4. Environmental	The project remains relevant even with major anticipated changes to the Léry dam operations.	L
C. Catalytic role	The project offers a potential model for joint management of water resources.	S
D. Stakeholders involvement	Technical stakeholders were consulted during the project development process. However it was not possible for the consultant to visit the project area.	MS
E. Country ownership / drivenness	Support for the project, which is being driven at national level, is high.	S
F. Achievement of outputs and activities	Equipment installation planned for the first months of the project was stalled during the rainy season but activities are now underway.	MS
G. Preparation and readiness	The project was thoroughly prepared.	S
H. Implementation approach	The involvement of the MCA was not foreseen by the PMU; this is welcome but the wider programme context does make project implementation more complicated.	S
I. Financial planning and management	An MOA was signed and the first funding transfer made. There are concerns about mobilization of co-finance and this has affected project activities.	MU
J. Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on rating for M&E Implementation</i>	MS
1. M&E Design	M&E activities were planned. There is no apparent requirement for regular progress reports in the MOA.	MS
2. M&E Plan Implementation	Implementation of the M&E plan will depend on mobilization of co-finance.	MS
3. Budgeting and funding for M&E	Funding was sufficient.	S
K. PMU Supervision and backstopping	The PMU has maintained an active role in supporting the project and troubleshooting.	S

³⁷ The overall rating in this category cannot exceed the ratings given in the ratings provided for either relevance or effectiveness

DP2. Installation and comparison of technological models of waste water treatment in the Cities of Kara (Togo) and Natitingou (Benin)

Overview of the Project in Togo

- 6.65. The original project linking Togo and Benin was abandoned in early 2009 when the Government of Benin decided to pull out on the basis that the planned project for Natitingou did not correspond to local priorities. The following paragraphs focus on the Kara project. A brief status report on development of an alternative project for Benin is included at the end of this section.
- 6.66. The project in Kara was identified on the basis of inadequate sanitation facilities (absence of sewage system and inadequate household facilities, poorly maintained storm water drainage system, absence of wastewater treatment, discharge of wastes into the river) leading to public health problems as well as deterioration of water quality and proliferation of aquatic weeds.
- 6.67. The project was developed in the context of a number of ongoing ideas and initiatives that by 2007 consolidated with the confirmed support of SIAAP (the *Service public de l'assainissement francilien*) to the city of Kara for development of a collective sewage system. The selected area selected includes a mix of residential and commercial properties with several larger amenities including a school (*Ecole Centrale*), mosque (*Grande Mosque*), hotel (*Hotel Bidva*), the central market, and the town hall itself. The project did not include a water treatment system.
- 6.68. The overall objective of the Demonstration Project 2 is “to restore the water quality and improve the living and health conditions of the population of Kara (Togo) through the implementation of appropriate technology of wastewater treatment”.
- 6.69. The Project has two specific objectives identified by the root cause analysis carried out during the project preparation process and updated during the inception phase of the GEF Volta project as follows:
- Specific Objective n° 1: Improve knowledge of local administration and other stakeholders on sanitation issues.
 - Specific Objective n° 2: Equip the town of Kara with appropriate systems of collection and treatment plant for wastewater and other effluents.
- 6.70. It is anticipated that the GEF funding for this project will be US\$ 100 000. The GEF Volta project has also invested significant time and resources in ongoing liaison with and support to the project partners, providing technical input as well as moral support and bringing a regional perspective and profile to the project.

A. Project Performance and Impact

- 6.71. The focus of the works to date has been on development of the sewerage network and storm water drainage for the Eauwu *quartier*, and area of approximately 16 blocks, bordering on the river Kpimboua. Around 200 properties will be connected to the system including 174 domestic compounds. The system is expected to serve between 3 000 and 5 000 people. Over 4km of the drainage network has now been completed.
- 6.72. The works have been complemented by an EU-funded road and bridge construction project covering parts of the same area which is approaching finalisation. While it was necessary for this work to be completed before the final 400m of the collection network could be installed, the excavation, surface-evening and limited demolition work has facilitated subsequent installation of sewerage and storm water drainage canals in a context where excavation is complicated by the rocky nature of the terrain.

- 6.73. The project is not particularly cost effective in terms of the cost per person served as a result of the decision to use concrete rather than PVC piping, though one advantage was that materials were available locally and could be constructed on a needs basis. Concrete piping is made and installed by a local contractor who obtained moulds for the drain segments from Lomé. Materials - apart from cement - are sourced locally.

B. Sustainability and catalytic role

B1. Sustainability

- 6.74. The *Mairie* is working with the *Société Togolaise des Eaux* (TdE) to add a sanitation charge to its existing water billing system for areas served by the sewerage network. The roles and responsibilities of the two parties have yet to be finalised but it is likely that revenues collected would be returned to the *Mairie* for system maintenance. Alternatively this work may be undertaken directly by TdE. This approach to cost recovery is supported by background studies that considered current household payments for waste removal. The sewerage system is constructed in a quite steeply sloped area where drainage is facilitated by gravity, obviating the need for pumping and so reducing overall running costs.
- 6.75. In terms of socio political sustainability, the project has strong political support. The *Mairie* noted that messages related to sanitation, and uncontrolled drainage, use of latrines and so on need ongoing reinforcement. The latest communications push has focussed on encouraging household and compound connections to the system.
- 6.76. In terms of environmental sustainability, the project is designed to reduce pollution influxes to the rivers Kpimboua and Kara. The facilities are expected to have a life of upwards of 20 years. The waste treatment facility has been designed to fit in the relatively narrow riparian area beyond the high water mark associated with high flow /flood periods and flood protection measures have been incorporated into the design.

Catalytic Role and Replication

- 6.77. The new sanitation system will entail behavioural changes that are being supported through awareness campaigns under the guidance of sociologists from the *Mairie* and from a sister project in Ouagadougou (*See below*). Based on their advice, SIAAP is investigating whether it will be able to provide grants as incentives for household connections.
- 6.78. The Kara Mayor, who initiated the project, has continued to champion the project and his personal interest and commitment have helped the project to reach its current stage.
- 6.79. Experience has already been shared more widely in the basin with contact to a similar project Ouagadougou facilitated through SIAAP. The project team visited Ouagadougou initiative and have been supported by experts from that area.
- 6.80. Cost-effective small scale sewage treatment works are replicable throughout the basin. In practice use of concrete piping in Kara means the cost per capital is relatively high and this has made it difficult to raise additional funding. The project team has learned a number of practical lessons that will be applied in completion of this project and in further projects in Kara (e.g. related to manhole designs).
- 6.81. Many of the specific approaches used in this project have wider utility, such as the approach taken to engage stakeholders and beneficiaries. Involvement of *Eau Vive*, a French NGO active in small scale sanitation projects in the West Africa region, will provide one conduit for sharing these experiences.
- 6.82. The *Mairie* plans to scale up the work at municipal level to other quarters within the city of Kara. In the longer term it would like to invest in a larger treatment works serving the entire city.

C. Processes affecting attainment of project results

C1. Preparation and Readiness

- 6.83. See 'Milestones in Design' in Part 1. Like the other demonstration projects, this project was well prepared over an extended period leading up to the situation analysis and project document completed in 2009.

C2. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

- 6.84. Work to date has been undertaken by a team based at the *Mairie*, with a wide range of other stakeholders and experts involved on a needs basis. Financial support, oversight and periodic technical support has been provided by SIAAP.
- 6.85. Innovative aspects of the work to date include
- Strong linkages to the National Water and Sanitation Office (ONEA) in Burkina Faso that has implemented a similar project in Ouagadougou;
 - Involvement of both engineers and sociologists in the project design and activities;
 - Involvement of the new Kara University as a project partner, with students taking part in house to house awareness work;
 - Involvement of French NGO *Eau Vive* who has recruited a technical assistant from the region funded through SIAAP.
- 6.86. The GEF Volta project plans to complete an MOU with SIAAP for construction of the treatment plant subject to approval by the SIAAP Board in October 2011. This is a year later than anticipated due to the need to complete a technical study and to a misunderstanding related to timing.
- 6.87. The principal risk to the project was uncertain availability of and access to the site close to the river that was identified for development of the treatment works. Suitable space in this area is limited due to flooding in periods of higher river flow and space shortages have been exacerbated by recent unauthorised residential construction in the assigned area. Various options have been considered including relocating the new settlers or redesigning the treatment design to provide more limited treatment through common septic tank facilities. As of June 2011 a new option for the pipe routing has been identified that should allow the original project to go ahead with minimal disturbance to buildings.

C3. Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness

- 6.88. There has been strong engagement of stakeholders, including local and regional services for water and sanitation and public works the Kara University and project beneficiaries. Major decisions such as the identification and selection of treatment options have been undertaken through a participatory process for selection of options; narrowing down the options from six to two.
- 6.89. The project has undertaken several awareness 'campaigns' related to sanitation issues and project activities in the Eauwu area, targeting opinion leaders and with involvement of local development committees and women's groups.

C4. Country Ownership and Drivenness

- 6.90. The project was initiated by the Mayor of Kara who was introduced to the work of SIAAP at a meeting of the *L'Association Internationale des Maires Francophones* (AIMF) in Paris. The team at the *Mairie* is strongly motivated and keen to produce exemplary results that can be replicated in other areas as well as attract further investment for water and sanitation and other development projects in Kara.

- 6.91. The national authorities involved in the GEF Volta project have had limited involvement in the project since despite being involved at the design stage and did not comment on the project in the context of this evaluation. In this sense the project is not yet serving its potential role as a focus for demonstrating project activities at the national level.

C5. Financial Planning and Management

- 6.92. It is too early to comment on financial planning and management in the context of GEF Volta support.
- 6.93. The PMU has worked with SIAAP to raise additional funding including through a joint application to the EU Water Initiative and an approach to KfW. To date these efforts have not been successful.

C6. PMU Supervision and Backstopping

- 6.94. The role of the GEF Volta project and of the RPC has been strongly appreciated by the local authorities and by SIAAP.

C7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6.95. The 2009 project proposal included a detailed logframe with very specific, measureable, relevant, and timebound indicators at all levels. Indicators at overall objective level related to river water quality were specific and ambitious, or at least difficult to attribute in the sense that the river is subject to many other upstream influences.
- 6.96. The 2009 proposal included a detailed M&E covering progress reporting as well as water quality monitoring, with specified costs, timing and roles and responsibilities. Funds were allocated in the budget for purchase of monitoring equipment and for subcontracting analysis work to a laboratory.
- 6.97. It is too early to comment on M&E implementation in the context of GEF Volta support.

Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

- 6.98. The commitment and persistence of partners together with recent solution to allow construction of the treatment works at the original site suggests the project is on track to deliver its intended results.
- 6.99. A summary of ratings for the project are provided in [Table 6.3](#). below. The overall rating is **moderately satisfactory**. The allocation of ratings is taken from the perspective of the involvement of the GEF Volta project and should not be read as an assessment of the work undertaken by SIAAP and the *Mairie* of Kara.
- 6.100. The project has potential to provide a good case study particularly with respect to innovative approaches to working with beneficiaries in the area served by the project.

Recommendation

- 6.101. It is **recommended** that the GEF Volta project proceed as envisaged to sign an MOU with SIAAP in October 2011 for construction of the water treatment plant.

