Strengthening the Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Russia

PIMS 4051, Atlas Award 00056530, Atlas Project No: 00069210

Terminal Evaluation, Volume I

February 2015

Russian Federation

GEF SO1: Catalysing the Sustainability of Protected Area (PA) Systems

SP2: Increasing representation of effectively managed marine protected areas in protected area systems, SP3: Strengthened National Terrestrial Protected Area Networks

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

United National Development Program (UNDP)

Stuart Williams

Acknowledgements

Organising the mission to evaluate the MCPA project was complicated given that the project carried out activities in one of the furthest east points of the country (the Commander Islands, 166ºE) and in one of the furthest west points of the country (St Petersburg and the Gulf of Finland in the Baltic Sea, 30ºE). Nonetheless and despite the weather's best efforts to thwart our progress, through a mix of the metro, taxis, railway, various types of aeroplane, buses and a small iron tub called the "*Vasily Zavoyko*" that took us through stormy North Pacific seas, we did manage to visit all the sites.

That we did manage, eventually, to visit all the sites was thanks to numerous people's efforts. I would like to thank everyone involved starting with Irina Bredneva and Elena Bazhenova of the UNDP-CO for making my second mission to Russia so easy.

Mikhail Korolyov, the Project Manager, accompanied me for the entirety of the mission and Vassily Spiridonov, the Project's Senior Technical Advisor, joined us for the initial part of the mission in Moscow and St Petersburg. They organised the majority of the meetings for me – and these worked smoothly even when circumstances with the whims of the weather became a little challenging. I thank them for the connections, arrangements, for accompanying me and for many fruitful discussions. I am also grateful to Sergei Bychkov (and his sons) for his hospitality in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatka and for ferrying us about the area. Many other people gave freely of their time and answered my questions patiently (please see Annex III for a list of all the people met over the course of the mission); for this I am thankful. I am also particularly grateful for the tireless efforts of Alexander Oshis, my interpreter over the course of the mission even when he was not well (particular on the "*Vasily Zavoyko*"), for the clear and accurate interpretation.

Finally, it was a pleasure and privilege to visit such extraordinary places, including St Petersburg, Kamchatka and the Commander Islands, and to be shown around with such evident pride and to see wonderful places. I saw the results of the dedication and enthusiasm that people had put into the work of conserving important places in the world. I would like to offer them my thanks and wish them every success in their continuing endeavours.

Stuart Williams

Kampala, Uganda

Table of Contents

Table of Contents (Annexes)

Executive Summary

Project Summary Table

Project Title:	**"Strengthening the Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Russia"**			
GEF Project ID:	0003518		at endorsement (Million US$)	at completion (Million US$)
UNDP Project ID:	PIMS 0004051 Atlas 00069210	GEF financing:	4.00	4.00
Country:	Russian Federation	IA/EA own:	0.00	0.00
Region:	ECA	Government:	8.93	9.64
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other:	0.466	1.91
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	SO-1/SP-2: 1) Increased coverage of marine ecosystems globally and in national PA systems, and 2) Improved management of marine PA.	Total co-financing:	9.396	11.5
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	Total Project Cost:	13.396	15.5
Other Partners involved:	Multiple relevant stakeholders not directly responsible for execution.	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		08 June 2009
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 31.12.2014 (latest approved)	Actual: tbc

Project Description

Given its size, with the diversity of ecosystems and array of climatic and geographical features, Russia's marine and coastal zone is of obvious global importance. Russia's coastal waters include globally important populations of many species – including fishes, waterfowl, marine mammals and invertebrates.

Despite the existence of a network of marine and coastal protected areas at the beginning of the project, a number of issues existed, including: i) there were inconsistencies in how the MCPAs were managed with reference to the federal jurisdiction and the fact that there are also regionally managed protected areas, ii) the management modalities and non-fishing aspects of the Marine Mammal Protection Zones (MMPZs) were imprecise and unregulated, respectively. Furthermore, rural communities living within or adjacent to MCPAs are dependent on natural resources harvested from marine and coastal zones.

The project concept evolved from an idea of a GEF medium-sized project devoted only to the Commander islands (that was built upon experience and lessons learned from the previous UNDP-GEF PA project in Kamchatka); however, shifting GEF priorities meant that it ended up as a system-level project.

The project was designed to contribute to overcoming the threats to Russia's marine and coastal biodiversity, including: i) unsustainable exploitation of natural resources – including fish resources, ii) invasive species, iii) both chronic and acute oil and hazardous material

spills, and iv) unregulated tourism. In addition, climate "instability" was recognised as an "over-arching" threat. The project was also designed to overcome the barriers to achieving the long-term solution (defined as being: "*a Marine and Coastal PA System of Russia that is ecologically representative, resilient to climate change and effectively managed*"); the identified barriers included: i) low systemic capacity, ii) institutional barriers, and iii) limited knowledge and low individual capacity.

The long-term solution and results were to be achieved by achieving the following objective: *to facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness*. This objective was, in turn, to be realised by achieving three outcomes: improved MCPA system and institutional-level capacity enables the expansion of the MCPA system (Outcome 1), MCPA management know-how is demonstrated, expanded and reinforced (Outcome 2) and strengthened MCPA system effectively captures knowledge and enables replication of best practice (Outcome 3).

Findings: Project Implementation

The project was implemented as a modified Nationally Implemented (NIM) project with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) at the federal level as the Implementing Partner (Executing Agency) with UNDP as the GEF Agency. Within the MNRE, project oversight was initially to be done by the Department for International Cooperation. In May 2011, that oversight responsibility – and the position of National Project Director – was transferred to the Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety. Aside from this institutional shift, there were other aspects of the project's implementation that could be considered as unconventional: i) the project team was housed within the UNDP-CO rather than within the MNRE, ii) the project worked with the MNRE and the NPD through a liaison person and who was also a consultant on the project. In addition, a local responsible party was selected to manage subcontracts and provide other project administrative support upon requires from the Implementing Partner.

The project was plagued by misfortune that led to the implementation being bitty and incoherent. As examples, in addition to the institutional shift within the MNRE and the change in NPD, the timeline of project was, as a consequence, interrupted because: i) the Project Manager was changed twice, and ii) the location of the PIU was changed once. Furthermore, the vast geographical focus of the project acted as a barrier to face-to-face interactions and frequent visits to the field. Taken together, these arrangements had a number of negative consequences for the project.

Findings: Project Results

Despite the issues associated with the implementation of the project, it has managed to lay the foundations for a MCPA system. Most notably, the project resulted in the appreciation within the MNRE that i) there *are* differences between terrestrial protected areas, and marine and coastal protected areas and, as a consequence, these differences need to be taken into account when considering the effective management of MCPAs, ii) that there was a need for resources – human, financial and equipment – for and investment in the MCPAs and iii) some different management techniques are necessary (e.g., satellite monitoring of shipping). In addition, the MNRE has willingly participated in public events (for example, conferences, forums, the WCPA congress in Sydney in 2014 and at specially organized trainings, seminars, and round tables). Moreover, MNRE established a working group on Marine Protected Areas under the Expert Council on Protected Areas; this working group systematically plans and coordinates activities and management approaches to MCPAs. In short, the MCPAs need to be considered *differently* from the terrestrial protected areas. These are arguably the key outcomes from the project. Other key results from the project include (but are not limited to):

1. The project carried out a gap analysis of the marine and coastal zones in Russia, resulting in recommendations for further development of the MCPA network to ensure representation and inclusion of rare and threatened species.

2. Despite the fact that i) the project developed all the necessary documents for the establishment of Ingermanland *zapovednik*, ii) IZ was listed in the MNRE's program for the expansion of protected areas and iii) the documents received the approval of all relevant ministries (including the FAF and the Border Control Agency) – with the exception of the Ministry of Defence, this protected area was not established. It is possible that, at some undetermined point in the future, the IZ will actually be established.
3. The Commander Islands *zapovednik* (hereafter CIZ) became a primary focus for the project and the project carried out a number of activities in the CIZ, including: i) the project facilitated the relationship with ScanEx to provide satellite data to track ships (particularly fishing vessels) that stray into the protected waters, ii) the provision of a large boat for patrolling and carrying out surveys, iii) leveraging a larger budget from the MNRE, iv) capacity increases, v) increase in knowledge through research and surveys, and vi) a micro-finance scheme for members of the local communities. In summary, then, the project contributed significantly to improving the effectiveness of the management of the CIZ; the changes in the CIZ's METT score (from a baseline of 57 to an EOP score of 77) is a testament of this.
4. The increased level of funding, as mentioned above for the CIZ, was also the case for other protected areas with which the project interacted.
5. The project focused on inputs to individual protected areas and outputs rather than focusing on the outcomes and results towards which the project should have been working and, ideally, achieving.
6. The project spent resources on building capacity in a number of protected areas, including organising two study tours.
7. The project developed a number of management plans for protected areas.
8. The project did expend energy, with success, to increase marine research capacity in the MCPAs, including the preparation of guidelines, field training courses, as well as establishing a commission for marine stations and MCPAs; this commission functions as part of the Marine Heritage Association and will, in part assure some sustainability of the project's processes and results.
9. The project worked with the FEMR to develop an invasive species response plan. However, the plan will be used *responsively* as opposed to *preventatively*.
10. The project successfully carried out biodiversity surveys, particularly in the FEMR and the Gulf of Finland.
11. In addition to the biodiversity surveys, the project also catalysed the visits of 75 students (e.g., from Moscow State University) to carry out small projects in the MCPAs – particularly in the CIZ.
12. Because of the vast quantity of petroleum products that are transported through the Gulf of Finland, an oil spill review was considered necessary and with partners, the project carried out training for a broad group of stakeholders who would be involved if there were to be an oil spill in this sensitive area.
13. In a display of adaptive management, the project's attention was shifted to assist (including providing inputs and developing management plans) those MCPAs that had been established under the MNRE's programme for expansion of the protected area network.
14. The project failed to change the status of the MMPZs – primarily because the MNRE and the FAF believed that the current status is sufficient to protect them adequately.

Aside from these results and the misfortune that the project suffers, there were several issues:

1. Whether the gap analysis will be used remains to be seen; it was not incorporated into the MNRE's 2012-2020 program for the expansion of the protected areas in Russia.
2. There were conflicts between the managers of the CIZ and the local administration; these need to be resolved.
3. There were questions regarding the sustainability of a number of the processes started by the project and the results that had been achieved. For example, whether student visits to the MCPAs to carry out research projects can be sustained without financial assistance from such a project. In contrast, sustainability of some of the project's results and processes is likely as the Marine Heritage Association will be assuming some of the responsibilities carried out by the project.
4. Although there were good efforts to measure the effectiveness of the management of protected areas, the project missed the opportunity to develop something innovative to measure the effectiveness of systemic effectiveness.
5. Arguably, one significant issue faced by the project was the degree of ownership. The MNRE's interest was to secure inputs for the MCPAs, not build a systemic approach to MCPAs with implications (as necessary) for policy and legislation, institutional arrangements and cooperation, capacity (systemic, site-level and individual), (re)definition of protected areas, financial sustainability, systems that operate at the systemic level (e.g., a centralised service that assists MCPAs when foreign ships stray into their waters), etc. Part of the disinterest may be attributable to the lack of capacity and time that the protected areas staff members in MNRE have to allocate to thinking, planning and implementing systemic-level activities.

   Finally and as a further testament of the lack of ownership and distance between the project and the MNRE, the MNRE produced its own program (spanning 2012-2020) to expand the protected area system within the country. The draft of the MNRE program was, apparently, completed in 2009 (just as the current MCPA project was starting) and yet the degree of overlap between the protected area selected to be established in both the MNRE's program and the MCPA project was minimal. [In contrast to this point, the project demonstrated adaptive management by adopting some of the MCPAs selected by the MNRE for establishment and working with them.]

Review Rating Table

Item	Rating	Comment
Overall project results	**MS**	The project was implemented and had shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. It was hampered with misfortune that led to incomplete attainment of its objectives. The issues largely stemmed from the way it was originally set up. Despite that, the project has laid the foundations for the MCPA system and has had some successes.
IA & EA Execution		
Overall quality of implementation and execution	**MS**	While the UNDP-CO provided good support, the project was plagued with misfortune that hampered implementation and execution.
Implementation Agency Execution	**S**	The UNDP-CO and UNDP-RTC provided good support to the project with no shortcomings.
Executing Agency Execution (MNRE)	**MS**	There were ownership and housing issues within the MNRE, with the project having to be transferred from one department to another a year after project implementation began. At this time, the Deputy Director who then took over as NPD is so busy and felt relatively little ownership of the project (partly because he was not involved in the development of the project), he did not take it

Item	Rating	Comment
		forward (especially the systemic aspects of the project) with the passion it demanded. Nonetheless, steps *have* been taken within the MNRE to incorporate marine and coastal elements into the broader picture of protected area management in Russia – most noticeably with the establishment of a working group on Marine Protected Areas under the Expert Council on Protected Areas.
Executing Company (Ecology & Business)	**S**	The execution carried out by the contractor, Ecology & Business, was satisfactory but was not particularly cost effective.
M&E		
M&E design at project start-up	**S**	The project adopted standard UNDP-GEF M&E planning.
Overall quality of M&E	**S**	On a positive side, the project displayed adaptive management particularly when it was realised that the establishment of the IZ might not be successful. The project shifted to assist the newly created MCPAs across the country. Nonetheless, it may be arguable that the apparent misfortunes that befell the project may have been avoided or curtailed with more focused – and adaptive – M&E.
M&E plan implementation	**S**	The implementation of the M&E plan has been satisfactory with all aspects of the plan implemented.
Outcomes		
Overall quality of project outcomes	**MS**	The overall *system* of MCPAs – that was really the focus of the project – was not realised and instead the project results were fragmented and unsystematic. There were many reasons for this but not least because of the inability of the MNRE to allocate sufficient time and resources to go through the process to make the systemic changes that were (and still are) necessary. Taken independently, some of the outcomes were, however, satisfactory (for example and perhaps most notably, the improved management of the CIZ).
Relevance	**S**	The project satisfactorily retained its focus on the marine and coastal protected areas; this was in accordance to project design, to the UNDP country programme within Russia (and up to 2011, the UNDP's Country Programme and to the GEF's focal area and strategic programs.
Effectiveness	**MS**	The (misfortunate but) fragmented and unsystematic nature of the project's implementation hampered its effectiveness. In addition, there were ownership issues that also hampered the effectiveness of the project. The project did not realise some of its major objectives (e.g, the establishment of the IZ which may have partly been as a result of over ambition). In contrast, the adaptive management shown by the project to support recently established MCPAs demonstrated a satisfactory level of effectiveness.
Efficiency	**MS**	The project satisfactorily implemented the usual tools to increase value-for-money. However, the set up with an NGO (Ecology and Business) administering the subcontracts and procurement for the project proved to be less cost-effective and, at some point, created some antagonism. The least efficient aspect of the project was the misfortunate that befell it and the fact that various unfortunate decisions in its set up were taken (e.g., being placed in the wrong department within the MNRE, with the wrong NPD and the

Item	Rating	Comment
		confusion about where the project was to be based – St Petersburg vs Moscow leading to the resignation of the first PM).
Sustainability		
Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	**L**	Because of the project was strongly associated with federal government structures, institutional sustainability is likely. However, the financial crisis that is currently ongoing illustrates the political and economic issues that can have profound impacts and this sector will be the first to have its funding reduced. Together with socio-economic sustainability, the financial sustainability was, therefore, rated as being Moderately likely. The socio-economic sustainability was rated as such because the sustainability of the micro-finance projects in the CIZ is unlikely. When this is coupled with the contribution that the MCPAs will make to preserve fish (and other resource) stocks, on which many people are dependent, the socio-economic sustainability was rated overall as being Moderately Likely. These factors all combined – with climate change as an additional factor – to an environmental sustainability that was rated as Moderately Likely.
Financial sustainability	**ML**	
Socio-economic sustainability	**ML**	
Institutional sustainability	**L**	
Environmental sustainability	**ML**	
Catalytic Role		
Production of a public good, Demonstration, Replication and Scaling up	**MS**	The project managed to act as a catalyst for various elements, including good quality management plans and involvement of the company ScanEx in collecting data on fishing vessels that make incursions into the protected waters. However, the project did not manage to achieve the creation of the *system* of MCPAs which, otherwise, would have been a highly satisfactory outcome.

Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons

In conclusion, then, the project has made progress to lay the foundations of the MCPA system in Russia, changing people's views of MCPAs, and, to some extent, achieved its stated objective ("*to facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness*"). The project results did not achieve the *cohesiveness* that a protected area system demands but this may be largely attributed to i) the misfortune that the project suffered – leading to an incoherent and unsmooth implementation, and ii) the lack of ownership of the project by the MNRE.

Finally, I would support an extension for the project i) if there was a clear plan of what the project team wished to achieve during that extension, ii) that specific and achievable results are targeted during the extension period, iii) that the results, when achieved at the end of the extension period would be sufficient that the overall rating of the project would be upgraded to "satisfactory" and iv) that the extension would incur no further cost (i.e., it would be a "no-cost" extension).

Recommendations and lesson learned

The summary of the key recommendations and lessons learned includes:

1. *Get it right from the outset of the project – institutions, ownership and personalities!* These elements need to come together right from the project's outset – the institutional housing, the NPD, the Project Manager and the team. *Ownership* of the project is one of its key elements as are the *personalities* involved.
2. *Systemic prosecution service for foreign fishing vessels*. Prosecuting foreign (fishing) vessels that stray into their protected waters is beyond the capacity and mandate of the protected area staff. A systemic service could have been established to carry out this support work for all MCPAs.

3. *Complete the outstanding work* – including a number of publications that needed completion (publications on salmon, sea lions and Gulf of Finland teaching aids for schools).
4. *The threat of invasive species was underestimated*. The project produced one invasive species plan – for the FEMR[1]. While there may be significant invasive species threats in the FEMR (as it is beside the international port of Vladivostok), it is odd that invasive species plans were not developed for island systems – particularly the CIZ – because: i) invasive species were identified as a key threat to island systems in the project document and ii) CIZ was identified as a target for developing an invasive species plan. However, it transpires that, for whatever reason and in contradiction to the project document, the MNRE "does not see this problem". In addition to dealing with invasive species, management of domestic animals and other "weed" species associated with humans and biosafety regarding visitors (including researchers and tourists) to remote islands should have received attention.
5. *Interagency issues*. Poor interagency cooperation is something that stifles effectiveness and efficiency in all countries of the world. Therefore, that this project encountered it – specifically between the MNRE and the FAF – is unsurprising. To overcome such issues requires coordination, collaboration and leadership – the sorts of things that require a systemic view.
6. *Plan for what can be achieved*. While some degree of ambition is necessary (for GEF project are about overcoming fears and demonstrating success), over-ambition can be lead to disillusion and disappointment.
7. *Monitoring of knowledge and awareness, and monitoring impact in general*. Like many others, the project carried out some awareness raising but also like many others, the project neglected to determine the impact that this was having. Ideally, the impacts of activities should be monitored and there are some good tools for measuring the impact on changes of knowledge and behaviour – for example, using an adapted Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey.
8. *Carry out socio-economic surveys*. The staff of the CIZ regretted not carrying out socio-economic surveys over the course of the project. This would have been useful for a number of reasons, not least because it would allow the impact of the micro-finance grants to be measured.
9. *Climate change*. Despite being identified as the single, over-arching threat to Russia's marine biodiversity, climate change was not mentioned once during the course of the TE mission to Russia and, for example, if and how climate change adaptation was built into management plans.
10. *Addendum on management plan guidelines*. The UNDP-GEF project in the Komi Republic produced a set of guidelines for developing management plans for protected areas. The lessons that have been learned in the MCPA project on developing management plans for MCPAs should be included as a brief addendum to this set of guidelines.
11. *Ingermanland* zapovednik. With regard to the Ingermanland *zaopvednik*, there are two urgent actions that need to be taken: first, the validity of the documents expires in February 2015. Thus, either the issue needs to be resolved by then or an extension of the validity is requested. Second, the UNDP-CO and its partners should apply whatever

[1] Although now the Russian Arctic National Park has a species plan.

[2] "*Concept of development of protected areas of federal significance for the period up to 2020*", approved by the Federal Government on December 22, 2011 number of 2322

[3] **Comment on draft**: "*For FAF the Project was of course in no way a priority. However, Mr. Maximov, the most recent FAF representative in PSC, was very helpful and collaborated in establishing the Solovky Zakaznik and assisting with the fisheries issues in the Onezhskoe Pomorye National Park. The issue of MMPZ became irrelevant after the legislation change because it was no longer in the mandate of FAF to introduce limitations of activities not related to fisheries. The MMPZ issue requires the changes in federal legislation that is not supported by any of the relevant authorities. However, FAF maintains the no-take regime in all former MMPZ, and no changes in the fishing rules*

political capital they can muster to persuade the Ministry of Defence (via whatever channels are available to them) to urge the Ministry of Defence to approve the document. Lessons should also be learned from the *process* that the project underwent.

12. *Conflict resolution*. The antagonism in the Commander Islands between the staff of the CIZ (and more particularly the Director) and the administration of Nikolskoye (and more specifically the Head of the Administration) needs to be urgently resolved.
13. *Complete equipping out of CIZ boat*. Dependent on the availability of funding, the boat could be equipped with useful scientific equipment: GPS units, depth finders/sounder, air compressor, diving equipment, telescope and binoculars, camera equipment, rubber dinghy for landing ashore, underwater sound recording equipment and playback equipment.
14. *Re-categorization of CIZ.* Apparently, the decision to re-categorise the CIZ into a National Park (Commander Islands National Park) has already been taken. Planning the implications of and implementing this decision will have to be taken carefully so as not to reduce funding and staffing for the protected area. In addition, the zonation of the national park will also have to be carefully considered.
15. *Be ambitious for the coverage of the protected area coverage*. There are many reasons why Russia should continue to expend its MCPA network in the coming years. The precedent has now been set by Gabon with 23% of its EEZ set aside for marine protected areas but other countries are targeting even higher proportions!
16. *Broaden the definitions of protected areas*. In a changing world, re-defining protected areas may be useful – especially when one *broadens* the definitions!
17. *Treat tourism as an ecosystem service*. In many places across the globe, tourism has been recognised as an ecosystem service to the tourists that visit; if this changed in Russia, fees could be charged as, apparently, Russian legislation only allows fees to be collected if a service is being provided.

Acronyms, Abbreviations and Glossary

APR	Annual Project Report
BD	Biodiversity
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CIZ	Commander Islands *zapovednik* or Reserve
EEZ	Economic Exclusion Zone
EOP	End of Project (usually referring to targets for indicators)
FAF	Federal Agency for Fisheries
FEMR	Far East Marine Reserve
FY	Financial Year
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF CEO	Chief Executive Office of the GEF
GPS	Global Positioning System
ha	Hectares
IZ	Ingermanland *zapovednik*
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (relating to a survey methodology)
LTM	Long Term Mean
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MCPA	Marine and Coastal Protected Area
METT	Monitoring Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MMPZ	Marine Mammal Protection Zone
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIM	Nationally Implemented
NPD	National Project Director
PA	Protected Area
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PM	Project Manager
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RUB	Russian ruble
ScanEx	A satellite based monitoring system, used in the project for monitoring

	fishing vessels that strayed into MCPA limits
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	UN's Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP-CO	United Nations Development Programme – Country Office
UNDP-GEF RTC	United Nations Development Programme - Global Environment Facility, Regional Technical Centre in Istanbul (formerly based in Bratislava)
WB	World Bank
WPC	World Parks Congress
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
Zakaznik	Nature Reserve
Zapovednik	Strict Nature Reserve, equivalent to an IUCN Category I protected area

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the review

15. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the UNDP-GEF project "Strengthening the Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Russia" was carried out according to the UNDP-GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. Thus, it was carried out with the aim of providing a systematic and comprehensive review and evaluation of the performance of the project by assessing its design, processes of implementation, achievement relative to its objectives. Under this overarching aim, its objectives were i) to promote accountability and transparency for the achievement of GEF objectives through the assessment of results, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability and impact of the partners involved in the project, and ii) to promote learning, feedback and knowledge sharing on the results and lessons learned from the project and its partners as a basis for decision-making on policies, strategies, programme management and projects, and to improve knowledge and performance.

16. As such, this TE was initiated by the UNDP-CO as the project's National Implementing Partner to determine its success in relation to its stated objectives, to understand the lessons learned through the implementation of the project and to make recommendations for the remaining part of the project.

17. The TE was conducted by one international consultant. The TE consultant was independent of the policy-making process, and the delivery and management of the assistance to the project. The consultant was not involved in the implementation and/or supervision of the project.

18. The TE was carried out over a period starting from 27 September 2014 and with a mission to Russia from 29 September – 16 October 2014. Carrying out the TE at this point in the project's implementation timeline was in line with UNDP/GEF policy for Evaluations.

1.2 Scope & Methodology

19. The approach for the TE was determined by the Terms of Reference (TOR, see Annex I). The TOR were followed closely and, therefore, the evaluation focused on assessing i) the concept and design of the project, ii) its implementation in terms of quality and timeliness of inputs, financial planning, and monitoring and evaluation, iii) the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the activities that are being carried out, iv) whether the desired (and other undesirable but not intended) outcomes and objectives were achieved, v) the likelihood of sustainability of the results of the project, and vi) the involvement of stakeholders in the project's processes and activities.

20. The TE included a thorough review of the project documents and other outputs, documents, monitoring reports, the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE), Project Implementation Reviews (PIR), relevant correspondence and other project related material produced by the project staff or their partners. The evaluation assessed whether a number of recommendations that had been made following the MTE, and monitoring and support visits from people from the Biodiversity staff of UNDP's Regional Technical Centres were implemented and to ascertain the explanations if they were not.