Table 6.3. Summary of Ratings for DP2: Kara, Togo

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Attainment of project objectives and results	<i>The overall rating is based on the effectiveness rating³⁸.</i>	MS
1. Effectiveness	The commitment of partners suggests the project is on track to deliver its intended results.	S
2. Relevance	The issue of sanitation in medium sized towns is relevant throughout the basin.	S
3. Efficiency	The project has been delayed relative to the GEF Volta project timing but is expected to be completed by 2012. The decision to use concrete piping has reduced cost effectiveness.	MS
B. Sustainability of project outcomes	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on the weakest rating for sub-criteria</i>	ML
1. Financial	There are proposals to collect user based fees.	ML
2. Socio-political	The project has a high profile at local level. Risks related to settlement of land by 'squatters' appear to have been resolved.	L
3. Institutional framework	The respective roles of TdE and the <i>Mairie</i> in system maintenance need to be formalised.	ML
4. Environmental	Precautions have been taken to avoid environmental impacts due to flooding.	L
C. Catalytic role	There is a clear need to expand collective sanitation infrastructure in the basin and this small scale project provides some good lessons.	S
D. Stakeholders involvement	Involvement of local stakeholders including beneficiaries, and constructive engagement of regional and international partners.	S
E. Country ownership / drivenness	The Kara Mayor has championed the project throughout it lifetime. Local authorities have been very responsive to partners suggestions.	HS
F. Achievement of outputs and activities	The project is on track to be completed in 2012, after some delays.	MS
G. Preparation and readiness	The proposal in the developed in 2009 had to be supplemented by detailed background studies. The linkage to Natitingou in Benin didn't work out.	MS
H. Implementation approach	The approach has been adaptive with excellent leverage of technical support though partners.	S
I. Financial planning and management	An MOU is expected to be signed with SIAAP in October 2011.	NA
J. Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on rating for M&E Implementation</i>	
1. M&E Design	The 2009 proposal includes a costed M&E plan with allocation of roles and responsibilities.	S
2. M&E Plan Implementation	It is premature to comment on M&E related to the GEF Project funding.	NA
3. Budgeting and funding for M&E	The 2009 budget included allocations for M&E.	S
K. PMU Supervision and backstopping	Though the MOU has not yet been signed, SIAAP has strongly appreciated the supporting role of the RPC.	S

³⁸ The overall rating in this category cannot exceed the ratings given in the ratings provided for either relevance or effectiveness

DP2. Overview of Progress in Benin

- 6.102. The Benin component of the joint Kara-Natitingou project was abandoned in 2009 following a field visit by national partners. The partners concluded that the main concern and priority of local stakeholders in the Pendjari basin was the proliferation of aquatic weeds and associated impacts on ecosystems. The PMU identified development of a new proposal in the first quarter of 2010 as an activity in its 2010 Workplan.
- 6.103. A further field visit was organised in late 2010 in collaboration with IUCN PAGEV, the Benin National Water Partnership and the NC. Discussions with local stakeholders led to the conclusion that main concerns and priorities of local stakeholders are protection of river bank, poor fishing practices particularly on the Burkina Faso side of the Pendjari River, and access to water for development of agricultural activities.
- 6.104. A detailed mission report was prepared by the PMU which includes a description of stakeholder concerns and problem analysis and proposed next steps towards development of a full proposal. The PMU identified development of a new proposal in the first quarter of 2011 as an activity in its 2011 Workplan.
- 6.105. A major concern at this stage is whether a project can be realistically launched and implemented in the time remaining to the project. The seasonality of activities such as tree planting means creates additional constraints and even if a project could be defined and launched in the coming months, work on the ground may not effectively start until the second quarter of 2012.
- 6.106. A total budget of US\$ 200 000 was allocated in the 2011 workplan for MOAs with the partners for DP3, covering project components in projects in Togo (Kara) and Benin. Given the existing commitment to the project in Kara, the allocation for Benin is up to US\$ 100 000.
- 6.107. Discussions with project partners during June 2011 indicated that there is still strong support for development of a project in Benin. The government partners stressed the need for a tangible outcome from and focus for the GEF Volta project. They observed that expenditure on demonstration projects across the six countries should be equivalent in all the countries.
- 6.108. There is potential to draw on the expertise of collaboration of a number of partners:
- IUCN's PAGEV project closes at the end of 2011 and it is not realistic to expect the project to expand into new areas in its remaining six months. However this is still scope to draw on the experience of PAGEV in project development, and possibly to involve programmes experts from IUCN in follow up.
 - The Benin Office for the Global Water Partnership has a large programme in the identified project area and is interested to explore possible complementarities and to facilitate project implementation through existing personnel on the ground.
 - The PMU is exploring potential to link the tri-national GEF project, *Enhancing the Effectiveness and Catalyzing the Sustainability of the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) Protected Area System*, which is expected to run until the end of 2013. The project activities address sustainable development of areas adjacent to parks and building awareness amongst communities about land use management issues.

Recommendation

- 6.109. It is **recommended** that a focussed concept be developed in the third quarter of 2011 using a consultant or small team of consultants under the oversight of the PMU and NC and with adequate stakeholder consultation including in the project area. If follow up can be assured through one or more partners, then consideration should be given to planning over a longer timeframe than 12 months. The GEF intervention should comprise a distinct foundational stage of the project that can be completed during 2012 (or by mid-2013 if the PSC recommends an overall project extension). If necessary funds for project development should be taken from the budget allocation for the MOA.

6.110. Given the limited time available, it is suggested that the project be oriented towards a future phase³⁹ if a realistic proposal and agreement on institutional set up of the project cannot be concluded by the end of October 2011.

Reference

UNEP-GEF Volta Project, 2010. *Rapport de la mission de prospection pour la définition des actions pilotes de lutte contre la dégradation des ressources environnementales transfrontalières du bassin de la Volta au Bénin*. UNEP/GEF/Volta/RR 7/2010.

³⁹ e.g. The SAP implementation project or independent funding

DP3. Restoring and protecting the river beds of the Black Volta and its tributaries through participative campaigns of reforestation (Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire)

Overview of Project

- 6.111. This riverbank restoration project is located in the transboundary area where the Black Volta River forms the frontier between the north eastern part of Côte d'Ivoire and north western part of Ghana. The area has been affected by serious land degradation associated with multiple causes including slash and burn agriculture and deliberate and accidental bush fires linked to charcoal production for local and commercial use. This is associated with increased runoff, sedimentation of water courses, and erosion.
- 6.112. The overall objective of the Demonstration Project 3 is "to ensure sustainability of water resources in the Black Volta River basin through participative promotion of reforestation that could be replicated across the Volta River basin".
- 6.113. The Project has two specific objectives (Inception Report):
- Specific Objective n° 1: Reinforce the capacity of stakeholders involved in forest and water resources management issues
 - Specific Objective n° 2: Restore and protect pilot plots of land along river channels through experimental and demonstrative actions
- 6.114. A preliminary project logframe was developed during the PDF-B stage for the GEF Volta project. It was modified during the inception phase of the project and further revised and elaborated through a detailed study that was undertaken by a team of consultants from Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and completed in March 2009. The study recommended relocation of activities since some of the original sites were in an area expected to be flooded as a result of closure of the Bui dam which is currently under construction.
- 6.115. Project activities in Côte d'Ivoire have been stalled since late 2010 owing to the political change process and insecurity in the project area. The focus of the following report and the assessment ratings is on the project progress in Ghana, though some of the comments to apply to both parts of DP3. This section concludes with a few paragraphs on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

A. Project Performance and Impact

- 6.116. An inception planning workshop was organised in Bole August 2009 to discuss the project concept, implementation methodology and modalities including institutional arrangements and to develop a workplan, budget and timetable for different components and partners. The meeting brought together some participants including the GEF Volta PMU, relevant ministries, representatives of district government and technical services, NGOs, and a representative from IUCN PAGEV.
- 6.117. The project started formally with signature of an MOA with the Water Resources Commission (WRC) in April 2010. A project manager was recruited in November 2010. WRC has signed MOAs with local project partners, each of whom has a workplan and associated budget.
- 6.118. A forum with communities from selected areas (Bole and Senyeri) in the districts of Bole and Sawla/Tuna/Kalba was organised in December 2010 with the support of the local NGO, Partners in Participatory Development (PAPADEV). This combined with follow up awareness-building meetings in each area allowed the roles of different groups (including men's and women's groups) to be defined and allowed communities' concerns to be incorporated into the planned activities.
- 6.119. Some 25 000 seedlings of a variety of species are being raised in the compound of the Forest Commission with individuals taking responsibility for raising up to a few thousand seedlings each. At the same time the project manager has been active in identifying sources of less

easily produced seedlings such as mango at through contact with the Forestry and Crop Research Institutes. These are more expensive and the budget currently allocated for seedlings is not sufficient for to cover the intended 50ha. The centralised approach to raising seedlings - more efficient but less inclusive - was taken view of timing. It was not possible to reach agreement with local women's groups to raise the seedlings in view of the low proposed purchase price. Planting went ahead since seedlings take several months to mature to the point where they can be planted out, and the optimal planting season is September.

- 6.120. Areas for tree planting have been provisionally demarcated. However the identified areas are set back from the river and already have some tree cover. During the visit in June 2011 the GEF Volta Science and Information Officer provided advice on identification of plots closer to the river that are suffering from serious erosion or loss of vegetation cover. While this may resolve the issue of seedling and labour costs (by requiring fewer seedlings for a smaller total surface), access may be difficult in some areas.
- 6.121. It has not been possible to implement activities dependent on exchanges with Côte d'Ivoire, such as training in efficient charcoal production. There is ongoing interest at the local level in working with these neighbouring communities.
- 6.122. It will take 2-3 years for the tree plantations to become established and effective in providing local benefits as well as reducing river bank erosion and sediment levels in run-off. Meantime, a second season of in-fill planting is envisaged for 2012.
- 6.123. Like the other projects, this project has remained relevant in the wider GEF Volta project and contributes to the strategic aims for the demonstration projects ([Paragraph 6.6](#)). It has not explicitly addressed development of public-private sector partnerships as envisaged in the GEF IW Strategic priorities prevailing at the time the project was designed ([Paragraph 6.7](#)).

B. Sustainability and catalytic role

B1. Sustainability

- 6.124. The project has several innovative aspects in terms of socio political sustainability.
- First is the plan to use economically valuable tree species to encourage communities to maintain the seedling during the early years when they are vulnerable to grazing pressure, and when they have matured and would be of interest for fuelwood or charcoal production.
 - Second, the project plans to reinforce awareness of and enforce of local byelaws⁴⁰ that forbid grazing of cattle in newly planted areas.
 - Third, the planning activities will be associated with training fire prevention and control at the community level. As well as ensuring protection of the new plantations this will have a wider impact in terms of raising awareness about fire and increasing local capacity to prevent and control fires, which are sometimes deliberately set.
- 6.125. In terms of financial sustainability, the revenue generating potential of new trees is expected to provide an incentive for communities to continue the work. However, the short duration of the project means it is questionable whether such work will continue without ongoing support of the local services since benefits will take several years to be realised. The communities themselves are hoping that the work will attract the interest of future projects.
- 6.126. There are no immediate concerns in terms of environmental sustainability since the project activities were relocated in response to the decision taken to construct the Bui dam.

⁴⁰ The project originally set out to create such byelaws but these already exist.

B2. Catalytic Role and Replication

- 6.127. The project will create economic incentives through provision of economically valued trees.
- 6.128. The project addresses a widespread issue in the Volta basin and in this sense is replicable. It has some original aspects such as engagement of the fire services that distinguish it from other projects in the Volta basin tackling river bank degradation (such as PAGEV).

C. Processes affecting attainment of project results

C1. Preparation and Readiness

- 6.129. See [‘Milestones in Design’ in Part 1](#). Like the other demonstration projects, this project was well prepared over an extended period leading up to the preparation of the situation analysis and project document by a team of two consultants, based on a field mission to the project area in 2008.
- 6.130. A detailed note on implementation modalities and project administration was prepared in mid-2009 on the basis of a meeting with the partners from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. This anticipated the start of the project in early 2010. Separate national planning meetings for each project bringing together a range of stakeholders were organised in August and September 2009.

C2. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

- 6.131. Day to day activities are overseen by a project manager employed by the WRC and based in Bole. Formal partnerships based on MOAs have been established with the Forest Commission, Fire Service and PAPADEV. The budgets available to each partner are based on the detailed negotiation of activities and roles that took place at the October planning meeting.
- 6.132. The project manager has responded actively to stakeholder comments that could improve the project, for example in investigating availability of a wider range of economically important tree species. However there are concerns with the apparent level of understanding of the project strategy and additional support in this area would be desirable (e.g. [Paragraph 142](#)).
- 6.133. In practical terms the project is located a nine hour drive from Accra. There is regular contact manager and WRC by telephone but the project manager remains rather isolated. It has not always been easy for the project manager, who comes from a different part of the country, to gain the confidence of key local partners. Periodic visits to the project to provide technical back up and support in meeting with key partners such as the local administration may be helpful in this regard.

C3. Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness

- 6.134. There was a good level of stakeholder participation in the planning process including technical services at national and local level and local government.
- 6.135. Subsequent contact with local communities has been facilitated by PAPADEV, an NGO that has been active in and around Bole for a number of years. PAPADEV has helped the project to build relationships with traditional Chiefs, elders and opinion leaders and has started awareness campaigns in the target areas.

C4. Country Ownership and Drivenness

- 6.136. The project addresses an issue that is of national concern and can be seen as delivering on the national policy related to establishment of buffer zones along the banks of watercourses that was drafted in 2008. The WRC is responsible for oversight of this policy and as such is the appropriate lead agency for this project.
- 6.137. At the local level the project is supported by traditional Chiefs and by the district administrations, as well as by the implementing partners.

C5. Financial Planning and Management

- 6.138. For Ghana, an MOA was signed with the Water Resources Commission in April 2010 covering the period 1 February 2010 to 31 January 2012. The first financial transfer of US\$ 32 500 was made on signature. The WRC observed in June 2011 that these funds are almost exhausted.
- 6.139. The direct GEF contribution to the project is US\$ 132 500 while, supplemented by indirect funding of US\$ 22 000 through the core GEF project. The Government of Ghana committed to co-finance of US\$ 112 100, of which US\$ 62 000 cash. While not yet reported, the Government of Ghana has already made significant in kind and cash contributions including through the refurbishment and furnishing of a project office in Bole and provision of a project vehicle.
- 6.140. The MOA budget corresponds to 50 percent of each budget line from the project document developed in 2009 and is identical to that for Côte d'Ivoire. This raises the question as to how well it is adapted to the different types of activities envisaged in the two countries, as described in the project workplan.
- 6.141. A recently-qualified project manager was recruited in late 2009 through an open recruitment process. The project office has been established on the premises of the Forestry Commission in Bole, and refurbished and equipped by the WRC. A project vehicle has been purchased.
- 6.142. MOAs have been established with key local services, with the most recent signed in May 2011. Financial advances are made according to the agreed schedule and are usually paid in cash against signatures. The representative of the Fire Service has expressed a preference for payments to be made through its bank account in order to improve traceability (since cash withdrawals can then be matched to activities).
- 6.143. The project budget has been revised on several occasions to take account of rising costs. Local costs of labour and of inputs such as seedlings have increased and the PMU has suggested that activities be scaled back accordingly.

C6. PMU Supervision and Backstopping

- 6.144. The visit of the Science and Information Officer in June 2011 was an opportunity to re-orientate a number of activities that had not been clearly understood by the project manager, notably relating to the demarcation of areas for planting, and to meet with partners to reiterate the importance of their support for the project.

C7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6.145. The March 2009 project document includes a basic M&E plan based on project reporting, with identified responsibilities and timing. The project logframe includes objectively verifiable indicators of mixed quality. Most are specific in terms of what will be measured but refer only in general terms to extent of the result (e.g. 'project area'). Indicators are timebound.

Indicators related to process milestones are attainable but those related to impact are overambitious in terms of timing, may be difficult to measure, and may be difficult to attribute the project, though control sites are envisaged. The budget includes allocations for monitoring equipment and for evaluations, with the latter covered by the GEF Volta core project.

- 6.146. At this stage there has not yet been any formal reporting on the project. The PMU has requested an inception report but this has not yet been provided.
- 6.147. The project manager was been advised by the Science and Information Officer to document the current status of intervention areas to serve as a baseline, including by use of photographs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 6.148. Project activities in Ghana are gaining momentum after a slow start. Partners are engaged and there is a strong likelihood that a substantial part of the bank restoration work will be completed in 2011. Appropriate demarcation of sites is vital to ensure a worthwhile result in the context of the GEF Volta project.
- 6.149. The project is scheduled to end in January 2012 just a few months after conclusion of the first planting season. Given the relatively late start it should be possible to extend the project by a few months on the basis of a no cost extension to allow for anticipated in-fill planting, but this remains a very short timeframe for a project aimed at changing attitudes and behaviour.
- 6.150. A summary of ratings for the project is provided in [Table 6.4](#) below.

Recommendations

- 6.151. It is **recommended** that the project budget and workplan are revised by WRC in collaboration with the PMU to take account of i) the poorly adapted budget in the MOA, ii) increased labour and seedling costs and iii) a possible project extension. This should be undertaken based on the outcome of and in liaison with the project revision for Côte d'Ivoire in order to take account of anticipated modification to joint activities.
- 6.152. It is **recommended** that the project is extended to allow for at least one season of in-fill planting and to enable exchanges with the sister project in Côte d'Ivoire. The first option, in view of the late start of the project, is a no cost extension to September 2012. A longer extension may be considered if the PSC decides to extend the overall GEF Volta project. This should be considered in the context of planning for joint activities with Côte d'Ivoire and possible requirement for reallocation of resources between the two projects.
- 6.153. Finally, as of June 2011, there was a clear need for WRC to ensure and if necessary directly support appropriate demarcation of planting sites. The scheduling of this evaluation means it is not possible to provide a timely recommendation in this regard.

Table 6.4. Summary of Ratings DP3: Black Volta, Ghana

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Attainment of project objectives and results	<i>The overall rating is based on the effectiveness rating⁴¹.</i>	MS
1. Effectiveness	Project effectiveness will depend on effective demarcation of intervention sites. This rating also reflects the limited duration of the project due to its late start.	MS
2. Relevance	The project addresses a relevant issue and is valid in the context of the overall GEF Volta project.	S
3. Efficiency	The project requires extension until at least September 2012.	MS
B. Sustainability of project outcomes	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on the weakest rating for sub-criteria</i>	MS
1. Financial	Though there is potential for economic returns local communities are expecting further project support that has not yet been identified.	MS
2. Socio-political	The project is well adapted to local needs but the timeframe is very short for a project that aims to change attitudes and behavior at local level.	MS
3. Institutional framework	Local administrations and services are involved in and supporting the project. Fire groups may be established.	S
4. Environmental	The project has a strategy in place to minimize fire risks	S
C. Catalytic role	The revenue generating potential of trees creates incentives for community involvement.	S
D. Stakeholders involvement	The project has engaged a wide range of local stakeholders after overcoming initial challenges.	S
E. Country ownership / drivenness	Local administrations are supportive of the project which is also supporting implementation of national policy.	S
F. Achievement of outputs and activities	Activities are expected to gain momentum in 2011.	MS
G. Preparation and readiness	The project was well prepared. However the MOA budget was not adapted to the differentiated activities in the two countries.	MS
H. Implementation approach	A local office has been established and partnerships have been developed with appropriate local partners	S
I. Financial planning and management	The project budget was poorly adapted. There has not yet been any financial reporting.	MS
J. Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>The overall rating on this criterion is based on rating for M&E Implementation</i>	
1. M&E Design	The project document includes a basic M&E plan but there is no requirement for progress reporting in the MOA.	MS
2. M&E Plan Implementation	The project has not produced an inception report and there has not yet been any effort to establish a baseline for areas to be restored.	MU
3. Budgeting and funding for M&E	The project budget included provision for monitoring and evaluation.	S
K. PMU Supervision and backstopping	The PMU was actively involved in project planning and has provided ongoing technical advice.	S

⁴¹ The overall rating in this category cannot exceed the ratings given in the ratings provided for either relevance or effectiveness

Côte d'Ivoire

- 6.154. A national planning workshop was held in Côte d'Ivoire in October 2009 bringing together national and regional stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organisations. The meeting set out the institutional arrangements for the project including membership of the project steering committee, identification of the executing agency and host organisation, definition of roles and responsibilities, and identification of participants to take part in the bilateral committee with Ghana.
- 6.155. An MOA was signed with *Ministre de l'Environnement, des Eaux et Forêts* in July 2010 covering the period 1 February 2010 to 31 January 2012. The first financial transfer of US\$ 32 500 from the GEF grant of US\$ 132 500 was made on signature.
- 6.156. According to the budget summary, the government of Côte d'Ivoire committed co-finance of US\$ 134 100 amounting to just over 50 percent of the project budget. However the summary budget provides identical data as that for Ghana, with Government co-finance of US\$ 112 100, of which US\$ 62 000 cash. This supplemented by indirect funding of US\$ 22 000 through the core GEF project (which presumably was counted as government co-finance in the budget summary to bring the total to US\$134 100).
- 6.157. There are unconfirmed reports that training activities were undertaken in mid-2010 and that some seedlings were planted over an area of some 10ha.
- 6.158. It has not been possible to look at detail into the prospects for re-launching the project since the National Coordinator in Côte d'Ivoire could not be reached during the period available for this evaluation. As of September 2011, there are unconfirmed reports that some 12 000 seedlings were raised in 2011. At the same time partners in Ghana are interested in collaboration and one option is to continue the project on a streamlined basis with a focus on exchanges with the project in Ghana rather than implementation of activities in Côte d'Ivoire. One implication of this is the need to extend both projects beyond January 2012.
- 6.159. The rating for this part of the project presented in the Part 3 reflects limited progress to date due to exceptional extenuating circumstances as well as concerns as to whether the project can be effectively re-launched in the time remaining in the absence of a clear proposal for this.

Recommendation

- 6.160. It is **recommended** that the PSC ask the National Coordinator to provide a frank and detailed assessment of prospects for re-launch of the project based on activities that can be undertaken with project partners in collaboration with Ghana, and provide a series of options and proposals for moving forward by the end of November 2010. Based on the proposal, the PSC may consider reallocating part of the budget for activities in Côte d'Ivoire project in Ghana in order to enable exchange between the areas to continue throughout 2012.

PART 3. Summary of Findings

6.161. It is too early to undertake a full mid-term evaluation of the demonstration projects. Nevertheless this review has served as a stock-taking exercise of the project in the context of Specific Objective 3 of the GEF Volta project. Some general findings of this exercise are the following:

- The demonstrated approaches are relevant, replicable, and, although not highly original, do all have some innovative aspects.
- The intended transboundary collaboration in all three projects has been affected by circumstances that were largely beyond the control of the project.
- The PMU has invested significant time and effort in supporting the establishment of the demonstration projects. Much of the burden of this work has fallen on the RPC since the working language for five of the six initiatives is French, and two partners did comment that capacity in the PMU appears to be stretched.
- Only one of the projects – Kara – is likely to be completed within the timeframe envisaged in the project in the MOA and in the remaining lifetime of the overall GEF Volta project.
- The late start of the demonstration projects and lack of tangible results at this stage in the regional project has affected the visibility of the project with repercussions in terms of national support and interest.

6.162. Overall ratings for each project are presented in [Table 6.5](#). It should be emphasised that the ratings overall reflect progress within the overall context of the regional GEF Volta project and the related progress indicators developed for Objective 3. The question of timing has had a particular impact on the overall performance ratings. Only one project (Kara) looks like to fully deliver the expected results in the time remaining to the project.