21. The TE also included a mission to Russia between 29 September – 16 October 2014. The evaluation process during the mission followed a participatory approach and included a series of structured and unstructured interviews, both individually and in small groups. Site visits were also scheduled i) to validate the reports and indicators, ii) to examine, in particular, any infrastructure development and equipment procured, iii) to consult with protected area staff, local authorities or government representatives and local communities, and iv) to assess data that was held only locally. The evaluator worked with the Project Staff and particularly with the Project Manager throughout the evaluation. Particular attention was paid to listening to the stakeholders' views and the confidentiality of all interviews was stressed. Whenever possible, the information was crosschecked among the various sources.

22. The mission did not go to schedule but this is indicative of the difficult conditions in which people are working. The weather in Kamchatka and the Commander Islands is variable and sometimes unpredictable. The mission's travel to the Commander Islands was delayed by five days; rather than risk further delays and remain stranded on the Islands, we opted to return to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatka on the small ship "*Vasily Zavoyko*" which, because of stormy seas, took 48 hours (rather than the scheduled 30 hour crossing). This did mean that we did not see quite as much as we could have on the Commander Islands (partly because our boat permit expired on the day we arrived on the Islands) and we also did not get to meet quite as many stakeholders as we would have liked.

23. The evaluation was carried out according to the UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. Therefore, activities and results were evaluated for their: i) **Relevance** – thus, the extent to which the results and activities were consistent with local and national development priorities, national and international conservation priorities, and GEF's focal area and operational programme strategies, ii) **Effectiveness** – thus, how the project's results were related to the original or modified intended outcomes or objectives, and iii) **Efficiency** – thus, whether the activities are being carried out in a cost effect way and whether the results were achieved by the least cost option. The results, outcomes, and actual and potential impacts of the project were examined to determine whether they were positive or negative, foreseen or unintended. Finally, the sustainability of the interventions and results were examined to determine the likelihood of whether benefits will continue to be accrued after the completion of the project. The sustainability was examined from various perspectives: financial, social, environmental and institutional.

24. In addition, the evaluator took pains to examine the achievements of the project within the realistic political and socio-economic framework of the Russian Federation.

25. The logical framework (with approved amendments in the Inception and following the MTE) with Outcomes, Outputs and indicators towards which the PM and the PIU was working formed the basis of the MTE.

26. According to the GEF policy for TEs, the relevant areas of the project were evaluated according to performance criteria (Table 1).

Table 1. The ratings that were assigned to the various aspects of the project, in accordance with UNDP/GEF policies.

Rating	Explanation
Highly satisfactory (HS)	The aspect had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency
Satisfactory (S)	The aspect had minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The aspect had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	The aspect had significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency
Unsatisfactory (U)	The aspect had major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The aspect had severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency

27. Alternatively, there could have been aspects of the project that were deemed Not Applicable (N/A) or Unable to Assess (U/A).

28. In a similar way, the sustainability of the project's interventions and achievements were examined using the relevant UNDP/GEF ratings (Table 2).

Table 2. The ratings that were assigned to the different dimensions of sustainability of the interventions and achievements of the project

Rating	Explanation
Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes expected to continue into the foreseeable future
Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Substantial risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
Unlikely (U)	Severe risk that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained
Highly Unlikely (HU)	Expectation that few if any outputs or activities will continue after project closure

29. The TE was carried out with a number of audiences in mind, including: i) Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), ii) various stakeholders involved with the project, including NGOs and associations, especially those associated with the protected area system, iii) the UNDP-CO and UNDP-GEF RTC in Bratislava, and iv) the GEF.

1.3 Structure of the review report

30. The report follows the structure of Project Evaluations recommended in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-Financed Projects as given in Annex 5 of the TOR. As such, it first deals with a description of the project and the development context in Russia (Section 2), it then deals with the Findings (Section 3) of the evaluation within three sections (Project Design, Project Progress, Adaptive Management, Monitoring systems and Management arrangements, respectively). The report then draws together the Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons from the project (Section 4).

2 Project description and development context

2.1 Project start and duration

31. The project's PIF was approved on 12 December 2007 with the PPG phase starting in January 2008. The GEF CEO Endorsement was secured on 24 March 2009 with UNDP approval on 08 June 2009. This signals the beginning of the project which was planned for a period of 48 months (or four years). At the end of the inception period, with the Inception Workshop of 06 October 2009, disbursement started. The Mid-Term Evaluation took place in July 2012 some 36 months after the start-up of the project. For further details of project implementation, see Section 3.2.6.

2.2 Problems that the project sought to address

32. Given its size, Russia's marine and coastal zone is of obvious global importance. Within this vast area, there is a broad diversity of ecosystems (including, for example, 11 of WWF's Global 200 Ecoregions). In addition to the ecosystems, there is an array of climatic and geographical features that, when coupled with the diversity of ecosystems, leads to a huge range of biodiversity. Of that biodiversity, Russia's coastal waters include globally important populations of many species – including fishes, waterfowl, marine mammals and invertebrates. For example, the waters harbour the most important populations and genetic diversity of salmonid fish, and an estimated 13 million seabirds – of over 80 species – nest along Russia's Arctic coastline.

33. At the beginning of the project, there were 35 MCPAs within Russia's federal network of protected areas. These included 19 *zapovedniks*, two national parks and 10 *zakazniks*. Because Russia's Constitution places all marine waters, territorial seas, the EEZ and continental shelves under federal jurisdiction, the protected area theoretically fall under the mandate of the federal agency for protected areas within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE). However, there are several regionally managed zakazniks that protected lagoons or semi-closed inlets – some of which are also Ramsar sites. In other words, there are some inconsistencies in how the MCPAs are managed – but this de facto situation appears to work, apparently, with some regional protected areas being well organized.

34. In addition to these federal and regional protected areas, a further 2.8 million ha were also protected as Marine Mammal Protection Zones (MMPZs). Within these zones, fishing was prohibited but their management modalities remained imprecise and the non-fishing impacts were not regulated.

35. In general, the MCPAs are found in areas where human densities are low – but there are exceptions (e.g., the two national parks in areas where human population densities are >100 people/km^2). In addition, there are some protected areas that have human populations living either within them or in close proximity to them. Finally, the people living within or close to the protected areas are generally dependent on marine resources for their livelihoods.

36. Apparently, this project evolved from the previous UNDP-GEF Kamchatka project with the idea of targeting the Commander Island *zapovednik* (CIZ) with the hope that a similar injection of interest and funding would come from the MNRE. However, shifting GEF priorities precluded a singular focus on the CIZ and a system-wide approach was adopted for the project.

37. The project was designed to contribute to overcoming the threats to Russia's marine and coastal biodiversity. These are described in the project document as including: i) unsustainable exploitation of natural resources – including fish resources, ii) invasive species, iii) both chronic and acute oil and hazardous material spills, and iv) unregulated tourism. In addition, climate "instability" was recognised as an "over-arching" threat.

38. In addition to the threats (for which the root causes were not explicitly identified), and with the long-term solution being defined as being: "*a Marine and Coastal PA System of Russia that is ecologically representative, resilient to climate change and effectively managed*," the barriers to "achieving the long-term solution" included: i) low systemic capacity – with the expansion of the MCPA not being based on a comprehensive gap or socio-economic analysis, the exclusion of the MMPZs from the system and the absence of a multi-sectoral, multi-agency approach, ii) institutional barriers – including poor communication and cooperation among agencies, and limited human and financial resources, and iii) limited knowledge and low individual capacity.

2.3 Immediate and development objectives of the project

39. As described above, the long-term solution is "*a Marine and Coastal PA System of Russia that is ecologically representative, resilient to climate change and effectively managed*"; the project's object was "*to facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness*." The project aimed to complement the government's program of MCPA expansion by demonstrating improved practices in three protected areas: the CIZ, the Far East Marine Zapovednik (FEMZ) and the Ingermanland *zapovednik* (which was to have been established by the project). In response to the baseline scenario, the following actions were proposed: i) carrying out integrated management planning processes with participation of stakeholders, ii) strengthened capacity at the level of the protected areas, iii) forming partnerships for enforcement and management, iv) establishing the monitoring and research baseline, v) developing integrated invasive species plans, and vi) developing responses to oil and hazardous materials spills. Overall, there would also be improved system-level management

effectiveness monitoring and a system-level knowledge management and replication process facilitated.

2.4 Baseline Indicators established

40. The achievement of the objective and outcomes was to be measured by a total of 11 indicators but when these were disaggregated there were a total of 20 indicators. The analysis of the indicators and the baseline information is presented in Table 3.

2.5 Main stakeholders

41. The stakeholders are well analysed and described in both the project document and the MTE. The degree to which the stakeholders continued to be involved in the implementation of the project is analysed below (See Sections 3.1.4, 3.2.2 and 3.3.4).

2.6 Expected Results

42. As indicated above (see Section 2.3), project was expected to contribute to the following long term solution:

> *A Marine and Coastal PA System of Russia that is ecologically representative, resilient to climate change and effectively managed*

43. This would be done through achieving the following results:

a. Management plans developed with participation of stakeholders
b. Strengthened capacity at the level of the protected areas
c. Partnerships for enforcement and management formed
d. Monitoring and research baseline established
e. Integrated invasive species plans developed, and
f. Responses to oil and hazardous materials spills developed

44. The project also aimed to demonstrate improved practices in three protected areas: the CIZ, the Far East Marine Zapovednik (FEMZ) and the Ingermanland *zapovednik* (which was to have been established by the project).

Table 3. The indicators for the project with established baselines and EOP targets.

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	Sources of verification	Risks and assumptions	TE Comments
Objective: To facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness					
Area of coastal and marine area under protection expanded	24,577,651 ha	Additional area protected with direct influence of project: +14,000 ha Additional area protected with facilitation of the project + 7,680,000 ha Enabling environment created for establishment of additional 1,006,000 million ha New total area under protection: 33,277,651 ha	Field, map assessments; expert opinion. Official gazette. - Official gazette of new or expanded areas amounting to 7,680,000 million. -Strategic plan endorsed calling for additional 1.006 million ha protected	Action on marine conservation may be difficult in Russia's rapidly growing natural resource sector	There are a number of ways of seeing this objective level indicator. First, given the length of the Russian coast, the targets are distinctly under-ambitious. Conversely, they seem over-ambitious in an environment that may not be enabling and for one project, with relatively limited funding, to achieve.
Indirect impact on improved management effectiveness in 24 million hectares of MCPA through METT Score.	Baseline	+40%			A 40% increase on baseline METT scores for all MCPAs across the country is an enormously ambitious task. I am not sure where in the METT scores this gain is supposed to come from but I suspect that a figure of 40% was rather wishful thinking. If the project reports an increase that approaches the 40% target, then I would suspect that either the baseline scores were very conservative or the final scores are overinflated (which will leave the PAs with difficulties in future years if they wish to further
	Zapovedniks - Arctic Bolshoi Arktichesky - 29 Gydansky - 40 Kandalakshsky - 37 Kandalakshsky - 42 Nenetsky - 36 U-Lensky - 49 Taimyrsky - 50 Wrangel Island - 47	*Zapovedniks - Arctic* Bolshoi Arktichesky - 41 Gydansky - 56 Kandalakshsky - 52 Kandalakshsky - 58 Nenetsky - 50 U-Lensky - 69 Taimyrsky - 70 Wrangel Island - 65	METT Score sheets for 33 MCPA in the network.		
	Far East Botchinsky - 37 Dzhugdzhursky - 35 Kronotsky – 58	*Far East* Botchinsky - 52 Dzhugdzhursky - 49 Kronotsky – 80			

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	Sources of verification	Risks and assumptions	TE Comments
	Koryaksky - 42 Kurilsky - 55 Lazovsky – 54 Magadansky – 51 Poronaisky – 43 Sikhote-Alinsky – 56	Koryaksky - 58 Kurilsky - 76 Lazovsky – 75 Magadansky – 72 Poronaisky – 59 Sikhote-Alinsky – 78			increase their METT scores).
	Caspian Sea Astrakhansky – 62 Dagestansky – 44	*Caspian Sea* Astrakhansky – 87 Dagestansky – 62			
	Baltic Regional zakazniks - 30 National Parks Kurshskaya Kosa - 63 Sochinsky - 59	*Baltic* Regional zakazniks - 42 National Parks Kurshskaya Kosa - 87 Sochinsky - 83			
	Federal Zakazniks Franz-Josef Land - 29 Nenetsky -- 28 Nizhne-Obskiy - 13 Severnaya Zemlya - 13 Yuzhno-Kamchatsky - 28 Malye Kurily - 34 Tumninskiy - 13 Agrakhansky - 41 Priazovsky - 19 Samursky - 13	*Federal Zakazniks* Franz-Josef Land - 41 Nenetsky -- 39 Nizhne-Obskiy - 19 Severnaya Zemlya - 19 Yuzhno-Kamchatsky - 39 Malye Kurily - 48 Tumninskiy - 19 Agrakhansky - 57 Priazovsky - 27 Samursky – 19			
Populations of two globally	Black-legged Kittiwake	Pop #s within natural range	Annual field surveys.	Environmental	While the GEF targets

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	Sources of verification	Risks and assumptions	TE Comments
threatened seabird species at CIZ.	(Min – 27,000; Max – 31,000) Red-legged Kittiwake (Min – 16,200; Max – 17,000)	of variation		perturbations will not affect results.	global biodiversity benefits, having a group of K-selected species (that are not under enormous pressures) as indicators is virtually meaningless. The only thing that would affect these species over such a project's lifespan is catastrophic change that would, almost without exception, be beyond the control of the project.
Steller sea lion populations on Mediny Island; - # of adult/juveniles - # of Pups - # of breeding males	Medny: 1051 adults, 29 breeding males, 220 pups.	Stable pop or within +/- 20% of Long-Term Mean (LTM).	Field Survey reports		
# and distribution of sea cucumbers in Reserve.	0.02 – 0.03 m2	Stable or increasing.	Field Survey reports		
Baltic seal population	Baseline figure: based upon 2007 "Nord-Stream" survey. Grey seals: 545 Ringed seals: 170	Stable pop or within +/- 20% of LTM.	Follow-up field survey from Nord-stream survey.		
Outcome 1: Improved MPA system and institutional-level capacity enables the expansion of the MCPA system.					
Area of MCPA in the process of establishment.	14,000	2,500,000 hectares	Official MNRE proposal for establishment of each new MCPA.	There is a high level of political acceptance of the need for additional protected marine and coastal areas.	The identified risk was not overcome (at least for the Ingermanland *zapovednik*) although the wording of the indicator ("in process of establishment") actually does stand! The figure is, however, dependent on the MMPZ which was dependent on cooperation between FAF and MNRE (see below).
# of new policies and guidelines developed and adopted by MNRE to	0	At least 4 in total.	Official policy and guideline documents published by MNRE.		This stands as another ambitious indicator given the environment of the

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	Sources of verification	Risks and assumptions	TE Comments
strengthen effectiveness.					MNRE.
# of marine mammal zones with strengthened protection.	0	At least 10.	Memorandum of Understanding - FAF and MNRE; Official announcement creating IUCN #3 protection for marine mammal zones.		While there is no specific risk identified for this indicator, the assumption here is that the FAF and MNRE cooperate and collaborate over MMPZs.
MNRE MCPA Capacity Scorecard				The reform process in Russia will continue to support high-level political acceptance and update of project strategy.	No comments although the risks and assumptions are limited given the circumstances.
Policy formulation	Policy Formulation	Policy Formulation			
Systemic	3/out of 6	5/out of 6			
Institutional	1/out of 3	2/out of 3			
Implementation	Implementation	Implementation			
Systemic	3/out of 9	7/out of 9			
Institutional	7/out of 27	20/out of 27			
Individual	4/out of 12	8/out of 12			
Engagement & consensus	Eng. & consensus	Eng. & consensus			
Systemic	3/out of 6	5/out of 6			
Institutional	3/out of 6	5/out of 6			
Individual	1/out of 3	2/out of 3			
Info & knowledge	Info & knowledge	Info & knowledge			
Systemic	2/out of 3	3/out of 3			
Institutional	3/out of 3	3/out of 3			
Individual	1/out of 3	2/out of 3			
Monitoring	Monitoring	Monitoring			
Systemic	2/out of 6	4/out of 6			
Institutional	3/out of 6	4/out of 6			
Individual	1/out of 3	2/out of 3			

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	Sources of verification	Risks and assumptions	TE Comments
Outcome 2: MPA management know-how is demonstrated, expanded and reinforced					
Direct impact on improved effectiveness in pilot sites = improved management in 6 million ha though METT Score.	CIZ: 57	CIMPCA: 75	METT Score sheets for three pilot sites.	Baseline Gov't funding will continue to support basic management functions.	As above, no comments although the risks and assumptions are limited given the circumstances.
	FEMR: 63	FEMR - 80			
	IZ: 13	IZ – 60			
Area of Bering Island to which rats are restricted.	Not restricted.	Restricted to immediate vicinity of Nikolskoye village.	Field surveys with "chew sticks"; official interviews.	Control practices used elsewhere will work in Russian MCPA.	This indicator was removed (as per Inception Report but for more discussion, see main body of text).
Outcome 3. Strengthened MCPA system effectively captures knowledge and enables replication of best practice.					
# of MCPA adopting invasive species management plans.	0	3 (FEMR, IZ, and probably Kurshskaya Kosa)	MNRE reports; Project APR; Planning documents.		Invasive species are a significant threat on islands thus this is a good indicator. The indicator should have gone further to ensure implementation of the plans.
# of MCPA adopting contingency plans for hazardous material spills.	0	5 (TBD)	MNRE reports; Project APR; Planning documents.		There are two issues with this indicator: i) was investing in a number of hazardous material plan contingency plans proportionate to the threat? and ii) would not a single *systemic* contingency plan be sufficient (with equipment placed in higher risk locations)?
# of official partnerships (monitoring, enforcement) formed by MCPA nationwide.	Agreements, monitoring marine and coastal ecosystems - 14	At least 20 monitoring agreements.	Signed Memoranda of Understanding or Agreement between agencies or Signed agreement between MCPA and respective partner.	The multi-level, approach to building a monitoring program could be perceived as non-scientific.	Signing agreements for monitoring, for cooperation among MCPAs, with tourism companies and for enforcement are the first step towards achieving a

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	Sources of verification	Risks and assumptions	TE Comments
	Cooperation agreement with other MCPA – 2	At least 10 cooperation agreements			functional system. The agreements need to be implemented and, consequently, tourism revenues increased, knowledge gained, shared and used to change practices, and enforcement improved. All these thing can and should also be measured.
	Cooperation agreement with tourism companies 2	At least 7 tourism management and promotion agreements			
	Written agreement for cooperation in enforcement – 0	At least 5 written agreements in cooperation on enforcement			

3 Findings

3.1 Project Formulation

3.1.1 Analysis of Logical Framework

45. The long-term solution and results were to be achieved by achieving the following objective:

> To facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness

46. This objective was, in turn, to be realised by achieving three outcomes:

a. *Outcome 1*: Improved MCPA system and institutional-level capacity enables the expansion of the MCPA system – required a strategic conservation plan (Output 1.1), a system-level effectiveness monitoring program (Output 1.2), MCPA partnership policy and guidelines development (Output 1.3), expansion of the MCPA network (Output 1.4). This final output covers a significant part of the project: i) establishing the Ingermanland *zapovednik*, ii) "facilitate" the establishment of a further eight MCPAs, iii) strengthening the status of MMPZs and iv) creating "an enabling environment" for the protection of an additional 1 million ha of "priority" marine and coastal habitats. Both Output 1.3 and this final part of Output 1.4 are poorly defined.

b. *Outcome 2*. MCPA management know-how is demonstrated, expanded and reinforced. There were five outputs under this outcome (see Table 4).

Table 4. The outputs associated with Outcome 2 and the sites in which they were to take place

Output and activities	Pilot sites
Output 1: Management and field conservation capacity building	FEMZ, CIZ, IZ
Output 2: Pilot partnerships for strengthened enforcement and monitoring	FEMZ, CIZ, IZ
Output 3: Sustainable tourism management practices	FEMZ
Output 4: Pilot on integrated invasive species management	CIZ
Output 5: Pilot demonstration for MCPA contingency planning and response to hazardous materials	IZ

c. *Outcome 3*. Strengthened MCPA system effectively captures knowledge and enables replication of best practice. Under this outcome, there were three outputs: system-level MCPA management effectiveness measuring and monitoring (Output 3.1), national MCPA knowledge management and development program (Output 3.2), and strengthened replication policies at the national MCPA level (Output 3.3).

47. There were a number of issues associated with the project's logframe; these are presented in Table 3.

3.1.2 Assumptions and risk analysis

48. The project document identified six risks and three assumptions (associated with sustainability) as well as seven further assumptions and risks that were described within the logframe. In brief, the listed risks included (from most to least significant):

a. Resistance of existing PA staff to change
b. Environmental perturbations affecting results
c. Outputs and replications tools will not be used
d. Climate change will impact ecosystems
e. Staff turnover could undermine stakeholder support and understanding
f. Resources from government will be insufficient

49. The three assumptions for sustainability were:

a. The project's outcomes are largely achievable with current institutions, and existing and to-be increased financial resources and personnel. Baseline Government funding of the Reserve will continue to enable basic management functions and may even increase in future years
b. New, strong partnerships with other government agencies, the local community, NGOs and governmental organizations will improve effectiveness and contribute to sustainability
c. Overcoming barriers (knowledge, financial, "proof of concept") will catalyze the self-sustaining adoption of new protected area management approaches

50. Whether these risks and assumptions were i) justified and ii) overcome will be discussed in the results section, as appropriate.

3.1.3 Lessons from other relevant projects

51. As a project that was implemented by the UNDP-CO, it draws of the history that UNDP has had implementing GEF projects in Russia. In addition, the project draws significantly off the UNDP-GEF project "Demonstrating Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation in four protected areas on Kamchatka peninsular". Indeed, as discussed above, the project was originally conceived as a second phase of that project but focusing primarily on the CIZ.

52. In addition to the above-mentioned project, there are a number of other projects that were/are being implemented in parallel. Some of these have covered similar themes as those targeted by this project (e.g., gap analysis, capacity building, management effectiveness). The majority of the linkages with the other projects was the application of lessons learned. Furthermore, the project drew off the network that the UNDP-CO has established among ongoing UNDP-GEF projects. This network meets annually and the connections among project implementation units are facilitated. Finally, with the project being housed within the UNDP-CO (see section 3.1.8 below), the connection with other projects was, arguably, easier for this project than many others.

3.1.4 Planned Stakeholder Participation

53. The list of stakeholders in the project and its results is well described in the project document and further summarised in the MTE report. The number was large – primarily because of the geographical scope of the project. As mentioned in these

documents, apparently a "strong emphasis" was placed on stakeholder involvement in the development of the project.

54. In practice, too, stakeholder participation, and, particularly, cooperation and coordination are essential when dealing with marine and coastal ecosystem projects. This is because so many actors at different levels have some jurisdiction over conservation, protection, management and use of marine and coastal resources – and the mandates are rarely complementary and are sometimes in direct conflict. While the project design did allude to this as a barrier and making attempts to overcome these issues, it would be unrealistic to think that the project would, singlehandedly, manage to resolve all institutional issues!

3.1.5 Replication approach

55. The project document described the project's approach to replication. This was to occur in various ways. First, the project aimed to demonstrate improved practices in three pilot sites. Obviously, the idea here is to replicate good practices and lessons learned to other MCPAs in the country. Second, the project was to produce a strategic conservation plan for the MCPA network – with its obvious implications for replication and scaling-up. Third, a system-wide monitoring system was to be designed and rolled out across the MCPA network. Fourth, policy guidelines "enacted" by the MNRE would institutionalize replication across the MCPA network. Fifth, the development of model management plans would allow for replication. And, finally, Outcome 3, in its entirety, was focused on knowledge management and replication. In summary, as it was designed, the project was thinking directly toward replication.

3.1.6 UNDP Competitive Advantage

56. While the World Bank has previously implemented GEF protected areas projects in the Russian Federation, UNDP has a strong competitive advantage. This can be summarised in the following:

a. The principal competing organisation is the World Bank; the WB-GEF projects are sometimes associated with loans – using complex procedures – to countries whereas UNDP gives grants through (relatively) simple procedures. This is, therefore, a much preferred modus operandi.

b. The UNDP-CO focuses on a number of different core areas for its work within Russia. These broadly fall into three areas: energy efficiency and environment, human development and private sector engagement. Within the energy efficiency and environment sector, UNDP has focused on various areas including biodiversity conservation.

c. The UNDP-CO has implemented a number of GEF projects in the Biodiversity Focal Area – and within that, a number of projects focusing on protected areas. Under UNDP's Results and resource framework for the Russian Federation, Output 3.2 is listed as being "Conserved ecosystems are considered as important resources for sustainable development"

d. All GEF Biodiversity projects being currently implemented at present within the Russian Federation are being implemented by UNDP.

e. Importantly, the UNDP-CO is generally perceived to be an independent partner for the Government of the Russian Federation and is without a political agenda.

3.1.7 Linkages between the project and other interventions in the sector

57. There were two primary linkages with other interventions in the sector. The first and most important was the countrywide government program to expand the protected area network. This included a number of MCPAs – including those identified for facilitated assistance from the project. The second primary linkage was the (now closed) UNDP-GEF project "Conservation and Sustainable use of wild Salmon Biodiversity in Kamchatka".

58. In addition, the project worked *directly* with many of the key stakeholders – including NGOs – in the sector. The project also hired, as consultants, key people within the sector. In this way, therefore, the project maintained strong linkages with relevant people and stakeholders.