Table 6.5. Summary of Progress Ratings

Project	Major Factor in Rating	Rating
DP1 - Mali	Progress has been slow. There are some concerns about reliance on activities undertaken in Burkina Faso.	MU
<i>DP1 – Burkina Faso</i>	The project is being implemented by DGRE with the support of the MCA.	<i>Not rated</i>
DP2 – Togo	Although the GEF VRB has yet to provide funding it has been an appreciated partner in this well-founded project. Works may be completed by mid-2012.	MS
DP2 - Benin	The original project concept was abandoned in 2009. There is support for but as yet no well-developed concept for an ecosystem based project.	U
DP3 - Ghana	The MOU was signed in April 2010, a project manager was appointed in November 2010 and the project is gaining momentum. The project has had challenges engaging stakeholders and technical oversight has been limited.	MS
DP2 - Côte d'Ivoire	The MOU was signed in July 2010, and some training activities were initiated. The project has been blocked as a result of the political change process and there is no current strategy to restart this.	MU

6.163. Individual recommendations are provided for each of the demonstration projects and are summarised in Box 1.

Table 6.6 Summary of Recommendations

DP1: Mali	<p>It is recommended that a follow up coordination meeting is organised in the third quarter of 2011 by DNH, with the support of the PMU, between the DGRE, DNH and AEDD and their parent Ministries if appropriate. The primary purpose should be to initiate development of the framework convention (Specific Objective 2) and secondary purpose to clarify data needs and modalities for data sharing for calibration of the model (Specific Objective 1).</p> <p>It is recommended that the project budget and allocation of costs between the MOA parties be reviewed and revised by the end of September 2011 by with the view to ensuring ready availability of resources to enable the project manager to visit the project area. The related issue of mobilisation of co-finance is addressed in the overall project evaluation.</p> <p>It is recommended that the project is extended on a no-cost basis to the September 2012. DNH may request a with a further extension of up to six months if the PSC decides to extend the GEF Volta project and if this is justified based on the outcomes of discussions with DGRE.</p>
DP2: Togo	<p>It is recommended that the GEF Volta project proceed as envisaged to sign an MOU with SIAAP in October 2011 for construction of the water treatment plant.</p>
DP2: Benin	<p>It is recommended that a focussed concept be developed in the third quarter of 2011 using a consultant or small team of consultants under the oversight of the PMU and NC and with adequate stakeholder consultation including in the project area. (<i>Full text in Paragraph 6.109</i>)</p>
DP3: Ghana	<p>It is recommended that the project budget and workplan are revised by WRC in collaboration with the PMU to take account of i). The poorly adapted budget in the MOA, ii) increased labour and seedling costs and iii) a possible project extension. This should be undertaken based on the outcome of and in liaison with the project revision for Côte d'Ivoire in order to take account of anticipated modification to joint activities.</p> <p>It is recommended that the project is extended to allow for at least one season of in-fill planting and to enable exchanges with the sister project in Côte d'Ivoire. The first option, in view of the late start of the project, is a no-cost extension to September 2012. A longer extension may be considered if the PSC decides to extend the overall GEF Volta project. This should be considered in the context of planning for joint activities with Côte d'Ivoire and possible requirement for reallocation of resources between the two projects.</p>
DP3: Côte d'Ivoire	<p>It is recommended that the PSC ask the National Coordinator to provide a frank and detailed assessment of prospects for re-launch of the project based on activities that can be undertaken with project partners in collaboration with Ghana, and provide a series of options and proposals for moving forward by the end of November 2010. One output of this revised project may be a proposal for follow up activities on the ground. Based on the proposal, the PSC may consider reallocating part of the budget for activities in Côte d'Ivoire project in Ghana in order to enable exchange between the areas to continue throughout 2012.</p>

References

- GEF Volta Project documentation including project document and annexes, inception report, annual reports and workplans.
- Situation analysis / project documents for three demonstration projects (Dated March 2009)
- Reports of Planning Workshops (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Mali)
- Inception Report for Mali (DP1)
- PMU Mission Reports and Memos
- MOAs between UNOPS and Governments of Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali

Annex 7. Measures of Effectiveness

Table 7.1. Progress against Objectives using on Outcome-level Indicators

This summary complements the discussion on *effectiveness* in [Part II, Section A](#) of the evaluation. Comments and ratings are based on progress against the Mid-term Target. Columns 1-5 are taken from the PIR.

Project objective and Outcomes	Description of indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Evaluation Comments	Rating
Objective 1: Build capacity, improve knowledge, enhance stakeholders' involvement to support the effective management of the VRB						MS
Outcome 1.1: <i>Project Managed and coordinated to partners satisfaction</i>	Project management and co-ordination bodies established	None	PMU and all project organs operational and effective		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Outputs and Activities 	
Outcome 1.2: <i>Capacity & participation of stakeholders in VRB management strengthened</i>	Ministries of environment and water resources are both represented in the Project Steering Committee		(None)	Ministries of environment and water resources participate in the project activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Ministries/agencies are represented at PSC level 	S
	All relevant stakeholders participate in project activities and have access to project reports, publications, database, etc	Not existing	All stakeholders identified and their actions understood; MOUs developed to support key collaborations, e.g. VBA, EU Volta project, IUCN PAGEV project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key stakeholders at the regional level have been identified and there is ongoing collaboration with the VBA. VBO and IUCN PAGEV project. • In the case of VBA, this has been formalised through a signed collaboration framework. • 3 national stakeholder reports were completed 	MS
	Institutions have the capacity to manage and monitor data in support of the implementation of SAP and APNP-VRB, and provide coordinated data transfer to VBA observatory	None	Existing data is inventoried and CHM established	Countries contributing data to the CHM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and regional studies on existing data completed. • The CHM (VB-ISS) has been established but VBO has not yet confirmed whether it will use the UNEP DEWA platform. • Data is being compiled by the VBO 	MS

Project objective and Outcomes	Description of indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Evaluation Comments	Rating
	Involvement of stakeholders in SAP and APNP-VRB process and roles detailed in SAP and APNP-VRB documents	None	Stakeholders contribute to the TDA process	Stakeholders have contributed to national and regional SAP processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder contribution to the TDA process has been limited (See section C3) 	MS
	National institutions have the capacity to implement the SAP and APNP-VRB	None	National institutions and partners understand the TDA and SAP processes	National institutions engaged in TDA and SAP processes and are positioned to implement the SAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training has been provided in the TDA and SAP process Capacity to implement the SAP and APNP-VRB is not well represented by these targets 	MS
Outcome 1.3: <i>Knowledge base expanded & basin-wide communication mechanism in place</i>	VBA database developed and updated at regional and national levels	No database for VBA exists	Equipment procured, development underway.	VBA database (CHM) developed by year 4 and functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The VB-ISS platform has been developed and VBA has recently requested purchase of ArcGIS 	MS
	Contributions to the establishment of regional Volta Basin Observatory completed & approved by the VBA	Volta Basin Observatory to be established, with funding by French GEF	Existing metadata and synthesized	CHM is functional and supports the observatory operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The VBO has a metadata management system on 'GeoNetwork' open-source software AFD is providing follow up 	MS
	At least 2 thematic studies carried out	Thematic studies to be identified will fill in gaps identified by TDA and national experts	(None)	2 thematic studies carried out on water and related natural resources of the Volta River Basin by year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources reallocated: this work was expected of be undertaken by the ECOWAS/WRCU EU project. Draft studies are to be taken up by VBO with AFD support 	MU
Objective 2: Develop river basin legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks, and management instruments for addressing transboundary concerns in the Volta River Basin and its downstream coastal area						MU
Outcome 2.1: <i>VRB regional coordination mechanisms supported</i>	VRB Convention into force	Convention signed by the riparian countries	Convention ratified by at least 4 of the riparian countries	VRB convention enters into force and VBA functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Convention entered into force in August 2009 	HS
Outcome 2.2: <i>TDA updated and finalised</i>	TDA revised, finalized and endorsed by the Project Steering committee	Preliminary TDA prepared under PDF-B phase of the project	TDA endorsed by the project Steering committee by the end of year 2	TDA endorsed by the project Steering committee and informing management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TDA has not yet been finalised or endorsed by the PSC (by year 3.5) 	MU

Project objective and Outcomes	Description of indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Evaluation Comments	Rating
Outcome 2.3: <i>Action Plans for the National Parts of the VRB (APNP-VRB) developed</i>	APNP-VRB finalised and endorsed at country level	IWRM plans at various stages of development for each country.	Methodology developed and agreed	APNP-VRB endorsed at country level by year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall methodology for the SAP TDA process provides partial guidance for the APNP-VRBs APNP development has not started 	MS
	Key inter-sectoral transboundary issues identified and plan for sectoral harmonisation developed with relevant sectors and agreed for inclusion in IWRM process	Inter-sectoral harmonization as part of the IWRM process needed in all countries and ongoing and substantial work	APNP-VRB methodology includes IWRM considerations; stakeholders understand links between APNP-VRB and SAP processes and IWRM	Issues arising from APNP-VRB process highlighted for mainstreaming into national IWRM processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above The national TDAs provide a foundation for inclusion of IWRM issues 	MU
Outcome 2.4: <i>Strategic Action Programme (SAP) prepared</i>	SAP drafted, finalized and endorsed at ministerial level (Water and Environment Ministers)	No SAP exists for Volta River Basin	Methodology for SAP process developed; national partners trained on TDA/SAP processes	SAP endorsed at ministerial level by the end of year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed methodology and work plan for SAP development completed National partners trained 	MU
	Volta Basin Authority (VBA) adopts SAP into their work plan	VBA established in 2007 but with no SAP to implement or other strategic planning of activities based on agreed priorities	VBA participates in and advocates for TDA/SAP process	VBA adopt SAP into their work plan as mechanism for the implementation of the Volta River Basin Convention by the end of year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VBA Executive Directorate is involved in the TDA /SAP process VBA collaboration framework includes commitment to endorse the project outcomes 	MS
Objective 3: Demonstrate national and regional measures to combat transboundary environmental degradation in the Volta Basin						MU
Outcome 3.1: 3 <i>Demo Projects successfully implemented</i>	3 Demo projects executed resulting in stress reduction and analyzed for their replicability	None	Six demo project starting at the beginning of year 2	Six demo projects executed by year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five projects underway with three currently supported financially by the GEF-Volta project. Progress in CI has stalled. 	MU
Outcome 3.2: <i>Replication strategy for demonstration project developed and initiated</i>	Six national Demo projects are prepared to be submitted to co-funding partners	None	Demonstration projects underway	Key issues in demonstration projects have been identified and incorporated into a replication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above 	MU

Table 7.2 Effectiveness based on GEF 3 IW Tracking Tool

Rating	Agreement on TB Priorities and Root Causes (TDA Development and Completion)	Regional Agreement Adopted	Regional Management Organisation Capacitated	SAP Approved	On-the-Ground Results (Demonstrations and Investments)	Functional National Inter-Ministry Committees (IMC)
0	No progress on TDA	No legal agreement in place	No TBW institution in place	SAP neither developed, nor approved ✓	No progress on implementing demonstrations or investments	No IMC established
1	Priority TB issues identified and agreed but based on limited environmental/socioeconomic impact information; none or inadequate root cause analysis	Legal agreement signed	TBW institution established but functioning is quite limited; countries contributing dues on voluntarily basis ✓	SAP developed and agreed at highest technical level (e.g. project Steering Committee)	Demos/investments are designed and agreed with stress indicators and targets set ✓	IMCs established but not functioning effectively or at all.
2	Priority TB Issues agreed based on solid baseline of enviro and socioecon impacts info; root cause analysis is inadequate* ✓	More than one country ratified the legal agreement	TBW institution established and functioning with limited effectiveness, 50% of countries contributing dues on voluntarily basis	SAP developed and endorsed by minimum 50% Of countries	More than 2/3 of demos/investments underway as designed but insufficient information available to quantitatively document stress reduction	IMCs established and functioning on informal basis ✓
3	Regional agreement on priority TB issues drawn from valid enviro/socioecon impacts baseline, immediate and root causes properly determined	Legal agreement ratified by necessary quorum and in force ✓	TBW institution established and functioning in general, 75% or more of countries contributing dues	SAP endorsed by all ministers of countries sharing the TB water body or adopted by relevant inter-governmental body	All demos/investments achieved the targets, projected stress reduction documented, results fully disseminated	IMCs established, functioning and formalized through legal and/or institutional arrangements

* This '2' rating is based on the fact that the regional TDA has not yet been completed and validated.

Annex 8. Review of Outcomes to Impacts

Figure 8.1 Generalised Theory of Change for the Volta River Basin Project

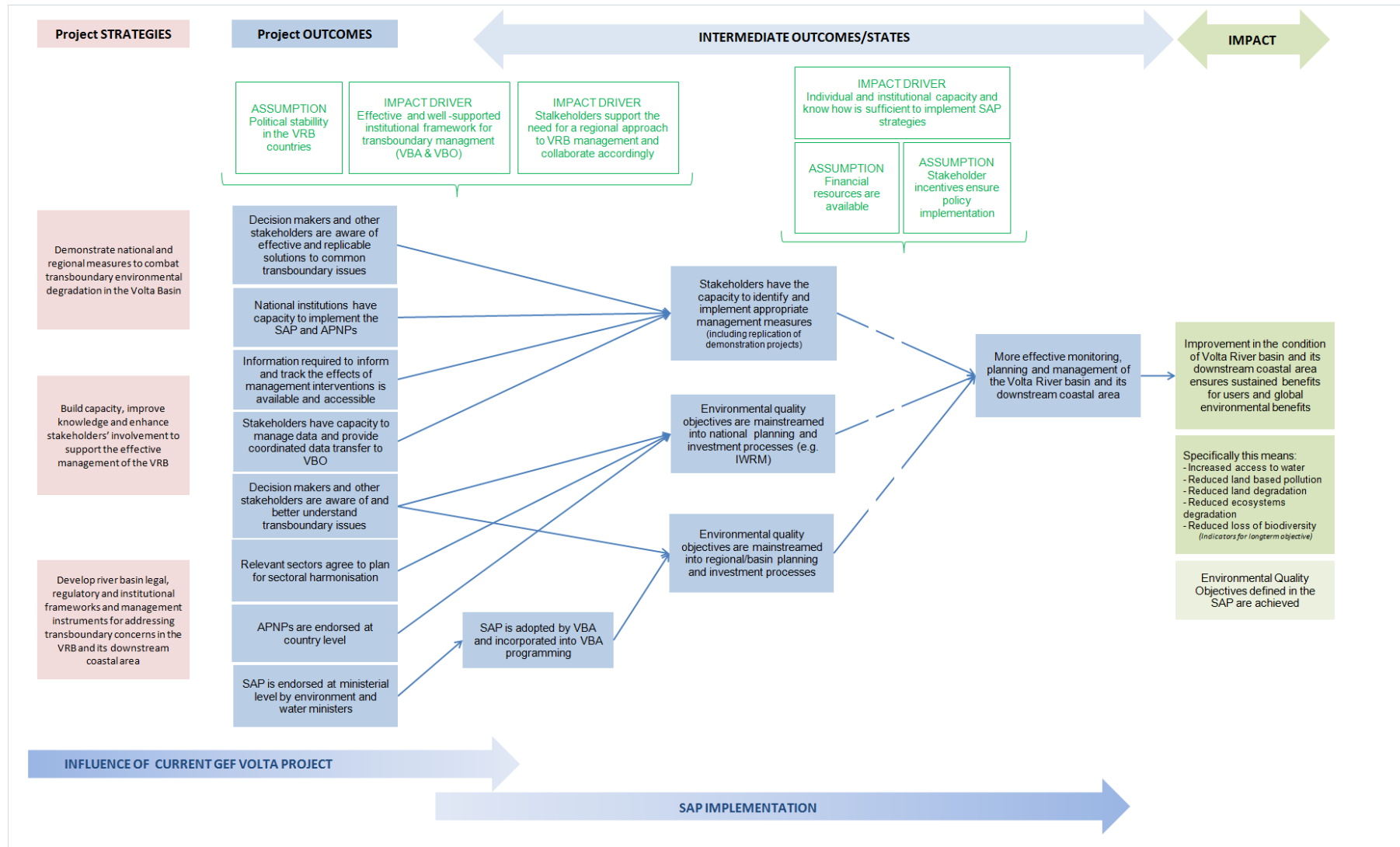


Figure 8.2. Results and ratings of Review of Outcome to Impact (ROtI)

Results rating of project entitled: <i>Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area</i>							
Project Objective							
To enhance the ability of the riparian countries to plan and manage the Volta River Basin and its downstream coastal area (including aquatic resources and ecosystems) on a sustainable basis							
Revised Outputs	Outcomes	Rating (D - A)	Intermediary	Rating (D - A)	Impact	Rating (+)	Overall
Capacity & participation of stakeholders in VRB management strengthened Knowledge base expanded & basin-wide communication mechanism VRB regional coordination mechanisms supported Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) updated and finalised Action Plans for the National Parts of the VRB (APNP-VRB) developed Strategic Action Programme (SAP) prepared 3 Demo Project successfully implemented Replication strategy for demonstration project developed and initiated	Decision makers and other stakeholders are aware of effective and replicable solutions to common transboundary issues National institutions have capacity to implement the SAP and APNPs Information required to inform and track the effects of management interventions is available and accessible Stakeholders have capacity to manage data and provide coordinated data transfer to VBO Decision makers and other stakeholders are aware of and better understand transboundary issues Relevant sectors agree to plan for sectoral harmonisation	D	Stakeholders have the capacity to identify and implement appropriate management measures SAP and environmental quality objectives are mainstreamed into national planning and investment processes (e.g. IWRRM) SAP is adopted by VBA and incorporated into VBA programming SAP and environmental quality objectives are mainstreamed into regional/basin planning and investment processes More effective monitoring, planning and management of the Volta River basin and its downstream coastal area	C	Improvement in the condition of Volta River basin and its downstream coastal area ensures sustained benefits for users and global environmental benefits Specifically this means: - Increased access to water - Reduced land based pollution - Reduced land degradation - Reduced ecosystems degradation - Reduced loss of biodiversity	NA	Moderately Unlikely
	Rating justification: The project has been designed to feed into a continuing process with specific allocation of roles and responsibilities, though this is not yet fully defined. However the D-rating is determined by the fact that outcomes have not yet been delivered.		Rating justification: The C rating reflects that measures have been designed to move toward intermediate states have started but have not yet produced results. This is expected at this stage in the project life.		Rating justification: The DC rating corresponds to 'moderately unlikely'. Further discussion is provided in the evaluation text. There is no '+' rating in a context where the project was expected to produce only localised impacts through the demonstration projects and these have not yet been realised.		

Notes:

Outputs are based on the nine outputs used in planning and reporting from 2009 onwards. Those outputs that were not fully under the control of the project have been reformulated

Outcomes are based on table of outcomes in Inception Report as adapted in Figure 8.1.

Ratings:

Rating scale for outcomes and progress towards 'intermediate states'

Outcome Rating	Rating on progress toward Intermediate States
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.

Six point scale for translation of ratings for 'achievement of outcomes' and 'progress towards intermediate states' to ratings for the 'Overall likelihood of impact achievement'.

Highly Likely	Likely	Moderately Likely	Moderately Unlikely	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely
AA AB 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

Annex 9. Statement of Project Expenditure and Summary of co-finance information

Table 9.1. Evolution of the Project Budget

UNEP BUDGET LINE/OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE All figures in US\$		Project Document (2006)	INCEPTION Budget 2008	Revised Budget 2009	Revised Budget 2010	Revised Budget 2011	Difference 2011 - Inception	Ratio 2011 Budget / Inception Budget (%)
10	PROJECT PERSONNEL COMPONENT							
	1100 Project Personnel	1 070 000	1 206 477	1 475 205	1 502 354	1 545 123	338 646	128
	1200 Consultants	436 100	907 400	592 643	595 643	564 584	-342 816	62
	1300 Administrative support	81 600	76 541	100 301	99 071	105 843	29 302	138
	1400 Volunteers	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	1600 Travel on official business	120 000	233 000	235 898	252 222	270 582	37 582	116
	1999 Component Total	2 104 802	2 423 418	2 404 047	2 449 292	2 486 132	62 714	103
20	SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT							
	2100 Sub-contracts (UN agencies)		0	0	0	0	0	
	2200 Sub-contracts (Non-profit organisations)	871 000	1 033 200	889 386	835 414	818 014	-215 186	79
	2399 Sub-contracts (Commercial purposes)		0	0	0	0	0	
	2999 Component Total	871 000	1 033 200	889 386	835 414	818 014	-215 186	79
30	TRAINING COMPONENT							
	3100 Fellowships		0	0	0	0	0	
	3200 Group training	324 800	256 000	293 118	283 955	305 654	49 654	119
	3300 Meetings/conferences	1 271 000	556 520	669 000	667 426	725 340	168 820	130
	3999 Component Total	1 595 800	812 520	962 118	951 381	1 030 994	218 474	127
40	EQUIPMENT & PREMISES COMPONENT							
	4100 Expendable equipment		28 000	49 500	76 500	69 500	41 500	248
	4200 Non-expendable equipment	168 856	38 100	78 661	71 928	67 394	29 294	177
	4300 Premises	10 000	6 000	6 777	6 777	5 626	-374	94
	4999 Component Total	204 356	72 100	134 938	155 205	142 520	70 420	198
50	MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT							
	5100 Operation and maintenance of equip.	3 000	11 000	30 500	33 500	28 681	17 681	261
	5200 Reporting costs	369 228	370 000	291 839	279 839	189 197	-180 803	51
	5300 Sundry (communications, postage etc)	122 194	129 040	93 450	101 646	110 739	-18 301	86
	5400 Hospitality and entertainment	17 000	0	0	0	0	0	
	5500 Evaluation	60 000	100 000	145 000	145 001	145 001	45 001	145
	5999 Component Total	571 422	610 040	560 789	559 986	473 618	-136 422	78
	TOTAL COSTS	4 951 278	4 951 278	4 951 278	4 951 278	4 951 278	0	100
	Project Execution Costs -UNOPS (8%)	396 102	396 102	396 102	396 102	396 102	0	100
	GRAND TOTAL COSTS	5 347 380	5 347 380	5 347 380	5 347 380	5 347 380	0	1

Table 9.2 Statement of Expenditure by Project Component (GEF Funding Only)

Status as of 30 April 2011 based on UNOPS Data

UNEP BUDGET LINE/OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE All figures in US\$		Estimated cost at design	Estimated cost in 2011 budget	Actual Cost to date (30-04-11)	Expenditure ratio (Actual/planned)	Expenditure ratio based on 2011 budget
10	PROJECT PERSONNEL COMPONENT					
	1100 Project Personnel	1 206 477	1 545 123	981 605	81.4	63.5
	1200 Consultants	907 400	564 584	311 751	34.4	55.2
	1300 Administrative support	76 541	105 843	71 388	93.3	67.4
	1400 Volunteers	0	0	0		
	1600 Travel on official business	233 000	270 582	203 994	87.6	70.7
	1999 Component Total	2 423 418	2 486 132	1 568 738	64.7	62.6
20	SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT					
	2100 Sub-contracts (UN agencies)	0	0	0		
	2200 Sub-contracts (Non-profit organisations)	1 033 200	818 014	274 136	26.5	33.5
	2399 Sub-contracts (Commercial purposes)	0	0	0		
	2999 Component Total	1 033 200	818 014	274 136	26.5	33.5
30	TRAINING COMPONENT					
	3100 Fellowships	0	0	0		
	3200 Group training	256 000	305 654	144 774	56.6	47.4
	3300 Meetings/conferences	556 520	725 340	310 593	55.8	44.5
	3999 Component Total	812 520	1 030 994	455 367	56.0	45.4
40	EQUIPMENT & PREMISES COMPONENT					
	4100 Expendable equipment	28 000	69 500	24 004	85.7	34.5
	4200 Non-expendable equipment	38 100	67 394	60 360	158.4	89.6
	4300 Premises	6 000	5 626	2 588	43.1	46.0
	4999 Component Total	72 100	142 520	86 953	120.6	61.0
50	MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT					
	5100 Operation and maintenance of equip.	11 000	28 681	1 936	17.6	6.8
	5200 Reporting costs	370 000	189 197	46 642	12.6	23.4
	5300 Sundry (communications, postage etc)	129 040	110 739	29 805	23.1	26.9
	5400 Hospitality and entertainment	0	0	0		
	5500 Evaluation	100 000	145 001	2 701	2.7	1.9
	5999 Component Total	610 040	473 618	81 084	13.3	16.8
	TOTAL COSTS	4 951 278	4 951 278	2 466 277	49.8	49.8
	Project Execution Costs -UNOPS (8%)	396 102	396 102	197 302	49.8	49.8
	GRAND TOTAL COSTS	5 347 380	5 347 380	2 663 579	49.8	49.8

Table 9.3 Summary of Co-finance received up to 31 December 2010¹ based on information available to the PMU as of 15 July 2011