3.1.8 Management arrangements

59. The project was implemented as a modified Nationally Executed (NEX) project with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) at the federal level as the Executing Agency with UNDP as the GEF Agency. Within the MNRE, project oversight was initially to be done by the Department for International Cooperation. In May 2011, that oversight responsibility was transferred to the Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety. At this point, Mr Vsevolod Stepanitsky (Deputy Director this Department and Principal Manager of protected areas in the Russian Federation) became the National Project Director.

60. As with the majority of UNDP-GEF projects, project oversight and responsibility fell under the Project Steering Committee (PSC). This was chaired by the NPD. There was good representation in the PSC. The PSC met once a year to approve workplans and budgets.

61. A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) comprised of three people was established within the UNDP-CO (see Table 5). The positions within the PIU were: Project Manager, Chief Technical Advisor and an Administrative Assistant. The PIU was responsible for the majority of the day-to-day implementation of the project, including aspects such as drafting Terms of Reference and analysis of specifications for procurement of equipment.

Table 5. The composition of the PIU team, their positions and their duration of employment to date

Name	Position	Dates of Employment
Olga Romanenko	Project Manager	01.10.2009-31.12.2009
Dmitry Kryukov	Project Manager	15.05.2010-31.12.2012
Mikhail Korolyov	Project Manager	01.01.2013-until present
Tatiana Sokolova	Administrative Assistant	2009-2011
Elena Bazhenova	Administrative Assistant	10.10.2011-until present
Vassily Spiridonov	Project Principal Technical Consultant	01.12.2009-until present
Natalia Troitskaya	Work Coordinator of Management Enhancement and the MCPA Network	01.12.2010-until present

	Expansion	
Galina Zaitseva	Project Financial and Administrative Officer (part-time), UNDP-CO employee	10.10.2011-until present

62. The project management was implemented in an unconventional way: i) the project team was housed within the UNDP-CO, ii) the project worked with the MNRE through a liaison person who was not a government employee (she is an ex-employee of the MNRE) but was connected by being the Head of the PA Directors' Association and she was also a consultant on the project (Work Coordinator of Management Enhancement and the MCPA Network Expansion, see Table 5), and iii) an NGO (Ecology & Business) to manage the procurement processes.

63. The implications of these things and the effectiveness of the management arrangements are discussed in various places in the report (specifically Sections 3.2.2, 3.2.6 and 3.3.4)

3.2 Project Implementation

3.2.1 Adaptive management

64. The somewhat incoherent, fragmentary and unsystematic implementation of the project (primarily, one might argue, because of the misfortunes that befell the project; see section 3.2.6 for a full discussion on this) meant that it resulted in a suite of adaptive management activities.

65. However, most notably, when the people associated with the project (primarily the project team, the UNDP-CO and the MTE) realised that the establishment of the Ingermanland *zapovednik* was becoming increasingly unlikely, the project shifted its focus to support actively a number of the MCPAs that had been established under the MNRE's program from 2012-2020 to expand the protected areas across the country[2]. Indeed, because these MCPAs were being newly established, the project's support was received gratefully and with enthusiasm, and some of the project's most important gains were made with these areas. However, this did contribute to the piecemeal nature of the project.

66. The project worked with a number of protected areas to develop management plans. It was good to see that the quality of these improved over the course of the project such that the final plans were significantly better than the first ones that the project produced. This is obviously indicative that the project team was *learning* as the project proceeded.

67. In another demonstration of adaptive management, rather than follow, to the letter, the recommendation of the MTE to use the FAF's Vessel Monitoring System, the project *facilitated* the relationship between the MNRE and ScanEx – an alternative satellite monitoring system. This has, to date, proved extremely satisfactory and success.

[2] "*Concept of development of protected areas of federal significance for the period up to 2020*", approved by the Federal Government on December 22, 2011 number of 2322

3.2.2 Partnership arrangements

68. The project worked with numerous organisations and partners. Most obviously, the project fell under the MNRE. The relationship with the MNRE – and specifically the Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety (that became the National Executing Organisation part way through the project) – was cordial and principally managed through Natalia Troitskaya: she acted as a liaison for the project to Mr Vsevolod Stepanitsky (the Deputy Director of the Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety, and Principal Manager of protected areas in the Russian Federation). This relationship was functional but when one considers the extraordinary circumstances of the central system of the protected areas of Russia (for further discussion on this see Section 3.3.4) this might be the best that one could expect.

69. While the Federal Agency for Fisheries (FAF) was represented on the PSC, their relationship with the project could best be described as formal: the project was in "no way a priority for the FAF". When interviewed by the TE, the Vice-Director of the Science Department of the FAF did rightly state that, when asked, they "had not presented an obstacle" to project progress. This was in reference to the establishment of the Ingermanland *zapovednik* but such a statement belies the lack of progress made, for example, with the establishment of the marine mammal protection zones (MMPZ)[3]. In short, the relationship could not be described as a "partnership". One illustration of how personalities can influence the progress of the project, the most recent FAF representative on the PSC provided good support – specifically with the establishment of Solovky *zakaznik* and assisted with fisheries issues in Onezhskoe Pomorye National Park.

70. At the level of the sites, the project enjoyed good relationships with the partners, including sub-contractors such as the Baltic Fund for Nature Protection and the management of each of the protected areas with which the project worked. This was exemplified by the relationship that the project had with the staff of the CIZ, the FEMR and the people put in place to establish the newly created protected areas (e.g., the Russian Arctic National Park and the Onega seaboard National Park). At the regional level, the project also enjoyed good relationships, both with the regional protected areas authorities (e.g., the Protected Areas Division of the Nature Resource Committee of the Leningrad Oblast) and regional NGOs (e.g., the Kamchatka Protected Areas Association).

3.2.3 Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management

71. As mentioned above, it was the realisation that the IZ establishment was becoming increasingly unlikely that led the project to invest more heavily in the newly established MCPAs. This was picked up, as well, during the MTE and the project responded well and successfully to this imperative. Similarly, the project responded to some of the recommendations made in the MTE – for example, i)

[3] **Comment on draft**: "*For FAF the Project was of course in no way a priority. However, Mr. Maximov, the most recent FAF representative in PSC, was very helpful and collaborated in establishing the Solovky Zakaznik and assisting with the fisheries issues in the Onezhskoe Pomorye National Park. The issue of MMPZ became irrelevant after the legislation change because it was no longer in the mandate of FAF to introduce limitations of activities not related to fisheries. The MMPZ issue requires the changes in federal legislation that is not supported by any of the relevant authorities. However, FAF maintains the no-take regime in all former MMPZ, and no changes in the fishing rules which would affect this, have been introduced during the lifetime of the Project*." **TE Response**: Section edited.

building relationships with the strong, well established MCPAs (exemplified by the project's relationship with Kronotsky *zapovednik*), ii) developing an oil spill response plan and training people in oil spill responses, and iii) the procurement of a large vessel for the CIZ.

72. In contrast, the project failed to deliver on some of the recommendations from the MTE. For example, i) there was no real regional delegation to organisation such as the Baltic Fund for Nature Protection[4], ii) the engagement with the FAF remained formal and continued until the TE – although, in contrast, the project (and its partners) did form good relationships with organisations such as the Border Control Agency, and iii) a socio-economic survey (to establish community development priorities on the Commander Islands) was suggested in the MTE but this was not carried out, much to the regret of the staff of the CIZ.

3.2.4 Project Finance

73. The project was funded by the GEF Trust Fund. The overall value of the GEF grant was USD 4 million. Arguably, this was a relatively limited budget given the scale of the project. This will be further discussed below.

74. In principal, there was relatively significant co-finance (see Table 6) but this was not effectively tracked over the course of the project. Co-finance for project outcomes was principally from WWF (for oil spill response work and work on the establishment of new MCPAs – e.g., New Siberian Islands or *Novosibirsky Ostrova* and Russian Arctic National Parks) and the Baltic Fund for Nature (for work on Ingermanland *zapovednik*).

Table 6. The planned value of the project including the funding from GEF and the various sources of co-finance

Type	Donor	Value (USD)
UNDP-managed grants	GEF	4,000,000.00
	UNDP	0.00
Partner-managed grants*	Govt. of Russia	9,637,341.58
	WWF	1,097,481.67
	BFN	116,883.16
	SEPA	89,000.00
	Additional leveraged from private sector, NGOs and partner research institutes	608,881.96
TOTAL		**15,549,588.37**

* As indicated in the Project Document

75. As mentioned in the Section 3.1.8 (Management arrangements), the project had an arrangement for project management with an NGO, Ecology and Business, administering of sub-contracts and payment processes – primarily because the NIM

[4] The Baltic Fund for Nature Protection effectively acted as a contractor but not as a regional PIU as suggested in the MTE.

(The MNRE) could not do these things. Although such a setup may be unusual elsewhere, this is usual for UNDP-GEF projects in Russia[5]. In addition, the project, per se, was not a legally registered entity[6].

76. The workplan was approved on an annual basis by the PSC; once approved, the funds were advanced to a separate bank account (that was managed by Ecology and Business) on a quarterly basis. Procurement was handled according to standard UNDP rules and local contractors had contracts with this entity. Ecology and Business also managed contracts and administrative tasks such as booking tickets, etc. Whether this was a cost effective solution is discussed in Section 3.3.3 (in addition to some other slightly odd aspects of this relationship).

77. As would be expected, the project funds were not evenly distributed among the different project Outcomes (see Figure 1, and Table 7 and Table 8). With Outcome 2 focusing on expansion of the MCPA network, it would be expected to have the highest budgets. Spending over the duration of the project was slightly under the budgeted amounts (See Figure 1). When the spending was examined relative to the budgets on an annual basis, the picture was slightly less elegant (see Figure 2) – thus, financial planning and spending against the budgets was less organised than the overall picture leads us to believe[7]. The observed pattern could be partly attributed to the issues that the project faced (as described through this report) and the adaptive management that the project was implementing as a result of these issues. This was probably also as a result of the changes that occurred over the project's lifetime (see Section 3.2.6 for a discussion on that).

[5] **Comment on draft**: "*This set up is not unusual at all; it is widely used throughout the region and is clearly defined as a NIM modality with the NIM Implementing Partner (MNRE) selecting a Responsible Party ("Ecology and Business" for the MCPA project) for the administration of subcontracts and payment processes which cannot be done by the NIM Implementing Partner. One might question the costs/added value of this particular Responsible Party, but not the implementation modality itself*". **TE Response**: Section edited.

[6] Previous draft had statement "UNDP-CO did not have the resources to take on management of the project". **Comment on this statement**: "*UNDP CO is not supposed to take on the project management! On the contrary, the CO is to contribute to building capacity of project teams and national institutions. In case of the Komi project which is mentioned in the footnote, the project team didn't manage to build enough capacity for management of three complex budgets from three donors, thus UNDP CO assisted them with the budget management. For the MCPA project, financial management and reporting was never an issue.*" **TE response**: Section edited.

[7] **Comment on draft**: "*Although I agree with the observation in general, it is worth mentioning that discrepancies between yearly budgets and delivery could be at least partly attributed to adaptive management which the project had to apply in abundance. Plus, the GEF rule of no reallocation of funds between the outcomes was observed, and so was the management costs limit*". TE response: Useful additional information and section consequently edited.

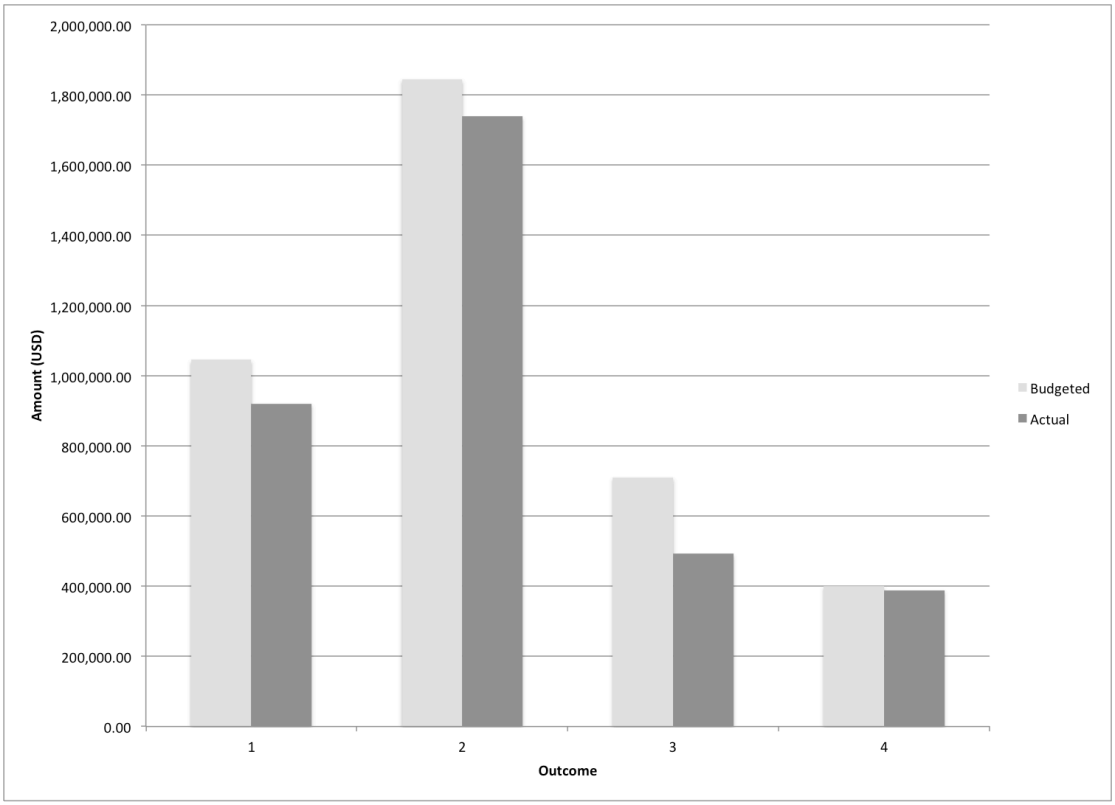


Figure 1. The actual expenditure against the approved budgets, by Outcome, for the project (across all years).

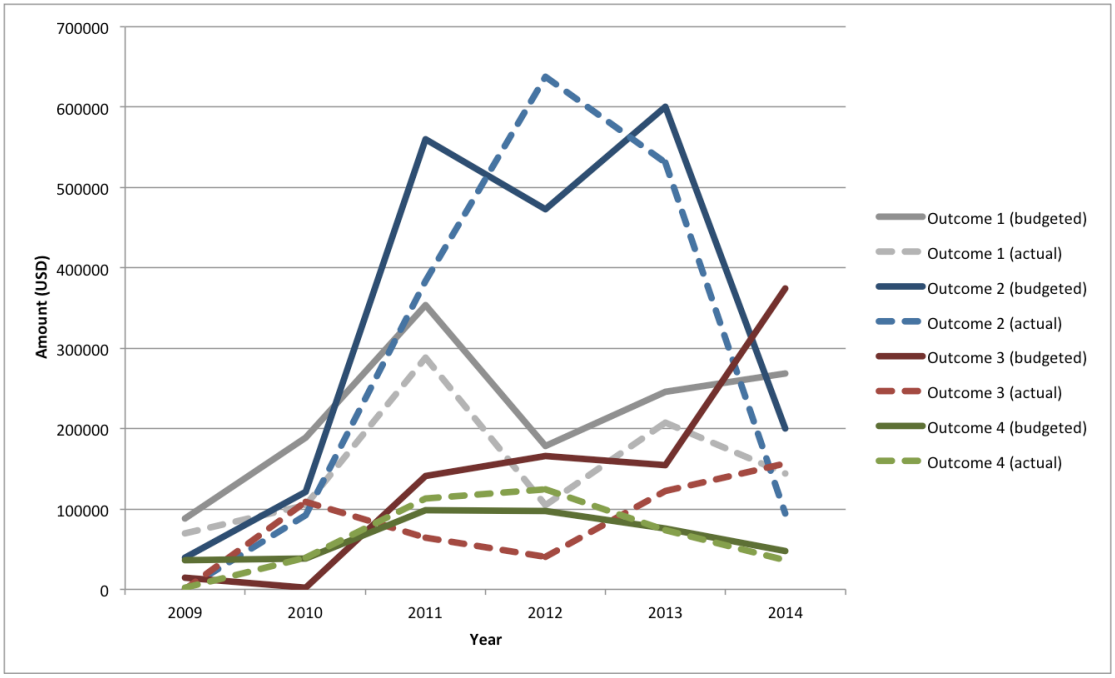


Figure 2. The actual expenditure against the approved budget by Outcome and by year.

78. Outcome 4, as listed in the tables and as depicted in the figures, represents the project management costs. This was less than 10% of the total value of the GEF grant and therefore acceptable (the project predates the recommended shift to lower rates

for full-sized projects, FSP[8]). By the time that I received the information on the project finances, 97.14% of the project management budget had been spent.

79. In terms of government in-kind contribution, these were in the form of in-kind donations:

a. The National Project Directors were both high-level officials, and who chaired the Project Steering Committee and were responsible for providing government oversight and guidance to the project implementation. The NPD was not paid from the project funds, but represent Government contribution.

b. Support provided to the project by other officials of MNRE who were paid by state budget

80. Finally, independent audits were carried out four times during the project's lifetime (FY 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013). These were carried out through the UNDP-CO audit processes. The opinions expressed in the audits were without qualifications.

[8] It should be noted that an external review of GEF Administrative Costs – including project management costs (Agenda Item 12, GEF Council Meeting Nov 8 – 12 2011, *GEF Administrative Expenses – Fees and Project Management Expenses: External Review*; GEF/C.41/07; see also *Highlights of the Council's Discussions, GEF Council Meeting Nov 8-10 2011* - http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Highlights_Revised_11-18-11.pdf) was carried out in 2011. The review noted that "project management budgets [should be] 10 % of the GEF grant for grants up to $2 million, and 5% of the GEF grant for grants above $2 million [and] if project proposals request above these benchmarks, then additional details have to be provided regarding the project management budget for scrutiny by the Secretariat." The conclusion was that the "Secretariat continues to keep close scrutiny of project management budgets." The project management budget for this project is, therefore, above the benchmark but the project predated this recommendation.

Table 7. The actual expenditure against the approved budgets, by Outcome, for both the GEF grant and Co-finance. The percentage of the budgeted amount is also given.

	GEF			Cofinance			Total		
Outcome	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**%**	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**%**	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**%**
1	1,045,000.00	920,246.99	88.06	2,546,000.00	3,631,000.00	142.62	3,591,000.00	4,551,246.99	126.74
2	1,845,000.00	1,738,724.41	94.24	4,808,000.00	5,824,957.16	121.15	6,653,000.00	7,563,681.57	113.69
3	710,000.00	492,296.99	69.34	1,192,000.00	1,484,749.25	124.56	1,902,000.00	1,977,046.24	103.95
4	400,000.00	388,562.69	97.14	850,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,250,000.00	388,562.69	31.09
Total	4,000,000.00	3,539,831.08	88.50	9,396,000.00	10,940,706.41	116.44	13,396,000.00	14,480,537.49	108.10

Table 8. The actual expenditure against the approved budgets, by year and by Outcome, for both the GEF grant and Co-finance. The percentage of the budgeted amount is also given.

	2009			2010			2011		
Outcome	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**% spent**	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**% spent**	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**% spent**
1	88,000.00	69,659.10	79.16	188,500.00	105,203.27	55.81	354,000.00	288,089.25	81.38
2	39,000.00	0.00	0.00	121,500.00	92,054.65	75.77	559,700.00	384,032.28	68.61
3	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	109,083.37	5,454.17	141,400.00	63,831.79	45.14
4	36,000.00	1,539.27	4.28	38,000.00	39,686.14	104.44	98,377.00	113,281.49	115.15
Total	178,000.00	71,198.37	40.00	350,000.00	346,027.43	98.86	1,153,477.00	849,234.81	73.62

	2012			2013			2014		
Outcome	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**% spent**	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**% spent**	**Budgeted**	**Actual**	**% spent**
1	178,000.00	105,081.80	59.03	245,500.00	207,870.91	84.67	269,095.67	144,342.66	53.64
2	472,520.00	637,709.07	134.96	600,000.00	531,052.57	88.51	200,151.43	93,875.84	46.90
3	166,400.00	40,786.71	24.51	155,000.00	122,177.97	78.82	374,120.16	156,417.15	41.81
4	97,000.00	123,984.53	127.82	75,700.00	73,771.00	97.45	47,737.57	36,300.26	76.04
Total	913,920.00	907,562.11	99.30	1,076,200.00	934,872.45	86.87	891,104.83	430,935.91	48.36

3.2.5 Monitoring & Evaluation – design and implementation

81. The project adopted the standard UNDP-GEF M&E framework. The M&E framework was relatively well resourced, in terms of funding as allocated in the project document (at USD 365,000 or 9.1% of the project budget). This is somewhat understandable given the fact that the project was spanning the entire country, from east to west and included a number of areas to the north. In addition, travel to some of these remote areas is exceedingly expensive (for example, a return aeroplane ticket from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatka to Nikolskoye in the Commander Islands at the time of the TE was RUB 63,000 – equivalent to USD 1,575 at the time).

82. Throughout the project, there were small delays in the implementation of the M&E plan, with the reporting in the PIR and MTE being delayed from the originally envisaged date (see Figure 3).

83. The project's logframe – which was key to the project's M&E framework – has been discussed above (see sections 2.4 and 3.1.1).

84. One issue that will be discussed below is that none of the monitoring processes mentioned that arguable mismatch between the scale of the project (both geographically and in its ambition), the relatively limited budget and the misfortunes that befell the project.

Item	Rating	Comment
M&E design at project start-up	**S**	The project adopted standard UNDP-GEF M&E planning.
Overall quality of M&E	**S**	On a positive side, the project displayed adaptive management particularly when it was realised that the establishment of the IZ might not be successful. The project shifted to assist the newly created MCPAs across the country. Nonetheless, it may be arguable that the apparent misfortunes that befell the project may have been avoided or curtailed with more focused – and adaptive – M&E.
M&E plan implementation	**S**	The implementation of the M&E plan has been satisfactory with all aspects of the plan implemented.

3.2.6 UNDP & Implementing Partner implementation, coordination and operational issues

85. As described in Section 3.1.8 (and relative to many other UNDP-GEF projects around the world), the project was implemented in a slightly unconventional way: the project team was housed within the UNDP-CO, worked with the MNRE through a liaison person, and employed an NGO (Ecology & Business) to manage the procurement processes.

86. The project was also plagued by misfortune that led to the implementation being bitty and incoherent. The timeline of project was, as a consequence, interrupted (see Figure 3):

a. The Project Manager changed twice (i.e., there have been three PMs working on the project) with the original PM resigning in October 2009. There was a gap of six months before the next PM was in place (in May 2010). The PSC did not approve the first workplan until October 2010 at which time the implementation started in earnest.

b. The first PM was to establish the project but base it in St Petersburg. This was altered and the project ended up being based in the UNDP-CO offices in Moscow.

c. The project was first housed within the Department of International Cooperation in the MNRE and then in May 2011, the project's institutional housing within MRN shifted to Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety – which also has the mandate to manage protected areas in the country.

d. In parallel with the departmental shift within the MNRE, the NPD also changed and since 2011, the NPD has been Mr Vsevolod Stepanitsky (the Deputy Director of the Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety, and Principal Manager of protected areas in the Russian Federation).

87. The most recent PM, Mikhail Korolyov, was put into a position after the MTR to pick up the pieces and do whatever he could to secure some results for the project. In these circumstances, he has done a good job: he has the right background – he came from working for the Fisheries Department in Kamchatka – and has the right skills for the job as well – he is a pragmatist, practical and has the right personality for the position[9].

88. In addition, without doubt the vast geographical focus of the project did contribute to some of the stumbles that it has suffered. This is irrespective of the relative ease of communication that we enjoy using tools such as Skype, mobile phones, the Internet and email. Nothing can replace face-to-face interactions and frequent visits to the field to provide support, encouragement, guidance and oversight to the teams in the field.

89. All decisions made along the process of implementation were made in good faith but *misfortune* befell the project, and was not apparent that poor decision-making or management lay at the core of the issues with project implementation. The result has been, overall, that the project has lacked the elegant coherence of a well-designed and well-implemented project that also enjoys good ownership (see Section 3.3.4).