Co financing (Type/Source)	IA own Financing (mill US\$)		Government (mill US\$)		Other (mill US\$)		Total (mill US\$)		Total Disbursed (mill US\$)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
Grants	0	0	800 926	55 784	60 000	0	860 926	55 784	55 784
- Government of Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	50 000	0	50 000	0	0
- Government of Hungary	0	0	0	0	10 000	0	10 000	0	0
- Government of Benin	0	0	118 200	15 063	0	0	118 200	15 063	15 063
- Government of Burkina Faso	0	0	100 000	0	0	0	100 000	0	0
- Government of Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	183 000	8 040	0	0	183 000	8 040	8 040
- Government of Ghana	0	0	140 000	13 200	0	0	140 000	13 200	13 200
- Government of Mali	0	0	214 270	18 475	0	0	214 270	18 475	18 475
- Government of Togo ²	0	0	45 456	1 006	0	0	45 456	1 006	1 006
Loans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Credits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Equity investments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In-kind support	60 000	0	2 626 803	1 492 095	3 053 500	1 383 950	5 740 303	2 876 045	2 876 045
- UNEP	60 000	Not reported					60 000	Not reported	Not reported
- IUCN					620 000	Not reported	620 000	Not reported	Not reported ⁴
- ECOWAS/WRCU EU Project ³					1 962 500	196 468	1 962 500	196 468	196 468
- ECOWAS/WRCU ³					0	276 226	0	276 226	276 226
- SIAAP ³					471 000	911 256	471 000	911 256	911 256
- Government of Benin			300 000	114 325			300 000	114 325	114 325
- Government of Burkina Faso			167 353	121 025			167 353	121 025	121 025
- Government of Côte d'Ivoire			732 000	501 130			732 000	501 130	501 130
- Government of Ghana			550 000	292 845			550 000	292 845	292 845
- Government of Mali			100 000	30 350			100 000	30 350	30 350
- Government of Togo ²			777 450	432 420			777 450	432 420	432 420
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	60 000	0	3 427 729	1 555 878	3 113 500	1 383 950	6 601 229	2 939 829	2 939 829

1 Country partners report on their co-finance contributions on an annual (calendar year) basis.

2 Figures compiled by the PMU. The NC reported contributions of US\$20 00 in cash and US\$391 000 in kind.

3 Figures provided by the PMU based on a Euro:US\$ conversion rate of 1.57

4 IUCN provided information to the PMU on expenditure in the period 2004 to 2008 at the end of July 2011

Annex 10. Consolidated comments & response by the evaluator

Note that addition of the executive summary as well as a couple of responses have led to renumbering of paragraphs in the evaluation report. New paragraph numbers are given in brackets.

Commenter	Comment	Response of the evaluator (29 September 2011)
Kelly West	1. The reviewer did an admirable job of synthesizing information from disparate sources and reporting on project progress. The evaluation report is a detailed and thorough assessment, the observations and analysis are well founded and the ratings justified. In my mind, the question remains as to whether the recommendations, if implemented, are sufficient to push the project into a 'satisfactory' conclusion.	This evaluation did consider the option of terminating the project on the basis that there are severe risks to its being able to achieve a satisfactory outcome and I have now noted this in the conclusions. There is further feedback on recommendation in response to comments below.
Hubert Onibon	2. First of all I would like to thank the consultant for preparing a clear, fair and independent evaluation report and also making thoughtful recommendations. I personally see this report as a great support to the project. It will allow the PMU to readjust the project activities, budget and institutional framework towards successful project completion.	-
H. Onibon	3. Project starting date: I know that UNOPS signed the contract with UNEP in 2007 but the project activities really started in January 2008 with the establishment of the PMU.	The start date in the summary table is the date when UNOPS received the first transfer of funding. Paragraph 11 states, 'The Project Management Unit was established in January 2008, which can be considered to be the project start date'.
H. Onibon	4. Paragraph 17 (48) (last sentence): The MOAs were signed with government agencies in charge of water or environment in the six countries.	The MOA with Burkina Faso was signed by the <i>Ministre de l'Economie et des Finances</i>
H. Onibon	5. Paragraph 18 (49): the exact definition of SIAAP is Syndicat Interdépartemental pour l'Assainissement de l'Agglomération de Paris.	SIAAP has recently changed its name but for clarity I have reverted to the name used in the project documentation
H. Onibon	6. Paragraph 23 (54): In 2003 1 USD was a bit more than 700 CFA while in 2006 it was around 500 CFA.	This section now refers to drop in US\$ value since the budget was first approved in May 2003, when the USD was at 570 CFA, rather than the drop since 2006. (Source: OANDA historical rates)
H. Onibon	7. Paragraph 36 (67): I clearly understand the comments on the number of output and outcomes. I explained to the consultant, UNEP wanted a detailed logframe during the inception phase. M. Takehiro's argument was that, time was against us and it would take long to hire consultant and reformulate the project. Therefore it was important to make the logframe as clear as possible. We therefore agreed to use indicators presented in the M&E plan (annex of the inception report) for the monitoring of project activities and outcomes. For the numbering of the activities, this is normal because	The question of activity renumbering is not a major issue, but was referred to here since readers may find activity numbers used in this report do not always correspond with those in project reports.

	<p>we have to coordinate our activities with ongoing initiatives to avoid duplication. Also when we realize that an activity is failing to reach an outcome or is redundant then we take action. The most important for the us (PMU, UNEP and PSC) was to keep outcomes/outputs and work on how to reach them.</p>	
H. Onibon	<p>8. Paragraph 42 (73): 2 studies were conducted on stakeholders: 1-) institutional analysis and 2-) local stakeholders analysis.</p> <p>310. With regard to the analysis of national institutions including ongoing/planned initiatives the main activities, mandates, institutional frameworks, weakness, strength and training needs of national/regional institutions involved or likely to be involved in the implementation of the GEF Volta Project, their concerns, perceptions and reactions to transboundary issues and the project activities were presented and analyzed and a training plan proposed. The study also offered the opportunity to gather additional information, identify links and propose a collaboration plan with ongoing/planned initiatives at national and regional levels. The 6 national reports were completed and a regional synthesis prepared</p> <p>311. For the study on local stakeholders the 6 National reports were drafted and reviewed by PMU, national partners and Task Force Members but only 3 were satisfactorily completed. This gap was filled during the TDA process and in each national TDA report a section is dedicated to stakeholders' analysis including their involvement. At the regional level the same work was done through the thematic report prepared on the Basin governance analysis by the regional TDA Expert</p> <p>312. It seems that the PMU and UNEP don't have the same understanding of stakeholders' involvement. For the PMU since the project has limited duration it's not necessary to invest by preparing a stakeholders involvement plan for the project. It is necessary to use a holistic approach to prepare a stakeholders involvement plan for the overall basin and this in the framework of the VBA strategic plan. Beyond this, for each project activity the PMU always develops an approach integrating the involvement of relevant stakeholders. It has been the case for Demo projects, TDA, SAP, National studies, etc.</p>	<p>The purpose of these analyses is different.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The TDA and governance reports look at stakeholder roles and responsibilities in the basin countries. - Based on the terms of reference, the national reports were supposed to provide a strategy for engaging stakeholders in during the course of the current project. The comment highlights that the PMU did not view this as a priority during the project; however the evaluator's opinion is that this would have been a strategic activity. <p>This issue is taken up in more detail in section C3 of the report.</p>
Olumide Akinsola	<p>9. Paragraph.42 (73): The use of national partners for project activities implementation has encourage use of existing structure at national levels. These structures have partners at national levels and are represented by different institutions and several stakeholders as national implementation committees members. National TDA preparation recognized this and we ensured that stakeholders were</p>	<p>Note that Paragraph 42 specifically refers explicitly to the planned activity to develop a stakeholder involvement plan for the project while paragraph 43 and Section C3 refers more widely to actual stakeholder engagement in the project.</p> <p>VBA's development of a stakeholder involvement plan is an important and worthwhile activity.</p>

	involved throughout the process. They were consulted and in some cases submitted contributions through subcommittees established to finalized these TDA documents at national levels across the countries. The advantage of internalizing the stakeholders this way should be recognized as definitely brings mileage to the project and encourage national partners as well. Of course the issue is should we have produce stakeholder plan for the project even when a deliberate policy of inclusion (albeit not documented), have been adapted and its working or is it better to encourage VBA to develop a basin stakeholders involvement plan?	
K. West	10. Paragraphs 44 (75) & 46 (77): It was my understanding that the IWRM training activities were to be assumed by the EU project and that the GEF Volta project, in a budget revision, had reallocated these funds.	Noted. However, there is a funding allocation of \$40,000 for IRBM training in 2011 (line 3201), that it is suggested be reallocated in view of the project extension, both in view of the need to save funds and also to focus effort on the key project outcomes.
H. Onibon	11. Paragraph 46 (77): the project didn't organize these trainings because as result of coordination discussions with VBA and project partners it has been decided to organize them in the framework of the EU Volta project. Nevertheless, the results of the project studies on institutions analysis and local stakeholders' analysis were used by the EU Project to organize a regional training on IWRM and Master plan for national institution and another regional training on IWRM and water governance for journalists.	I have clarified paragraph 46. I think the confusion has arisen from these activities being reported in annual reports and in the PIRs.
H. Onibon	12. Paragraph 47 (77): Prior to the training and development of the VB ISS, the project conducted a study on the establishment of Regional Information and Data Exchange Mechanism in the Volta River Basin including: i-) the Inventory and analysis of existing national/regional data and information on the Volta river basin, including institutional analysis and training gaps, ii-) the setting up of a mechanism for the circulation of data and information at national and regional levels. The 6 national reports and the regional synthesis were completed and validated.	These activities were reflected in Annex 5 but not detailed in the text. I have expanded the text.
Charles A. Biney	13. Paragraph 47 (78): VBA has already decided to use the platform proposed by the project but it <i>is yet to fully utilize</i> it. It is an ongoing process. This is also applicable to paragraph 158.	I have clarified the text.
O. Akinsola	14. Paragraph 47 (78): Prior to the training on data sharing provided by the project, we conducted 6 national studies towards the establishment of a regional information and Data exchange mechanism in the Volta River basin. There is a regional report to this effect which consist of analysis of existing metadata, data holding institutions, training gaps and priority training needs for data	See above response to comment 12. .

	management. It was this report that recommended the need for appropriate data sharing system upon which the VBISS was established.	
H. Onibon	15. Paragraph 48 (79): The major difference between the EU Project and the GEF Volta Project is in the format used to submit project briefs. This approach was used during the PDF-B phase to mobilize funds in view of 1/1 co-finance requested by the GEF. Therefore the 2 projects were obliged to discuss and harmonize their intervention to avoid duplication and institutional conflict. Coordination discussion chaired by the VBA led to the conclusion that the EU Project will develop a model for the basin and then conduct thematic studies as stated in the project document while the GEF Volta role was to provide technical support.	I have added reference to the coordination meeting that led to reassignment of the studies to the EU project.
C. A. Biney	16. Paragraph 48 (79): The name of the EU-funded ECOWAS/WRCU project is 'Volta Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project'.	I have added the project name to first reference to the project, now in paragraph 46
H. Onibon	17. Paragraph 52 (83): in addition to the 6 national consultants, 2 national experts were also recruited per country to support the national consultants. Also a TDA working group was established in each country.	Added. Again, further detail is provided in Annex 5
H. Onibon	18. Paragraph 55 (86), last line: replace political change process by political crisis.	Done
K. West	19. Paragraphs 56 (87) (and also 95 (126) and 146 (177)): The evaluator notes short-comings in quality of some of the TDA input reports. The TDA consultant raised concerns about quality of inputs as a reason for his resignation. The report also notes that the PMU invests considerable time in improving consultants reports. To date the PMU is chasing consultants for the regional technical reports as input to the TDA. Quality seems to be a recurrent and important issue and perhaps more specific recommendations on this issue and/or technical support would be helpful.	There is not a separate recommendation on technical support but recommendation 1 on project extension and related budget changes, and recommendation 2, on SAP development encompass: 1. Refocus of PMU efforts on core outputs; 2. Allocation of US\$ 80 000 for additional technical support that it is suggested is used to establish task force of regional consultants for each of the 3-5 priority SAP themes; 3. Refocus of UDC technical support to TDA completion and SAP development; 4. More active involvement of NOFPs including in APNP-VRBs. In addition Recommendation 4 looks at engagement of a wider range of national stakeholders. I have also had to assume that a new TDA team leader has been recruited with good experience of TDA/SAP processes as well as technical content, and have recommended dovetailing these processes. See also feedback to comment 52.
H. Onibon	20. Paragraph 63 (94): it's important to highlight the fact that the hydrological model has been identified by MCA Burkina Faso in	Added. More detail on the demonstration projects is provided in Annex 7.