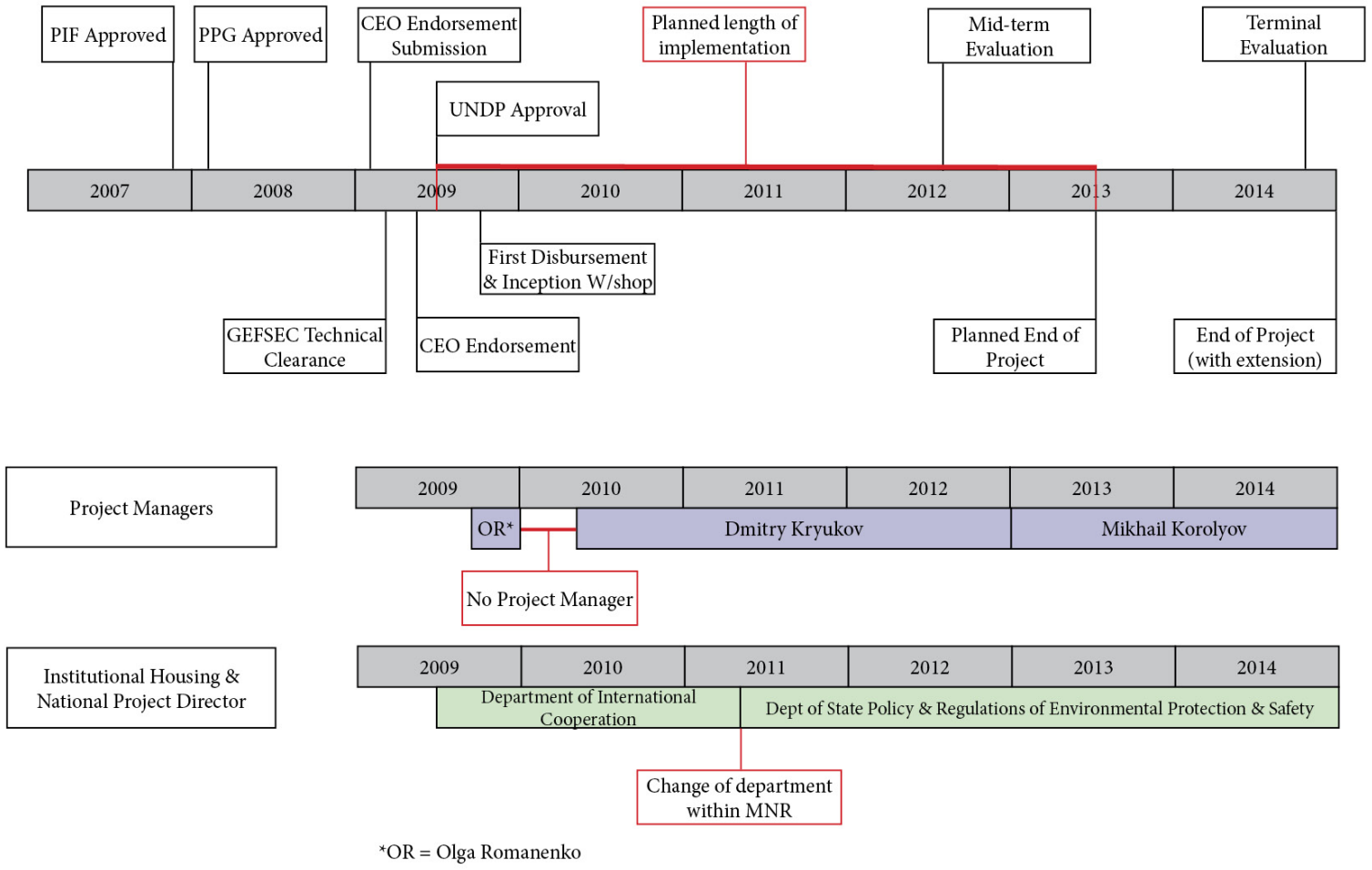
90. Nonetheless and notwithstanding the comments made in Section 3.1.8, the latest PM has made a concerted effort to salvage the project and secure whatever results he possibly could. As previously mentioned, he has the necessary skills to ensure the practical and pragmatic implementation of such a project; these were skills that were timely brought to the project when he was taken on.

Item	Rating	Comment
Overall quality of implementation and execution	**MS**	While the UNDP-CO provided good support, the project was plagued with misfortune that hampered implementation and execution.
Implementation Agency Execution	**S**	The UNDP-CO and UNDP-RTC provided good support to the project with no shortcomings.
Executing Agency Execution (MNRE)	**MS**	There were ownership and housing issues within the MNRE, with the project having to be transferred from one department to another a year after project implementation began. At this time, the

[9] However, it is difficult not to make comparisons with the UNDP-GEF Komi project (partly because the one followed on the heels of the other). It is sure that there was profound commitment of those involved in the Komi project, a commitment based on six or more years of effort and stress.

Item	Rating	Comment
		Deputy Director who then took over as NPD is so busy and felt relatively little ownership of the project (partly because he was not involved in the development of the project), he did not take it forward (especially the systemic aspects of the project) with the passion it demanded. Nonetheless, steps *have* been taken within the MNRE to incorporate marine and coastal elements into the broader picture of protected area management in Russia – most noticeably with the establishment of a working group on Marine Protected Areas under the Expert Council on Protected Areas.
Executing Company (Ecology & Business)	**S**	The execution carried out by the contractor, Ecology & Business, was satisfactory but was not particularly cost effective.

Figure 3. A schematic of the timeline of the project illustrating its interrupted history.



3.3 Project Results

3.3.1 Overall results and Attainment of objectives

91. The vision of the project – to establish a functional system of MCPAs – has not been achieved but to some extent the project achieved its stated objective ("*to facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness*") has been achieved. There is, of course, a difference between the vision and the objective. Functionally, the latter deals with the hectarage (as simply measured by the area of the system – something that the project only partially and not directly achieved) and the management effectiveness (as only partly measured using the METT scores of the individual protected areas). The former is, nonetheless, more difficult to define but the cohesiveness of the network of MCPAs is at its heart. It is that *cohesiveness* that has not been achieved. In Section 3.3.4 (on Country Ownership), I discuss in more detail some of the reasons why this key objective has not been achieved.

92. However, there is an important question to ask at this juncture: was the scale of the project simply too ambitious for the allocated budget (of USD 4 million)? There are a number of issues that feed into this discussion: i) the mechanism by which the project was conceived and how its focus evolved over time, ii) the ownership by the MNRE – and specifically the Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety (which has the mandate for management of the federal protected areas of Russia), and iii) the design of the project. Each of these will be considered briefly (with further discussion elsewhere in the report). First, as described in Section 2.2, the project evolved in its scope – from a project that was to focus only on the CIZ to one that considered the entire MCPA system! This illustrates the *opportunism* that many countries – with their GEF implementation agencies (in this case UNDP) – display with respect to GEF funding. As the priorities and foci shift, so too do the projects. One issue here is that people and organisations start to invest in an idea and are then loathe to forego it even when the priorities and foci shift. Second, the question of ownership and the MNRE is discussed at length in Section 3.3.4; suffice to say here that had the ownership of the project had been better, it would probably have advanced further. Finally, there is the question of the design of the project and the question of whether it was simply too ambitious in scope and scale for the allocated budget of the project[10]. There is justification to this idea: for example, any one component of the project (e.g., management of invasive species, management of oil and other hazardous materials, improving management effectiveness of MCPAs across the country, countering the threat of overexploitation of fish and other marine resources) would take separate projects in and of themselves. Such an argument is countered by the ethos of GEF projects: GEF projects are precisely about overcoming fears, catalysing processes and demonstrating success. In the context of this project, many of the disparate components of the projects could be seen to be trying to "demonstrate success". It is possible, however, that this project should have been more focused and selected fewer components and done a better job at "demonstrating success" – in other words, the components of the designed were not flawed but both in design and implementation it was not as focused as it could have been.

[10] To argue that the design was flawed is difficult because the design is scrutinized so often and so carefully between the moment that it is conceived to the end of the MTE process – although, of course, some projects obviously do make the mistake of an inappropriate design.

93. Nonetheless, the project has laid the foundations for a MCPA system. Most notably, the project resulted in the appreciation within the MNRE that i) there *are* differences between terrestrial protected areas, and marine and coastal protected areas and, as a consequence, these differences need to be taken into account when considering the planning, financing and effective management of MCPAs, ii) that there was a need for resources – human, financial and equipment – for and investment in the MCPAs and iii) some different management techniques are necessary (e.g., satellite monitoring of shipping). In addition, the MNRE has willingly participated in public events (for example, conferences, forums, the WCPA congress in Sydney in 2014 and at specially organized trainings, seminars, and round tables). Moreover, MNRE established a working group on Marine Protected Areas under the Expert Council on Protected Areas; this working group systematically plans and coordinates activities and management approaches to MCPAs. In short, the MCPAs need to be considered *differently* from the terrestrial protected areas. These are arguably the key outcomes from the project.

94. Other key results from the project include (this is by no means an exhaustive list; detailed analysis of the logframe results is presented in Table 10):

a. The project carried out a gap analysis of the marine and coastal zones in Russia. The analyses included determining the distribution of rare and threatened species relative to the existing protected areas and trends of economic development in marine and coastal areas. The gap analysis results in recommendations for further development of the MCPA network to ensure representation and inclusion of rare and threatened species.

   However, the results of the gap analysis have not yet been used and will not be used until the *next* program for expansion of the protected areas of Russia is under preparation. The *current* program runs from 2012-2020. The subsequent program should, in principle, run from 2021-2030 but i) there are no guarantees that the results of the gap analysis will be included and ii) the socio-political and development situation could have changed considerably by then.

   The disconnect between the approval and publication of the *current* program (on 22 December 2011, publication No. 2322) and the gap analysis carried out by the project (released on 08/10/2012) may speak about the distance between the MNRE and the PIU, and of ownership issues (more of which is discussed below in Section 3.3.4 on Ownership). Thus, one might expect that these two processes would have been better aligned and sequenced such that the results of the gap analysis would have been available and fully incorporated into MNRE program[11].

[11] **Comment on draft**: "*Current plan for establishment of the protected areas cannot be amended. The planning process includes a very time consuming bureaucratic correspondence between the federal and the regional authorities. The point is that the MNRE can't accept purely marine areas (even though they are allowed by the legislation; this is however an underestimated constraint of administrative thinking that became apparent only in the course of the Project and is difficult to change rapidly). Planning and the start of establishment of the protected area around New Siberian Islands was one of the results of the gap-analysis completed in the course of the Project. It was only possible because WWF as a partner of the Project, was able to convince the authorities of Sakha – Yakutia to replace the New Siberian Islands to Medvezhyi Islands (which are apparently less valuable in terms of biodiversity, particularly marine and coastal biodiversity, although being an important breeding site for polar bears) in the governmental plan. The work on the Solovki Islands protected area*

b. The project developed all the necessary documents for the establishment of Ingermanland *zapovednik* (hereafter abbreviated to IZ). These documents were ushered through all the relevant ministries and departments for approval. Notably, the documents received approval and support from the FAF and the Border Control Agency. However, the documents remain stuck in the Ministry of Defence since they were submitted on 28 August 2012[12] and there appears to be little movement. Without the approval and support of the Ministry of Defence, the IZ cannot be established.

   There are a few things that should be noted. First, the establishment of the IZ has been planned for sometime: the project did not initiate the process but rather injected resources into the process to ensure that all the documents were correctly and well prepared, and to usher the documents through the approval process. Second, the IZ was also included in the MNRE's 2012-2020 program for expansion of the protected area network. Third, in blocking the proposal, the Ministry of Defence – for whatever reason (including, perhaps, the current security situation in the Gulf of Finland[13]) – in not following official protocol (which indicates that the MoD should respond to the proposal – which comes directly from another Ministry, the MNRE – within one month of submission). The PIU (with the UNDP-CO) should continue to use whatever influence it has within the MNRE to ensure formal and informal follow-up with the Ministry of Defence on this issue[14].

   Nonetheless, all interviewees were *relatively confident that at some point the IZ would be* established.

   The risk of the IZ documents being blocked was not specifically identified in the project document although this is somewhat alluded to in the identified assumption: "there is a high level of political acceptance of the need for additional protected marine and coastal areas." This assumption does not, however, specifically address the reality as it emerged. As a

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(which was also highlighted by the gap analysis) was started because of Mr. Putin's decision. Of course there is no guarantee that any other results and proposals will be accepted by the authorities, but the results of the project are currently used in a new detailed planning process undertaken by WWF for the Arctic". **TE response**: useful information and section edited.

[12] The first set of documents was submitted to the Ministry of Defense on 28.08.2012, (№02-12-36 / 13486); a number of comments and suggestions were made on this set of document and the comments subsequently addressed. Since then, the case has been followed up with the most recent letters sent on 05 March 2015.

[13] See, for example, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/19/sweden-search-russian-submarine-stockholm (given here simply as an illustration of the issues at present). **Comment on draft**: "*The footnote relates to the Swedish military hunting for a Russian submarine; it had happened before in 70s and 80s. Rather than referring to the possible political causes of the MoD's reluctance, one can possibly mention that the MoD is not following the official protocol of having to respond to the query from another Ministry within one month; the FE might recommend the PMU to use whichever influence it has with the MNRE to ensure formal and informal follow-up with the MoD on the issue*". **TE response**: Section edited in response.

[14] **Comment on second draft**: "*According to the latest information from the MNRE, and the Hydrographic Service in the Russian Navy in St. Petersburg, it's only technical problems and usual bureaucratic routines that delays final approval of the Ingermanland Zapovednik on the side of Ministry of Defence. This gives a hope that the zapovednik will be established in late 2015*". **TE response**: This is good news, however, the MNRE should be still encouraged to continue to follow this up. Once established, it will vindicate the belief that the IZ would, eventually, be established.

consequence, a risk was introduced into the Atlas risk management tool and the management response was regularly updated by the PIU and the UNDP-CO. Whether more could have been done to mitigate this risk is a moot point[15].

Nonetheless, in the circumstances and in short, then, the project took the process as far as they possibly could – and did a good job in doing it.

c. Aside from the process for the establishment of the IZ, the Commander Islands *zapovednik* (hereafter CIZ) became a primary focus for the project. The project carried out a number of activities in the CIZ.

The management plan for the CIZ was developed with the participation of stakeholders[16].

At the stage of the MTE, there was a proposal for the MNRE and project to work with the FAF (and specifically the Centre of Fishery Monitoring and Communications) to ensure that MCPAs had access to satellite data regarding ships that may be passing through the waters of MCPAs. Instead, the project facilitated a relationship between ScanEx and the CIZ. ScanEx provides real-time data to the CIZ regarding passing ships. The CIZ can then investigate. It should be further noted that the process of prosecuting Russian vessels (and usually they are fishing vessels) is relatively simple. This is in stark contrast to the process of prosecuting international vessels (i.e., from other countries). It is at this level that a systemic approach would have been useful and this was not carried out by the project (for further discussion see Section 4.2).

Towards the end of the project and as supported by the MTE, the project procured a large vessel for the CIZ. At the time of the TE, this vessel was pulled onto the shore at the small harbour of Nikolskoye and repairs were being undertaken to the propeller. In addition, while the vessel has been purchased, other accessories that would make the vessel even more useful were not purchased. These include items such as GPS units and depth finders and sonar equipment. For the vessel to be most useful, both as a patrol vessel but also for carrying out surveys and research, and *if there are any project funds remaining*, some of these funds should be used i) to ensure that the boat is fully seaworthy (including assisting with the current repair job) and ii) procure some of the accessory equipment to upgrade the boat to full usefulness.

One outstanding result from the intervention of the project in the CIZ (and, indeed, other MCPAs) was leveraging an increase in the budgets from the MNRE. This is a symptom of the process described above: that the project demonstrated that MCPAs not only require investment from the

[15] **Comment on draft**: "*Disagree: a particular risk regarding the IZ establishment was introduced through the Atlas risk management tool, with the management response regularly updated by the PMU and UNDP CO*". **TE response**: This was not clear during mission but it is good to see this: section edited as a result.

[16] Stakeholder involvement took the form of meetings, meetings, conversations and interviews, followed by the analysis of general interests, expectations, claims and concerns related to the activities of the reserve. The work with the local population was built on best international practices and recommendations as set out primarily in the Performance Standards and other documents of the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

government – but, importantly, that they justify and are worthy of such investment.

In addition to this boost in funding, the capacity of the CIZ was also increased through training received by the staff.

Finally, the project developed a microfinance scheme for the local communities (and principally the indigenous Aleut people) living in Nikolskoye. A small number of initiatives were funded; at the time of the TE, none of the initiatives had produced any results worthy of evaluation. Further to this scheme, the CIZ staff members hold regular meetings with Aleut communities to discuss pressing issues; the leaders of the Aleut communities are also invited to join the Scientific and Technical Council of the CIZ as a mechanism to allow them to participate in the process of decision making. A small number of local people also participated in a study tour to the Kenozersky National Park[17]. In addition, up to 30 short-term, seasonal contracts are offered between the period 2012-2014 by the CIZ to local people.

In summary, then, the project contributed significantly to improving the effectiveness of the management of the CIZ; the changes in the CIZ's METT score (from a baseline of 57 to an EOP score of 77) is a testament of this.

d. The increased level of funding, as mentioned above for the CIZ, was also the case for other protected areas with which the project interacted.

e. The project focused on inputs to individual protected areas and outputs rather than focusing on the outcomes and results towards which the project should have been working and, ideally, achieving.

f. The project spent resources on building capacity in a number of protected areas but there was a focus on CIZ (see above). The project organised two study tours, one to Alaska and the other to the Galapagos Islands of Ecuador. Interestingly, the participants of the Alaska study tour valued their time there and incorporating the lessons learned from the study tour into their work and activities. This is the ideal result from any study tour.

   In contrast, the study tour to the Galapagos was considered of less value to the participants. It is difficult to say, precisely, why this was the case but one might speculate that this is at least partly because the members of the study tour *aspire* to the levels of the Americans but that Ecuador and Ecuadorians are less aspirational. This may simply be a cultural artefact but, nonetheless, is an important consideration that should be taken into account when organising study tours. In short, is the study tour destination in a place to which the study tour participants will or do aspire?

g. The project developed a number of management plans for protected areas. This was, of course, a learning process and the project team felt much more confident and comfortable with the plans that were produced in the later stages of the project than those at the beginning (e.g., that for the Russian Arctic National Park). This is a valuable lesson for future projects

[17] The study tour fell under the theme of "*Protected areas and the local population: from the conflict of interests to mutually beneficial cooperation*" and included 10 local residents from Nikolskoye.

and future processes to develop management plans for a series of protected areas.

This suggests that towards the end of a project, the project team should re-visit the management plans that are produced at the early stages of the project and amend the plans, as necessary, on the basis of the lessons that have been learned through the process.

Finally, the UNDP-GEF Komi project has produced a manual for producing management plans for protected areas in the Russian Federation. It would be good to see the MCPA project producing a short Annex to this manual indicating the differences in the processes that should be incorporated for MCPAs.

h. The project did expend energy, with success, to increase marine research capacity in the MCPAs, including the preparation of guidelines, field training courses, as well as establishing a commission for marine stations and MCPAs; this commission functions as part of the Marine Heritage Association and will, in part assure some sustainability of the project's processes and results.

i. The project worked with the FEMR to develop an invasive species response plan. While the quality of the plan was largely satisfactory, it appeared as if it will be of little use because, as one interviewee expressed, "it will only be useful if there is a significant increase in invasive species". In other words, the plan is *responsive* as opposed to *preventative*.

   Aside from the plan developed for the FEMR, no other invasive species plans were developed (although they are planned for the Russian Arctic National Park and the Franz Josef National Refuge[18]) – either at a system level or for any of the other protected areas in the country. In addition, the focus on rats on Bering Island of the CIZ was removed (through elimination of the indicator). This was surprising to me for a number of reasons not least because invasive species on the CIZ was identified, in the project document, as a key threat. It also contradicts the (desk-based) findings of the project's own study on invasive species[19]. Indeed, invasive species are *the* primary threat to many island communities, including sub-Antarctic islands of similar latitude to the islands within Russia's MCPA network – and the MCPA network in Russia is comprised of a number of island systems. As the MCPA continues to develop, further analysis of the threat of invasive species is warranted and, ideally, a systemic invasive species plan should be developed with site-level plans in those areas (and specifically islands) at higher risk from invasive species, as appropriate.

j. The project successfully carried out biodiversity surveys, particularly in the FEMR and the Gulf of Finland.

[18] **Comment on second draft**: "*The plan for invasive species control and management was also developed and approved for the Russian Arctic National Park and the Franz Josef Land.*" **TE response**: Good to see that they were developed and approved. It would be good to see this expanded in a systemic way and have the MNRE recognize the threats of invasive species, particularly on island systems.

[19] Zalota, Anna (2011) A review of international and Russian practice in monitoring and control of alien species in marine and insular protected areas.

k. In addition to the biodiversity surveys, the project also catalysed the visits of a number of students (n = 75, e.g., from Moscow State University) to carry out small projects in the MCPAs – particularly in the CIZ. This initiative was good for it not only was useful to collect information but it also has the potential to build a generation of people committed to marine and coastal conservation. However, because of the vast expense involved in getting people, including students, to remote areas such as the CIZ, the sustainability of such student visits is questionable (see Section 3.3.6 on Sustainability below)[20].

l. Because of the vast quantity of petroleum products that are transported through the Gulf of Finland[21], an oil spill review was considered necessary. At the point of the TE, this becomes somewhat of a moot point because of the stalled process to establish the Ingermanland *zapovednik*. Nonetheless, with the Baltic Salvage and Towing Company and the Baltic Fund for Nature, the project carried out training for a broad group of stakeholders who would be involved if there were to be an oil spill in this sensitive area.

   There are two caveats to note from this process. First and notwithstanding the recent reduction in oil prices that may, at least in the short- to mid-term have some effects, there will be an increasing interest to explore for and produce oil from Arctic reserves. With this in mind, the project may have worked with the MNRE and other bodies such as the Ministry of Emergencies (with whom the project developed a good relationship around the Gulf of Finland trainings) to produce a *systemic* oil response plan and use the Gulf of Finland as a *pilot* for training.

   In contrast to this, the MCPA system needs to be realistic about the relative threat of oil spills across the system. Thus, in the CIZ – where there was some talk of oil spill responses – the relative threat is low and this must be kept contextual and realistic.

m. Once it was apparent that the IZ might not be established over the project's lifetime, the attention shifted to the MCPAs that had been established under the MNRE's programme for expansion of the protected area network. These included Onega and the Russian Arctic National Parks. Here, the project provided inputs and developed management plans but, somewhat in contrast to the reception of the support with the older protected areas, a good relationship was established with these newer protected areas. This was similar to the good relationship that the project enjoyed with the staff of the CIZ. In addition, the project provided funding for environmental and economic surveys that justified the establishment of the *Novosibirskie* Islands National Park. A similar exercise was carried out for the establishment of a nature refuge in the vicinity of the *Solovetskie* Islands.

[20] **Comment on second draft**: "*Some follow ups of the project, i.e. Commission on MCPA and marine stations may provide sustainability of students involvement in the MCPAs activity and facilitate recruitment of motivated and dedicated young people*." **TE response**: Section on Sustainability (see Section 3.3.6) edited slightly in response.

[21] For example, in 2011, 6.5million tonnes of heavy fuel were carried through this area in a total of 105 ships.

n. The project implemented a number of micro-finance projects with local stakeholders in the Commander Islands. At the time of the TE mission, there were no results from this investment.

o. The project failed to change the status of the MMPZs – primarily because the MNRE and the FAF believed that the current status is sufficient to protect them adequately. This begs the question of why this was included in the project in the first place.

p. The project made some effort to develop techniques and indicators for monitoring effectiveness at the system level[22]. The main method involved a comprehensive examination of the performance of the protected areas using a number of measures. The performance is examined against targets for those protected areas – for example, their goals, objectives within management plans. This allows for analysis of the effectiveness of protected areas across the network. There are two things to note here: i) the management effectiveness across the system did not use the METT (i.e., there was no replication from this or previous GEF protected area projects in the country) and ii) the methods continue to examine protected area management effectiveness at the level of the protected areas but did not consider the effectiveness of the system. In other words, it failed to measure systemic level management effectiveness.

   This second (arguably rather critical) point should be taken in the following context. Few, if any, nation states measure the effectiveness of their protected area system. Thus, there are few measures of the systemic level management effectiveness. As written in the project document, it was the objective of this project to do something along these lines; however, the project did not manage to take the opportunity to do anything innovative here.

   Finally, baseline data have not yet been collected; the periodicity of data analysis have also not been made explicitly clear – except to note that data will be collected on an annual basis.

95. More formally, the results that have been achieved can be examined against the expected results. This can be done at a number of different levels (see Table 9 but for analysis of the logframe, see Table 10).

Table 9. The status of the project versus the expected results

Expected result	Status, TE
Project vision (or long-term solution): A Marine and Coastal PA System of Russia that is ecologically representative, resilient to climate change and effectively managed	As the project vision, this is what the project should be *contributing* to. It implies coherence within the system that extends from policy and legislation, through planning and capacity to management effectiveness. The project has only partly contributed to this overall vision – but the issues did not lie wholly with the project but with

[22] Troitskaya, Natalia (2014) Reports on measuring effectiveness of MCPA network; Troitskaya, Natalia (2013) Indicators of effectiveness of the PA sysstem management and recommendations

	the system itself and the challenges achieving *anything* at a systemic level.
Project objective: To facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness	While the project was generally beset by bad luck, the MNRE's (independent) program to expand the protected area network in the country was, from the project's perspective fortuitous: it gave the project the opportunity to invest in those MCPAs established under that program. In this way, the project partly achieved this aspect of its objective in this way. For the second functional aspect of the objective – the management effectiveness – this was satisfactorily achieved in the CIZ. The degree to which the project was influential in changes in the recorded METT scores of the MCPAs across the network is questionable – although the increase in budgets across the system may be, at least in part, attributable to the project.
Outcome 1: Improved MCPA system and institutional-level capacity enables the expansion of the MCPA system	At the national level, there was and still is low capacity but the project successfully focused on building capacity at the individual MCPA level – and specifically with the CIZ. The *system*, as something coherent, was not achieved by the project.
Output 1.1. Improved MCPA system and institutional-level capacity enables the expansion of the MCPA system – required a strategic conservation plan	The project primarily focused on the production of gap-analyses for this output; this meant that other aspects – including a strategic conservation plan was not achieved.
Output 1.2. A system-level effectiveness monitoring program	Four different models of system-level management effectiveness monitoring were prepared and the project apparently worked with the MNRE to select the best model. This was not yet complete (including collecting the baseline data) at the time of the TE mission[23].
Output 1.3. MCPA partnership policy and guidelines development	The project did facilitate partnerships (e.g., between the CIZ and SCANEX, and MCPAs and universities and other academic institutions) but this did not result in policy change. The reports developed under this output proposed a series of *recommendations* for how this might work.
Output 1.4. Expansion of the MCPA network, including: i) establishing the Ingermanland zapovednik, ii) "facilitate" the establishment of a further eight MCPAs, iii) strengthening the status of MMPZs and iv) creating "an enabling environment" for the protection of an additional 1 million ha of "priority" marine	The project benefitted from the serendipitous and coincidental commencement of the MNRE's (independent) program to expand the protected areas within Russia allowing the project to invest in some of the emerging MCPAs that were established under that program. The IZ was listed under that program and although all planning documents were produced for the establishment of IZ, it has not yet been established. The MNRE program did not include any of the other protected areas slated for establishment in the project

[23] An update following the TE mission was that this work was completed but failed to produce anything *innovative* that measure *system-level* management effectiveness. Thus, it focused on assimilation of individual METT scores rather than thinking about systemic processes and their effectiveness.

and coastal habitats.	document; it also did not include high biodiversity areas such as the *Novosibirskie* Islands National Park and *Solovetskie* Islands Nature Refuge. The MMPZs were also not strengthened as originally envisaged. The project did, however, carry out other important activities in the area that would be otherwise included in the IZ – including i) making plans for the Ramsar sites within the Gulf of Finland (specifically amending the fishing regulations) and ii) oil spill and other hazardous material training and mitigation measures (see Output 2.5 below).
Outcome 2. MCPA management know-how is demonstrated, expanded and reinforced	This outcome refers specifically to the demonstration or pilot sites.
Output 2.1: Management and field conservation capacity building	This was achieved, most specifically in the CIZ. Management plans were also developed for a number of MCPAs including CIZ and FEMR with participation of multiple stakeholders (see Annex VI). The project also facilitated the dissemination of the lessons learned from the Kronotsky *zapovednik* to other monitoring and research stations (specifically the White Sea Marine Research Station).
Output 2.2: Pilot partnerships for strengthened enforcement and monitoring	A number of "partner" organisations were contracted during the project and some organisations has strong affiliations with certain areas (e.g., WWF with a selected number of MCPAs). This appears to be *less* influenced by the project than the choice of the organisations involved. In its own reporting, the project placed into this output the surveys that were carried out to assess the population sizes of various indicator species; exhibitions of artwork; reports of students' field studies. These are not strictly *partnerships* that are established for improving management.
Output 2.3: Sustainable tourism management practices	Relatively little was done with tourism with the exception of a study in the FEMR and ecotourism training. Arguably, there were missed opportunities with developments in the CIZ.
Output 2.4: Pilot on integrated invasive species management	This was only done (and not particularly satisfactorily) for FEMR. This stands in stark contrast to the project document that specifically identifies invasive species as a threat in the CIZ.
Output 2.5: Pilot demonstration for MCPA contingency planning and response to hazardous materials	This was done satisfactorily – but some interviewees estimated that a disproportionate emphasis was put on this relative to the actual threats (e.g., in CIZ).
Outcome 3. Strengthened MCPA system effectively captures knowledge and enables	

replication of best practice	
Output 3.1. System-level MCPA management effectiveness measuring and monitoring	Overlap here with Output 1.2. Measures that indicate the effectiveness of the management of the MCPA system were recommended.
Output 3.2. National MCPA knowledge management and development program	The system for monitoring within the MCPAs was successfully developed by the project and changes to research programmes have been recommended to the MNRE. In addition, substantial knowledge was built during the project.
Output 3.3. Strengthened replication policies at the national MCPA level	Formal *policies*, as suggested here, were not developed.

Item	Rating	Comment
Overall quality of project outcomes	**MS**	The overall *system* of MCPAs – that was really the focus of the project – was not realised and instead the project results were fragmented and unsystematic. There were many reasons for this but not least because of the inability of the MNRE to allocate sufficient time and resources to go through the process to make the systemic changes that were (and still are) necessary. Taken independently, some of the outcomes were, however, satisfactory (for example and perhaps most notably, the improved management of the CIZ).

Table 10. The analysis of the status of the results of the project in the logframe.

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
Objective: To facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness					
Area of coastal and marine area under protection expanded	24,577,651 ha	Additional area protected with direct influence of project: +14,000 ha Additional area protected with facilitation of the project + 7,680,000 ha Enabling environment created for establishment of additional 1,006,000 million ha New total area under protection: 33,277,651 ha	The total area under protection at the end of the previous reported period (2013) amounted 28,430,223 ha (24,577,651 ha of the base line level + 3,852,572 ha of new areas of various categories). Russian government issued the order for establishment of "Shantarkie Ostrova" National park (Shantar Islands) in the Sea of Okhotsk on 20 December 2013. This adds 515,500 ha (274,284.08 ha of marine zone) to the total area under protection. Total area under protection now amounts to 28,945,723 ha with the overall increase from the start of the project by 4,368,072 ha (56% of the target level)	Government order # 821-p 2009 - establishing national park "Russian Arctic"; # 1436-p 2010 - establishing *zapovednik* "Utrish"; Government order # 2559-p - establishing buffer zone of *zapovednik* Wrangel Island; Government Order # 3 2013 - establishing national park Beringia; Government Order # 1304 - establishing national park Shantra Islands; Government order on the condition of oil and gas reconnaissance work in the area inhabited by Western Pacific Gray whales 827-p, 2011	The areas that have been established over the lifetime of the project were done so under the MNRE's program for the expansion of protected areas within the period 2012-2020). The project had little or no influence over the drafting of this program (and cannot fall under the project's "facilitation" or under an "enabling environment" created by the project). Therefore, the inclusion of these areas within the logframe – as a project result – can be viewed as "creative accounting". The principal target of expansion (through "direct influence") – Ingermanland *zapovednik* was not (yet) successful.
Indirect impact on improved management effectiveness in 24 million hectares of MCPA through METT Score	Baseline	+40%	Total increase as compared to the baseline assessment comprised 33%.	METT scores	The results, as reported here, stem from a "thorough reassessment" of the METT scores across the system – apparently allowing for

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
	Zapovedniks - Arctic Bolshoi Arktichesky - 29 Gydansky - 40 Kandalakshsky - 37 Kandalakshsky - 42 Nenetsky - 36 U-Lensky - 49 Taimyrsky - 50 Wrangel Island - 47	*Zapovedniks - Arctic* Bolshoi Arktichesky - 41 Gydansky - 56 Kandalakshsky - 52 Kandalakshsky - 58 Nenetsky - 50 U-Lensky - 69 Taimyrsky - 70 Wrangel Island - 65	*Zapovedniks - Arctic* Bolshoi Arktichesky - 43 Gydansky - 49 Kandalakshsky - 54 Kandalakshsky - 54 Nenetsky - 52 U-Lensky - 54 Taimyrsky - 60 Wrangel Island – 56 Russian Arctic – 66		an overall increase of 33% (from an increase of only 7.5% from the previous year): this begs the question of whether the same degree of thoroughness was applied to the baseline scores (and hence is the recorded increase was real). Further, it is difficult to discern wherein lies the increase (if real) in management effectiveness and the degree to which the project was *influential* in that increase. Nonetheless, monitoring the management effectiveness of the MCPAs should continue to be monitored.
	Far East Botchinsky - 37 Dzhugdzhursky - 35 Kronotsky – 58 Koryaksky - 42 Kurilsky - 55 Lazovsky – 54 Magadansky – 51 Poronaisky – 43 Sikhote-Alinsky – 56	*Far East* Botchinsky - 52 Dzhugdzhursky - 49 Kronotsky – 80 Koryaksky - 58 Kurilsky - 76 Lazovsky – 75 Magadansky – 72 Poronaisky – 59 Sikhote-Alinsky – 78	*Far East* Botchinsky - 56 Dzhugdzhursky - 38 Kronotsky – 67 Koryaksky - 48 Kurilsky - 61 Lazovsky – 62 Magadansky – 60 Poronaisky – 53 Sikhote-Alinsky – 67		
	Caspian Sea Astrakhansky – 62 Dagestansky – 44	*Caspian Sea* Astrakhansky – 87 Dagestansky – 62	Black and Caspian Sea Astrakhansky – 74 Dagestansky – 56 Utrish – 18 (n/a) – deleted from the final METT		

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
			since there was no direct input to the PA development from the Project		
	Baltic Regional zakazniks - 30	*Baltic* Regional zakazniks - 42	N/A – According to Russian Law, only federal PA can have marine protected territories hence it's impossible to assess regional zakazniks as compared to the federal ones		
	National Parks Kurshskaya Kosa - 63 Sochinsky - 59	*National Parks* Kurshskaya Kosa - 87 Sochinsky - 83	*National parks* Kurshskaya Kosa - 74 Sochinsky - 67		
	Federal Zakazniks Franz-Josef Land - 29 Nenetsky -- 28 Nizhne-Obskiy - 13 Severnaya Zemlya - 13 Yuzhno-Kamchatsky - 28 Malye Kurily - 34 Tumninskiy - 13 Agrakhansky - 41 Priazovsky - 19 Samursky - 13	*Federal Zakazniks* Franz-Josef Land - 41 Nenetsky -- 39 Nizhne-Obskiy - 19 Severnaya Zemlya - 19 Yuzhno-Kamchatsky - 39 Malye Kurily - 48 Tumninskiy - 19 Agrakhansky - 57 Priazovsky - 27 Samursky – 19	*Federal Zakazniks* Franz-Josef Land - 61 Nenetsky -- 40 Nizhne-Obskiy - 13 Severnaya Zemlya - 28 Yuzhno-Kamchatsky - 46 Malye Kurily - 45 Tumninskiy - 32 Agrakhansky - 49 Priazovsky - 32 Samursky - 36		
Populations of two globally threatened	*As in original logframe* Black-legged Kittiwake	Pop #s within natural range of variation	Red-legged kittiwake: 16 pairs on Toporkov Island,	Data from the Science department of the Commander islands reserve	See comments on logframe in Section 2.4

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
seabird species at CIZ.	(Min – 27,000; Max – 31,000) Red-legged Kittiwake (Min – 16,200; Max – 17,000) *Actual numbers:* Red-legged kittiwake Toporkov Island: 22 pairs; Ariy Kamen': 223 pairs (2008 survey)		297 nesting pairs on Ariy Kamen'. Thus there is a tendency of decrease in the small colony on Toporkov Island and tendency of increase in the large colony on Ariy Kamen' (census 2013). Total increase in breeding pairs is 68 pairs as compared to 2008 baseline survey. This trend is within natural range of variation.	(email and brief reports of CIZ)	regarding the relevance of this indicator. Nonetheless, it is unclear why the numbers for the Black-legged Kittiwake have not been reported.
Steller sea lion populations on Mediny Island; - # of adult/juveniles - # of Pups - # of breeding males	*As in original logframe* Medny: 1051 adults, 29 breeding males, 220 pups. *Actual numbers*: 88 adult males, 105 subadult males, 295 females, 182 1year + specimens, 231 pups	Stable pop or within +/- 20% of Long-Term Mean (LTM).	66 adult males, 47 subadult males, 156 females, 39 1year specimens and 164 pups. The slight decrease in number is within the range of multi-year fluctuations.	Data from the Science department of the Commander islands reserve (email)	Comment as above.
# and distribution of sea cucumbers in FEMR.	0.02 – 0.03/m^2	Stable or increasing.	Saturation density was observed in the most effectively protected inlets of the Western and Southern subareas (0.05 specimens per m^2). In the Southern subarea in general the density was between 0.01 and 0.02 specimens per m^2 (data of autumn 2013). Overall	Data from the report on census of the sea cucumber obtained in fall season 2013 by experts of Far Eastern Marine reserve (report # 2-2-12)	Comment as above.

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
			density remains within the baseline level of about 0.02 specimens per m^2).		
Baltic seal population	*As in original logframe* Baseline figure: based upon 2007 "Nord-Stream" survey. Ringed seals: 170 based upon 2010 spring aerial survey : 40-45	Stable pop or within +/- 20% of LTM.	No census was done during reporting period due to poor ice conditions altering the counts.	Reports of BFN, the key stakeholder for the region (## 2-2-1 - 2-2-3)	Comment as above.
	Grey seals: 545 [Per Inception Report, this indicator no longer measures Grey seals, and only the Russian part of the Gulf is being monitored]				
	Larga seal breeding population in the Far Eastern Marine Reserve: 2100 adults; 380 pups (census of 2008)	Stable pop or within +/- 20% of LTM.	2,600 adults and 650 pups	Data from Scientific department of the Far Eastern Marine reserve (email; published book by Nesterenko and Katin, 2014)	Comment as above.
Outcome 1: Improved MPA system and institutional-level capacity enables the expansion of the MCPA system.					
Area of MCPA in the process of establishment.	14,000	2,500,000 hectares	14,000 ha Ingermanlandsky zapovednik; 136,630 ha	Packages of documents justifying establishment of the IZ available in Project office as hardcopies and	The IZ has yet to be established and there is no indication of when it will be (see main body of

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
			Solovki Islands	electronic versions Solovki Islands – package of document also available[24]	report for more details). The set of documents justifying the establishment of the Solovki Islands refuge is currently undergoing the State Environmental Expert Review (due for completion in March 2015)
# of new policies and guidelines developed and adopted by MNRE to strengthen effectiveness.	0	At least 4 in total.	2 (Strategic Concept for PA development til 2020 as in the previous reported period + Concept of association of protected areas in regional clusters under common administration)	Concept for development of federal nature protected areas 2020; Governrmnt statute 2322-p of 22.12.2011: http://base.garant.ru/70116598/ 2). On reorganization of zapovedniks Great Arctic, Taymyrskiy, Putoranskiy into a united directorate "Zapovedniks of Taymyr", order of Ministry of Natural Resources # 237 of 13.08.2012	The role of the project in development and adoption of these policies and programs is unclear.
# of marine mammal zones with strengthened protection.	0	At least 10.	2 – unchanged from the previous year	Fishing rules for Far Easter Basin, approved by order of Ministry of Agriculture № 385 of 21.10.2013	See main text for discussion on MMPZ.
MNRE MCPA Capacity Scorecard			Overall positive trend as compared to the baseline level. See data below.	Report Indicators of effectiveness of the PA system management and recommendations # 3-1-1; Mr. Vassily Spiridonov	As with METT, there is no analysis of the areas in which the gains have been made. Given the overriding conclusion that little has been achieved at the *systemic*
Policy formulation Systemic	Policy Formulation 3/out of 6	Policy Formulation 5/out of 6	Policy formulation: Systemic: 4 out of 6 (at the systemic level legal		

[24] **Comment on draft**: "*As of 23.04.2015 the package of documents justifying establishment of Solovki islands refuge has successfully undergone the State Environmental Appraisal and will now be submitted to the MNRE for the preparation of the government order*". **TE response**: This is useful information (that post-dates the TE mission).

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
Institutional	1/out of 3	2/out of 3	framework is in place) Institutional: 2 out of 3 (capacity to update plans increased in several MCPAs - Komandorsky, Magadansky, Kronotsky, Russian Arctic and others).		level, some of the reported figures may be overly optimistic. Conversely, at an institutional level and, even more, at an individual level, the capacity appears to be higher and the figures may be more realistic.
Implementation Systemic Institutional Individual	Implementation 3/out of 9 7/out of 27 4/out of 12	Implementation 7/out of 9 20/out of 27 8/out of 12	Implementation: Systemic 7 out of 9 (increasing planning capacity and developing oversight mechanisms); Institutional 18/ out of 27; Individual 8 out of 12		
Engagement & consensus Systemic Institutional Individual	Eng. & consensus 3/out of 6 3/out of 6 1/out of 3	Eng. & consensus 5/out of 6 5/out of 6 2/out of 3	Eng. & consensus Systemic: 4/ out of 6; institutional: 5/ out of 6; individual: 2/ out of 3		
Info & knowledge Systemic Institutional Individual	Info & knowledge 2/out of 3 3/out of 3 1/out of 3	Info & knowledge 3/out of 3 3/out of 3 2/out of 3	Info & knowledge Systemic: 2/ out of 3; institutional 3/ out of 3; individual: 2/ out of 3		
Monitoring Systemic Institutional Individual	Monitoring 2/out of 6 3/out of 6 1/out of 3	Monitoring 4/out of 6 4/out of 6 2/out of 3	Monitoring Systemic: 4/out of 6; institutional: 4/ out of 6; individual: 2/ out of 3		
Outcome 2: MPA management know-how is demonstrated, expanded and reinforced					

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
Direct impact on improved effectiveness in pilot sites = improved management in 6 million ha though METT	CIZ: 57	CIMPCA: 75	CIZ - 77 (+10)	METT scores	These scores are realistic and reflect the situation. Real gains have been made in CIZ in particular.
	FEMR: 63	FEMR - 80	FEMR - 75 (+8)		
	IZ: 13	IZ – 60	IZ - 13		
Area of Bering Island to which rats are restricted.	Not restricted.	Restricted to immediate vicinity of Nikolskoye village.	N/A	N/A	
Outcome 3. Strengthened MCPA system effectively captures knowledge and enables replication of best practice					
# of MCPA adopting invasive species management plans.	0	3 (FEMR, IZ, and probably Kurshskaya Kosa)	1 – FEMR has been elaborated, and 1 in progress (Russian Arctic National Park)	Document, Approval of the Plan from Head of the FEMR	The invasive species management plan for FEMR was adopted; however, there is no implementation as the plan is "responsive"
# of MCPA adopting contingency plans for hazardous material spills.	0	5 (TBD)	4 in progress (Russian Arctic National Park, Magadansky Reserve, FEMR, CIZ)	Published contingency plans for the four MCPAs	See main body for comments about relevance of contingency plans.
# of official partnerships (monitoring, enforcement) formed by MCPA nationwide.	Agreements, monitoring marine and coastal ecosystems - 14	At least 20 monitoring agreements.	Monitoring of marine and coastal environment agreements - 21	Official annual reports of federal protected areas to the Ministry of Natural Resources; contact N. Troitskaya	The monitoring planning and agreements are satisfactory.
	Cooperation agreement with other MCPA – 2	At least 10 cooperation agreements	Cooperation agreements with other MCPA - 5		
	Cooperation agreement with tourism companies 2	At least 7 tourism management and promotion agreements	Cooperation agreements with tourism companies -5		
	Written agreement for cooperation in enforcement – 0	At least 5 written agreements in cooperation on	Agreements for cooperation in enforcement -2		

Indicator	Baseline level	EOP Target	EOP Status	Sources of verification	Comments
		enforcement			
# of Russia's MCPAs included in the North Pacific monitoring network (indicator introduced by the Inception Report)	0	3	4 (CIZ & Kronotsky Biosphere Reserve, and Magadansky Zapovednik participate in the North Pacific monitoring network of sea lion and marine colonial birds colonies; National Park Russian Arctic participates in the international network of ivory gull monitoring)	Letter of Steller Sea lion programme coordinator Dr. Vladimir Burkanov (NOAA); also report 2-2-9.	See comment above on monitoring.

3.3.2 Relevance

96. The relevance of the project i) to local and regional levels, ii) to the national level, iii) to multilateral environment agreements and iv) to GEF's strategies, priorities and principles is well described in the MTE and it is not necessary to repeat this here but to concur with the conclusion that the relevance has been broadly **satisfactory**.

97. There are a few things that warrant mention in terms of relevance. First, with a total area of 8,086,000km^2, Russia has a relatively large EEZ (and ranks fourth in the world primarily because a couple of the countries that rank higher than Russia has significant dependent territories in the Pacific). Coastline is more difficult to measure but if one takes the measurement of the World Resources Institute (which is sensible because at least the measurement is consistence across all countries), Russia has a coastline of 110,310km (and ranks third in the world).

98. If one then examines the coverage of countries' EEZs with marine protected areas, the global coverage is 2.2% of all marine areas (including international waters) are protected. If one considers only the EEZs, the coverage goes up to 9.7%. By achieving coverage of 11.6%, Russia has nudged over the global average (and the target set in the CBD) but still could do much more, particularly in those remote locations in which there are few people. Nonetheless, the MCPA has forged the foundations for further growth.

99. Second, it is a human universal that people use the resources that are locally available. There is a degree of dependence of people on fish, molluscs, crustaceans and to a lesser extent, marine mammals. The natural resources form an important supplement to the livelihoods of the almost all of the people living in many of the coastal areas. While this is not enshrined in policies or legislation, it is a fact of life to the people in the coastal area and by protecting the biodiversity and ecological processes of the marine and coastal areas of the country, the project was contributing to sustainable livelihoods of the people. This is something that is not necessarily formally recognised in the literature at any of the levels but is of great significance.

100. While all the work was of relevance it could have been better focused. Thus, the oil spill work is relevant to the Gulf of Finland where there is a high volume of traffic including that carrying large amounts of oil. However, the risk of oil spills in remote places such as the Commander Islands is vanishingly small.

101. Finally, the vision of the functionality of the marine and coastal protected area *system* and how a functional system would benefit all protected areas was not fully grasped. The best illustration of this was the consideration of responses to illegal fishing by foreign fishing vessels within the protected areas. This is most important in some of the MCPAs in the far east of Russia (e.g., CIZ or Kronotsky *zapovednik*). These protected areas neither have the capacity nor the mandate to prosecute foreign vessels when they stray into their waters. As such, it would have been more efficient to have established a centralised service that could assist all MCPAs across the country (i.e., to function as a system!).

Item	Rating	Comment
Relevance	S	The project satisfactorily retained its focus on the marine and coastal protected areas; this was in accordance to project design, to the UNDP country programme within Russia (and up to 2011, the UNDP's Country Programme and to the GEF's focal area and

Item	Rating	Comment
		strategic programs.

3.3.3 Effectiveness & Efficiency

102. For a number of reasons, not least the misfortune that befell it, the project jumped from one workable thing to another in a slightly haphazard fashion. Thus, despite the issues that plagued the project, it did manage to carry out a large array of activities (as partly described above in Section 3.3.1). The question, then, is how effective were these activities in overcoming the threats and their root causes and the barriers, as originally identified.

103. The project had a number of shortcomings in that it did not achieve its originally stated objectives (see Table 10 and Table 9). There were a number of explanations for some of these aspects. For example, the lack of progress on the establishment of Ingermanland *zapovednik* may be, at least in part, that there was insufficient political capital (including that of the MNRE[25]) to persuade the Ministry of Defence to lend more attention on the case. In contrast, where they could affect effectiveness, the project *did* prove effective – thus, in the preparation documents for the establishment of Ingermanland *zapovednik*, the project proved very effective. There is, of course, a lesson to be learned from this: there are always tasks and areas that are more challenging than others. At the outset of a project – usually in the Inception Phase – the project implementers need to examine dispassionately what can be realistically achieved by the project. In the case of Ingermanland *zapovednik*, the preparation of the documents was easy enough (the contract was simply given to the Baltic Fund for Nature) while securing the support and approval of every one of the necessary people appears to have been one step too many.

104. In other cases, personalities are key to the effectiveness in any given area. A good example of this was from the FEMR. The previous Director of the Reserve was difficult and obstructive, and, as a result the project made little progress until his successor came in. A similar case may be seen in the Commander Islands. There was acute antagonism between the local administration in Nikolskoye and the staff of the CIZ.

105. Another example of ineffectiveness was the study tour to the Galapagos Islands. While it was "interesting" for the participants to visit the Galapagos Isalands, not much was learned from the visit. In contrast, the study tour to Alaska was extremely useful and appreciated. It may be that the *aspirations* of the people involved in the study tours played a part in the degree that they derived use from the area visited.

Cost effectiveness

106. As with the majority of UNDP-GEF projects, the competitive procurement processes were specifically designed to ensure good value for money.

107. However, as indicated in Section 3.2.4 (on Project Finances), one aspect of the project that led to inefficiencies: how its finances and procurement processes were set up. The NGO (or St Petersburg Public Organisation), *Ecology & Business*, was given

[25] **Comment on draft**: "*UNDP doesn't and isn't supposed to have any political influence with the MoD*". **TE response**: section edited.

the contract to manage the project subcontracts and payment processes. In addition, the General Director of Ecology & Business participated in the PSC and he assumed that his role was not just the administration of the project but also to provide some technical backstopping. And yet, all of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and analysis of specifications (when procuring equipment) was carried out by the project team. In conclusion, then, this arrangement seems like a duplication and cost ineffective. Furthermore, later in the project, the PM reduced their tasks to project administration and the relationship somewhat deteriorated. All in all, this seemed a rather inefficient mechanism for project management and administration.

Item	Rating	Comment
Effectiveness	**MS**	The (misfortunate but) fragmented and unsystematic nature of the project's implementation hampered its effectiveness. In addition, there were ownership issues that also hampered the effectiveness of the project. The project did not realise some of its major objectives (e.g, the establishment of the IZ which may have partly been as a result of over ambition). In contrast, the adaptive management shown by the project to support recently established MCPAs demonstrated a satisfactory level of effectiveness.
Efficiency	**MS**	The project satisfactorily implemented the usual tools to increase value-for-money. However, the set up with an NGO (Ecology and Business) administering the subcontracts and procurement for the project proved to be less cost-effective and, at some point, created some antagonism. The least efficient aspect of the project was the misfortunate that befell it and the fact that various unfortunate decisions in its set up were taken (e.g., being placed in the wrong department within the MNRE, with the wrong NPD and the confusion about where the project was to be based – St Petersburg vs Moscow leading to the resignation of the first PM).