	collaboration with the GEF Volta Project, DGRE Burkina, Volta Basin Observatory and DNH Mali. Its adaptation to the project area was supposed to be completed by the end of the second quarter of 2011. Also demo planning meetings were held in Mali and Burkina Faso.	
O. Akinsola	21. Paragraph 64 (95): The demo projects were revised in 2008 and the report ready for implementation early 2009. However project activities were blocked for most of the 2009 and no demo implementation MOA was signed until 2010 or later.	The timeline is presented in detail in Annex 6 while this section summarises achievements.
H. Onibon	22. Paragraph 65 (96): Despite the political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire reforestation activities were conducted and according to information received from national partners: 10 ha of tree plantation were completed in 2010 and 12 000 seedlings were raised since the beginning of 2011.	The information on seedlings raised in 2011 is new and should clearly be taken into consideration when a decision is made as to whether to continue this initiative. It is now reflected in paragraph 6.158 in Annex 6.
Abigail Enid Sackar	23. Paragraph 66 (97): ... being stretched ...: It is quite unclear if it is the language issue or technical capacity to support the Demo projects because feedback from national partners in Togo and Côte d'Ivoire after visits of the Science and Information Officer who is normally assigned to be at their meetings has been nothing but positive.	Two technical partners in two demonstration projects commented that the PMU seemed overloaded and was slow to respond, but one of these also highlighted their strong appreciation of the technical input of the PMU. The issue is either workload or prioritisation, not competence. Several interviewees commented that the language issue meant that the project coordinator bore a large part of the project workload; this was not always related to the demonstration projects and I have clarified this text accordingly. One partner in a francophone country did specifically report that language had been an issue when the Science and Information Officer took part in a national meeting.
O. Akinsola	24. Paragraph 66 (97). It would be good to know if the capacity of PMU claimed to have been stretched or overstretched (mentioned in several parts of the report) has anything to do with language during the implementation of demo project. However with Gef-Volta implementing four demo projects and two (Demo3-Cote d'Ivoire and Demo3-Ghana) of those assigned to the SIO (who apparently clearly has some French limitation) certainly there have been no moment where working language has created overstretched situation or burden or position that made delivery impossible on those demo project.	See response above on paragraph 66
C. A. Biney	25. Paragraph 72 (103): The project is also relevant to the GEF-funded 'Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem project' executed by UNIDO, which has the overall goal to combat living marine resources depletion and coastal area degradation through ecosystem-based approach.	Agreed, however I have limited this section to the points raised in the project document under UNEP mandate in view of space limitations.
K. West	26. Paragraph 85 (116): Many SAPs are 'sustainable development plans'. This is why the development banks, which are also GEF	At this stage my understanding is that the Master Plan will take a wider development perspective while the SAP will focus on achieving and

	<p>agencies, usually get involved in the SAP implementation projects, this is the case for the Mediterranean, Southeast Asian Seas, Lake Chad Basin, among others. Many of the SAP interventions will require significant finance...e.g. irrigation efficiency improvement, wastewater treatment plants etc. and that is the comparative advantage of the banks. The SAP should not just represent the things that GEF would potentially fund in the future, but rather all of the needs of the basin, assuming these will be addressed in an environmentally sustainable way. SAPs typically consist of interventions financed by a wide range of potential donors. This doesn't necessarily detract from the points in this paragraph that the SAP will contribute to, but not substitute for, the Volta Basin Master Plan, or that the relationship between the two needs to be defined early in the process. But the prospect of two large basin-level planning processes is still a great concern.</p>	<p>sustaining environmental quality objectives in the context of ongoing development in the basin. The SAP will certainly require significant investment as described.</p> <p>As an example, the Master Plan may include development of infrastructure such as dams that would probably not be part of a SAP unless these have environmental objectives. However the SAP may anticipate strengthening of governance processes to ensure that any such development is planned and implemented in an appropriate manner. Planning is likely to be iterative in both cases.</p> <p>I understand the concern about two processes and have elaborated the preamble to recommendation 3.1 on SAP mainstreaming to reiterate the need to define the relationship between these processes.</p>
C. A. Biney	27. Paragraph 89 (120): Data gaps may also be partially addresses through other initiatives such as the GLOWA Volta Project.	Added. See also Annex 5.
K. West	28. Paragraph 92 (123): The term 'GEF Agency' almost always refers to implementing agency, in this case UNEP, whereas UNOPS is the executing agency.	Clarified in the text
C. A. Biney	29. Paragraph 94 (125): The delays in delivery of key project activities are more to do with the work plan of the Inception Report being too optimistic. For example, the demonstration projects were supposed to start at the beginning of 2008, the same time as the establishment of the PMU, even before approval by the Steering Committee.	Added
H. Onibon	30. Paragraph 95 (126): the PMU acknowledges its limited capacity and is willing to improve in view of a successful implementation of the project. It's a genuine comment and the PMU would like to be more oriented: technical capacity? Human resources capacity? Organizational capacity? Leadership? Etc...	The reference is to all round capacity in terms of available human resources relative to workload. There is potential for stronger prioritisation/planning and also for more delegation within the secretariat. See also responses to comments on paragraph 66.
O. Akinsola	31. Paragraph 94 (125) and 95(126): It would be good to indicate that the delays were also encouraged by the blockage of the project in 2009 even though the exigency of that moments due to the change in the Task Manager demands better understanding of the project concept.	The 2009 Annual report does report some delays in the first half of 2009 but concluded that the project remained on track. The word 'blockage' implies that there were deliberate actions such as suspension of activities or withholding of funds: this was not the case. However I have expanded the text in paragraph 207 that refers to delays associated with UNEP backstopping.
K. West	32. Paragraph 96 (127): please explain and clarify what is meant by a 'streamlined approach to APNP-VRBs.	Specific suggestions are made under recommendation 2 (Paragraph 299)
K. West	33. Paragraphs 131 (132) (and also paragraphs 16 (47), 145 (176) and 187 (220)): it was my understanding from predecessors at	The project document does state that UDC would report to UNOPS but this appears to have been disputed in the inception phase. At the same time the budget allocated to UDC to provide the anticipated support was

	<p>UNEP/DGEF that a challenge in recruiting UDC was that UDC did not wish to be recruited by UNOPS on the principle that they had participated strongly in the project development and did not wish to be sub-contracted by another agency. Consequently they participated in e.g. the inception meeting and other events through their own co-finance and much of the original budget that had been allocated to UDC was then reallocated. It was only when UDC received a new Director, who had experience with many GEF projects and UNOPS modalities and agreed to a UNOPS contract, that the contract could go forward. However, at this time, given the subsequent commitments made, it was not possible to even closely reconstitute the original budget.</p>	<p>dramatically reduced without recognition that in operational terms scaling back is not always straightforward.</p> <p>I have expanded paragraph 176 (see response to comment 37 below).</p>
H. Onibon	<p>34. Paragraph 135 (166): The PMU is not reluctant to accept UNEP support but has concern about UNEP involvement in day to day management of the project.</p>	<p>I have changed the wording here. However I think there is an issue of pushing back where UNEP (and perhaps KEOC) have tried to provide support or to better understand project issues. It's important to appreciate that all parties are acting in what they perceive to be the best interests of the project.</p>
A. E. Sackar	<p>35. Paragraph 135 (166): The use of the word 'intrusive' to describe PMU's reaction to support from DGEF is not quite accurately indicative of PMU response to support from both DGEF and UNOPS KEOC. The PMU does not at all find support from either party as intrusive.</p>	<p>See above. I have now used the word 'excessive' rather than 'intrusive'.</p>
H. Onibon	<p>36. Paragraph 144 (175): I'm not sure if the Task Force issue is well captured here but what is clear is that the decision to put on hold Task Force contracts came from UNEP and its implication is the implementation of project activities without technical support as initially planned.</p>	<p>I have added that from the perspective of the PMU this left a void in technical support from regional experts. This now reflects a balance of views in this issue.</p>
K. West	<p>37. Paragraph 145 (176): During the project inception period, it became clear that there were different institutional perspectives regarding the various modalities for engaging UDC in the Volta River Basin Project. Discussions on this continued for some time, through a succession of staff members within UNEP, UNOPS and UDC, with each of the partners introducing delays into the process at various times. Eventually agreement on UDC's roles was reached in mid-2010 and they were contracted to provide technical support to the project, though given the subsequent commitments made in the meantime, it was not possible to even closely reconstitute the original budget.</p>	<p>I have expanded this text to reflect this comment which also reflects comments made by the PMU during earlier discussions</p>
C. A. Biney	<p>38. Paragraph 154 (185): VBA is conducting a study on the involvement of stakeholders in water resources management as part of the</p>	<p>Added</p>

	establishment of the Observatory, which is supported by the French GEF (FFEM).	
C. A. Biney	39. Paragraph 158 (189): VBA has already decided to use the platform proposed by the project but it <i>is yet to fully utilize</i> it. It is an ongoing process.	I have removed reference to a decision pending on the VB-ISS in this paragraph (that concerns the project website) and addressed the comment together with comment 13.
H. Onibon	40. Paragraph 165 (196) bullet point 3: with regard to the demo project in Benin, the PMU asked national partners to conduct field visit and advise on way forward and it was even discussed during Abidjan PSC meeting. Demo projects are countries responsibilities and the PMU role is to coordinate and provide technical support when necessary.	The NC and NOFP reported that they are waiting for the PMU to act on this so the statement about uncertainty regarding responsibilities in bullet 3 is valid.
K. West	41. Clarification to paragraph 169 (200): In April 2011 the project vehicle was still not servicing the project.	Added. This was still the situation in June 2011 but it had been agreed to recruit a driver.
K. West	42. Paragraph 177 (209)(also paragraph 13 (44)): While working on the 2011 PIR, UNEP had the horrible realization that none of the project revisions approved by the PSC to date had been formally processed. The UNEP Task Manager (TM) and Fund Management Officer (FMO) have spent some time analyzing this situation. While the PSC-approved budgets have been communicated to the FMO by the TM prior to and following PSC meetings, the delay has been in the reporting on past expenditure from UNOPS KEOC to UNEP which, as a matter of due diligence, is part of the process of approving a revision.	I have added the point about meeting requirements for due diligence in a timely manner but it does look as though there was a breakdown in communications at some stage.
H. Onibon	43. Paragraph 179 (211): The RPC contract started in December 2007 but accepted to start the work a bit earlier without financial implication upon UNEP request.	Clarified in the text
Angélika Quaye	44. Paragraph 183 (215): That is not so with Benin. They submitted in total 4 reports as at the MTE period and have received 5 Payments.	I did receive a copy of the fifth report and was told only three payments had been received in response to financial reports. Based on the MOU payment schedule and content of the report, four payments must have been made in total; the initial payment plus three replenishments based on financial reports. Replenishments were not made when the financial reports showed a healthy balance.
H. Onibon	45. Paragraph 184 (216): I understand partners concerns but the fact that the PMU doesn't manage funds should also be reflected in the statement.	This is described in paragraph 220.
K. West	46. Paragraph 207 and 208 (239 & 240): See comment on paragraph 177. The FMO contributes the following analysis: 313. I note the rating on financial planning as "moderately unsatisfactory" in paragraph 201 (233). Whilst I would probably concur with this rating, and can see that a number of the key issues leading to this rating have	I have added a reference to delayed financial reporting from UNOPS to UNEP in paragraph 174 (205). See also response to comment 42. I have added a reference in paragraph 239.