3.3.4 Country ownership[26]

108. The issue of country ownership in the context of this project is complex and interesting. First, the context of the federal agency for protected areas (housed within the MNRE's Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety) warrants some explanation. In contrast to the scale of the protected area system that falls under the mandate of this agency (99 of a total of 101 *zapovedniks* and 41 National Parks across the country), the agency has a staff of just six people. As a consequence, these people – and especially Mr Stepanitski, the Deputy Director the Department and Principal Manager of protected areas in the Russian Federation – are exceptionally busy. A support system of NGOs goes some way to alleviate the pressures but, nonetheless, the ratio of the number of central bureau staff per protected area or per unit area of protected area must be, by some distance, the lowest in the world. The focus is firmly on the field and the protected areas. For the protected area staff, Mr Stepanitski finds it possible to secure the salaries and recurrent budgets (maintenance, fuels, etc) for the protected areas but budgetary mechanisms generally have limited manoeuvrability to allow the agency to purchase

[26] In response to follow-on discussions and comments on this section, a number of edits have been made.

equipment or to develop infrastructure[27] for protected areas (e.g., capital costs for vehicles, equipment, training, study tours or even processes such as management planning). Despite the limitations facing him and his agency, there is an overall, pragmatic direction that the protected area system is taking with the incremental development of protected areas – one by one. This has included several MCPAs – such as the Kronotsky *zapovednik* as well as the CIZ. In summary, then, the protected area system of Russia is dependent on external funding interventions for development of individual protected areas while the whole system is slowly developed under the guidance of a very small group of people at the central level. This vision does not always mesh well with the changing vision of the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area[28] but, together with partners such as the UNDP-CO, they try to make these projects come together.

109. In conclusion, projects such as these can be seen as vehicles to assist the MNRE continue to develop the system specifically for the provision of inputs for individual protected areas but when it came to system-level issues, the MNRE were simply less interested. This could be viewed as being problematic given that this was supposed to be a *system level* project.

110. In addition, there were other institutional issues – although they should all be taken in the context of the above discussion. As described in Section 3.1.8, when the project was originally established, it was placed (but not physically) within the MNRE's Department of International Cooperation. In early 2011, the affiliation of the project was changed to the MNRE's Department of State Policy and Regulations of Environmental Protection and Safety (and within which the protected areas agency sits). At the same time, the National Project Director also changed and Mr Stepanitsky became the NPD. When he was questioned about various aspects of the project that has not gone so well and his apparent ambivalence to them (e.g., the establishment of the MMPZs and system-level activities), he simply stated that this was because he had "not been involved in the project from the outset". This has had a profound limitation of the extent to which the project could have systemic impacts – including holding any discussions about the definitions of protected areas, any tools and/or systems that could be established at the systemic level and which might benefit the MCPAs in the network (e.g., a centralised service that assists MCPAs when foreign ships stray into their waters).

111. A further barrier to systemic development is the already discussed lack of capacity. The small, centrally based team is simply overwhelmed with work. This precludes their ability to spend the time that would otherwise be necessary to develop and implement a systemic vision. Indeed, they do all they can do to keep the existing protected areas afloat. It was, therefore, telling that Mr Stepanitsky assigned someone (Natalia Troitskaya) to act as a liaison between him and the project team. He had little time to dedicate about the project[29] and was, arguably, less interested because he has little or no ownership of the project because, as he stated, he had not been involved in the original thinking or design of the project.

[27] In contrast, if one is managing a "favoured" protected area – such as Kronotsky *zapovednik* – then it is possible to develop substantial infrastructure with a government budget: the new Headquarters of Kronotsky *zapovednik* were under construction in Yelizovo when the TE mission visited the area.
[28] In this context, it should be further recognized that the GEF obviously covers developing nations across the globe and they set their focal areas, objectives and priorities on the basis of the needs of the majority and, sometimes, of the lowest denominator.
[29] For what it is worth, this stands in contrast to the NPD of the UNDP-GEF Komi PAS project.

112. Indeed, this is a tale that extended throughout the system of protected areas and represents something quite surprising: there appears to be a network of NGOs and associations whose function it is to support the protected areas[30]. This is partly in recognition of the lack of capacity within the government and partly in recognition that to get certain things done (which the government structures and systems prevent), the NGOs and associations are useful. As such, they represent remarkable pragmatism and adaptive management within difficult circumstances!

113. There are a few other aspects of 'ownership' that warrant mention. First, as previously mentioned (see Section 3.3.1, paragraph 94a) there was the disconnect between the MNRE's programme (spanning 2012-2020) to expand the protected area system within the country, and the protected areas selected for establishment under this project (with the exception of the IZ that was the only PA on both lists) as well as the project's gap analysis.

114. Second, there are complications regarding the management of the FEMR. Currently, the FEMR falls under the mandate of the Russian Academy of Sciences but it is to be transferred, at a currently undetermined time, to the MNRE. This is hampering the implementation of any management. For example, as a scientific institution, an invasive species plan was developed but was not implemented (and from the responses I received it was presented as a piece of interesting research not as a practical handbook for managing a scourge!). It was, I was told, "a responsive" plan – thus, not preventative. I suspect that had the MNRE already have the management of the FEMR, the thinking behind and expectations of an invasive species plan would have been considerably different.

115. Third, at a more local level, 'ownership' (or rather, lack of ownership) was proving a hindrance was proving a challenge in the CIZ. Here, there is a conflict between the local administration – and more specifically the head of the administration of Nikolskoye – and the staff of the CIZ – and more specifically the Director of the CIZ. The depth of this antagonism is such that it threatens to undermine the management of the CIZ and the Director of the CIZ has been personally threatened a number of times. There is an urgent need to manage this conflict and there are a number of (not mutually exclusive) options available of how this might be done: i) seek the support of the Governor of Kamchatka to intervene and mediate between the two parties (using the relationship that the Governor has with the Director of the Kronotsky *zapovednik* as a mechanism to communicate the need for this to the Governor), and ii) seek a conflict resolution professional to bring the parties together and work towards resolving the conflict and reconciliation. In summary, this is something that needs to be addressed urgently.

116. Whether this is occurring because the Head of the local administration feels excluded from and threatened by the (now more effectively managed and resourced) CIZ remains unknown: unfortunately, the Head of the administration was absent when the mission (finally) managed to make it to the Commander Islands.

117. Finally, when discussing invasive species with a number of the interviewees, it became apparent that the MNRE does not consider invasive species as an important threat in MCPAs (and, presumably, elsewhere within the protected area network). Whether this stems for a lack of information, a lack of knowledge or simple denial of the problem remains unclear.

[30] Whether such a system exists in all branches of government is unknown to me.

3.3.5 Replication, mainstreaming and catalytic role

118. The project is the first to focus on marine and coastal protected areas in Russia … ever. The principal result that this has brought, in terms of replication, mainstreaming and a catalytic role was i) to bring about the realisation in the MNRE (and elsewhere) that MCPAs warrant attention and had different requirements to terrestrial protected areas and ii) to prompt an increase in budgets for the MCPAs – particularly those that were the focus of the project. In this, the project probably celebrates it most significant success.

119. A second aspect that was the development of the management plans – particularly for those areas that had been established under the government's programme to expand the protected areas within Russia (and which included some MCPAs). As the project proceeded and experienced gained, the quality of the management plans improved such that by the end of the project, the team were justifiably proud of the quality of the products. Under these circumstances, there may have been an argument for the team to review and edit the first management plans that they had produced!

120. The UNDP-GEF project within the Komi Republic has produced a manual for the production of management plans. It would be good if the MCPA project team could produce a brief addendum that focuses specifically on MCPAs and their special needs within the context of and to complement that manual.

121. Third, the project catalysed the relationship between the managers of the CIZ and the company ScanEx; this was the company that provided real time information of the ships and/or fishing vessels that strayed into the waters of the CIZ. Of course, this systems should be replicated throughout the MCPA network but in the CIZ this has proved so successful that there has been a decline in the number of incursions since the system was put into place (Table 11).

Table 11. The impact of the introduction of the relationship with ScanEx on incursions into the CIZ.

	Before cooperation with ScanEx		After cooperation with ScanEx was launched	
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of ships violated the waters of the reserve	170	158	74	45
Foreign ships	No data	80	46	44
Russian ships	No data	78	28	1
Russian ships fined in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation	0	0	28	1
Foreign ships were fined in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation	0	0	0	0

122. Finally, much to the delight of the project's Technical Advisor, because of the project, (part of) a generation of students managed to spend time in the field collecting data. This was inspirational for those 75 students and, hopefully, should have ignited some passions at least among some of those people such that they will become leaders in the MCPAs. However, if there is a caveat to this, it is the sustainability of such activities – and that will be discussed in the next section.

Item	Rating	Comment
Production of a public good, Demonstration, Replication and Scaling up	**MS**	The project managed to act as a catalyst for various elements, including good quality management plans and involvement of the company ScanEx in collecting data on fishing vessels that make incursions into the protected waters. However, the project did not manage to achieve the creation of the *system* of MCPAs which, otherwise, would have been a highly satisfactory outcome.

3.3.6 Sustainability

123. The analysis of sustainability is split into: financial sustainability, socio-economic sustainability, institutional sustainability and environmental sustainability. Of course, as an environmental project, environmental sustainability is at the heart of the project and all these other aspects of sustainability all influence environmental sustainability.

124. *Institutional sustainability*. The principal institutions with which the project worked were governmental – with the exception of some NGOs and associations that had contracts to develop various analyses and reports on different aspects of the project. The governmental organisations are secure and sustainable: there was nothing encountered over the course of the mission to Russia that would suggest otherwise. The mission and the write-up of the report coincided with a deepening economic crisis for Russia and it is probable that this will have impacts on the funding for protected areas (and the environment sector as a whole) until such time as the crisis has passed. This should not, however, jeopardise the sustainability of the institutions.

125. The only point that contradicts this statement is the antagonistic situation that currently exists in the Commander Islands (between the CIZ members of staff and the local administration). This needs to be resolved as soon as possible to ensure the sustainability of the CIZ management (for it is highly unlikely that the CIZ will end up dominating the situation). If the project and the MNRE have managed to achieve a systemic view, an early warning and conflict resolution mechanism could have been put into place such that protected area managers could receive some systemic support. As it is, they operate more or less alone (with the exception of those areas, such as in Kamchatka, where there is a protected areas association – thus a Director may seek support from his/her colleagues).

126. Many of the project's more academic aspects will be transferred to the Marine Heritage Association – including all the reports and other information that is currently found on the project's website.

127. It is worth mentioning that the status and 'institutional sustainability' of the UNDP-CO is not completely clear. At the beginning of the mission to Russia, I was informed that the UNDP-CO would be closed sometime in the relatively near future. By the end of the mission, there had been meetings and it was likely that UNDP

would be bidding for projects funded under GEF-6: this would delay the closure of the UNDP-CO by some years. It is worth mentioning that through these projects, the UNDP has been able to catalyse significant activities which will ultimately lead to significant impacts. It would, therefore, be unfortunate if UNDP were to close its offices – particularly in times of crisis such as the present.

128. *Socio-economic sustainability*. As a systemic project, the project largely operated at a level at which it was not directly influencing local socio-economics. However, there are two aspects worthy of mention here.

129. First, as mentioned above, coastal people are dependent on natural resources not only at a subsistence level but also to derive income from harvesting natural resources. By protecting the stock and spawning grounds of many of the harvestable species, the project was contributing and will continue to contribute to the livelihoods of those people that are dependent on these resources.

130. Second, the project did implement micro-credit schemes among the local population living in Nikolskoye on Bering Island. By the time the mission was taking place, the results from the micro-finance projects had not been collected. As a result it is impossible to say anything about the impact that they have had. In addition, because of the curtailed visit to the Commander Islands, I did not manage to speak to any of the recipients and, therefore, it is also impossible to say anything about the sustainability of the funded projects. From a distance, however, it seems unlikely that these small projects will be sustainable without further guidance and inputs.

131. *Financial sustainability*. I have already mentioned the issue of the recession and crisis in Russia at present. This will almost definitely affect the funding to the protected areas across the country. This only serves to illustrate the issues with financial sustainability and the degree to which the economy – and, consequently, funding for protected areas is susceptible to the vagaries of things such as the price of oil and political sword rattling.

132. That being said, it would be very surprising if the funds would dry up completely and people were made redundant. Thus, it is likely that the salaries of staff and recurrent costs will be paid.

133. The greatest threat, however, is that the gains that have been made by the project – and specifically the *increases* in the budgets for the MCPAs – are either reversed or, once the crisis is over, they are not returned to their former levels. The UNDP-CO should be vigilant to this and apply whatever political pressure it can to ensure that they do return to their former levels.

134. There is one other financial sustainability issue. As mentioned earlier, the project managed to sponsor 75 students to spend time collecting data in the MCPAs. There is simply no way that this can be sustained particularly with the cost of getting to remote places like the Commander Islands (although the Commission on MCPA and marine stations may be in a position to continue to fund student involvement in the MCPAs).

135. Finally, it is notable that *National Parks* have lower levels of funding than *zapovedniks*. The decision that the Commander Islands *zapovednik* be changed into a National Park has, apparently, already been taken. The MNRE should ensure that resources (human and financial) allocated for the national park remain equivalent to (if not greater than those for) the *zapovednik.* In addition, it will be necessary to have

a good and transparent management plan that specifies any zonation and the regulations for each zone within the national park.

Item	Rating	Comment
Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	**L**	Because of the project was strongly associated with federal government structures, institutional sustainability is likely. However, the financial crisis that is currently ongoing illustrates the political and economic issues that can have profound impacts and this sector will be the first to have its funding reduced. Together with socio-economic sustainability, the financial sustainability was, therefore, rated as being Moderately likely. The socio-economic sustainability was rated as such because the sustainability of the micro-finance projects in the CIZ is unlikely. When this is coupled with the contribution that the MCPAs will make to preserve fish (and other resource) stocks, on which many people are dependent, the socio-economic sustainability was rated overall as being Moderately Likely. These factors all combined – with climate change as an additional factor – to an environmental sustainability that was rated as Moderately Likely.
Financial sustainability	**ML**	
Socio-economic sustainability	**ML**	
Institutional sustainability	**L**	
Environmental sustainability	**ML**	

3.3.7 Impact

136. Despite some of the issues facing the project and its implementation history, is has had some impacts. Two of these have direct implications for biodiversity. First, the fishing on the Commander Islands is now more regulated with the regulations being enforced with the CIZ staff regularly patrolling the areas. In addition, the community in Nikolskoye is so small that almost everyone knows what everyone else is doing. However, the CIZ staff has neglected to monitor these situations so the extent of change remains unknown. Second, there has been a decline in the number of ships straying into the CIZ waters since the adoption of the ScanEx system. However, once again, the changes in the numbers was not monitored and, therefore, little can be said quantitatively about the reduction in fishing vessel numbers in the CIZ waters.

137. Notwithstanding the issue of financial sustainability discussed above, the increase in budgets that the MCPAs enjoyed and which was catalysed by the project is an impact, albeit that the effect on biodiversity is indirect.

138. Further, as a measure to the degree to which the MNRE is considering the MCPA differently to the rest of the protected area network, it has established a separate expert committee on MCPAs.

4 Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

4.1 Conclusions

139. In conclusion, then, the project has had its issues although it did manage to start to lay the foundations for a systemic approach to the MCPAs. The real question is whether, in the absence of the issues and interruptions that plagued the project, would more have been achieved? The answer to that question is probably yes. If the project had been housed, from the outset, in the appropriate department within the MNRE; if the NPD had had ownership and more time to allocate to the project; if there had only been one PM throughout the project; if the scale of the project had

been more closely matched with the available resources; if these things had happened, it is quite likely that more would have been achieved.[31]

140. One of the outcomes of the interrupted sequence of the project (see Figure 3) is that it became incoherent with activities being carried out here and there opportunistically but with no real strategic path. This begs a further tough question but one that should be asked: were the issues that plagued the project a result of mismanagement? The answer, I believe, is no. There are a number of reasons to substantiate that answer not least that the UNDP-CO has been simultaneously implementing projects of the highest quality. As a result, I believe that a series of bad luck befell the project. There may have been moments of poor judgement – for example, housing the project within the Department of International Cooperation – but overall the management of the project from the perspective of the UNDP-CO appears to be exemplary.

141. A further aspect that is argued in Section 3.3.1 is the degree to which the scope and scale of the project was too ambitious both for the project duration as well as for the budget that was allocated.

142. Nonetheless and to reiterate, the project *did lay the foundations for a system of MCPAs* and, under normal circumstances (i.e., in the absence of the current political and financial crisis), one would expect that the MCPA would grow on these foundations. Some real outcomes were achieved, including changing people's views on MCPAs. As a result, there is now an understanding that MCPAs warrant attention and funding; some of this funding has been forthcoming with increases in budgets in some of the targeted MCPAs.

Item	Rating	Comment
Overall project results	**MS**	The project was implemented and had shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. It was hampered with misfortune that led to incomplete attainment of its objectives. The issues largely stemmed from the way it was originally set up. Despite that, the project has laid the foundations for the MCPA system and has had some successes.

4.2 Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project

143. In the conclusion above, there is a lament ("if the project had been housed in the appropriate department within the MNRE; if the NPD had had ownership and more time to allocate to the project; if there had only been one PM throughout the project"). And yet, if, indeed, these things had been different from the outset of the project, then more may well have been achieved. Getting it right from the beginning

[31] **Comment on draft**: "*This still brings us back to the initial impression from the first draft of this report – that the reason for the project underdelivery and its limited impact is a single person being too busy. The following aspects (which were mentioned in the skype call with Natalia Olofinskaya) are somehow omitted in this final conclusion: the mismatch of project scale and its budget; the overambitious objective of the project versus resources; limitations set by a country-level PA management approach where there is no such thing as a separate MCPA system, etc*.". **TE response**: section edited in response to comment.

of the project is the most obvious of "corrective actions" but this project is a lesson of what happens if we do not get it right from the outset.

144. Aside from this obvious observation, there are other things that the project might have done differently and had it had done so, the outcomes might have been different. Many of these observations have been made through the main body of the report in the sections above, so I summarise them here. They include:

145. *Systemic prosecution service for foreign fishing vessels as well as oil and gas exploration vessels*. Prosecuting foreign (fishing) vessels that stray into their protected waters is beyond the capacity and mandate of the protected area staff. An addition and increasing issue is the oil and gas exploration that is currently taking place in the Arctic. Having a centralised (systemic) service for prosecuting foreign fishing vessels, and dealing with oil and gas exploration issues for all MCPAs would have been a worthy result. It should be noted that this is not the detection process (which is now in place – thanks to the project) but the process of *prosecution* and *law enforcement*.[32]

146. As an extension to this, the project failed to achieve the systemic level framework. One would wish that it were otherwise!

147. *Complete the outstanding work*. At the time of the mission, there were various outstanding tasks, including a number of publications that needed completion (publications on salmon, sea lions and Gulf of Finland teaching aids for schools). I hope that they have been completed by now.

148. *The threat of invasive species was underestimated*[33]. The project focused on producing one invasive species plan – for the FEMR[34]. This is a mainland site and it is slightly odd that this site was chosen above any of the island site within the MCPA network. [Obviously, the rationale for carrying out the invasive species plan in the

[32] **Comment on draft**: "*Not only fishing foreign vessels constitute the big problem (in places like Russian Arctic it is much more important to trace the vessels servicing oil and gas exploration, and this may be a common issue in the future). However in fact with introduction of AIS and a service provided by ScanEx, basically all zapovedniks and national parks that need such information now have an access to it (and this is a result of the project!). In fact only few zapovedniks include fishing grounds that can be exploited by vessels detected by any VMS (Komandorsky and Kronotskiy). Both are now using ScanEx service. If any new PA needs to trace the fishing vessels, they can easily join this scheme. There are other MCPAs where illegal fishing is a threat, either actual or potential but this fishing or marine invertebrates harvesting is done using small boats for detecting of which AIS is of little help. NP Russian Arctic is tracking all the vessels in general and any Arctic or Pacific PA can do the same if there is increasing activity of oil and gas vessels. Thus we can conclude that the system is already in place*." **TE response**: Section edited – with emphasis on law enforcement and prosecution.

[33] **Comment on draft**: "*In fact we have two invasive species prevention plans, there other one for the Russian Arctic NP has been finally delivered at the time of your visit. Unfortunately, the Ministry does not see this problem and its profile can't be raised without strong science departments (see my general comment below) in PAs. Indeed we have several other zapovedniks with remote islands where we need to increase capacity to manage invasive species. Even if the Ministry recognizes the importance of the problem or is pushed to do this it can't provide necessary financial, expert and organizational support to have preventive action plans in place. What the project team can do is prepare the justification for the issue to be included in the next strategic program for federal PAs for 2021 – 2030 through publishing the set of articles in the official bulletin of the Ministry. The Commission on Marine Stations and MPAs can do more in this regard but this possibility was not mentioned in the draft report, whereas the very idea of the Commission as the project follow up is important to mention*." **TE response**: Section edited slightly in response.

[34] However, a further invasive species plan for the Russian Arctic National Park has now been produced.

FEMR was understood – with the implications of the nearby port of Vladivostok.] However, what was less understood was why invasive species plans were not developed for some of the island sites or, indeed, a systemic protocol for managing invasive species in MCPAs. Across the globe, invasive species are *the primary threat* to native biodiversity on islands – and it would difficult to believe it were not also the case in among the islands off the Russian coast. It is not because of the latitude: invasive species are the primary threat in the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic islands.

149. In addition, the most acute threat to small, remote and isolated populations of canid (such as the Artic foxes in the Commander Islands) is disease transmitted from domestic dogs. At present, apparently, there are no regulations regarding the importation of dogs (or other domestic animals) or their vaccination. There are certainly no regulations regarding the management of domestic cats that run amok in Nikolskoye: yet, even at a continental level, the impact of domestic cats on birds and small mammals is significant[35]. There certainly should be strict regulations on invasive species and biosafety on the remote islands such as Medny Island and especially for visitors from cruise ships[36].

150. Further to this, biosafety has become a prominent feature when people visit such islands. There has been discussion regarding biosafety (e.g., the project recommended the development of a biosafety plan for the CIZ) as certainly there are no biosafety measures in place (as observed in the Commander Islands)[37].

151. Finally, it is notable that under GEF-6 BD-2 (reducing threats to globally significant biodiversity), there is a specific program (Program 4) to address issues of invasive species. The MNRE (partnered with the UNDP-CO) may wish to develop a concept around building capacity for managing invasive species in the MCPAs[38].

152. *Interagency issues*. The competition that occurs between the MNRE and the FAF is unsurprising: such institutional competition is a common feature across many countries especially when funding is limited. There are some occasions when such competition can enhance performance but this was not the case in the competition between the MNRE and the FAF. To overcome such issues requires coordination, collaboration and leadership – the sorts of things that require a systemic view.

153. *Plan for what can be achieved*. While some degree of ambition is necessary (for GEF project are about overcoming fears and demonstrating success), over-ambition can be stifling. The targeted results and outcomes need to be achievable (or perceived as being so by the project implementers). This requires clarity of vision and understanding of what one's strengths and limitations are. For example, collectively, the project, UNDP, the MNRE and other partners simply did not have the political capital to push through the establishment of the Ingermanland *zapovednik*

[35] For example, see Loss, S.R. *et al*. (2013) The impact of free-ranging cats on wildlife of the United States. *Nature Communications*, **4**, Article Number 1396.
[36] An innovative scheme would be to introduce a certification scheme for cruise ships – some that could aslo have been done at a systemic level – and allow only certified cruise ships into the area.
[37] **Comment on draft**: "*Project recommended the Commander Islands zapovednik to make a biosafety plan but there has to be the administration's decision to go this way and the Project only has advisory role in this case*". **TE response**: This is noted but the emphasis in this section is corrective actions – thus, what might have been improved and other aspects that could still be taken up, in the future (but obviously without the support of the project) by the PAs in question.
[38] See *The GEF-6 Biodiversity Strategy* (September 2014).

(although as a result of inertia, it is possible that the IZ will be established – partly on the contribution made by the project)[39].

154. *Monitoring of knowledge and awareness*. Like many others, the project carried out some awareness raising (particularly in the vicinity of the Gulf of Finland[40]. But also like many others, the project neglected to determine the impact that this was having[41]. Moreover, it is not simply the increased awareness that should be measured – but the point of raising awareness is to change behaviour. While acknowledging their limitations[42], there are some good tools for measuring the impact on changes of knowledge and behaviour – for example, using an adapted Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey[43].

155. *Monitoring impact*. Projects carry out activities with the assumption that the activities will result in some form of impact – ideally for the conservation of biodiversity. Some of these activities are indirect – one or two steps removed from the intended consequence. As an example, as described in the point above, projects often carry out awareness raising campaigns with the hope of changing behaviour with the hope that those changes of behaviour have positive consequences for biodiversity. What projects are not very good at is trying to measure the impacts of their activities. Therefore, we know that the project *did have* impacts but we do not know *how much* impact. For example, there was a decline of illegal offtake of fish on the Commander Islands – but we have no quantified information about the reduction in of illegal offtake or consequent improvement of fish stocks.

156. *Carry out socio-economic surveys*. The staff of the CIZ regretted not carrying out socio-economic surveys over the course of the project. This would have been useful for a number of reasons, not least because it would allow the impact of the micro-finance grants to be measured[44].

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[39] **Comment on draft**: "*Owing to the chain of delays we are now in the situation when 1) It becomes difficult to push the Ministry of Defense; 2) It makes less sense to refer to Russia's international commitments. In this situation the project can't do much. However, all processes of creating PAs in Russia are strongly inertial and it may easily happen that the Ingermanland zapovednik will be established after completion of the Project which indeed built a basis for its establishment*". **TE response**: Section slightly edited in response to comment.