	<p>been mentioned, I do feel that there is one aspect that has not been given adequate prominence in the content of the report. The said paragraph 201 does mention "delays in reporting and receipt of project payments" but it is apparent from the main content of the report that this is largely in relation to reporting by countries to the PMU. However there have also been significant delays in financial reporting from UNOPS to UNEP as the implementing agency. This in turn has caused delay in the processing of cash requests, where it had not been possible to verify proper usage of earlier funds transferred when reviewing a request for the next tranche of the budget. It also had a knock-on effect on the smooth processing of budget revisions, where actual expenditures to date must be taken into account when assessing the impact of proposed revisions. Whilst I concur that the revisions ought to have been concluded on each occasion, I would draw attention to the impact of delays in being able to look at the full picture, which made the process more time consuming than it should have been, where, given the current work loads, time is of the essence. I welcome the comment that "UNOPS is committed to and has already undertaken steps....." and trust that it is also applicable to the above reporting issues between UNOPS and UNEP.</p>	
H. Onibon	<p>47. Paragraph 212 (244): baseline information are presented in the M&E plan and stress reduction baseline data could not be collected before the inception phase of the demo projects.</p>	<p>Paragraph 58 of the Inception Report states '<i>The Monitoring & Evaluation plan for the full project needs considerable attention, and appropriate baselines and indicators need therefore to be developed</i>'.</p>
O. Akinsola	<p>48. Paragraph 240 (272): Training though may seem fragmented but are in part based upon training assessments conducted as part of several studies by the project and I think the report should help address this issues in spite of the constraints mentioned. Training as a capacity strengthening basis to VBA strategic process should not be discounted and in my opinion should not be totally abandoned. For example, of relevant and critical would be the need to present a forum for technical partners to rationalize the need for the <i>VBA convention, Statues</i> and the immediate plan to develop the Volta Basin Water <i>Charter</i> within the legal and institutional framework for effective basin management. The incremental benefit of such training cannot be over emphasized.</p>	<p>This comment on IWRM training refers back to paragraph 77. There are no recommendations on training as such since unfortunately the remaining time and budget does not allow for a strategic approach to be delivered.</p> <p>The wider points about capacity building in the VBA process and integration of the water charter initiative are important and could be taken up in the context of recommendation 3 related to adoption and mainstreaming of the SAP.</p>
K. West	<p>49. Paragraph 242 (274): I'm wondering whether it would be useful somehow for UNOPS to communicate to project partners the steps that have been taken to address the concerns about administrative delays...either as part of the MTE report or the management response or some other forum? It could help to be proactive in</p>	<p>This commitment is covered in at least two places in the MTE report. I leave it to UNOPS whether they wish to raise this at the next PSC or in the management response.</p>

	rebuilding trust?	
C. A. Biney	50. 256 (288): It is not clear how the GEF Volta project can provide allowances through national co-financing without the involvement of the implementing and executing agencies. Is it the PMU of the GEF Volta project that should be responsible for this?	I have clarified the wording. It is not possible to provide additional allowances such as top-ups through GEF funding; the only option is that these are covered by national co-financing.
K. West	51. Paragraph 258 (290): it would be helpful if all of the embedded recommendations would also be included in this section.	It would be possible to draw recommendations from the lessons section but these are not necessarily actionable or within the remit of the PSC/PMU/UNOPS/UNEP (e.g. use of co-finance for top ups) and/ or are no longer timely for this project (e.g. clarification of GEF regulations or other issues related to project design stage). I have deliberately limited the recommendations to a few key issues.
K. West	52. Paragraph 261 (293): I agree with this recommendation, the project will need to be extended in order to reach its goals. However, I'm concerned that extending the project with the necessary budget reallocations is not enough. The PSC agreed to a one-year extension back in 2010 and while progress has been made, we are still significantly behind schedule. I don't have other additions on this now, other than to note my concerns that a "business-as-usual" approach may not get us to the finish line (in terms of TDA, SAP and demo deliveries) even with a 12 month extension. To this end, I'm not sure the recommendations go far enough towards pushing a project that has been rated 'moderately unsatisfactory' into a 'satisfactory' range.	<p>As noted in paragraph 298, one of the effects of the budget reallocations and associated workplan will be to refocus the PMU and partners effort into the key outputs - a good TDA leading to a quality SAP.</p> <p>This will mark a significant change from "business-as-usual" where the PMU is being pulled in multiple directions and has struggled to establish priorities.</p> <p>There is also a commitment from UNOPS to improve administrative support.</p> <p>See also above response related to technical support (Comment 52).</p> <p>The major outstanding concern is the substantial risk associated with of national ownership and commitment; see feedback on comment 57 below.</p>
C. A. Biney	53. 261 (293). The demonstration project need not be completed because of the many aspects beyond the control of the GEF Volta project, e.g., MCA in Burkina Faso, instability in project area in Cote d'Ivoire. I think the work plan should rather focus on their sustainability.	Recommendation 4 may lead to one or two demonstration projects being discontinued. See also response on Comment 56 below.
H. Onibon	54. Paragraph 269 (301): this has been addressed in national TDA documents and summarized in the draft regional thematic report on governance analysis.	The key to this recommendation is to involve these partners, not just to identify them.
A. Quaye	55. 270 (271): Recommendation 4.3 I think it should rather be November 2011 and not 2010.	Yes!
O. Akinsola	56. Paragraph 270 (302): I wish to suggest that we be wary of starting another demo project at this stage if we are indeed concern about delivery issues mentioned in this report and about cutting cost to deliver the SAP. Delays so far experienced from demo implementations are basically beyond PMU control and the reasons	<p>There is more background to the recommendations on demonstration projects in Annex 6.</p> <p>National partners expressed a strong view that all countries should be given an equal opportunity to implement demonstration projects and</p>

	<p>for these are lack of capacities and also lack of needed supports / commitments from the national partners who are responsible for the demos to drive these demo projects implementation. Of course we all know the reason at the heart of this attitude and I think the review presents clear opportunity for all to understand. In my opinion, future demo intervention during SAP implementation should be the focus and this would require different delivery methods from the way we are currently operating it and that should be the lesson to put across, especially in the light of unchanging national circumstances.</p>	<p>highlighted their strategic importance at the national level. In view of this, I have proposed that the PSC should lead the decision process here.</p> <p>A decision should be taken sooner rather than later so that any funds that are released can be reallocated to other project activities rather than returned to the donor.</p>
K. West	<p>57. Given the discussions regarding country ownership, national co-finance, remuneration for project partners, and the issues raised therein, which in spite of all of the PMUs good efforts, have the potential to seriously undermine the project outputs and outcomes, I had hoped that there might be strong recommendations on how to strengthen these aspects (without paying remuneration, of course!).</p>	<p>The success of this project is very much in the hands of the country partners who requested GEF support.</p> <p>The evaluation identifies a substantial risk associated with limited country ownership and appropriation. The issues have been aired in this evaluation and need to be discussed by the PSC and I have added a recommendation in this regard (Recc 4.1). However as one interviewee stated, there is no silver bullet here.</p> <p>Related recommendations address mobilisation of co-finance (Reccs 4.2. & 4.3) - which has affected motivation by blocking activities - and engaging a greater range of national partners in the SAP process as a basis for mainstreaming (Recc 3.1 & 3.2).</p>
H. Onibon	<p>58. Paragraph 6.41: STP/CIGQE is now AEDD</p>	<p>Corrected, also in interviewees list.</p>
H. Onibon	<p>59. Paragraph 6.91 (Just for information): at the beginning of the project several coordination meetings were organized in Lome at the Environment directorate with the involvement of the water directorate. The process for the review of the demo document including thematic discussions and validation workshop was conducted in collaboration with the 2 directorates. The environmental impact assessment was conducted under the leadership of the Environment Directorate. In the field, the 2 directorates participate in project activities through their regional departments. The draft MOA with SIAAP was sent to the 2 directorates for review and comment.</p>	<p>I have added a reference to national authorities being involved in the design stage. A number of interviewees mentioned that the project was no longer supported at national level; while this did come up in the last PSC meeting it was not raised as a current issue by the NC.</p>
H. Onibon	<p>60. Demo project in Benin: to avoid delay and administrative constraints it's better that PMU, IUCN/PAGEV and national partners meet to develop a concept note by the end of the year.</p>	<p>My concern here is that these parties already met in late 2010 but this has not yet produced a viable project. Who will actually write the proposal? This should be addressed in the management response to the recommendation.</p>
H. Onibon	<p>61. If activities like, development of new demo projects, trainings, IWRM meetings etc, will be removed from the project then NOFP won't be needed for the remaining project period. One could therefore use demo staff to assist NC when necessary.</p>	<p>The NOFPs should be closely involved in the SAP consultation process, including the 'streamlined' APNP-VRBs. Using demonstration project staff to support the NC would not work in most cases (e.g. due to distance or being in different agencies) and would detract them from their principal tasks.</p>

H. Onibon	62. The 3 major problems of the project are: i-) weak understanding of the project governance by national partners, ii-) institutional bottlenecks and, 3-) weak commitment of national partners due to the fact the project is not paying salary or top-up to national coordinators.	-
H. Onibon	63. The PMU is conscious of the delay and its implication even though in most cases it's beyond PMU, UNEP and/or National partners' control. Nevertheless one should highlight the fact that the delay started in 2009 with a long institutional blockage (mainly from UNEP side) which didn't allow the implementation of planned activities. For example, TDA review and methodology and other key national studies in view of TDA finalization were completed in 2008 while TDA finalization was launched at the regional level in December 2009 and at national level during the 1 st quarter of 2010.	There was not an institutional blockage as such but I have reflected delays experienced with UNEP backstopping and the change in TM in paragraph 238. See also response to comment 31 above. The main delay in TDA preparation appears to have been in the quality of the first drafts of national reports produced in 2009, compounded by data access issues. (Paragraph 84).
H. Onibon	64. Travel: it's a good idea to save cost by reducing travels to riparian countries. Nevertheless one should also consider project national partners' capacity and level of commitment. Once we have the guaranty that the project can be fully functional at national level without PMU support then travels to basin countries won't be necessary. I would like to suggest that we update budget for travels in collaboration with the TM and based on UNEP vision for the project.	The number of trips to riparian countries was not realistic and some activities could be combined. Travel to the basin countries will remain very important. Significant savings can be made on international travel and travel to meetings that are not directly linked to TDA finalisation and SAP preparation/mainstreaming; this is needed in view of the proposed extension.
H. Onibon	65. The project will not be able to prepare a revised strategy including work plan by 15 November. This is because the PMU needs further consultations with national partners, UNEP, UNOPS KEOC and VBA and the period given is a bit short. I would like to suggest that we expect this for January 2012	Some weeks have passed since the timing was proposed. I have now proposed 15 January, in time for the PSC proposed for January.
C. A. Biney	66. The proposed deadline of 15 November seems too optimistic. I would propose end of 2011.	As above
H. Onibon	67. Based on the consultant recommendations, the PMU will update the budget, discuss it with UNEP by 15 November and present it to the next PSC.	I would suggest the budget is developed in close conjunction with the workplan for presentation to the PSC by 15 January 2012. This is because the budget is now very tight in view of the recommended extension; tough choices will be required as some desirable activities will not be feasible.
H. Onibon	68. I would like to suggest that we organize the PSC meeting in January 2012 and invite the consultant to present the substance of the MTE report. In the meantime the project will submit a revised work plan for the remaining project period.	-

Annex 11. The Evaluator

Sarah HUMPHREY, PhD

Profile

Over 18 years working on environmental research and policy, project and programme development and institutional strengthening with a wide range of non-governmental, intergovernmental and research organisations in Europe and Africa.

Technical background in environmental management, policy and governance, sustainable development, conservation, and project and programme evaluation

Education

Open University Business School: MBA (Merit)

Department of Marine Sciences and Coastal Management, University of Newcastle
PhD: *Analysis of Approaches for Evaluating the Success of Coastal Management in Europe*

King's College, University of London: BSc. (Hons Class I): Human Environmental Science

Employment

From 2008 Consultant in Environment, Sustainable Development and Conservation for WWF, IUCN, Oxfam International, UNEP, EC, WIOMSA, IOC ReCoMaP, and others

2000 - 2007 WWF International, Gland, Switzerland
Programme Officer, Africa and Madagascar Programme

1999 – 2000 European Commission, Brussels, Belgium
Stagiaire, Environment Directorate: Nature, Coastal Zones and Tourism

1997 - 1999 University of Newcastle, UK
Research Associate, Department of Marine Sciences and Coastal Management

1996 - 1997 Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), Zanzibar, Tanzania
Development Officer

1990 - 1995 IUCN - The World Conservation Union, Switzerland & Kenya
Research Assistant then Programme Officer, Marine and Coastal Programme