[40] **Comment on draft report**: "*The project document does not pose the task of communication and raising awareness specifically. However we were always trying to strengthen communication and there were several events that attracted media attention. But again since Prodoc did not set specific tasks for communication we can't spend resources for monitoring of awareness even though this is a really important task.*" **TE response**: The additional efforts of the project to communicate and raise awareness is to be applauded. That it was not mentioned in the Prodoc demonstrates adaptive management by the PIU. Nonetheless, where efforts are being made, it would still be good practice to measure any impacts that even these additional things have – even if they were not in the Prodoc.

[41] Notwithstanding the measurement of Knowledge and Information within the capacity scorecards.

[42] See, for example, http://www.anthropologymatters.com/index.php/anth_matters/article/viewFile/31/55

[43] See, for example, http://www.birds.cornell.edu/citscitoolkit/toolkit/steps/effects/resource-folder/Guideline%20for%20Conducting%20a%20KAP%20Study%20(PDF).pdf

[44] **Comment on draft**: "*The municipality of Nikolskoe receives quite substantial subsidies from the federal budget and Reserve does not prevent local people from subsistence resource use. The problem is not the commune poverty per se but effectiveness of management and psychological attitudes of people. There is no simple solution (at least the one that is based on the Reserve's capacity). Nonetheless, the Project highlighted the importance of development of community interaction strategy to the Reserve's management, however it is now up them to tailor and implement this tool. Since the small grants program was only completed in late 2014, the follow-up will take place later in 2015*

157. *Climate change*[45]. Finally, over the course of the mission in Russia, no-one nowhere spoke about their concerns regarding climate change and sea level change (with the consequences for changes to the coastline). Alterations in sea levels will have profound consequences not least for the pinniped rookeries. This is somewhat surprising although arguably this is something that would have been better dealt with at the systemic level with detailed plans at the local level, as necessary.

4.3 Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project

158. In this section, I make recommendations about what may be done to enhance the successes that the project has already had to take the successes further and to contribute to a wider extent.

159. *Addendum on management plan guidelines*. The UNDP-GEF project in the Komi Republic produced a set of guidelines for developing management plans for protected areas. The lessons that have been learned in the MCPA project on developing management plans for MCPAs should be included as a brief addendum to this set of guidelines.

160. *Ingermanland* zapovednik. With regard to the Ingermanland *zaopvednik*, there are two urgent actions that need to be taken: first, the validity of the documents expires in February 2015. Thus, either the issue needs to be resolved by then or an extension of the validity is requested. Second, the UNDP-CO and its partners should apply whatever political capital they can muster to persuade the Ministry of Defence (via whatever channels are available to them) to urge the Ministry of Defence to approve the document.

161. *Conflict resolution*. The antagonism in the Commander Islands between the staff of the CIZ (and more particularly the Director) and the administration of Nikolskoye (and more specifically the Head of the Administration) needs to be urgently resolved. The steps to take have been described in Section 3.3.4.

162. *Complete kitting out of CIZ boat*[46]. The project purchased a good, seaworthy boat for the CIZ but did not make it fully functional. I recommend that the project spend any remaining funds that it can to upgrade the boat to ensure that it becomes the functional vessel to fulfil its research and patrolling role within the CIZ. For example, some, if not all, the following equipment could be useful (depending on the budget available: GPS units, depth finders/sounder, air compressor, diving equipment, telescope and binoculars, camera equipment, rubber dinghy for landing ashore, underwater sound recording equipment and playback equipment.

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before the project closure". **TE response**: It should be noted that the draft was based on the quotes of the CIZ staff.

[45] **Comment on draft**: "*More attention will be paid to the issue with coordination of marine research and monitoring through the Commission on marine stations and MPAs. (Commission can do coordination and methodological guidance much better than the governmental institution and even with the funding, please see Spiridonov's presentation at the Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Trondheim in December 2014).*" **TE response**: That's good news; however, little was said about climate change by all interviewees over the course of the TE mission – when climate change is likely to be an important issue for MCPAs. Although the management plans produced over the course of the project were not examined in detail (primarily because they were in Russian) but it is hoped that climate change in included.

[46] **Comment on draft**: "*To our knowledge they fixed all the technical problems at the moment*". **TE response**: Yes, that was the understanding of the TE as well; however, the point is to extend the usefulness of the vessel by fitting it with state-of-the-art equipment to assist the research and monitoring tasks carried out within the CIZ.

163. *Re-categorization of CIZ*[47]. Apparently, the decision to re-categorise the CIZ into a National Park (Commander Islands National Park) has already been taken. Planning the implications of and implementing this decision will have to be taken carefully so as not to reduce funding and staffing for the protected area. In addition, the zonation of the national park will also have to be carefully considered.

4.4 Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

164. This section addresses the "next steps" for the Russian MCPA system – to consolidate and build upon the gains that the project has made.

165. *The Commander Islands and Nikolskoye as an "Ecological District"*[48]. The concept of Ecological Districts has developed in various areas in the Russian Federation (and elsewhere in the CIS), and Nikolskoye would be an ideal place to pilot the concept in Russia and demonstrate its impact (e.g., under a mainstreaming biodiversity project). The town (and some of the surrounding landscape) is in a dire need for it: the area is littered with rusting metallic waste. It would also provide for synergies between the administration and the *zapovednik* – which, again, could be a model for piloting co-management.

166. *Lessons from the Ingermanland* zapovednik *process*. There are numerous lessons that can be learned from the attempt to establish Ingermanland *zapovednik*. The documents that were prepared were, by all accounts, exemplary. The principal lesson, however, is to carry out a comprehensive feasibility study and a thorough analysis of stakeholder interests *before* the start of the project[49]. In principle, this should be included in the PPG phase of project development but it rarely is as a fully-fledged and detailed feasibility process.

167. *Be ambitious for the target coverage of the protected area coverage*. There are many reasons why Russia should continue to expend its MCPA network in the coming years and I can only think of two reasons why Russia may hesitate. The first is that establishing protected areas precludes exploration and production of oil and gas; and, second, it may limit the exploitation of fish (or other natural resources). However, in the remoter areas of the Russian coastline, there are few if any people and, as a consequence, a higher coverage of MCPAs can surely be achieved. The

[47] **Comment on draft**: "*This decision has been already taken even before the FE took place. As the project team will prepare and implement a management response to this set of recommendation, it might worth an effort to consult Natalia Troitskaya on this issue before the recommendation is included as it is into the final version of the FE report*". **TE response**: It was not made clear to the TE that this decision was already made. However, as it has, the section was edited.

[48] **Comment on draft**: "*Establishment of the "Ecological District" is basically a responsibility of municipality. The zapovednik may provide advice and help but this is largely beyond its present capacity to do much of this work.*" **TE response**: Section edited in the context that this was written as a recommendation for the future.

[49] **Comment on draft**: "*If we would have completed the feasibility study regarding establishing Ingermanland Zapovednik 5 years ago (and in fact a sort of such study was done) nothing would tell us that creations of the zapovednik would not be feasible unless we predicted the general change of geopolitical situation and priorities of the governmental institutions (which are now affecting the process). Other PAs (Onezhskoe Pomorye, Russian Arctic, Beringia) were waiting similarly long but had a better fortune*". **TE response**: A comprehensive feasibility study would have predicted the majority of issues facing the establishment – because it should be couched in the realistic socio-political context of the Russian Federation. In contrast, it might have been difficult to predict the particular vagaries of the Ministry of Defence.

precedent has now been set by Gabon with 23% of its EEZ set aside for marine protected areas[50] but other countries are targeting even higher proportions!

168. *Broaden the definitions of protected areas*. This is one area where Mr Stepanitsky of the MNRE was adamant: there would be no broadening of the categories and definitions of protected areas within the country! Thus, to suggest this as a "proposal for future directions" may seem preposterous. However, there are already cracks that are appearing in the system. *Zapovedniks* are defined to be "Strict Nature Reserves" – equivalent to IUCN Category I. However, in numerous *zapovedniks* across the country, people are venturing inside areas that were, historically, the realm of a small handfuls of scientists only. Thus, for example, people are visiting the standing rocks of Manpupuner in Pechora-Ilych *zapovednik*; people regularly visit the Valley of the Geysers in Kronotsky *zapovednik*. And, after all, people have lived in the Commander Islands *zapovednik* for some years (until the area around Nikolskoye was removed from the *zapovednik*).

169. The next steps are to consider other definitions of protected areas – and across the globe many forms of protected area have arisen and many of them are contributing significantly to the conservation of biodiversity.

170. There are three possible explanations (among quite a few others, I am sure) for Mr Stepanitsky's reluctance to openly discuss what is already happening around the country and is becoming the de facto situation. First, there is an unwritten agreement that the policy and legislation (of 1995) is sufficient, and does not need to be changed. Second, there is some nervousness of the "greens" who, for example, vigorously support the concept of *zapovedniks* and do not care for any discussion to redefine protected areas (including, for that matter, the CIZ). Third – and probably most importantly – with a staff of just six people and 99 (of a total of 101) *zapovedniks* and 41 National Parks to manage, the department that oversees the management of federal protected areas across the country is stretched thin. Time is a limited resource for these people and developing policies, legislation and regulations require lots of time. At present, therefore, it is simply impossible to spend the time that is necessary to carry out these tasks.

171. *Treat tourism as an ecosystem service*. In many places across the globe, tourism has been recognised as an ecosystem service to the tourists that visit – presumably to appreciate – the wonders of nature. If those wonders become eroded in any way, then the quality of the service diminishes. The reason that I am putting out this argument is that, apparently, Russian legislation only allows fees to be collected if a service is being provided. Therefore, if tourism is similarly recognised as being an ecosystem service, this provides for tourism fees to be collected and for revenues accrued by protected areas to grow. In most countries in which fees are collected from visitors, there is a heavy weighting by status of the visitor. Therefore, citizens pay the least (and often a nominal amount), resident non-citizens slightly more, and foreign tourists can, in some circumstances, pay substantial entrance fees[51] and that

[50] On 12 November 2014 at the WPC in Sydney, Australia, the President of Gabon announced his intention to establish a network of marine protected areas that would, eventually, comprise 23% of Gabon's EEZ.

[51] For example, the most expensive entrance fee for a protected area known to me is USD 100/person/day for entrance into Gombe National Park in Tanzania, see http://www.tanzaniaparks.com/parkfees/applicableFees2013-06.pdf

these fees can generate sufficient revenue to cover the management costs of the protected area systems[52].

172. *Share lessons in existing forums*. As explained in Section 3.3.4, the formal, governmental structures that have the mandate to manage protected areas are supported by a number of non-governmental organisations – including an association for protected area directors and, more locally, associations for protected areas within a certain region. These provide the perfect forums to share experiences and lessons and future projects should support but also exploit these associations.

4.5 Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success

173. This section relates the lessons that might be learned from this project, aside from those already described in this section as a whole.

174. The interrupted history of the project led to a bitty project that was less coherent than it intended to be[53]. This speaks to the importance of the getting the project structure correct from the outset. The long and complicated history of project development did not help this project (although this lesson has been repeatedly learned in many GEF projects). In addition, this includes placing the project in the correct department in the correct ministry, finding the right NPD and PM, and – perhaps most importantly – *recognising the conflicting stakeholder interests and barriers to achieving outcomes in the arena of marine and coastal areas*. These are always challenging issues but knowledge of Russia helps considerably: *it is personalities that make all the differences* – particularly those with political capital. While this may not be the ideal situation making decisions on the basis of this knowledge is pragmatic and will probably yield better results for it is contextually appropriate.

175. Furthermore, on the personnel issues, implementing these projects requires a range of skills and characteristics: political capital, energy and passion, knowledge, experience, practical abilities, leadership, organisational skills, commitment, imagination and creativity. These characteristics do not necessarily need to be rolled into one (super)human but the team, as a whole, needs to have them all and to assign roles and responsibilities on the basis of people's strengths. A further characteristic of these projects is that they cannot become an academic's personal research project.

176. It is obvious but the greater the ownership, the more likely the project will succeed. Of all the projects I have evaluated, the ones that are least successful are those in which there are institutional and personnel changes at some point of the project and the people who assume the responsibility for the project have no

[52] For example, the costs of managing Tanzania's protected areas is completely cover by revenues accrued.

[53] **Comment on draft**: "*The "bits and pieces" are only partially associated with the fact that there were three PMs and two NPDs. First and perhaps major cause of an incoherent project strategy is the variety of conflicting stakeholder interests in this particular area; the project had to be flexible, responsive and adaptive simply not to be stuck. Another key reason is the mismatch between the ambitions (objective) and the resources mentioned by Natalia. Third reason was the long and complicated project development history. Yet another reason lays in obstacles toward achievement of major project outcomes, such as establishment of Ingermanland Reserve, marine mammal protection zones, pursuing the "MCPA system" dimension of the project etc*". **TE response**: This is recognized by the TE and the section (and elsewhere in the report) has been edited as a result.

ownership. They do their jobs but they are not passionate about the project and not willing to "go the extra mile" for the project.

177. Owing to the overworked people within the federal MNRE, it simply may be very difficult, if not impossible at present, to make any headway in Russia with systemic projects that operate at the federal level. This can be held in contrast with 'system' level project that operates at the level of the federal subjects of Russia as was so well demonstrated by the UNDP-GEF project in the Komi Republic.

178. When the project does change direction – through adaptive management – it can work out to be fortuitous. The recipients of the new direction can turn out to be grateful, pleased and enthusiastic. This was the case with the protected area that were newly established under the government's programme to expend the protected area network. When the project turned towards them and, ultimately, provided valuable support to them, they were enthusiastic and the partnership worked well.

179. In Section 3.3.1, I discussed the fact that the study tour to the Galapagos Islands was less successful than that to Alaska. As suggested in that section, it is possible that this has something to do with the aspirations of the people involved in the study tour and that this clouds their view of what, in their eyes, are less aspirational places and cultures.

180. Finally, as the project progresses, lessons will be learned. In this project, this was best illustrated through the improvement of the management plans that the project produced with different protected areas. It is obviously satisfying when this happens and one hopes that some of these lessons and experience can be transferred to future projects such that the good practices do not have to be re-learned with every new project!

Strengthening the Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Russia

PIMS 4051, Atlas Award 00056530, Atlas Project No: 00069210

Terminal Evaluation, Volume 2 – Annexes

February 2015

Russian Federation

GEF SO1: Catalysing the Sustainability of Protected Area (PA) Systems

SP2: Increasing representation of effectively managed marine protected areas in protected area systems, SP3: Strengthened National Terrestrial Protected Area Networks

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

United National Development Program (UNDP)

Table of Contents

Annex I: Terms of Reference

Introduction

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the "Strengthening the Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Russia" Project (PIMS 4051)

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

Objective and Scope

In 2009, with funding from the Global Environment Facility, UNDP launched a project targeting conservation and sustainable use of globally significant coastal and marine biodiversity of Russia. This project is designed to complement the governmental efforts to expand the marine protected area system and strengthen its management effectiveness.

The Project Objective is therefore to facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness as reflected in design issues relating to both individual sites and protected area systems and adequacy and appropriateness of management systems and processes, and the delivery of protected area objectives. The three main outcomes of the project are: (i) Improved MCPA system-level capacity enables the expansion of marine and coastal protected areas; (ii) MCPA management know-how is demonstrated, expanded and reinforced; and (iii) Strengthened MCPA system effectively captures knowledge and enables replication of best practice. The project is supposed to improve the coverage of marine and coastal ecosystems by 8.7 million hectares by: a) finalizing the protection of the new 14,000 ha Ingermanland Zapovednik, b) facilitating the expansion or establishment of additional eight MCPA covering 7,680,000 hectares; and c) creating the enabling environment for the protection of an additional 1,006,000 million ha of marine and coastal ecosystems. The project is also designed to improve management effectiveness of a network of 35 MCPA across Russia covering over 24 million ha. This is believed to be an important step in securing the long-term conservation of globally significant coastal and marine biodiversity sheltered in the longest coastline in the world.

Project location: Russian Federation

Project pilot sites: Commander Islands, Primorsky Krai, Leningrad Oblast

The implementation of project activities are coordinated by the Project implementation Unit based in Moscow. The overall management of the project is the responsibility of Project Manager, who is a full time employee of the project, stationed in the UNDP Project Support Office in Moscow. The project funding provided by the GEF, amounts to USD 4,000,000. Pledged cofinancing is estimated at USD 9,396,000.

The project is implemented by the Government of Russia (GOR) represented by the federal Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment (MNR) and operates according to UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM).

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

Evaluation approach and method

An overall approach and method1 for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR (Annex C) The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission to Moscow and pilot project sites, such as Komandorsky State Nature Reserve and Leningrad Oblast. Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum: Federal Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Komandorsky State Nature Reserve and Far Eastern Marine Reserve Nature Reserve, Leningrad Oblast Committee for Natural Resources and Environment, Leningrad Regional Protected Areas Directorate, Baltic Fund for Nature, Expert in Protected Area Management Effectiveness, and/or other major stakeholders.

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in Annex B of this Terms of Reference.

Evaluation Criteria & Ratings

[1] For additional information on methods, see the Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results, Chapter 7, pg. 163

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary.

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	rating	2. IA& EA Execution	rating
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	rating	4. Sustainability	rating
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

Project finance / cofinance

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator(s) will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/ source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US$)		Gov't (mill. US$)		Partner Agency (mill. US$)		Other		Total (mill. US$)	
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Grants	0		8,93				0.466			

Loans/ Concessions										
In-kind support										
Other										
Totals										

Mainstreaming

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

Impact

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.2

Conclusions, recommendations & lessons

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of conclusions, recommendations and lessons.

Implementation arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP Project Support Office (PSO) in the Russian Federation. The UNDP PSO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

Evaluation timeframe

The total duration of the evaluation will be up to two months; within this time period, up to 32 days working days are expected to be distributed according to the following plan:

Activity	Time allocation
Preparation	4 days
Evaluation Mission	14 days (incl.travel)

[2] A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: ROTI Handbook 2009

Draft Evaluation Report	10 days
Final Report	4 days

Evaluation deliverables

The evaluator is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	No later than 2 weeks before the evaluation mission.	Evaluator submits to UNDP CO
Presentation	Initial Findings	End of evaluation mission	To project management, UNDP CO
Draft Final Report	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the evaluation mission	Sent to CO, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFPs
Final Report*	Revised report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP ERC.

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

Team Composition

The evaluation is conducted by an international evaluator with prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The evaluator must present the following qualifications:

Minimum 4 years of relevant professional experience, Knowledge of UNDP and GEF, Previous experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies; Technical knowledge in the targeted focal area(s), Familiarity with protected area policies and management structures in Eastern Europe/CIS/Russia, Excellent English communication and report writing skills

Evaluator Ethics

Evaluation consultant will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'

Annex II: Itinerary of Mission in Russia

Date	Events
29 Sept	International consultant, arrival in Moscow
30 Sept	Meeting with the UNDP PSO and the MCPA Project Team Skype conference with Sergey Dolganov, Director of the Far Eastern Marine Reserve Meeting with Federal Agency for Fisheries (FAF) Meeting with PA Management Efficiency Adviser and Liaison with MCPA National Director
01 Oct	Meeting with the MCPA Project National Director Meeting with Project Manager Meeting with Director and Deputy Director of Onega Seaboard National Park Meeting with Conservation Director, WWF-Russia Travel to St Petersburg
02 Oct	Meetings with the key Project stakeholders in Saint-Petersburg (PA Department of Leningrad Region, Baltic Fund for Nature Protection) Meeting with Technical Advisor to MCPA project Meeting with Deputy Director of St Petersburg Branch of World Ocean Museum
03 Oct	Meeting with Ecology and Business (the executant for the project)
04 Oct	Departure for Moscow from St Petersburg Departure for Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky from Moscow
05 Oct	Arrival in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky Meetings with stakeholders in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, including Head of PA Association and Director of Kronotsky zapovednik
06 Oct	Flight to Commander Islands delayed because of poor weather Meeting with Director and staff of Kronotsky zapovednik
07 Oct	Flight to Commander Islands delayed because of poor weather Meeting with Project Manager
08 Oct	Flight to Commander Islands delayed because of poor weather Meeting with Project Manager
09 Oct	Flight to Commander Islands delayed because of poor weather

10 Oct	Travel to Commander Islands Meetings with the key Project stakeholders in Nikolskoye village - Director and staff of Commander Island zapovednik Field visit with staff of CIZ
11 Oct	Meeting with Project Manager Visit to field sites with staff of CIZ
12 Oct	Meeting with Director and staff of CIZ Board the ship "*Vasily Zavoyko*" for Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky from Nikolskoye
13 Oct	Aboard ship "*Vasily Zavoyko*" for Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky
14 Oct	Arrival in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky
15 Oct	Travel to Moscow from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky Meeting with Project Manager Debriefing meeting with UNDP-CO PSO
16 Oct	International consultant departure for London from Moscow

Annex III: List of persons interviewed

Person	Position & Institutional Affiliation/Position
Natalia Olofinskaya	UNDP Head of Project Support Office
Irina Bredneva	UNDP Program Specialist
Sergey Dolganov	Director of the Far Eastern Marine Reserve
Mikhail Korolyov	Project Manager
Vassily Spiridonov	Project Senior Technical Advisor
Sergey Maksimov	Vice-Director, Science Department of the Federal Agency for Fisheries
Natalia Triotskaya	Liaison with National Project Director from MNRE Consultant on PA Management Effectiveness
Vsevolod Stepanitskiy	Deputy Director of Department of the State Policy and Regulation for Environmental Protection, MNRE
Oleg Prodan	Director, Onega Seaboard National Park
Marina Patsay	Deputy Director for Tourism and Environmental Education, Onega Seaboard National Park
Victoria Elias	Programme Director, WWF-Russia
Fedor Stulov	Head of Protected Areas Department, Leningrad Region Administration, Committee for Natural Resources
Rustam Sagitov	Director, Baltic Fund for Nature
Sergei Rasgei	Project Coordinator, Baltic Fund for Nature
Pavel Filin	Deputy Director of St Petersburg Branch of World Ocean Museum
Leonid Korovin	General Director, Ecology and Business
Sergei Bychkov	Director, Kamchatka PA Association
Igor Shpilinok	Director, Kronotsky zapovednik
Anna Zavadskaya	Researcher, Kronotsky zapovednik
Anastasia Kuznetsova	Director, Commander Islands zapovednik
Evgeny Mamaev	Deputy Director (Science), Commander Islands zapovednik
Vlada Valchenko	Public Relations, Commander Islands zapovednik
Igor Bobyr	Head Ranger, Commander Islands zapovednik

Annex IV: Comments to the draft evaluation report and their responses

On 02 January 2015, the TE Evaluator received an email with a document attached. The document raised some broad comments and responses to the first draft of the TE Evaluation Report. As a result various edits have been made to the first draft and the TE Evaluator's own responses to the general comments are described below. The text of the PIU responses is in regular font, *while the TE Evaluator's responses to the comments are in italics*.

"…. However both overall rating and conclusions call for comments which our team delegated me to do. Let me start with the final section, i.e. Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons."

1. The objective of the project was not to establish a system of MCPAs but "to facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness". Indeed there is an established general system of protected areas and the project in fact was dealing with one of its component associated with sea and coast . It was trying to facilitate the expansion of this component, to raise its profile, and to gain professional and expert capacity related to specific marine issues within the general PA system. To establish a separate system of MCPAs would be simply not achievable with the present institutions and authorities. Genely in all these directions we did nearly all that we could do. Basically even the placement of the project within the international department would not be such a big mistake if there are other people in both this department.

***TE Response**: The vision (or long-term solution) of the project was "a Marine and Coastal PA System of Russia that is ecologically representative, resilient to climate change and effectively managed[3]" and the project objective was, as you have pointed out, "to facilitate expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and improve its management effectiveness". Obviously, the project can only take steps to contribute to its defined vision but it should do so in such a way that a coherent MCPA system should, ultimately, be established from the foundations that the project has built.*

The MCPA system should, of course, not be separate from the overall protected area system but mesh well with it while taking into account the specific needs of a MCPA network. The gap analysis and the monitoring strategy that the project carried out are good examples of how this should be done.

However, there were a number of areas in which the project – or rather system as a whole (and the MNRE and its lack of enthusiasm for the project lies at the heart of it) – failed to achieve this. This is most effectively explained in Table 9 in the main report.

2. Systemic prosecution service for foreign fishing vessels. First let me clear that it foreign vessels that the biggest problem and not only fishing (in places like

[3] As stated in para 73 on pg 24 of the Project Document.

Russian Arctic it is much more actual to trace the vessels servicing oil and gas exploration, and this may be a general issue in the future). However in fact with introduction of AIS and organizing a service that is provided by ScanEx practically all zapovedniks and national parks that need such information have an access to it (and this is a result of the project!). In fact only few zapovedniks include fishing grounds that can be exploited by vessels detected by any VMS, Komandorskiy and Kronotskiy. Both are now using ScanEx service. If any new PA have a need to trace fishing vessels of appropriate size they can easily join. There are other MCPAs where illegal fishing is a threat, actual or potential … but this fishing or marine invertebrates harvesting is done using small boats for detecting of which AIS is of little help. NP Russian Arctic is tracking the vessels in general and any Arctic or Pacific PA can do the same if there is increasing activity of oil and gas vessels. Thus we can conclude that the system is already in place.

***TE response**: It is not the act of collecting the data that is the issue, it is the process of enforcing the law. With local (Russian) vessels, law enforcement is relatively easy. However, with foreign vessels, it is far from straightforward and it is often beyond the capacity and mandate of protected area managers or, even, regional prosecutors to deal with cases with foreign vessels. It is these specific circumstances that the recommendation was targeting. Finally, it was a suggestion that came from one of the important stakeholders interviewed over the course of the TE mission! Of course, this was not written into the project document but it would have been an excellent example of adaptive management – i.e., the project responding to a systemic need as it was identified over the course of the project.*

Nonetheless, as mentioned in the main body of the report, the project's work to facilitate the relationship with ScanEx is to be applauded.

3. The threat of invasive species. In fact we have two invasive species prevention plans, there other one for the Russian Arctic NP has been finally delivered at the time of your visit. Unfortunately, the Ministry does not see this problem and its profile can't be raised without strong science (see my general comment below) in PAs. Indeed we have several other zapovedniks with remote islands where we need to increase capacity to manage invasive species. Even if the Ministry recognizes the importance of the problem or is pushed to do this it can't provide necessary financial, expert and organizational support to have preventive action plans in place. What the project team can do is preparing the issue to be included in the next strategic document for federal PAs for 2021 – 2030 (so called Concept): organizing publication of articles in the official bulletin of the Ministry. The Commission on Marine Stations and MPAs can do more in this regard but this possibility was not mentioned in the draft report, even the very idea of the Commission as the project follow up was not mentioned.

***TE response**: I am happy to hear that the Russian Arctic National Park now has an invasive species plan. However, it is concerning to hear that the MNRE "does not see this problem" for it adds weight to the assertion that there was an issue of ownership of the project by the MNRE – particularly as invasive species were identified as a key threat in the project document and also as a "high present threat" in 12 of 31 MCPAs[4]. In addition, invasive species were listed as a key threat in the Commander Islands (as a result of which, an indicator was added to the*

[4] *As listed in Table 9 (pp. 19-20) of the project document.*

logframe to measure progress against dealing with invasive species in the CIZ). This indicator was obviously removed and the project focused on an invasive species plan for the FEMR – and, yet, in the words of the FEMR's Director, "it will not be used except in a responsive – and not preventative - way…". During the mission to the Commander Islands, it was apparent that there was no management of invasive species despite the equally apparent threat.

4. We of course recommend the Commander Islands zapovednik to make a biosafety plan but there has to be the administration decision to go this way. Furthermore they will need expert help. We, of course, can advise them to approach somebody but they usually look for their own experts.

***TE response**: As above, it is excellent to hear that the recommendation was made; indeed, the Director of the CIZ agreed that it was needed during the TE mission to the CIZ. I suspect that some assistance would be needed to nudge them along the way – but the poor relationship between the zapovednik staff and the local authorities would probably be a barrier to realising this result. This also should be coupled with tourism planning and management in the CIZ (and, potentially, other susceptible MCPAs).*

5. We realize that you may doubt if Ingermanland zapovednik is achievable with current political capital. In principle, it is, there is nothing extraorydinary in establishing a new reserve butwe have a bad luck. Owing to the chain of delays we are now in the situation when 1). It becomes difficult to push the Ministry of Defence; 2). It makes less sense to refer to Russia's . international commitments. In this situation the project can't do much. However, all processes of creating Pas in Russia are strongly inertial and it may easily happen that the Ingermanland zapovednik will be established after completion of the project which indeed build a basis for further actions.

***TE response**: The situation may have become even more difficult – in the current geopolitical climate – since the TE mission. I agree that there is little more that the project could have done and, as you suggest, was bad luck and bad timing! Nonetheless, given the justifications for the establishment of a protected area in the Gulf of Finland, this result may, sometime, be finally realised. Let's hope that the MNRE stays committed – perhaps with some encouragement from the UNDP-CO – to this case when geopolitics and timing seems more appropriate.*

6. Mikhail will discuss with Stepanitsky if it makes sense to provide support for a new panel review that will be a basis for follow up work.

***TE response**: I am not sure to what you are referring here.*

7. The project document does not pose the task of communication and raising awareness specifically. However we were always trying to strengthen comunication and there were several events that attracted media attention. But again since Prodoc did not set specific tasks for communication we can't spend resources for monitoring of awareness even though this is a really important task.

***TE response**: The principle here is that every action that a project takes or every activity that a project carried out should be targeting the achievement of the project's objectives and outcomes. Indeed, many projects carry out awareness campaigns because they believe it is necessary to achieve their objective and*

outcomes. [That being said, very few actually demonstrate that their awareness campaigns do lead to change in behaviour, which is, after all, what we want to happen and is the purpose of the awareness campaign in the first place.] If the action or activity does not target the project's objective or outcomes, then it should not be considered; but if it is worth carrying out, then surely it is worth measuring the impact that the action has (even if a "quick and dirty" method is used to estimate impact)? And, again, if it was not mentioned in the project document and the action or activity yields results and demonstrably contributes to the objective or outcome, then the project will only get applauded for adaptive management.

8. Socio-economic survey on Commander Islands is of course important (and in fact there were some studies) but it is unlikely gives an immediate solution to the problems of relationships between PA and local community. The economical background looks not too bad. First of all the municipality of Nikolskoe receives quite substantial subsidies, reserve does not prevent local people from subsistence resourse use, so what? …The problem is not a commune poverty but effectiveness of management and psychological attitudes of people. There is no simple solution at least the one that is based on the zapovednik's capacity.

***TE response**: Actually, the suggestion came from the Director of the CIZ as a mechanism to measure the impact of the micro-finance projects. In addition, as with the awareness campaigns, these micro-finance projects should be leading to changes in behaviour; socio-economic surveys would be one mechanism to demonstrate this.*

9. Climate change. If we would achieve the task of keeping standard and coordination of marine research and monitoring through the Commission on marine stations and MPAs we can then say something specific about climate change, not just global concern and common place. Again the Commission deserves a bit more attention and support because with minimum funding it can do coordination and methodological guidance much better than the governmental institution, please see my presentation at the Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Trondheim in December – this all abut climate change and monitoring.

***TE response**: the comment was made because for two reasons: first, over the course of the TE mission, nobody mentioned climate change. Second, "climate instability" is described as being **the single, over-arching threat** to Russia's marine biodiversity[5]. While I did not scrutinise the management plans that were produced for the MCPAs, I hope that they included sections on adaptation to climate change. In summary, given that it was identified as the over-arching threat to marine and coastal biodiversity, I would have expected interviewees to mention it, at least once!*

10. Commander Islands boat. To our knowledge they fixed all the technical problems at the moment.

***TE response**: Indeed, that was my understanding as well. However, the boat is minimally equipped and to take it from being a vessel that could be used to carry out basic patrols to one that could be used for other functions – including research – other equipment might be useful – including (but not limited to) those mentioned*

[5] See Section 1.5 and specifically paras 48 *et seq*. in the Project Document.

in the main body of the report: GPS units, depth finders/sounder, air compressor, diving equipment, telescope and binoculars, camera equipment, rubber dinghy for landing ashore, underwater sound recording equipment and playback equipment.

11. Makin "Ecological District" is basically a task of municipality. The zapovednik may provide advise and help but this is largely beyond its present human resources to do much of this work.

***TE response**: I agree that creating an "ecological district" remains in the domain of the administration and authorities. However, the point here speaks to two aspects. First, the Commanders Islands and Nikolskoye in particular lend themselves to the notion of "ecological districts" – there are relatively few examples of a town existing within a zapovednik. Thus, in principle, this should be an objective of both the CIZ management as well, presumably, of the municipality. That it did not happen – or was not conceived – may be indicative of the relationship between the CIZ and Nikolskoye municipal authorities. The second aspect is that I have included this suggestion in Section 4.3 of the report. This section is titled "Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project". In other words, this does not have to be the responsibility of the project hereon but, given that the MNRE (and others) are also considered as audiences of the report, they can (and in this case I believe should) take this forward. This should also be taken in the context of the Commander Islands that are surprisingly and alarmingly strewn with rotting metal. A walk down the beach besides the town of Nikolskoye reveals all manner of rusting stuff; a drive across the island reveals other rusting material, including discarded oil drums, across the landscape. Taken together, I believe that it is not only should be done but there is an imperative to do so!*

12. Feasibility study. If we would feasibility study regarding establishing Ingermanland Zapovednik 5 years ago (and in fact a sort of such study was done) nothing would tell us that creations of the zapovednik would not be feasible unless we predicted the general change of geopolitical situation and priorities of the governmental institutions (which are now affecting the process). Other PAs (Onezhskoe Pomorye, Russian Arctic, Beringia) were waiting similarly long but have a better fortune.

***TE response**: The key statement here is "unless we predicted the general change of geopolitical situation and priorities of the governmental institutions." A related aspect is that the things that have acted as a barrier to the establishment of the IZ were identified neither as risks nor as barriers. It is difficult to determine the thoughts of the designers of the project but even five years ago surely some of the political realities and government priorities could be foreseen if not in high resolution then at least as a risk? A detailed (and good) feasibility study should identify such issues and devise, to whatever extent possible, mitigation strategies or solutions to them. Again, we are looking for lessons learned that **might** assist us not to bump against the same issues in the future.*

13. Everything that the project has done (including gap-analyss and planning for New Siberian Islands National Park) will be included in the strategic document (Concept) for the next term (2021 – 2030). In this way the project results with regard to expansion may have a prolonged effect.

***TE response**: This is good news. It does beg the question of when this will be produced and how much influence can UNDP (and other actors) have on this document to ensure that there is coherence with the project's vision?*

14. I am a bit surprised that there no mentioning in the report the effort which were made to increase marine research capacity in the MCAs (preparing guidelines, field training course, establishing Commission on marine stations and MPA (as part of the Marine Heritage Association). We think this is essential for many issues you have raised in the report, including alien species, climate change, awareness etc.

***TE response**: The results section of the report has been edited to include this. However, this is also taken in the context that research is only one facet of protected area management and, particularly when protected area systems are involved there are many other factors that are, arguably, more important to achieve the objective of effective management – including (but not limited to) policies, judicial system and support, resourcing and capacity (human and financial resources, and skills, experience and training of staff), coordination and cooperation among relevant organisations (government, non-governmental and private), support from local administrations and authorities, and, when it comes to specific threats to specific aspects of biodiversity (e.g., disease, invasive species), capacity to respond.*

15. And finally, taking these comments into consideration the overall ranking of the project may be higher to my mind.

***TE response**: There are a number of points here:*

1. *To some extent, the overall rating is comparative – i.e., it is based somewhat on the relative performance of other UNDP-GEF projects*
2. *The overall rating in the draft TE report was 'moderately satisfactory' – which is defined as being that "[the project] … had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency." I believe that the project did have a number of "moderate" shortcomings – albeit that many stemmed from bad luck rather than poor management or poor implementation of the project. Many of these have been discussed, ad nauseam, through the report. Arguably, the most important include:*
    a. *The lack of ownership displayed by the MNRE (see Section 3.3.4 of the main report)*
    b. *The lack of overall coherence that would have otherwise demonstrated systemic thinking, planning and implementation of the project.*
3. *Therefore, when viewed overall, I believe that these amount to "moderate shortcomings". However, in recognition of the activities that the project did carry out, I do concede that it may be considered as borderline "satisfactory" and I would, in principle, be happy to support a project extension but only if i) that it would incur no additional budget (i.e., it was a no cost extension), ii), the project team could articulate precisely what would be achieved during an extension period, and iii) that those achievements or gains would be sufficient to guarantee a "satisfactory" rating.*

Annex V: List of documents produced by the project

Output 1.1

Mokievsky, V.O. et al. (2012) Gap-analysis of biogeographic and ecosystem coverage of MCPA network, Parts 1 and 2

Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute (AARI) (2010) Technical report on Information-analytical system

Output 1.2

Troitskaya, Natalia (2014) Reports on measuring effectiveness of MCPA network

Output 1.3

Suprunenko, Yulia (2011) Review of best practice in cooperation in MCPA enforcement

Nikolaeva, Natalia and Vadim Mokievsky (2011) Scientific cooperation between MCPAs and external organizations - practice and recommendations

Biodiversity Conservation Centre (2011) Recommendation on using remote sensing and other distant instrumental methods in MPA activities and cooperation with organizations providing remote sensing data

Grigoriev, Alexey (2011) Review of oil and chemical spills in MCPAs and contingency experience

(2011) Guidelines for marine research and monitoring in MCPAs

Output 1.4

Baltic Fund for Nature (2011) Ingermanland Reserve updated planning document

Neelov, Alexey (2011) Needs for development of fishery refuge zones in Bay of Finland

Baltic Fund for Nature (2010) Assessment of financial and facilities needs for Ingermanlandsky zapovednik

Baltic Fund for Nature (2012) Final report Bay of Finland

Cherenkova, Nadezhda, et al. (2013) Solovki Islands Reserve planning document

WWF Russia (2014) New Siberian Islands national park planning

Output 2.1

Biodiversity Conservation Centre (2011) Management plans for Commander Islands and Far Eastern Reserves - general report

Staff of Russian Arctic National Park (no date) Mid-term management plan, Russian Arctic National Park (SPR), Vols I & II

Output 2.2

Baltic Fund for Nature (2010) Baltic ringed seal spring census

Baltic Fund for Nature (2012) Baltic ringed seal spring census

Baltic Fund for Nature (2012) Baltic ringed seal autumn census

(no date) Monitoring programme for Commander Islands Reserve title page with approval

Kuznetsova, Anastasia (2011) Proposal for improving management effectiveness of Commander Islands Reserve

Mamaev, Evgeny (2014) Red-legged kittiwake brief report

Biodiversity Conservation Centre (2011) Exhibition of Smirin's artwork from Commander Islands

(2011 – 2013) Reports of students field work in Commander Islands Reserve (**for examples of the reports and topics covered by the students, see below).**

Altukhov, A. (2014) Sea lion monitoring in Kronotsky zapovednik

Markevich, Grigory (2012) Fish and habitat survey in Kronotsky zapovednik

Staff of Magadan Reserve and experts (2013) Inventory of intertidal biodiversity of Magadan Reserve

Staff of FEMR (2011, 2013) Sea cucumber survey, FEMR

Ilyashenko, Valentin (2013) Western Pacific Gray whale plan and MPAs

Output 2.3

(No author, no date) Determination of allowable tourism impact on the open areas of Far Eastern Marine Zapovednik, Parts I and II

(No author) (2013) Ecotourism trainings, Part 2 and 3

(No author) (2012) Poronaisky zapovednik training

Output 2.4

Zalota, Anna (2011) Global survey of alien species and MPAs issues

Institute of Marine Biology, Vladivostok (2013) Alien species assessment in the Far Eastern Marine Reserve

Far Eastern Marine Reserve staff and Vassily Spiridonov (2014) Plan of alien species monitoring and control for Far Eastern Marine Reserve

Output 2.5

WWF Russia, Murmansk office (2011) Constraints for effective oil spill response in MPAs

WWF Russia, Murmansk office (2013) Guidelines for oil spill contingency in MPAs

Baltic Fund for Nature (2010) Training for aquatic birds rehabilitation after oil spills

Output 3.1

Troitskaya, Natalia (2013) Indicators of effectiveness of the PA sysstem management and recommendations

(No author) (2012) Information report on training trip to Galapagos Is for directors of Russian MPAs

Spiridonov, Vassily, et al. (2013) Report on field training marine science for MPAs

Baltic Fund for Nature (2013) Training trip to Finland for regional protected areas administrations

Peer reviewed publications

Spiridonov V., Gavrilo M., Krasnov Y., Makarov A., Nikolaeva N., Popov A., Sergienko L., Krasnova E. (2012) Towards the new role of marine and coastal protected areas in the Arctic: the Russian case. In: F. Huettmann (ed.) *Protection of Three Poles*. Tokyo, Springer, pp. 171-202.

Ivin V.V., Zvyagintsev A.Yu., Kashin I.A. (2014) Monitoring and control of alien species in marine and insular specially protected areas by the example of the Far East Marine Stae Biosphere Reserve. *Russian Journal of Biological Invasions*, **2014, # 2**, p. 47-79.

Examples of the reports and topics covered by students supported by the project:

1. Studies on the biota of the internal waters of the Commander Islands zapovednik. By A.A. Novichkova (Moscow State University, Biological Faculty)
2. Report on field studies in Komandorsky zapovednik (coastal soils). P.D. Orlova (Moscow State University, Geographical Faculty)
3. Report on field studies in Komandorsky zapovednik (coast). P.D. l landscapes and marine litter) E.A. Loshakova, I.A. Snyatkov (Moscow State University, Geographical Faculty)
4. Inventory of species composition of zoobenthos of springs, rivers and lakes of the Bering Island. T.A. Chuzhekova (St. Petersburg University, Biological Faculty)
5. Analysis of perspectives of development of ecological education in the Far Eastern Marine Zapovednik. D. Filippova (Far Eastern State University)
6. Recreational loads in coastal areas of Far Eastern Marine Reserve (Sobolevas)
7. Information report on hydrological, hydrochemical, ichtyological and hydrobiological field studies in the Kronotsky State Biosphere Reserve. Head of the field project G.N. Markevich . Students: Abyzova G.A., Melnikova V.A., Sokolova A.M., Golovlev P.P., Golovleva V.O., Debolsky A.V., Sergeev D.S., Saltykova E.A. Bush A.G., Sedash G.

Annex VI: Stakeholder participation in developing management plans

As evidence of the stakeholder participation in the development of the protected area management plans, the following lists of participants were provided by the project team:

"Russian Arctic" National Park:

During elaboration of the Management Plan, three workshops with stakeholders were conducted in the region with the assistance of external experts and consultants.

On February 21st, 2012 introductory seminar on eco-tourism development in the polar regions was held for the National Park staff. The keynote speakers were Dr. Jakob de Korte from «Oceanwide» travel company (Netherlands) and naturalist Mr. Alexander Volkov.

During 13-15 June, 2012 inception seminar led by Mr. Yuriy Buyvolov was held covering analysis of the current situation and formulating the goals and objectives for the «Russia Arctic» National Park and the federal refuge "Franz Josef Land" for 2013-2017. The representatives of the Government of the Arkhangelsk region, non-profit environmental and educational organizations took active part in the seminar.

On November 9th, 2012 meeting dedicated to further development of the protected area, was attended by more than 30 representatives of the Government of the Arkhangelsk region, the scientific community, educational institutions, regional law enforcement agencies, and experts in the field of conservation and environmental education activities.

Following experts participated in the discussion on the future of the «Russian Arctic» National Park and the preparation of proposals for inclusion in the management plan: Ms. Natalia Troitskaya and Mr. Alexey Troitsky (Non-for - profit Partnership "Partnership for Zapovedniks", Moscow), Mr. Nosov (Border Guard Service of Russia in the Arkhangelsk region), Mr. Busin and Mr. Klimov (Institute of integrated security), Mr. Laptev (Ministry of Culture of the Arkhangelsk region), Mr. Pavlenko (Arkhangelsk Scientific Center, Ural Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences), Ms. Kireyeva ("Pavlovsky" center, St. Petersburg, Russia), Mr. Volkov ("Sustainable development" Fund, Moscow), Mr. Spiridonov (Senior scientific consultant for UNDP/GEF MCPA Project, RAS, Moscow), Mr. Studenov (SevPINRO).

Far Eastern Marine Reserve:

All stakeholders were involved in consultations during elaboration of the management plan. In April 2011, inception workshops were held in Vladivostok, on the Popov island and in the Vityaz' village of the Khasan district focusing on formation of the goals and objectives of the Far Eastern Marine Biosphere Nature Reserve for the period of 2012-2016. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Primorsky Territory Administration and Khasan municipality, non-profit environmental, scientific and educational organizations,

travel agencies and interested commercial organizations. Following experts took active participation in the meetings and preparation of proposals for the management plan: Mr. Vakin (Federal Security Service of Russia in Primorsky region), Mr. Schur (Primorsky Krai Administration), Mr. Naryzhny (Administration of Khasan district), Mr. Tyumenev and Ms. Naryzhnaya (Administration of Zarubinsky settlement), Mr. Ivin and Mr. Selin (Institute of Marine Biology, Far Eastern branch of RAS), Mr. Kraskov (Far Eastern Federal University), Ms. Kornyushina, Ms. Andreeva, Ms. Zyablova, and Ms. Nechyporenko (tourism companies of Primorsky Krai), Mr. Petrychenko (International youth camp "Meridian"), Mr. Gorlach (Vityaz' settlement representative).

Komandorsky State Nature Biosphere Reserve:

Stakeholder were involved in consultations, meetings and round table discussions during elaboration ofr the management plan. Representatives of the federal government, Administration of the Kamchatka and Nikolsky municipality, non-profit environmental, scientific and educational organizations, travel agencies and other commercial organizations took active part in the meetings. Following experts partiicpated in elabiration of proposals to the managemnet plan: Mr. Matvienko, Mr. Lessin, Ms. Krasilova, Ms. Borodina (Rosprirodnadzor of Kamchatka), Mr. Kidanov (Head of the border security service), Mr. Fomin, Mr. Utkin (FAR), Ms. Gordienko, Ms. Doolina, Mr. Emelyanov, Mr. Pelipenko, Mr. Kumarkov (Administration of Kamchatka Krai), Mr. Burdin, Ms. Mikhailova, Ms. Chernyagina (Pacific Institute of Geography, Far Eastern Branch of RAS), Mr. Yaroshenko, Ms. Volkova, Mr. Izvekov (Nikolsky district municipality), Ms. Tutushkins (Kamchatka State University), Mr. Korneev, Mr. Novikov, Mr. Pogodaev (KamchatNIRO), Mr. Chernenko (Russian-American Center). Following representatives of the local community of Nikolskoye village took active part in preparation of proposals and discussions of major issues during elaboration of the management plan: Mr. Golyi, Ms. Levaya, Ms. Lisovskaya, Mr. Pasenyuk, Ms. Sushkova, Mr. Stroganov, Mr. Timonkin, Mr. Yakovlev and others.

«Onezhskoye Pomorye» National Park:

During elaboration of the Management Plan, three workshops with stakeholders were conducted in the region with the assistance of external experts and consultants.

The inception seminar took place during 11-14 July 2014 and addressed the following questions: analysis of the current situation and a description of the desired prospects; proposals of experts for development of a recently established national park; current status and strategies for further development of the national park; discussion on best approaches for collaboration with local communities.

Second workshop took place during 4-8 August 2014 and discussed the following issues: Positioning and marketing of the National park in Russian and international information space; tourism, programs and activities to attract tourists and involvement of the local population; environmental education - key areas and work plan for the period of 5 years.

Presentation of the results on public and scientific discussion took place on October 29th, 2014 at the Moscow State University. Results of the comprehensive study of the territory, environmental monitoring, preservation of historical and cultural heritage, tourism development and support of local communities were presented to the general public. Particular attention was paid to the prospects of future cooperation of the National Park with representatives of scientific and cultural organizations.

50 representatives of stakeholders and relevant experts took part in consultations: staff of «Onezhskoye Pomorye» National Park, representatives of local Fishing enterprise named after Kalinin, VNIRO, IFAW, Greenpeace, Russian Geographic Society, State Museum of Biology named after Timiryazev, Ecocenter "Zapovedniki", Russian Venture Company, RIA Novosti news agency, Shirshov Institute of Oceanology, Severtsev Institute of Ecology and Evolution, Geological Institute(Russian Academy of Sciences), Moscow State University: Faculty of Biology and Geography, White Sea Biological Station, Information Center, Center for Marine Research, the Museum of Earth Sciences, and the mass media.

Annex VII: Framework questions used

1. What is the achievement, so far, of which you are most proud?
2. If you could go back in time, what would you change or do differently?
3. If you could go back in time, which activities would you definitely do again?
4. If the project had an extra USD 500k and an extra two years, what else would you consider doing?
5. What are you doing to ensure take up/replication of the concept and processes in other areas of the country?
6. What are the effects of inflation or changes in the exchange rates to the budgeting and/or expenditure?
7. Please give examples of how you are ensuring cost effectiveness?
8. Please provide all information on cofinance to date, including both cash and in-kind expenditure and a summary of the items on which the co-finance has been spent.
9. What is your role/relationship with the project?
10. What are you doing to ensure sustainability of the project's processes and impacts?
11. This (xxx) success seems very good: what did you do to achieve it?
12. Who are the partners (i.e., people actively working to the same goals) on the project?
13. Who would you say *owns* the project?
14. Who are the stakeholders in the project (i.e., people that are involved in the project, either actively or passively or will be affected by the project in some way)?
15. Who prepares the TOR for all contracting?
16. Who signs the contracts?
17. Imagine this scenario: if the Minister phones you up and says that he needs to make a brief report on the project to the President and he needs 5 bullets on the following subjects:
    - Key successes
    - what would you advise the next door country to do if they were to implement a similar project
    - what works and why
    - what does not work and why
    - key challenges
18. Is the project having any useful (but unplanned) spin-offs?
19. Is the project having any detrimental or negative (but unplanned or unintended) impacts?
20. This is a UNDP project – what advantages or disadvantages does this bring? What if it was a World Bank project instead – what difference would that bring?
21. If you were to re-write the Project Document, what would you change?
22. Who are the project's champions?
23. Standard issues:
    - Project Manager Forum
    - Procurement rules and efficiencies
    - UNDP training/support
    - Financial audits

- Cofinance information
- Communication strategy?
- Monitoring awareness/knowledge
- Backing up data and digital information
- Team functionality
- Staff turn over
- If training is provided, how is training is now being used in job?
- How including gender and/or indigenous peoples issues?
- Need to provide all information, including equipment, inputs, infrastructure, tracking tool data.
- If there was a delay, what was the reason?

24. How is the project aligned to the national development plan, region-level development plans and the UNDAF?
25. Is the project trying to increase awareness? If so, among which target groups? How is the project monitoring changes in awareness and attitude? How has any changes in attitude and awareness affected project implementation, and how is it being used in the daily, professional lives of the target groups?

Annex VIII: Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Evaluators:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and: respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant	Stuart Williams

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at: Kampala, Uganda On: 09 February 2015

Signature 

Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared by

UNDP Country Office	
Name: Signature:	Date:
UNDP-GEF RTA	
Name: Signature:	Date: