United Nations Development Programme

Global Environmental Facility

Final Report (Submitted 8 December 2021)

Terminal Evaluation of the UNDP-Supported, GEF and Other-Financed Project

Strengthening the National Protected Area System of Swaziland

GEF Project ID 5065; UNDP PIMS ID 4932

Country: Kingdom of Eswatini (Swaziland)   **Region:** Africa

GEF Focal Area: GEF 5 Biodiversity Strategic Objective 1 (Improve the Sustainability of Protected Areas)

GEF Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Project Executing Agency: Eswatini National Trust Commission (formerly SNTC, now ENTC)

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABT	Aichi Biodiversity Target
ACAT	Africa Co-operative Action Trust Lilima (Swaziland)
APR	Annual Project Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BBMC	Balimi Belibito Multipurpose Cooperative
BD	Biodiversity
BDC	Biodiversity Conservation
BGP	Big Game Parks
BOQs	Bill of Quantities
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CCA	Community Conservation Area
CDC	Chiefdom Development Committee
CDP	Chiefdom Development Plan/Planning
CDSC	Capacity Development Scorecard
CDT	Community Development Trust
CO	Country Office (of the UNDP)
COSPE	An international NGO working for social and environmental change
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan (of the UNDP)
DoA	Delegation of Authority
DWA	Department of Water Affairs
EA	Executing Agency
EBD	Ecosystems and Biodiversity
EoP	End of Project
ESSP	Environmental and Social Screening Procedure
FSC	Financial Sustainability Scorecard
ESWADE	Eswatini Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IA	Implementing Agency
IC	Inner Council
LAs	Landscape Associations
LoA	Letter of Agreement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTAD	Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development
MTEA	Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

NDP	National Development Plan
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPM	National Project Manager
OECM	Other Effective Conservation Measures
OFP	Operational Focal Point
PA(S)	Protected Area (System)
PB	Project Board
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management Eswatini
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PM	Project Manager
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PRODOC	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEDCO	Swaziland Enterprise Development Corporation
SEA	Swaziland (Eswatini) Environment Authority
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SNTC	Swaziland (Eswatini) National Trust Commission
SNL	Swazi Nation Land
SRF	Strategic Results Framework (formerly known as a logical framework or logframe)
STA	Swaziland (Eswatini) Tourism Authority
SWIFT	Swaziland Fair Trade
TA	Technical Advisor
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TDL	Title Deed Land
TT	Tracking Tools
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNCCD	United Nations Convention for Combating Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISWA	University of Swaziland (Eswatini)
WMP	Wetland Management Plan
WRB	Water Resource Branch

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 Project Information Table

Project Title:	Strengthening National Protected Areas System		
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	4932	**PIF Approval Date:**	October 10th, 2012
GEF Project ID:	5065	**CEO Endorsement Date:**	July 2nd, 2014
Award ID:	00081957	**Project Document Signature Date (date project began):**	October 3rd, 2014
Country:	Eswatini	**Date project manager hired:**	April 1st, 2015
Region:	Africa	**Inception Workshop date:**	June 4th, 2015
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	**Midterm Review date:** **Terminal Evaluation date:**	April, 2018 August 25th, 2021
GEF-5 Focal Area Objectives:	Obj. # 1: Improve the sustainability of Protected Areas	**Planned closing date:**	December 31st, 2020
Trust Fund:	GEF	**If revised, proposed closing date:**	December 31st, 2021
Executing Agency:	Swaziland (Eswatini) National Trust Commission		
Other execution partners:			

Geospatial Coordinates of Project Sites:		**Latitude**	**Longitude**
	Please see separate Excel file		

Project Financing:	**at CEO endorsement (USD)**	**at Terminal Evaluation (USD)***
[1] GEF financing (excl. PPG):	5,390,000	5,390,000
[2] UNDP contribution:	200,000	232,605
[3] Government:	13,600,00	740,000
[4] Other partners:	9,800,000	Partner (BGP) withdrew
[5] Total Co-financing [2 + 3+ 4]:	23,600,000	972,605
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5]	**28,990,000**	**6,363,605**

*Cut-off date for figures presented at Terminal Evaluation is 1 September 2021 (date TE began).

1.1 Brief Project Description

[1] The objective of this seven-year (originally planned for six years) project was to "effectively expand, manage and develop Swaziland's protected area network in order to adequately protect the biodiversity and landscapes of the country". The project was financed primarily by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with a grant of almost US$5.4 million, with additional co-financing from the Government of Eswatini and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project "Implementing Partner" (IP) was the Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC), which partnered with numerous "Responsible Parties" (RPs) to implement activities. A more detailed description of the project is found in Section 3.

1.2 Evaluation Ratings Table

[2] Ratings for various aspects of the project, including monitoring and evaluation, implementation, impact, and sustainability are presented in Table 2. Ratings were assigned to the project using the obligatory GEF rating scale (see Annex 1).

Table 2. Terminal Evaluation Ratings Assigned to the Project

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating
M&E design at entry	MU
M&E Plan Implementation	MU
Overall Quality of M&E	MU
Implementing Agency (IA) Implementation & Executing Agency (EA) Execution	
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	U
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	U
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	U
Assessment of Outcomes	
Relevance	S
Effectiveness	MU
Efficiency	U
Overall Project Outcome Rating	MU
Sustainability	
Financial sustainability	ML
Socio-political sustainability	MU
Institutional framework and governance sustainability	MU
Environmental sustainability	MU
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	MU

In accordance with UNDP guidelines for GEF project evaluations, Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, and Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: HS = Highly Satisfactory (exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings); S = Satisfactory (meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings); MS = Moderately Satisfactory (more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings); MU = Moderately Unsatisfactory (somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings); U= Unsatisfactory; HU = Highly Unsatisfactory (substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings); Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: L= Likely; ML = Moderately Likely; MU= Moderately Unlikely; U = Unlikely.

1.3 Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Lessons

1.3.1 Findings and Conclusions

[3] A great deal of effort by many people was put into this project – the largest international donor-supported project to conserve biodiversity thus far in the country's history. There were many meaningful advances made. Nevertheless, the results in terms of biodiversity conserved are not commiserate with the effort or with the amount of funds allocated.

[4] The project represents a start, which, in order to get to the finish, i.e., to derive the outcomes that were anticipated by project end, must now be somehow further pursued. The Government of Eswatini can and should provide some of that needed support, and the beneficiaries of this project should do the same through their own continued effort, but further external support will also be needed to build on what this project started and to enhance sustainability of those project-supported efforts that were completed but which still require "hand-holding" for some time before "walking" on their own.

[5] It will be important for ENTC and others to learn lessons that might be extracted from this project experience to ensure the next donor-supported efforts to conserve biodiversity in Eswatini are more cost-effective than this one was.

[6] The task of the TE is to assess, amongst other things, how well the project performed against what was committed in the PRODOC as well as what was reflected in the RF (if there is variance between the two). In signing a GEF project document, parties commit to doing what is indicated therein. The TE attempts to assess how well that commitment was met.

[7] The reader should bear in mind that this section is a summary. More detailed findings are presented throughout the report.

[8] Relevance. The stated objective of the project as well as the expected outcomes were relevant and responsive to national needs. Much of what the project actually did (and was supposed to do according to the PRODOC) was relevant, nevertheless, some of what was actually done was far less relevant to the objective and some was not approved by the GEF.

[9] The project envisaged the investment in improved lodging for tourists on communal lands to contribute to biodiversity through enhanced revenues generated and re-invested in conservation actions on communal PAs. This has not happened.

[10] The Concept. The concept of adopting the landscape approach was good but perhaps not realistic for all four of the landscapes originally targeted. Spelling out in greater detail exactly what was meant by a "landscape approach" would have helped tremendously. This should have been discussed in detail at the project inception workshop. It was not. In some ways, it is incongruent to have a project objective that focuses, as this one does, exclusively on PAs while adopting a landscape approach that involves much more than just PAs. There are many different ways to interpret the term "landscape approach" and this project, although it was to adopt this approach, failed to clearly spell out what that meant from the start. It is only now, close to project end, that the newly-established Landscape Associations will decide what the priority issues are for each of them, what collaborations are required between them (and the form

these will take), and what agreements need to be put in place. This is when the term "landscape approach" will be translated into action.

[11] Implementation suffered as a result of numerous factors including in some cases lack of clarity regarding what was to be done, delays in fund transfers, restructuring of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and frequent changes of Project Managers, and lack of adequate strategic direction and oversight by the committee tasked with steering the project.

[12] Efficiency. The Project was not efficient in use of resources. Slow implementation exacerbated inefficiencies including the additional funds spent on management costs committed as UNDP co-financing that could have otherwise been spent on project activities. There were investments that yielded little or nothing (e.g., some consultancies undertaken were aborted before all deliverables were delivered, no action was taken to follow up on some reports). There were misspent funds to pay for costs that should not have been paid for with GEF funds (e.g., elaboration of Chiefdom Development Plans (CDPs), elaboration of a national strategy on IAPS). There were inefficiencies associated with poorly planned and implemented infrastructural projects.

[13] Sustainability A number of the activities which should have been completed some time ago are only being completed in the last year of the project (during the project extension period). Thus, a strategy had to be put in place to ensure these late efforts would be completed and further built upon. There does appear to be political will to pursue a number of the activities initiated by the project and to expand upon them, and, for some areas, it seems likely there will be further donor support to finance some of those activities.

[14] Time Frame. This seven-year (84 month) project effectively operated over a period of only 52 months, or 62% of the actual planned project period. A total of 32 months were effectively lost – more if one counts time lost to COVID-19 impacts. (See Section 4.2.5 for details)

[15] Strategy. An extraordinary amount of time was spent after project start on project strategy development. Despite all the strategic planning undertaken by the project (Technical Advisor Huntley, Technical Advisor Rod de Vletter, development of a detailed project strategy (2016), strategic planning workshop (2017), development of the management response to the MTR (2018), development of a "master plan" (2020), the project failed to truly adopt a strategic approach to achieve the project objective.

[16] Project contributions to possible eventual impact. Despite inefficiencies, the project made some important contributions that may, if effectively pursued, result in conserving biodiversity on the ground. These include progress on establishing a Conservation Fund[1], establishment of Landscape Associations, enhanced awareness related to the importance of conserving biodiversity – especially by communities within Chiefdoms containing "protection worthy areas", enhanced awareness by decision-makers of the potential benefits that can be derived through the designation of PAs, official designation as some form or other of "protected area" assigned to numerous areas that were determined to be worthy of protection

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[1] MTEA is currently going through the process of enacting the regulations related to the Conservation Fund, including the plan to capitalize the fund once established. Not all Government entities agree that it was necessary to establish a new fund. The Environment Authority feels that the CF should have been incorporated into the existing Environment Fund and that simply because the ENTC Bill and the NBSAP call for the establishment of a CF did not indicate that a CF could not have been established under the existing umbrella of the Environment Fund.

thereby enhancing prospects that these areas will be conserved over the long-term, bringing some stakeholders together that otherwise may never have met and whose joint, collaborative efforts will in large part determine the success or failure of conservation efforts not only on their own land but also on adjacent lands, supporting women's efforts to benefit directly from the conservation of biodiversity (BD) thereby empowering women while contributing directly to the conservation of wetlands.

[17] Already perceived conservation results. In addition to the above-described contributions which may eventually lead to significant conservation on-the-ground, the project effort also resulted in some already perceived conservation of biodiversity and enhancement of ecosystem functioning. One can already see the benefit derived from the project effort related to rehabilitation of wetlands on communal lands. The project effort to reduce poaching of wildlife has apparently had some positive effect in ENTC-managed Reserves (although attributing this improvement directly to the project intervention is not possible). The project effort to supplement wildlife populations which were genetically isolated has (one may reasonably assume although no genetic testing was done before or after supplementation) resulted in more genetically diverse wildlife populations, and in some cases simply larger populations of the species within the PAs.

[18] The trainings provided through the project have contributed directly to conserving biodiversity as well as having the potential to contribute more in future. Those trainings involving PA staff are seen to have had significant and direct impact. It is unfortunate that, even though additional conservation management trainings were originally envisaged (and TOR for these trainings elaborated), those important trainings were not pursued – according to UNDP because of a simple procedural matter (deliverables could not be agreed upon between the contracting parties).

[19] Technical Advice. Much of the technical advice provided by the project was more project management/steering type advice rather than technical conservation advice. The 3 different National Project Managers which the project had over its "life" appear to be well-qualified project managers but did not always receive clear direction from the PB. This was not an issue that was most appropriately solved by providing external technical expertise. On the other hand, technical expertise that would have been helpful to the project was not always provided. For example, the PRODOC mentions game ranching on communal lands as an "alternative livelihood" -- a viable livelihood option in place of, or in combination with, cattle ranching. Despite this, the project provided no technical advice on how this could be pursued.

[20] Partnerships. The approach adopted by the IP (ENTC) – especially in the later part of the project -- of working together with other partners including NGOs with experience working with communities in the various landscapes, and the University of Eswatini, was helpful. Its collaboration with other Government entities, including those under the same Ministry (e.g., the Eswatini Tourism Authority), was, however, less effective, as the respective comparative advantages of the various entities was not always fully acted upon. The project also developed partnerships with the Private Sector to contribute to biodiversity conservation. The Partnership with Montigny for example allowed the Ngwempisi Cluster to get technical expertise for the management of IAPS that are rife in that area. The plan was to extend this partnership to two communities in the Ngwempisi Cluster when all activities were suspended by the Minister of Tourism.

[21] As indicated above, in addition to the project successes, there were significant shortcomings as well as missed opportunities.

[22] There was disproportionate focus on one part of what essentially was a two-part objective. Relatively greater focus should have been placed on enhancing the effective management of PAs compared to the focus placed on expanding PA coverage.

[23] With the exception of wetlands, the project failed to improve BD conservation within designated community conservation areas – even those that had been established by customary law long before this project began (e.g., Shewula) and failed to contribute significantly to capacitating community members to undertake conservation activities on community conservation areas despite awareness of the importance to conserve BD having been improved. The project failed to facilitate meaningful links between communities and adjacent PLOs owning private conservation areas so as to truly reduce pressures on those areas (even though the requirement that PLOs outline Access and Benefit Sharing plans as part of their OECM applications was a helpful step).

[24] Following the MTR, the project focused its efforts on enlarging the PA estate by using the IUCN designation of OECM instead of pursuing expansion of the PA estate through increasing the number of legally gazetted PAs. Although this allowed for a significant increase in the PA estate (thus helping the project to report good progress related to the objective and to certain expected outcomes), there were shortcomings in the process, products, and results related to the project's efforts pertaining to OEMCs. This resulted in some areas being designated as OECMs which may not legitimately be designated as such in accordance with international standards (and if unchanged will also allow for future OECMs to be designated as such which might not legitimately qualify). It also resulted in designating some PAs for which there is little assurance in place that the areas will be maintained in their natural state over the long-term.

[25] Although the project was implemented by a technical entity (ENTC), was supported by several technical advisors, involved technical consultancies, involved technical working groups, had a Project Technical Committee (at least by some definition), and was managed by National Project Managers (NPMs) whose required qualifications included a relevant technical background and experience, the project somehow lacked adequate technical direction and oversight. This was due to several factors including ignoring technical advice (as also reported in the MTR), putting emphasis on the criteria of Departmental representativeness rather than technical expertise in the area of biodiversity conservation as the means of comprising what were supposed to be technical entities (Project Technical Committee, OECM Committee), lack of adequate time for technically qualified individuals to act in their technical capacity due to the need to focus on project management (reporting, etc.).

[26] The CBNRM activities undertaken in community wetlands by women is an example of an excellent CBNRM initiative that truly directly contributes to biodiversity conservation. This initiative should be replicated in other wetlands around the country. The project has provided some important catalytic support and this should now be further supported to upscale and to replicate. However, most of the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) efforts (with the important exception of those undertaken in the wetlands) had in fact little to do with biodiversity, or the management of natural resources, and were mainly focused on activities that are unlikely to contribute significantly (or sometimes even at all) to BD conservation (e.g., chicken and rabbit rearing projects that had no direct link to biodiversity conservation). These were projects covered in the PRODOC, possibly with the understanding that investing in IGAs that did not depend on biodiversity and natural resources would release pressure on natural resources for those who depended on them for livelihoods. According to unconfirmed

information provided to the TE, experiences from ESWADE projects on bee-keeping for example have shown links to biodiversity conservation within many of the country's rural communities. In areas where bee-keeping is common, lessons from these projects show that the value of natural ecosystems such as forests increase in areas of beekeeping as communities understand the importance of these resources as links to incomes and their livelihoods. It is from these lessons that such projects were anticipated to bring about positive biodiversity gains.

[27] Attempts to increase income for communities from ecotourism may enhance community awareness of the importance of conserving biodiversity, but in the case of many of the communities involved in the project, cannot possibly yield the expected result of actually conserving biodiversity within communal PAs. That will entail more direct conservation action, changes in some cultural norms, and the financial security that allows communities to focus on that goal.

[28] Project governance was poorly designed with both a Project Board (PB) and a Project Steering Committee (PSC), the later which was really intended to be a Technical Committee. But, even after the issue was pointed out by the Mid Term Review (MTR) and revised Terms of Reference were drafted for the PSC (and the PSC renamed as the Project Technical Committee), confusion regarding what the Committee was intended to do persisted through to the end of the project. Partly (but not entirely) because of poor design in the governance entities for the project, the Project was not well steered.

[29] Project oversight by the GEF Agency responsible for this project (UNDP) was inadequate. The TE believes the GEFSEC should have been approached for advice related to several matters which represented a major change in the project from what had been endorsed by the GEF CEO. It was the responsibility of UNDP to ensure this was done. It was not.

[30] The UNDP CO in Eswatini requires stronger support from the UNDP Regional Service Center to ensure improved undertaking of its responsibilities as a GEF Agency for any future GEF-supported project for which it is asked to be the GEF Agency.

[31] Although a "National Implementation Modality (NIM)" project, there was a very significant amount of execution support provided by UNDP, the GEF Agency for the project. The problems with this were pointed out in the MTR (including the lack of the appropriate LOA specifying the nature of the execution support to be provided and the cost associated with that) but UNDP continued to provide very significant execution support even after the MTR.

[32] The original, as well as the revised, Results Framework have significant weaknesses. Reporting only on the indicators and targets in these RFs, a not-so-accurate or comprehensive picture of the project emerged in some project reports, including the main annual reports used to monitor the project, the PIRs. Inadequate attention was given to monitoring and reporting on progress toward impact, and the intended impact (which was to be on biodiversity) was sometimes confused with other things such as for example income generation that was not linked in any way to the conservation of biodiversity.

[33] There is little evidence that lessons from other relevant projects around the world were incorporated into the design of this project.

[34] Logistical considerations as described below affected the project ability to implement and monitor activities more effectively on the ground. Basing the Landscape Coordinators (and project vehicles) in the landscapes was critical to project success. Instead, the Landscape Coordinators and the (more than the

originally planned number of vehicles purchased by the project) were based just outside of the capital city at ENTC headquarters, several hours drive round trip from some of the landscapes.

[35] Despite the shortcomings and missed opportunities, there are fair prospects for building further on some of the project achievements and getting those to the point where they make a real difference on the ground to conserving Eswatini's globally significant biodiversity.

1.3.2 Lessons

[36] Lesson: Spending more time, effort (and of course funds) "up front" (i.e., during the elaboration of the PIF and during the PPG) might well have helped the project to be more effective and efficient. It is cost-effective to spend more time on strategy development and PRODOC formulation prior to project submission. Note: This lesson will be difficult to learn in practice unless the GEF is willing to provide a greater level of funding at project concept/project preparation grant (PPG) stage.

[37] Lesson: TOR for all anticipated personnel and for all major consultancies to be undertaken should have been described in the PRODOC. Few were included in the PRODOC (e.g., no TOR for Community Liaison Officers/Landscape Coordinators were included in the PRODOC). This would have also helped to clarify what was needed and why and how it would contribute to the project expected outcomes.

[38] Lesson: A project is not a programme. To be successful, the scope of a project should be limited.

[39] Lesson: Effective participation of UNDP on PBs is essential to project success. UNDP is accountable to the GEF when it is designated as the GEF Agency for a project. Although UNDP must respect the role of IPs, it must also serve effectively in its oversight role to ensure accountability to the primary donor, in this case, the GEF.   Poor PIR ratings that do not significantly improve from year to year is one indication that a PB is not effectively steering a project and that UNDP's participation on a PB may need to be strengthened.

[40] Lesson: Whenever there is any doubt on the need to approach the GEFSEC for advice, it is best to do so early on.

[41] Lesson: Restoring biodiversity (including native fauna and flora) on communal lands is expensive and takes time. It also comes at a cost to communities over the short and medium term, even if communities may gain over the long-term. Communities living in poverty cannot afford to incur such costs. They cannot be expected to conserve biodiversity simply because they believe in it. Projects that are intended to conserve biodiversity on communal lands in Eswatini must provide the possibility for communities to adopt a longer-term perspective and actions by providing financial and other support until such a time as conserving biodiversity pays for itself (through ecotourism, continual long-term guaranteed philanthropic support, game ranching, or other means). The cultural context must be seriously considered as financial support alone will not necessarily be sufficient to change practices that lead to biodiversity degradation on communal lands. This will require decisions regarding livestock stocking rates that must be taken at Chief and Inner Council levels, as if only some community members implement actions that may result in benefits to biodiversity whilst others don't, the benefit will not be derived and some community members will incur costs with no associated benefit. Project design must take all of the above into consideration.

[42] Lesson: There may be different goals for adopting a landscape approach to conserving biodiversity. In some cases, the goal may be to encourage and enable free-roaming wildlife to have a more naturally-functioning ecosystem. Any future initiatives that may entail adoption of the landscape approach to

conservation should carefully consider and explicitly define what the goals are (e.g., free-roaming wildlife across the landscape – irrespective of the landowner whether it be private or communal lands, or perhaps reduced pressure emanating from communal lands on the biodiversity being conserved on privately owned or Government-managed self-contained conservation areas, or any number of other possibilities.) and should update goals if these change based on realities. Different objectives for adopting a landscape approach will require different actions. Thus, clear and precise definition of the goal for adopting a landscape approach from the start is extremely important to avoid wasted effort and an unfocussed "dart throw" approach which would not represent a strategic, focused intervention.

[43] Lesson: Some barriers (especially those related to policy and legislation) are not possible to remove through a project effort, and if not addressed by Government (who has the sole possibility of removing such barriers) prior to financing a project, will continue to present barriers to project success, making project interventions less than cost-effective. More effort should be placed on removing such barriers *prior* to signing of PRODOCS to enhance prospects for successful GEF-supported projects.

[44] Lesson: Avoid establishing both a Project Board and a Project Steering Committee. These are simply different names for the same thing.

[45] Lesson: It is good practice to establish technical committee/s but these should truly be technical in nature (their TOR should be exclusively to provide technical advice not project steering advice) and the composition of these committees/groups should be technical, i.e., people should be invited to be part of technical committees based on their technical expertise rather than on other considerations such as institutional representation.

[46] Lesson: The IP for projects that are implemented as "National Implementation Modality" or (NIM) projects are expected to execute the vast majority, if not all, of the project budget. If this is not the case, they should not be referred to as NIM projects.

[47] Lesson: If the GEF Agency for a project is expected to provide any execution support, clearly specify this in the LOA and also specify the costs associated with providing such support.

[48] Lesson: Assign costs related to execution support provided by GEF Agencies to NIM projects to Project Management Costs (PMC) rather than distributing these costs across project components.

[49] Lesson: Preparing for MTRs and TEs takes time. It is very important that the "Project Information Package" be shared in a timely fashion and that it is comprehensive and well organized.

Some Lessons Related to Systemic Issues Not Specific to this Project but which Affected this Project

[50] Lesson: Results Frameworks may not be the most appropriate for use in biodiversity projects. Although they may work well for monitoring and reporting on more quantitative types of projects (e.g., POPs), the use of RFs has been shown to be problematic in many GEF-financed biodiversity projects. UNDP and the GEF should consider a different tool for monitoring and evaluating the progress and impact of biodiversity projects.

[51] Lesson: The GEF should consider providing a greater level of funding at project concept/project preparation grant (PPG) stage. A bigger investment "up front" is likely to yield better project results.

[52] Lesson: With the exception of a single rating of "Satisfactory", this project received ratings that were less than satisfactory for both Implementation Progress (IP) and for progress towards the achievement of the Development Objective (DO) for every year for which PIRs were completed. Likewise, the ratings assigned by the MTR only assigned one "Satisfactory" rating to the project. Ratings subsequent to the MTR did not significantly improve. Although this evaluation – the evaluation of the largest donor-supported biodiversity project undertaken in the country's history – has not yet concluded, the concept for the next GEF-supported biodiversity project has already been approved. It is difficult to see how the lessons from this project experience can be incorporated into the design and formulation of the next project if that project is being designed even before the TE for the last project is completed. If there is serious intent to learn lessons from past project experiences, the GEFSEC should give careful consideration to how this can best happen when it approves new projects in the same GEF Focal area before ongoing projects are completed and evaluations for those become available.

1.4 Recommendations Summary Table

[53] The Project ends 6 weeks/months from now on 31st December 2021. Therefore, the Terminal Evaluation (TE) recommendations mainly relate to follow-on actions that could help to ensure that the foundation set by this project is further built upon, that the project investment is not lost where further actions are required to sustain what has been achieved to date in relation to the project's expected outcomes, and that lessons may be learned and incorporated into future initiatives.

Table 3. Recommendation Summary Table

Rec #	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time-frame
1	Strengthen the criteria for designation as an OECM to make these criteria stricter to enable greater correspondence with internationally recognized standards for OECMs. Some of the areas designated as OECM under this project may not legitimately qualify as such if guidelines/criteria for designation were more rigorous and the application of those criteria were also more rigorously applied. There are some newly designated OECMs for example where dagga (marijuana) is illegally being cultivated. Strengthen the OECM committee (the committee responsible for deciding if a site should be designated as an OECM or not) with more relevant technical expertise in the field of biodiversity conservation. At present, institutional representation is a primary consideration for inclusion on the committee whereas, this not being a political but rather a technical committee, the primary consideration should be technical background. Put in place additional assurance that OECMs and other formal (but not gazetted) PAs will not convert land to non-biodiversity compatible uses.	Eswatini OECM Committee with support from IUCN and other national technical experts in the field of biodiversity including those that may be associated with the University of Eswatini	2022

	Put in place a monitoring system for OECMs to monitor long-term compliance with non-conversion to non-biodiversity conservation compatible uses.		

2	The newly established Landscape Associations (LAs) need further assistance to become truly operational and meaningful. Without such support, there is high risk that they will become forums without action. The following actions should be taken to help ensure the LAs truly contribute to on-the-ground collaborative conservation action:
	   a) Assist each of the LAs to further refine the priority actions they will focus on (what specific collaborative efforts will they undertake; what agreements will they pursue between the various landowners in the landscape related to fence removal, encouraging free-ranging wildlife, Access-Benefit Sharing agreements between PLOs and adjacent communities, etc.).
	   b) Facilitate access to SGP funding for the LAs. Such funding should be to support actions, not meetings. It is good that the SGP is already in touch with the LAs to discuss sustainability.
	   c) Wherever relevant, include activities in future donor-supported projects to support LAs in implementing their priority on-the-ground collaborative actions (e.g., IAPS control, re-introduction of wildlife, schemes to compensate landowners for losses incurred related to reducing livestock numbers that result in increasing wildlife numbers, etc.).
		a) NPM to discuss with each of the LAs and to include results in his project Terminal Report
		b) SGP
		c) ENTC
			2021-2022

3	The LC & the new Lubombo LA should meet with the assistance of a facilitator from the Project (such as the NPM) to discuss whether the LA is redundant/needed or not and a final decision in this regard should be taken to avoid confusion in future between the two entities. Duplication with the existing Lubombo Conservancy (LC) should be avoided. If the main difference between the existing LC and the newly formed LA is that the later would have greater geographic coverage, this, in the opinion of the TE is not adequate justification to pursue the new LA. Creating a yet bigger umbrella when the existing umbrella is not fully functional does not seem to be the best solution. The approach adopted by the LC is a good model of a landscape approach to conservation which has struggled over the years to become more operational in part for lack of adequate funding. Establishing a new, larger entity may actually detract from the ability of the LC to strengthen its efforts as it may create both confusion and competition for limited funding. The TE recommends that careful consideration be given to whether further effort should be made to pursue the new LA for Lubombo or whether it should be dropped and effort made instead to further strengthen the existing LC. Such discussions should take place with the members of both the existing LC as well as the members of the new LA for Lubombo.	Lubombo Conservancy & the new Lubombo LA with a facilitator from SNPAS (such as the NPM).	By project end
4	The initiative undertaken to support women to harvest reeds from wetlands and to charge a levy which is then re-invested in the protection of those wetlands is an excellent example of a CBNRM initiative that directly contributes to conserving biodiversity. Build further on the project's successes in wetlands to ensure strengthening of nascent activities and replication of these successes at other wetlands within the 3 landscapes: a. Encourage and support exchanges between women members of Wetland Management Committees from communities where wetlands management plans have been developed so that successful initiatives in some wetlands can be undertaken in others.	MTAD through its community development officers and with support from the Regional Development Funds and the SGP	2022

	b. Support in-school activities in communities where wetlands exist to increase awareness regarding the importance of wetlands and actions that can be taken to protect them (fencing, alternative watering and washing areas, reduction of livestock stocking rates, and other means) c. Further support nascent entrepreneurial activities undertaken by women based on extraction of resources from wetlands so that this can be replicated in other communities for more women to benefit and for the economic benefit they derive to be more significant. (A total of only approximately 30 women in only one community – Khalangilile -- are currently engaged in this activity which is harvesting of reeds to make into handicrafts and other products for sale. The economic benefit they currently derive from this is small. 30 women derived a total of E588 in 2020 and 22 women derived a total E491 in 2021, which is equivalent to approximately US$40/year. Local women pay a small levy (E5) to harvest reeds in the wetland and women from outside the community pay a higher levy (E20). The revenue generated from the fee is reinvested into maintaining fencing to protect the wetland and to control IAPS in the wetland area. d. Showcase nascent entrepreneurial activities undertaken by women based on deriving economic benefits from protected wetlands by including these in Environment Day and other national events.		
5	The reintroduction of some wildlife species for the purpose of trialing game ranching within communal PAs should be further considered. Game ranching was described in the PRODOC as an alternative livelihood but was never pursued by the project. The legislative environment that exists in the country made this a difficult process to pursue. For example, the Game Act which could have facilitated for this is held by a private body that has complete control over how it is administered. The project anticipated the passing of the ENTC Bill. The relevant entities should meet to discuss the possibility of providing the necessary support to trial game ranching on one communal PA. Trialing game ranching on communal lands will require a significant investment (in terms of community buy-in/commitment, financial subsidies, and technical support). It is not realistic to assume game ranching will be viable in the short term. Such an initiative will require long-term support and should be trialled on one communal PA to begin with. Criteria for deciding on the most appropriate place to do so should be developed as a first step. Such criteria may include, for example, communal land adjoining an existing conserved area, level of community interest/buy in, logistical considerations related to wildlife reintroductions, habitat condition, logistical considerations related to game processing possibilities, etc..	ENTC and BGP and MTAD	2022
6	The project invested GEF funds in the purchase of equipment, some of which is not working (e.g., biofuel briquette making machine) and some of which is not being used in the best way to support on-the-ground conservation (e.g., project-purchased vehicles are not stationed in PAs where they are needed to implement PA management activities described in the PA management plans developed with support of this project). The following actions should be taken: a) Three of the vehicles purchased by the Project should be kept full-time in the 3 landscapes supported by the project and can either be attached to the Landscape Associations or to the ENTC-managed	ENTC with monitoring by the PMU until project end and follow up by UNDP CO	By project end

	PAs for use by the Park Wardens to implement PA conservation activities within and around the PAs. None of these vehicles should be kept at Lobamba (ENTC headquarters) where they are now being kept. b) The project purchased a machine intended to produce fuel briquettes from IAPS. This machine is not operational and has not been since it was purchased. The project committed to making a viable business from this that would benefit communities at landscape level. The project should ensure the machine is operational before project closure and that follow up is ensured to put the business venture in place and to become operational (as was planned and budgeted for in this project). c) Water troughs were purchased for some ENTC PAs (e.g., Mlawula Nature Reserve) to encourage dispersion of wildlife during drought to prevent degradation of the environment around the few remaining water holes. These have not been used because the water tanker is not operational to take water to the troughs. Government of Eswatini should invest in repairing the water tanker. Adequate funds for fuel should be included in budgets of each of the ENTC managed areas to ensure this investment is not lost.		
7	Ensure the following activities which have not yet been fully completed are completed by project end: complete the Luzelweni eco-lodge rondavel, ensure Shewula bee hives are set up and operational, ensure Shewula fencing is complete, ensure Mahamba bee hives are set up and operational, ensure rabbits are acquired for Mhlumeni.	PMU to oversee	By project end
8	The project invested GEF funds in building and restoring infrastructure, some of which has not yet been completed and some of which has not served the intended purpose of contributing to BD conservation. The following actions should be taken: a) MTAD to facilitate the CDTs to access the funds of RDFs to fortify/finalise the pending activities (e.g. finalizing structures, purchasing required equipment or required inputs, and compiling needed business/management plans); b) Capacitate the same communities (through skills development or reinforcement) in order to mobilize resources and forge partnerships to carry out and successfully income generating activities; c) Devise (in close consultation with the communities on the ground) more viable and sustainable alternative livelihood options that are long term oriented to counter the temptation to venture in the cultivation of illegal substances triggered by unemployment and poverty; d) Link the communities involved in ecotourism with national or international interested partners (e.g., NGOs who as in the case of the Mhlumeni Bush Camp can help to market and bring clients to the Eco lodges).	MTAD	2022-2023
9	Provide the necessary training and technical support as well as the necessary financial support required to *capacitate* communities to conserve biodiversity on their communal PAs and to enable these communities to *implement on-the-ground actions* to conserve biodiversity within communal PAs.	Conservation Fund if/when becomes operational should provide	2022-2023

	This project was intended in part to enhance on-the-ground conservation, including on communal lands – i.e., to enhance conservation <u>within</u> community conservation areas/protected areas. In practice, however, other than the activities related to wetlands on communal lands and those related to fencing of CCAs, project activities on communal lands mostly focused on activities <u>*outside*</u> of PAs (i.e., enhancing infrastructure to enhance tourism opportunities, and on small-scale agricultural initiatives -- erroneously termed CBNRM). There is little conservation activity taking place within PAs on communal lands. Many such areas are devoid of many of the wildlife species that should naturally be found in them. Some have severe IAPS problems. The native biodiversity in some of these areas is threatened by the (illegal) cultivation of dagga. Livestock grazing continues to negatively impact the native biodiversity in many of these areas. Thus, there must be a focus on conservation efforts within PAs on communal lands and such efforts must include rehabilitation and restoration, and importantly, local community members must be capacitated to undertake such efforts (with outside technical support where required). Such efforts are usually quite costly and require long-term financial commitments beyond what could possibly be derived from small-scale ecotourism alone.	financial support MTAD through the Regional Development Fund	
10	Facilitate a meeting between Chiefs (from Chiefdoms for which the project supported the elaboration of CDPs and which have designated PAs) and private companies (national or multinational) with interest in supporting biodiversity conservation and raising their profile as "green" companies. The purpose of the meeting would be to bring Chiefs and private sector together to facilitate the search for funding for the initiatives described in the recommendations in this Table related to communal lands. Consideration should be given to resuscitating partnerships that were already established but affected by the project suspension such as that with Montigny. There were also indications of interest from neighbouring PAs, at least in the Ngwempisi cluster to support community areas, i.e. Mantini Game Reserve was interested in supporting surrounding communities and communal PAs	Eswatini Investment Promotion Agency (EIPA), MTEA, Chiefs, private companies	2022
11	BGP withdrew from this project soon after project launch. This had major implications for the project. The project has now undergone a TE in which lessons are identified for future investments. The TE tried unsuccessfully to interview BGP as a key stakeholder in this project (as the originally planned primary RP and also as a key conservation player in the country). The TET understands that BGP and ENTC have recently begun to collaborate on another large biodiversity project which adopts a landscape approach. That project is being designed before the TE for this project is completed. A meeting should be convened to ensure the findings and lessons emanating from this project are shared and discussed to ensure the new project builds on the experience of this project.	ENTC, BGP, Private companies involved in the new initiative	During planning stage of the new initiative

12	In order to facilitate access to the knowledge base generated during the course of the Project, undertake the following:
	    a. Upload all technical documents produced with project support onto the biodiversity portal.
	    b. Support/equip the Landscape Associations to access the GIS Portal/platform, and to use available information.
	    c. Promote and uphold institutional memory through documents digital archiving for transmitting the lessons learned for future programming.
		PMU	By project end

| 13 | The GEF Secretariat (GEFSEC) should be contacted to determine what if any course of action may be required as a result of deviations from the approved PRODOC which were pursued by the project as described in this report. Due to the early withdrawal from the Project of the primary "Responsible Party", the project lost a very significant percent of the co-financing that had been committed (and in part on which the GEFSEC approved the project), and did not undertake as originally planned, numerous activities committed in the CEO endorsed document (activities 1.3.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 3.2.3, 3.3.2, 3.4.2). In addition to the change in co-financing and the change in scope of work resulting from the withdrawal of the planned primary RP from the project early on in the project, the project's inappropriate pursuit of an alternative project strategy (which was not congruous with the CEO endorsed document) cost the project funds and time -- funds and time which should have been spent pursuing the activities described in the approved PRODOC. The GEFSEC was never approached for advice (as the TE believes it should have been), regarding such major changes from the GEF-approved PRODOC. Even though this is now the end of this project, the GEFSEC should still be approached for advice on what, if anything, should now be done. | OFP UNDP | By Project end |

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

[54] The evaluation was initiated by UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency for this project in accordance with evaluation requirements set forth by the GEF. UNDP and GEF Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) policies and procedures require that all full-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE). The purpose of conducting a TE is "to promote accountability and transparency; to synthesize lessons that can help to improve the selection, design and implementation of future UNDP-supported GEF-financed initiatives; and to improve the sustainability of benefits and aid in overall enhancement of UNDP programming; to assess and document project results, and the contribution of these results towards achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits; and to gauge the extent of project convergence with other priorities within the UNDP country programme, including poverty alleviation; strengthening resilience to the impacts of climate change, reducing disaster risk and vulnerability, as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, empowering women and supporting human rights". In accordance with the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the TE, the TE report assessed the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

2.2 Scope of the Evaluation

[55] The focus of the TE is a single UNDP-supported, GEF-financed project, "Strengthening the National Protected Area System of Swaziland". The geographic focus of the project within the country is on three "landscapes", the Lubombo, the Ngwempisi and the Malolotja. The project consists of three components and the scope of the TE encompasses all components.

2.3 Methodology for Data Collection and Analysis

[56] The evaluation was conducted by one International Consultant/Team Leader (IC/TL) and one National Consultant (NC) intermittently over a three-month period extending from 24 August 2021 to 19 November 2021, beginning approximately four months before anticipated project operational closure and approximately two years and eight months after the Mid-Term Review (MTR) was concluded in December 2018. The Team Leader was given 20 work days to complete the TE, whilst the NC was given 30 work days. Travel to the country for the IC/TL was not possible due to the global COVID – 19 pandemic, thus, the NC undertook the visits to project sites. A total of 6 days were spent visiting project sites.

[57] The TE was conducted in accordance with the "UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-financed Projects (July, 2020)", and the "*GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*", and in line with GEF principles including impartiality, transparency, and participation. The TE sought to provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. In this regard, the Terminal Evaluation Team (TET) followed a participatory and consultative approach, and used a variety of evaluation instruments including:

[58] Evaluation Matrix: An evaluation matrix was developed based on the set of questions covering the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact which were included in the TOR for the TE and which were amended by the TET to be most useful to this particular TE. The matrix (presented in Annex 2) served as a general guide for the interviews conducted by the TET.

[59] Documentation Review: The TET reviewed documents including the project document (PRODOC), project reports including all annual APR/PIRs, the project budget, procurement plan, the Mid-Term Review (MTR) report, the GEF Tracking Tools prepared by the project, project files, Project Board and Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting minutes, policy and national strategy documents, and other relevant documents. A list of documentation reviewed by the TET is included as Annex 3 to this report.

[60] Interviews: Interviews were conducted with more than 40 stakeholders. Several of these meetings took place with small groups such as, for example, with community members and Community Conservation Trust Committees who had participated in project activities. Many interviews took place virtually (via Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp) when in-person interviews were not possible. The complete list of stakeholders interviewed is included in Annex 3.

[61] Project Visits: The NC on the TE Team visited 9 project sites including sites in all three landscapes. Annex 4 is a detailed list of all sites visited.

[62] Sources of information included documents (as described above and as detailed in the annex of documents reviewed), and consultations with a wide range of stakeholders (as described above and as detailed in the annex of stakeholders consulted). Stakeholders consulted were selected to ensure that representatives of all key stakeholders and beneficiaries were consulted. Information obtained from these sources was intended to address questions outlined in the Evaluation Criteria Matrix as well as other questions which arose during the course of the evaluation. In order to ensure maximum validity and reliability of data, the TET triangulated the various data sources by asking the same questions to at least three different stakeholders and often asking the same question, posed in a different way, to individual stakeholders.

[63] Terminal Evaluation Mission Itinerary: The TE mission itinerary is presented in Annex 5.

2.3.1 Evaluation Criteria and Ratings

[64] In accordance with GEF guidelines for project evaluations, achievement ratings as well as sustainability and relevance ratings were assigned by the Terminal Evaluation Team (TET) using the GEF ratings scale (Annex 1). The TET rated project achievements and outcomes according to the GEF project review criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Results and Sustainability), using the obligatory GEF ratings of: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). A full description of these ratings and other GEF rating scales is provided in Annex 1. The TET also rated various dimensions of sustainability of project outcomes using the GEF obligatory rating scale of: Likely (L), Moderately Likely (ML), Moderately Unlikely (MU), and, Unlikely (U).

2.4 Ethics and Code of Conduct Adhered to by the Terminal Evaluation Team

[65] The TE Team reviewed and agreed to adhere to the UNEG "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations". The "Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct and Agreement Form" signed by both members of the TE Team is attached as Annex 6.

2.5 Limitations of the Evaluation

[66] There were several limitations which affected the evaluation: 1) The IC/TETL did not participate in the site visits due to COVID-related travel restrictions. Thus, the NC undertook the site visits alone. As many of the sites lacked connectivity or the fora did not lend to virtual participation by the IC, the IC did not participate in these interviews conducted during site visits with intended beneficiaries2. 2) Due to the COVID-19 situation in the country and the civil unrest and related security concerns, site visits were kept short, avoiding overnight stays whenever possible. 3) There had been high turnover in key project-related positions including in the UNDP CO and the UNDP RTA, the PMU and the Implementing Partner (ENTC), resulting in the TE having to interview several individuals who may have held the same position at different times and in some cases, it was not possible for the TE to reach certain individuals who had played key roles earlier on in the project. 4) The TE did not interview BGP (an attempt was made to do so but BGP did not respond to the request). Thus, the TE did not gain first-hand the perspectives of the entity originally planned to be the primary "Responsible Party" for the project and a key conservation player in the country. 5) The RTA for the project was on extended leave and UNDP had not assigned anyone to be "Acting RTA" in her absence. Thus, the TE was unable to gain first-hand the perspectives of the RTA. After repeated attempts to gain information from the RTA, the RTA contacted the TE but that was after the deadline for submission of the draft report and by that very late stage it was not possible for the TE to incorporate information into the draft so the TET suggested that the RTA share comments on the draft report once submitted. 6) Some documents that would normally be included in the project information package (to be shared with the TET immediately after contracting) were not shared until several weeks/months after the TE was initiated and these were not shared in the organized fashion which

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[2] The IC did engage (virtually) in all other interviews with stakeholders.

had been requested by the TE, making it extremely cumbersome to locate documents and in some cases meaning that some key documents that should have been shared early on during the evaluation were not shared until close to the end. The MTR reported experiencing similar difficulties and actually undertook two missions in part because of the difficulty in accessing relevant information/documents. 7) The International Consultant (who also served as the Team Leader) was contracted for only 20 days whereas the National Consultant was contracted for 30 days. There are several issues with this. Twenty days to conduct a TE of a project that has experienced significant problems and has been classified as a project "in transition and re-alignment" is simply not sufficient. Contracting the Team Leader for fewer days than the National Consultant does not make sense, especially in the case where this is the first GEF project evaluation in which the NC has participated. 9) Civil unrest in the country caused logistical difficulties for the TE during part of the evaluation. 10) This was the first TE of a GEF project that the UNDP CO had been engaged in since the guidance on how to conduct TEs had been published by UNDP in 2020. The TE Team Leader (TL) had in several instances to remind the UNDP CO of the new guidance regarding the conduct TEs (e.g., at start of TE, the TE TL asked the UNDP CO who the TE Manager was. The UNDP Programme Officer (PO) responsible for the Project responded that he was the TE Manager. The TE TL responded that would not be in accordance with UNDP guidance. The UNDP CO then appointed the appropriate person as TE Manager. The UNDP CO had planned to only involve UNDP and the PMU in the TE presentation of preliminary findings. The TE TL explained it was more normal to invite all key stakeholders. This was then done. The TET requested a meeting with UNDP to discuss the draft inception report. Neither the TE Manager nor the UNDP PO responsible for the project participated in this important meeting, asking the SGP Manager (who, had no role in this project) to do so instead. As, essentially, no RTA was in place during the TE, the Regional Office of UNDP in Addis asked the UNDP CO – the PO responsible for the project – to respond on their behalf to questions posed to the RTA. This is poor practice as, although both the UNDP CO and the UNDP RTA and the UNDP Regional Offices are all part of UNDP, they are distinct for the purposes of evaluation interviews as they are supposed to serve to provide additional layers of oversight and support.) UNDP, not the TET, should be guiding the TE process to ensure correct practices (in accordance with UNDP and GEF policies and practices) are followed during any evaluation.

[67] It is interesting to note that many of the challenges faced by the TET in conducting the TE were the same as those that had been faced by the MTR. The MTR report indicates, for example, " …challenges that compromised the effectiveness of the MTR emerged, including: The project team had not managed to fill in the required tables and matrices (progress to results, and financial data) ahead of the mission, and this task fell to the evaluators to carry out during and after the mission; this meant that the mission was conducted without a complete picture of the current state of delivery of the project. During the in-country mission it became apparent that some critical documents relating to project implementation had not been made available in the DropBox folder (though they had been requested), were which meant that the interviews and site visits were conducted without a proper knowledge or understanding of all relevant issues. Consolidated financial records were not available beforehand, and the figures that were present during the first mission were confusing". It is clear that UNDP did not learn lessons related to preparing for evaluations from the MTR experience and repeated many of the same shortcomings in the TE.

[68] Finally, a lesson might be learned by UNDP based on both the MTR and TE experiences related to this project. The MTR report makes reference to a DropBox that had been set up to share documents. It is unfortunate that a system was not put in place at that time (looking ahead to the eventual TE and the need to have all relevant documentation up until the time of the MTR as well as post MTR available for

the TE Team) to keep all relevant project documentation organized on a single Drive. It is also noteworthy that the MTR Team had to undertake 2 missions (instead of the originally planned and more normal single mission) to enable them to gather the necessary information needed for their evaluation. The TE did not have that option. As it stands, it is the MTR TL, rather than UNDP, who appears to have the most comprehensive documentation of the project – at least up until that time. This is not the way it is supposed to be.

2.6 Structure of this Report

[69] This terminal evaluation report documents the achievements, successes, shortcomings and constraints encountered by the project and includes four sections as required in the standard TOR for terminal evaluations. Section 1 is the executive summary. Section 2 briefly describes the purpose, scope, methodology and limitations of the evaluation. Section 3 presents an overview of the project. Section 4 presents the key findings of the evaluation related to project design, implementation, and results and impacts. Conclusions, recommendations and lessons are presented in Section 5. Annexes are found at the end of the report. The TE Audit Trail and TE Tracking Tools are annexed in a separate file.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 Project Start, Duration & Other Milestones

Preparation Grant Approved (PIF approved):	4 February 2011 (Re-submitted 10/09/12)
CEO Endorsement:	2 July 2014
Start Date (PRODOC signed by Government)	22 October 2014
Project Inception Workshop:	4 June 2015
Midterm Review:	31 August 2018
Closing Date:	31 December 2021
Terminal Evaluation:	30 October 2021

3.2 Development Context

[70] To avoid duplication of effort, the description of the development context in which the project operates is taken from the PRODOC (2014), and the MTR report (Dr Mandy Cadman, International Consultant/Team Leader, Dr. Nicollete Mhlanga-Ndlovu, National Consultant, 2018) in which it was adequately described.

Environmental Context
[71] According to the MTR, "The Kingdom of Eswatini's endowment of biological riches is disproportionate to the country's size. With a land area of only 17, 364 km2 – a little smaller than the Kruger National Park in neighbouring South Africa – the Kingdom lies at the interface of four physiographic regions, and exhibits a high diversity of ecosystem types that span montane grasslands, forests (montane, riparian and dry types), savanna-woodland mosaics (highland and lowland types), and a diversity of freshwater systems (such as wetlands, marshes, streams and rivers). These ecosystems are home to biodiversity of global and

regional significance, including a diverse array of plant and animal species – a notable proportion of which are rare or threatened, especially in landscapes that are not formally protected or actively managed for conservation. The country exhibits one of the largest intact altitudinal gradients of natural ecosystems in Southern Africa, and is the only place where this gradient occurs across a relatively short distance (about 200 kms). Eswatini's natural ecosystems provide resources, ecological infrastructure and ecosystem services that are essential for addressing issues such as food and water security, poverty alleviation and livelihood creation, and building greater socio-ecological resilience, especially in the face of climate change and economic hardships. The ecological health of three major transboundary river systems (the Komati, Mbuluzi and Maputo), depends heavily on how natural landscapes are managed in Eswatini, with implications for national, regional and international water security. The country's grasslands and savannas serve as rangelands, and, with about 50% of land used for extensive communal grazing, 12% for subsistence agriculture, and a further 19% for commercial ranching, these landscapes are critical for supporting local livelihoods, food security and economic development. Despite their global, national and local significance, Eswatini's biodiversity assets are currently under-protected and are being placed at risk by land degradation, unsustainable land-use practices, land-use conflicts, weak regulation and enforcement, and other burgeoning socio-economic and environmental pressures".

Protected areas in Eswatini

[72] "To date, the legally gazetted protected area estate of Swaziland has accounted for only 3.918 percent[3] of the country's land surface. The protected area network includes six national parks and at least 20 other private and communal conservation areas, both formal and informal – some of these have made a critically important contribution to restoring viable populations of previously threatened and even locally-extinct species. Despite this, the protected area network is not fully representative of the country's ecological diversity, and protected areas occur largely as small, disconnected 'islands', surrounded by heavily-modified production or settled landscapes. Several of Swaziland's protected areas are also under-resourced, lack the technical capacity and scientific knowledge-base to enable effective management, and are vulnerable to variety of pressures that place their ecological integrity and financial sustainability at high risk. Outside of protected areas, the ecological integrity of natural landscapes is compromised by land degradation, habitat loss and fragmentation caused by unsustainable practices (such as over-harvesting, over-grazing, illegal hunting and poorly-located infrastructural and other developments), the impacts of invasive alien species (which have been declared by His Majesty, King Mswati III, as a national disaster), and the effects of climate change. These drivers of change are exacerbated by issues such as limited economic opportunities for the largely rural population (who rely mostly on subsistence agriculture or livestock keeping for their livelihoods), poverty, and food insecurity, which sometimes forces people to adopt coping responses that cause biodiversity loss, damage to ecosystems and a decline in the productive capacity of land. Land use" (MTR, 2018)

Socio-Economic Context

[73] According to the PRODOC (2014), "Swaziland's population is estimated at 1,093,158 with an annual growth rate of 2.7%. The population of Swaziland may be divided into 76% rural and 24% urban. Some 75% of the population practice subsistence farming and 63% of the population live on less than the equivalent of US$1.25 per day. Economically, Swaziland depends heavily on South Africa from which it

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[3] There is a variance between this figure which is based on calculations made by the TE with information provided in the Q2 report prepared by the PMU in which legally gazetted area is estimated to be 4.26%.

receives more than 90% of its imports and to which it sends 60% of its exports. Swaziland's currency is pegged to the South African rand, effectively subsuming Swaziland's monetary policy to South Africa. The government is heavily dependent on customs duties from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), and worker remittances from South Africa supplement domestically earned income.

[74] Swaziland's economy is diversified, with agriculture, forestry and mining accounting for about 13% of GDP, manufacturing (textiles and sugar-related processing) representing 37% of GDP and services – with government services in the lead – constituting 50% of GDP. Title Deed Lands (TDLs), where the bulk of high value crops are grown (sugar, forestry, and citrus) are characterized by high levels of investment and irrigation, and high productivity. Nevertheless, the majority of the population – about 75%is employed in subsistence agriculture on Swazi Nation Land (SNL), which, in contrast, suffers from low productivity and investment. This dual nature of the Swazi economy, with high productivity in textile manufacturing and in the industrialized agricultural TDLs on the one hand, and declining productivity subsistence agriculture (on SNL) on the other, may well explain the country's overall low growth, high inequality and unemployment with unemployment estimated at 40%".

Institutional and Policy Context
[75] According to the MTR (2018), "The institutional context for governance and management of land and natural resources in Eswatini is relatively complex. There is a dual land tenure system in which about 30% of the country's land surface is under Title Deed Land (TDL), and the remaining 70% falls under Swazi Nation Land (SNL) – which is held in trust for the nation by the King, and is accessed by communities under the leadership of Chiefs. The distribution of land uses and exploitation of natural resources varies according to the land-tenure system. Swazi Nation Land is used largely for subsistence farming, which is practiced by some 75% of the population, whilst Title Deed Land is under a variety of land uses including commercial agriculture, industrial development, commercial ranching; plantation forestry, and nature conservation. Administratively, the country is divided into four regions (Hhohho, Lubombo, Shiselweni, and Manzini). Each region is divided into local government administration centres called 'Tinkhundla', which are, in turn divided into Chiefdoms (Umiphakatsi), which are under traditional governance. Responsibility for land-use planning, management and protection of natural resources is spread among a number of different government ministries, and other state (or parastatal) agencies, and is governed by several different pieces of legislation.

[76] In areas under communal use, traditional forms of land-use governance are practiced. Responsibility for biodiversity management is distributed across five key national institutions: the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs (MTEA) and two of its public entities – the Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC) and the Swaziland Environmental Authority (SEA); the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA); and Big Game Parks (BGP), under mandate of the King's Office). SNTC and BGP are primarily responsible for matters related to protected areas (among other mandates), while the SEA and MoA carry responsibility for mainstreaming biodiversity considerations into land-use decisions outside of the PA network, and for promoting community based natural resource management (CBNRM)."

3.3 Problems the Project Sought to Address: Threats and Barriers Targeted

[77] According to the PRODOC, under national level threats, land degradation, fragmentation of habitats, invasive alien species (IAS), and rapid degradation of the biological resources are the key challenges to be addressed by the country. In addition, ever increasing poverty, particularly in the rural areas, and population growth is resulting in the rapid degradation of Swaziland's biodiversity in a vicious cycle of declining availability. Over-grazing, climate change, and Hunting and Poaching are also listed under this category of threats. The second category includes the threats facing protected areas. They include unplanned development and poor management of PAs, unsustainable harvesting, land use conflict, and climate change.

[78] The PRODOC states that the "long-term solution to these threats which was to adopt a landscape conservation paradigm that allows a broader range of stakeholders to work together to manage biodiversity more effectively. Under this approach, Protected Areas (PAs) will be established and managed in critical biodiversity areas as clusters—different sites managed by the State, private landowners and SNL communities in proximity to one another. These PAs will need to be managed as part of a matrix of land uses across landscapes that allow biodiversity management objectives to be integrated in the strategies, production practices and decisions of a range of land and resource users occupying land immediately adjacent to PAs (and between them—so as to maintain functional corridors)".

3.4 Immediate and Development Objectives of the Project

[79] The PRODOC states that, "the project objective is to effectively expand, manage and develop Swaziland's protected area network in order to adequately protect the biodiversity and landscapes of the country. This will involve devising a system of integrating land and natural resource management that transforms the current PA patchwork into a protected areas network, while creating incentives for all Swazis (land management agencies, conservancies, private landowners and tourism operators) to work together toward conservation and sustainable economic development. This project addresses multiple priorities for the development of a mainstreaming approach to biodiversity conservation and responds to the NBSAP. In order to achieve the project goal and objective, the project's interventions have been organized in three components:

- Component 1: Knowledge based platform operationalized at the National and regional level to address current and emerging threats to PAs and biodiversity conservation.
- Component 2: Landscape approach operationalized and leads to expansion of PA network.
- Component 3: Strengthening PA functioning through improved Conservation management and Operational support for existing and new PAs, including both formal and informal PAs".

3.5 Theory of Change & Expected Results

[80] The PRODOC did not include an explicit Theory of Change (there was no requirement for this at the time). Nevertheless, according to the MTR (2018), "the description of the project rationale and the GEF alternative to the baseline scenario (in the PRODOC) lay the foundation for an implicit Theory of Change".

Expected project results are described in the PRODOC. The project is divided into three components (See Section 3.4). The project's Results Frameworks (original and revised) are included as Annex 7.

3.6 Main Stakeholders: Summary List

[81] The main stakeholders involved in the Project were Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs (MTEA), Swaziland/Eswatini National Trust Commission (SNTC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Swaziland/Eswatini Tourism Authority (STA), Eswatini Environment Authority (EEA), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Lubombo Conservancy, Swaziland Game Ranchers Association, All Out Africa, private land owners with conservation areas, communities living on Swazi Nation Land, Ministry of Tinkhundla and Development (MTAD), Eswatini Water and Agriculture Development Enterprise (ESWADE), University of Eswatini (UNESWA), Swaziland Enterprise Development Corporation (SEDCO), National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), Participatory Ecology Land Use Management (PELUM), TENVELO, LULOTE, Swaziland Fair Trade (SWIFT). More detailed information regarding planned stakeholder involvement (as per the PRODOC) is found in Section 4.1.4, and an analysis of the planned versus actual stakeholder involvement is found in Section 4.2.2.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Project Design/Formulation

4.1.1 Analysis of Results Framework

[82] The design of a good RF is key to project success and serves as an essential foundation for monitoring and evaluating a project. The Results Framework was analyzed thoroughly as part of the MTR which recommended that the RF be modified. The MTR provided very detailed advice regarding how the RF should be modified which is copied below for ease of reference.

"MTR Recommendation 1.1: Strengthen the indicator/target framework and the refine the articulation of some outcomes and outputs, as follows:

a) Define a comprehensive set of *impact-level indicators at objective and outcome level*, with realistic targets.

At objective level, the following are recommended:
o Increase in extent of land brought under effective conservation management, according to OECM or IUCN Green Listing Standards (with time-bound, geographically specific targets set)
o Improvement in financial sustainability of PAs, as measured by increased Financial Sustainability Scorecard scores (or other suitable indicators drawn from the SNPAS PA Financial Sustainability Strategy)
o Improved PA management effectiveness, as measured by increased METT scores (or other objective criteria for measuring PA management effectiveness, drawn from PA management plans)

o Improved systemic and institutional capacity for PA management and planning, measured using the Capacity Development Scorecard (or other suitable criteria)

b) Refine the articulation of indicators and outputs under Component 2 to reflect a shift in approach from expanding the protected area estate through gazettement, to placing land and active conservation management, in compliance with international criteria for Other Effective Conservation Measures (with revision to Indicators 2.1 and 2.2).

c) Focus future activities in three landscape clusters – Lubombo, Ngwempisi and Malolotja, (with selected interventions implemented at Mantenga Reserve and occasionally elsewhere, if indicated) – selecting sets of interventions that are best suited to the opportunities presented in these landscapes (all outcomes do not have to be delivered in all clusters and 'one size does not fit all').

d) Ensure direct alignment between strategic priorities identified at the Strategic Planning Workshop in 2017, with the outcomes in the refined PRODOC SRF, and the integrated plan for delivery, discussed below." (MTR, 2018)

[83] The TE agrees with the comprehensive MTR assessment of the original RF and therefore will not re-analyze the *original* RF.   We focus our analysis on the *revised* RF.

[84] The Management Response to the MTR recommendations indicated agreement with the need to modify the original RF ("Management Response 5: Agree with recommendation 5 to be undertaken in conjunction with Recommendation #1").

[85] The revised RF does not, in the opinion of the TE, represent a significant improvement from the original with few exceptions. Although the MTR made very detailed recommendations regarding how the RF should be revised (see above), very little of this advice was adopted. The revised RF would have been much stronger, had that advice been taken.

[86] The revised RF can be found in Annex 7. It is without date and with no indication of the author. It appears to be a proposal, indicating, "Below is a revised results framework for your review and clearance". Notwithstanding, this was the official "revised RF" shared with the TE by UNDP as part of the Project Information Package. According to UNDP, the revised RF was officially approved by the Project Board. The TE could find no reference to this in its review of PB meeting minutes. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the revised RF was used to report on in the "progress" column of the PIRs while maintaining the original RF structure, including the original indicators and targets. This is very confusing and poor practice and does not allow for proper reporting on either the original RF or the revised RF. This should not have been allowed by the UNDP CO, and certainly the UNDP RTA should have rectified this right away following the revision of the RF. Nevertheless, it went unchecked until project end. The TE was informed by UNDP that even though, according to them, the revised RF was officially approved by the PB, it was never officially changed in the UNDP system. No explanation for this was provided despite several inquiries by the TE. As per the MTR, "The UNDP CO Programme Specialist is responsible for ensuring that the revised SRF is submitted for approval by the RTA, the RCS in Addis Ababa and UNDP-GEF-HQ".

[87] Although the TE analysis focuses on the revised, rather than the original RF, we include an assessment of the statement of the project objective as we believe this was poorly worded and contributed to

confusion. The objective is stated as, "To effectively expand, manage and develop Swaziland's protected area network in order to adequately protect the biodiversity and landscapes of the country".

- The word "develop" in the project objective is vague. Vague terms such as this one should be avoided.
- The objective as stated would suggest an exclusive focus on protected areas yet the project approach is described as a "landscape" approach which normally includes not only protected areas but the areas surrounding these. This is confusing and provides little direction as to where the project effort should be focused (on PAs within a defined "landscape", on connecting PAs through "ecological corridors" within a defined "landscape, on establishing and strengthening buffer zones on communal lands adjacent to PAs?).

[88] One good modification made in the revised RF was that it allows for counting OECMs as PAs for the purpose of reporting on the enlargement of the PA estate. This was a good and necessary modification to the RF but much was lost as a result of how it was written. It would have been better to split this into two indicators to avoid losing the focus on *effective management* of PAs, not a mere increase in their numbers. The MTR recommended that the project, "Shift the focus from gazettement of new protected areas, to bringing more land under active conservation management". Instead, the project continued to focus on adding more land to the PA estate (doing so by utilizing the OECM and Special Habitat designations) with lesser attention given to ensuring active conservation management on PAs, including those areas already designated as PAs.

[89] Revised Objective-level Indicator #1: The revised Objective-level Indicator #1 reads, "% of land under effective conservation management, according to OECM5 or IUCN Green Listing Standards6 (with time-bound, geographically specific targets set)". The revised indicator confuses an increase in the PA area with effective management of PAs by combining two separate things in a single indicator.   The reader is left to interpret if the intent is simply to have a greater % of land designated as OECM, or to have a greater % of land under effective conservation (which may have nothing to do with OECM designation). If the intent was the former, then having only one objective-level indicator related to expansion of the PA estate with no other objective-level indicator related to how effectively PAs are managed would not reflect a comprehensive picture of the stated project objective.

[90] Revised Outcome-level Indicator # 2 is, "3 Capacity Building programmes" and the revised target for this "indicator" was, "Improved PA management effectiveness, as measured by increased METT scores (or other objective criteria for measuring PA management effectiveness, drawn from PA management plans)". Given that not all of the capacity building programmes were related to PA management, the target as described would not be appropriate. It would have, however, been appropriate (and important) to include "METT scores for PAs" as an objective-level indicator in the RF, including the baseline METT scores as well as target METT scores for the various PAs included in the project. That was not done. Presenting the indicator and target as was done in the revised RF means there really is no indicator for assessing management effectiveness of PAs (even though this is wrongly presented as a target for capacity building programmes there really is no indicator related to capacity building programmes (even though there is a target for these which is presented as an indicator).

[100] Lesson: Every indicator should be described in a specific way. With this understanding, and in this context, "Number of trainings" was not an appropriately defined indicator either as an Objective-level indicator (which it originally was) and as an outcome-level indicator. The revised RF should not simply have shifted this from being an objective-level indicator to an outcome level indicator, but should have

refined the indicator. Indicators should not merely be how many/much of something was done. They should be oriented to telling the story of impact in terms of contribution to the expected result/outcome.

[101] Lesson: "Streamlined" RFs for biodiversity projects often get in the way of project success instead of contributing to it. This is true of this GEF project (and of many others evaluated by the TE TL). The translation from what is committed in a PRODOC (which is a legally binding document describing what will be done for the amount of money given to the project) to what is presented in a RF is often poor, with a loss of some of the original commitment. This the cost paid by the donors for their insistence on having neat and tidy looking RFs that are normally limited to 3 or 4 outcomes. And, although one can understand the desirability of thinking out a project in terms of what one wants to achieve and then working backwards from that (first the objective, then the definition of the outcomes, then the outputs, then the activities), in reality, projects are practical and start with the reverse. Activities first. For those who know the situation on the ground the best, they know what is needed. That should be the starting point, not a generally phrased objective and outcomes written by someone who knows how to draft GEF project documents but who may not be fully familiar with the situation on the ground. Project Managers report on progress made as per the RF, thus, anything that does not appear there is often forgotten and lost.

4.1.2 Assumptions and Risks

[102] Assumptions and risks were generally not well-articulated in the PIF and PRODOC and lacked robust analysis. Some critically important assumptions were implicit rather than explicitly described in the PRODOC and the risk that these would not hold true was also implicitly underestimated.

<u>Assumptions</u>

[103] According to the Management Response to the MTR, "Gains were not made by the project in implementing the landscape approach mainly as a result of the complicated nature of the land tenure system in Eswatini." The assumption that the "complicated nature" of the land tenure system in Eswatini would not affect the project was never explicitly described in the PRODOC. It should have been.

[104] Another implicit assumption (never explicitly described) was that the two key actors in the conservation arena in the country (ENTC and BGP) would be able to collaborate effectively on the project. Indeed, the history between the two would indicate quite the contrary (see November 2015 letter from BGP to Minister of MTEA attached as Annex 8. There was no credible basis for this critically important, yet never explicitly stated, assumption.

[105] The assumption that "knowledge-based, landscape-based PA management and sustainable financial management becomes a national priority for conservation and development" was far from the realities on the ground.

[106] The assumption that "legal gazetting of new Protected Areas is not held up in the executive or legislative branches" has not held true, with this being a major issue causing the gazettement of numerous prospective PAs not to materialize.

Risks

[107] As can be seen in Table 4 below, most risks identified at project design stage were, in the opinion of the TE, rated appropriately, with the exception of one risk which was over-rated, and one which was under-rated, both categorized as operational/strategic risks.

[108] Some risks which should have been included in the risk matrix were not, including the risk that cultivation of illegal substances (mainly dagga) within PAs would present a challenge to PAs.

Table 4. Risk Matrix with Assessment at TE

Identified Risks & Category of Risk	Risk Assessment Rating given in PRODOC	Elaboration of the Risk as presented in the PRODOC	TE Assessment
Operational Resistance by local communities to the expansion or establishment of PAs.	Medium	Communities continue to hold strong negative perceptions about PAs because in the past they have not been adequately compensated for the opportunity cost of not accessing natural products in the PAs. This might compromise the success of the community conservation areas and other forms of PAs, particularly as short-term costs may appear to be greater than benefits due to stronger enforcement elements.	Low Judging from the level of excitement of local communities regarding the establishment of CCA during the mobilization phase and the raising of awareness on biodiversity conservation, this risk was overestimated. The rating should have been "low".
Operational PA financial sustainability measures meet resistance as well as slow operationalisation.	High	Increasing sustainability of PA financing depends, to a large extent, on increasing domestic and international tourism. Swaziland has a conservative entrepreneurship culture, which might hinder increasing domestic tourism. The drive to increase international tourist numbers might also be affected by the global economic and financial down-turn. Stakeholders might also be hindered in implementing the financing measures by the limited capacity and technical support.	High TE agrees with this rating, however, additional factors other than those described in the elaboration of this risk in the PRODOC came into play including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic towards the later part of the project. Full adoption of the B. Huntley recommendations related to financial sustainability has not happened which has also hindered prospects for PA financial sustainability.
Environmental Climate change could lead to change in distribution of biodiversity.	Medium	Climate change might affect ecosystems and biodiversity negatively: Swaziland's NAPA reports that the climate is likely to get more unpredictable but certainly drier, even if the global levels of GHG stabilise at the current levels. Swaziland has in the recent past been	Medium The TE agrees with this assessment of risk even as it may have grown increasingly important over the time period of the project as scientists believe the impacts of climate change are increasingly felt.

Identified Risks & Category of Risk	Risk Assessment Rating given in PRODOC	Elaboration of the Risk as presented in the PRODOC	TE Assessment
		affected by large variations in rainfall and recurring droughts.	
Environmental & Operational Land use pressure from local communities hamper landscape based management efforts.	High	Local community and other stakeholders hamper the efforts of landscape-based management strategies due to conflicting and unsustainable land use practices that lead to further degradation. Unsustainable practices such as agriculture also expand into PAs reducing the ecosystem integrity.	High TE agrees with the assessment of this risk. Due in large part to poverty experienced on communal lands and the disparity of available natural and other resources to those living on communal lands compared to those adjacent landowners with title deed land who have designated part or all of their land as conservation area, there are significant pressures on title deed lands related to poaching (primarily to obtain meat for both consumption and for sale), agricultural encroachment (to have sufficient land to farm to produce for self-consumption), and encroachment for the purpose of growing marijuana (for sale) by neighboring communities. This negatively affects the ability to truly adopt a landscape approach. The number of fences being erected (in part with the assistance of this project) is one indicator that the landscape is not truly being managed as a landscape but rather as islands (depending on land ownership) within a greater landscape.
Operational & Strategic Limited cooperation between stakeholders and stakeholders are reluctant to establish PAs.	Low	The fear of loss of autonomy and resistance to the proposed management plans results in limited implementation of the project activities and low stakeholder response in expansion and establishment of PAs.	High The TE believes this risk was under-rated and should have been rated as "high" instead of "low". During Project implementation, the withdrawal of some key stakeholders (e.g. BGP), and the lack of active involvement of others (e.g. King's Office, and some PLOs) hindered the full implementation of many activities.
Operational & Strategic Limited political will to gazette PAs owing to fear of lost	High	The fear of loss of economic development opportunities especially mining on areas to be established as PAs may result in reluctance to gazette PAs under Swazi law.	High Risk was appropriately assessed though formulation should be revisited to read "Limited political will to gazette PAs".

Identified Risks & Category of Risk	Risk Assessment Rating given in PRODOC	Elaboration of the Risk as presented in the PRODOC	TE Assessment
resource use opportunities.			
Operational Limited participation by women due to cultural norms.	Medium	Swaziland is a strongly patriarchal society in which women's participation in leadership is limited especially in activities considered to be the domain of men. Lack of awareness of the potential benefits of the project in wealth creation and securing livelihoods also results in limited involvement by women.	Medium Risk was appropriately assessed. Women were very involved contrary to all projections or anticipation of low turnout.

4.1.3 Lessons from Other Relevant Projects Incorporated into Project Design

[109] There is little evidence that lessons from other projects were incorporated into project design. UNDP has ample experience with lessons "learned" documented in many UNDP-supported, GEF-financed BD projects indicating that many BD projects are overly ambitious for the time-frame, budget and implementing capacity. This important lesson was not taken into account in the design of this project, which suffers from the same thing.

[110] There could have usefully been exchange of experiences and learning from other ongoing and recently-completed projects. The GEF helps finance many projects to enlarge the PA estate and to strengthen the management effectiveness of PAs around the world, including many in Africa. Some such projects were completed at the time this project was being designed and some of them were ongoing. There are also numerous projects, both supported by the GEF and by others, that adopt a landscape approach and involve protected areas. A few of the relevant projects supported by the GEF which could have provided some lessons for this project include the "Namibia Protected Landscape Conservation Areas Initiative (NAM PLACE)" which was to establish Protected Landscape Conservation Areas and ensure that land uses in areas adjacent to existing Protected Areas are compatible with biodiversity conservation objectives, and to establish corridors to sustain the viability of wildlife populations. Another project, the "Strengthening the Effectiveness of the National Protected Area System by Including a Landscape Approach to Management in Uruguay" was to ensure that the Uruguayan Protected Areas System incorporates a landscape approach to management, strengthening the effectiveness of PAs as nuclei for the conservation of globally important species and ecosystems. Nepal's project on "Integrated Landscape Management to Secure Nepal's Protected Areas and Critical Corridors" may also have provided some lessons, as might have the "Amazon sustainable landscape approach in the Plurinational System of Protected Areas and Strategic Ecosystems of Bolivia" or the "Creating Protected Areas for Resources Conservation (PARC) in Vietnam Using a Landscape Ecology Approach" project which was to conserve Vietnam's globally significant biodiversity through implementation of a landscape ecology approach to protected areas management. These are only a few of the GEF-supported relevant projects that this project could have learned from. It is not the task of the TE to do a comprehensive search of such projects

as well as others that may not have been financed by the GEF. That was the task of the designers of the project. There is no evidence that such an effort was made and no evidence that lessons learned from relevant projects were incorporated into the design of this project.

4.1.4 Planned Stakeholder Participation

[111] Many RPs were involved in this Project, making it a complex project to manage. Even though the project planned for many of the relevant stakeholders to be involved, it under-estimated the importance of the involvement of some and overlooked completely the involvement of others.

[112] It was planned that BGP would be the primary "Responsible Party". Given that the IP for the project was ENTC, and given that ENTC is responsible for the management of the ENTC PAs, naming BGP instead of ENTC as the primary RP was perhaps not the best choice.

[113] Greater emphasis should have been placed in the PRODOC on the participation of traditional leaders as the Chiefs and the Inner Councils have key roles to play in designating conservation areas on communal lands and on determining the management of those areas. Likewise, the Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development (MTAD), should have featured as an important stakeholder, but was omitted in the PRODOC. Another important stakeholder that was omitted in the PRODOC was the Swaziland Tourism Authority (now ETA). The involvement of locally-based NGOs with experience in the various landscapes should have been envisaged as a way to facilitate the project's on-the-ground efforts on communal lands. Greater involvement of the private sector – not just private landowners but also private companies both national and multinational – should have been planned which could also have contributed towards prospects for greater financial sustainability. Finally, greater involvement of rural youth in almost every facet of the project should have been planned. This was a real missed opportunity for the project and an oversight in planned stakeholder participation.

[114] Lesson: Give youth a real chance to engage in conserving biodiversity. They are in the truest sense, the present and the future. This project should have focused much more on youth and partnered with local NGOs with a focus on youth and/or the environment.

4.2 Project Implementation & Management

4.2.1 Adaptive Management

[115] Changes made as a result of the BGP Withdrawal. Given the withdrawal of the primary "Responsible Party" for the project, BGP, there was need for significant adaptive management in the project, both in terms of its governance (as BGP was a member of the PB and PBS), but most importantly because it was to implement a significant percent of the budget. Many activities had been assigned to BGP to implement, and, as indicated in Section 4.2.2, many of these activities could not be implemented by anyone else given that some of the activities were to take place in BGP-owned and managed PAs and other activities dealt

with wildlife management and anti-poaching activities which according to existing legislation, BGP is responsible for.

[116] The PB recommended that ENTC take over the activities that were initially allocated to BGP. Given that, as described above, this was possible only for select activities, the withdrawal of BGP from the project significantly affected the scope of work that could be undertaken by the project -- which would now deviate substantively and significantly from the scope of work approved at the time of CEO endorsement. The TE considers that the decision to shift those activities originally planned for BGP to ENTC while deleting altogether some others was more than what could be considered normal adaptive management and that advice from the GEFSEC should have been sought at the time of the BGP withdrawal before pursuing the project further.

[117] As a result of the BGP withdrawal, only 3 of the 4 landscapes originally envisaged (as per the CEO endorsed document) were included in the project. The Mkhaya landscape was omitted from the project as BGP was to have taken the lead in that landscape. Again, there is no record that has been shared with the TE indicating that the GEFSEC was approached for advice on this significant change.

[118] Adoption of the 2016 Project Strategy and M&E Plan. The project was taken significantly off track in pursuit of a "Project Strategy and M&E Plan" produced in 2016 and approved by the PSC which outlined indicators distinct from those in the Results Framework presented (and approved) in the PRODOC and which activities were described (and undertaken) which did not contribute to achieving the defined expected outcomes as per the approved RF. This is an example of adaptive management – but not the kind that is desired.

[119] Changes made to the PMU. The PMU as originally envisaged was far too large. Appropriate action was taken following the MTR (and the recommendation it made in this regard) to reduce the PMU in size. The reduction in the size of the PMU (in 2019) came, however, just before the last two years of the project in which the bulk of the project effort was undertaken in terms of on-the-ground implementation of activities. Given this situation, the project appropriately adopted an approach (as part of its exit strategy) to shift implementation away from implementation by the PMU to implementation by the intended beneficiaries, thus enabling greater implementation as well as promoting greater buy-in and thereby enhancing prospects for sustainability.

[120] Changes made/not made according to advice given by Technical Advisors to the Project. Perusing the numerous mission reports submitted by the various Technical Advisors the project had over the years, it is clear that much of the advice by these advisors has not been taken up. It is unclear why there was lack of follow through on so much of the advice given. Perhaps continual changes in the PMU and in UNDP (both at the CO level as well as the RTA) contributed to this.

[121] Changes made/not made post MTR. The MTR made numerous recommendations for change in the project approach, governance, management and implementation. Although the management response to the MTR recommendations (which is undated except for the indication of the year 2018) indicates agreement with the recommendations, many of the recommendations were not taken up.

[122] For example, the Management Response indicated, "In order to work around the challenges highlighted by the MTR, and while the project will not be able to address the central issue of gazettement of new PAs, government and UNDP will need to change the project approach by "going

deep rather than going wide". Concretely, this means that government through refining the articulation of indicators and outputs under Component 2, will make a shift in approach from expanding the protected area estate through gazettement, to placing more land under active conservation management, in compliance with international criteria for Other Effective Conservation Measures and/or to be in compliance with the IUCN Green List Standards. The project will also work at convergences with already existing initiatives in the country including the Man and Biosphere programme and Trans-Frontier Conservation Area (TFCA) projects" (Management Response to MTR, 2018).

[123] The Project did not do this after the MTR. Instead, it continued to focus on expanding the PA estate -- just not through gazettement. It did not shift the approach to place more land under active conservation management, it simply used a different means to designate more land as "protected area". It also did not "work at convergences" to strengthen existing initiatives in the country such as the Lubombo Conservancy. This lack of follow through on this agreed recommendation had serious implications on the impact the project had on conserving biodiversity as, had the project followed through on this, it would likely have had much greater impact on conserving biodiversity during the project period.

[124] Changes made to the RF. The Results Framework was modified following the MTR. Nevertheless, the original RF continued to be used in the PIRs. The progress reported in the PIRs is a combination of reporting on both the old as well as the revised RF. Greater detail on the RF is found in Section 4.1.1.

4.2.2 Actual Stakeholder Participation and Partnership Arrangements

[125] Two entities are listed in the CEO Endorsed Document as "Other Executing Agencies". These are ENTC and BGP. Annex 9 describes planned versus actual stakeholder participation for the various entities involved (and originally anticipated to be involved) in the project.

4.2.3 Project Finance, Co-Finance & Financial Management

[126] The cut-off date of September 1, 2021, for the financial information provided in this TE report was established by the TE. This date reflects the approximate start date for the TE.

[127] According to information provided by UNDP, US$ 5,361,001 or 99% of the total GEF budget of $5,390,000 allocated to the project was expended as of 1 September 2021, with approximately 4 months remaining until project operational closure on 31 December 2021.

[128] Table 6 (below) presents the budget by component as described in the PRODOC along with the actual amount spent.

Table 6. Budget per Component as per PRODOC

Component	Budget as per PRODOC (US$)	Actual spent (US$)	% over-spent or under-spent compared with PRODOC budget
1 Knowledge Based Management Platform Operationalized	660,000	1,298,598	Project spent significantly more than what was originally budgeted (197% more)
2 Landscape Approach Operationalized	2,000,000	1,318,514	Project spent significantly less than what was originally budgeted (66% less)
3 Strengthen PA Functioning	2,460,000	2,476,832	Project spent approximately the same as what was originally budgeted (101%)
Project Management Costs (PMC)	270,000	267,062	According to figures as reported, the project spent approximately the same as what was originally budgeted (99%) but this is not an accurate picture of what was actually spent on project management. The reported figure does not take into account the US$148,404 in co-financing provided by UNDP. The project actually spent significantly more than the budgeted amount but assigned much of that cost to the various components instead of to PMC as should have been done.

[129] Table 7 and Table 8 (below) present approved annual work plan budgets (by component) and actual annual project expenditures (also by component) for all years in which the project operated.

Table 7. Approved (by the PB) Annual Budgets per Component

Component	Budget According to Approved Annual Work Plan (USD)								
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
1	0	145,226	574,446	486,249	182,091	55,831	116,781	0	1,560,624
2	0	26,167	45,513	475,250	238,710	90,980	59,257	52,558	988,434
3	0	37,200	177,411	662,268	290,222	152,643	1,090,278	531,607	2,941,630
PMC	68,205	15,300	33,798	28,571	28,571	0	0	59,863	234,309
Total	68,205	223,893	831,169	1,652,338	739,595	299,454	1,266,316	644,028	5,724,998

The budgeted amount being higher than the approved budget is because some initial budgets in some years were not adjusted when expenditure did not meet the budget. Since the unspent resources would still be available, future year budgets would be higher than the PRODOC budget. Thus, while the unadjusted total budget is higher than the approved amount, actual expenditure is still within the approved amount. Added to this is the fact that the budget also included UNDP financing.

Table 8. Project Expenditures as of the time of the TE

Component	Expenditures								
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
KNOWLEDGE BASE PLATFORM		68 869	376 060	351 157	317 720	9 221	87 491	88 079	1 298 598
LANDSCAPE APPROACH	156	53 966	33 083	603 925	283 475	106 130	197 939	39 837	1 318 510
PA FUNCTION STRENGTHENED		20 873	155 038	582 288	307 841	148 771	672 058	589 963	2 476 832
PROJECT MANAGEMENT	48 923	63 476	142 270	100 522	-90 289	2 367	0	-206	267 062
Total	49 079	207 185	706 450	1 637 892	818 747	266 489	957 488	717 672	5 361 001

[130] The $1,298,598 spent under Component 1 represents 197% of the indicative budget of $660,000 for this component as indicated in the CEO Endorsement Document. Thus, much more than the budget approved by the GEF was spent on this Component. Under Component 2, $1,318,514 was spent, representing 66% of the budget of $2,000,000 allocated for that component in the CEO Endorsement Document and 133% of the budget approved by the PB. Thus, an amount significantly less than that approved by the GEF but more than that approved by the PB was spent on this Component. Under Component 3, $2,476,832 was spent, representing 101% of the budget of $2,460,000 allocated for that component as per the CEO Endorsement Request. Thus, approximately the same amount of money was spent on this Component as was approved by the GEF even though significantly less was spent compared to the amount approved by the PB. Project management costs totaled $267,062 or 99% of the $270,000 allocated for project management in the PRODOC budget. UNDP in-cash co-financing totaling US$58,496.66 was used to pay the additional project management costs associated with the one-year project extension.

[131]The variance from the PRODOC in the distribution of GEF funds between components was significant and may be considered a "major" change from what the GEF CEO endorsed. Despite this, the project did not seek the advice of the GEFSEC regarding the financial variance from the original agreed allocated budget. The TE considers that this financial variance significantly affected the scope of work to be completed and it is our understanding, that in this case, the project should have sought the advice of the GEFSEC. It did not do so and no evidence has been shared with the TE to suggest that the RTA for the project brought this possibility up for discussion with the UNDP CO.

[132] Expenditures were less than what was budgeted in 6 years (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020) and more than what was budgeted in 2 years (2018, 2021).

[133] There were numerous financial management issues:

1. The PMU was without a Finance Officer for an extended period of time (12 months, from April 2019 to March 2020).
2. It took extended time periods (averaging 3 months) for the ENTC Board to clear expenditures, causing delays in execution by ENTC as well as by RPs. This issue was known at the time the 2013 HACT[4] was conducted and was pointed out once again in the 2018 HACT.
3. The Annual Spending Limit (ASL) for 2019 was only received in July of that year affecting the transiting of the PMU from being under UNDP to being under ENTC (in accordance with MTR recommendations).
4. Regularly late arrival of funds to the PMU from UNDP caused frequent delays in implementation of activities.
5. There was significant variance between the GEF approved budget per component and the actual amount spent, with one component being over-spent by more than 200% but with no record of the UNDP CO or RTA questioning or taking action on these significant variances.
6. According to UNDP policies, in order to channel funds through IPs, the financial management capacity of that implementing partner has to be assessed prior to commencement of any activities. A HACT assessment was done of SNTC in 2013.   No areas assessed were rated as high risk in that report. Normally, the only justification for UNDP to provide execution support is if high risk areas are identified in the HACT. Thus, the TE questions whether UNDP was justified in providing execution support to the IP for this NIM project.
7. Only a standard LOA was in place at the time of GEF approval of the project. There was no LOA detailing execution support activities and their costs at PRODOC signing and no such letter was developed following the MTR which pointed out the need for such a letter if UNDP was to continue providing execution support for the project. If a HACT assessment was done of ENTC and if risk ratings were significant, then UNDP execution support might have been justified, but in this case a LOA stipulating the nature and cost of the execution support should have been developed and signed and submitted to the GEF for approval. The Delegation of Authority Letter makes it clear that the provision of execution-support services should have been discussed with the GEF, but it was not.
8. Costs associated with UNDP execution were distributed across components rather than assigned to Project Management Costs as they rightly should have been. This is not in accordance with proper procedures and also had the effect of essentially showing greater levels of implementation than what should have been shown and decreasing the reported amount spent on project management.
9. GEF project funds (totaling $ 72,569 according to the PMU Finance Officer) were used to pay for costs associated with the development of Chiefdom Development Plans when this cost was not included in the budget and was not planned for in the PRODOC.

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[4] "Transferring funds through the Government account could cause delays when the entity needs to access these."

10. The second NPM for the project was being paid for a period of time during which he was not actively engaged in undertaking all responsibilities assigned to this position as the PB had requested that he does not participate in PB meetings.
11. The STA was paid (US$18,644) to produce a master plan describing how the project would proceed following the MTR but did not produce a master plan. The explanation provided to the TE was that he was unable to do so because the PSC could not agree on the MTR recommendations.
12. Inefficient use of project funds due to poor planning and procurement practices (IAPS machine ordered from China instead of from South Africa; consultants contracted who did not perform and yet were paid and new consultants contracted to do the same job resulting in unnecessary additional expenditures; Bill of quantities were not correctly prepared Khelekhele, Mlawula, Luzelweni).
13. Project funds were spent on the elaboration of a Five-year ENTC Strategic Plan yet this was not anticipated in the PRODOC and the TE does not believe this cost was justified and considers these GEF funds to have been misspent. (See PB Meeting Minutes dated 27.02.2018, item 34)

Financial Audits and Spot Checks

[134] The project operates under HACT policies and uses two of the three cash transfer modalities which are possible under HACT, direct cash transfer (UNDP advances cash funds on a quarterly basis based on agreed work plan to the IP, who in turn reports back expense through FACE forms), and direct payment (The IP carries out the procurement activity but requests UNDP to make the disbursement directly to vendors through FACE. In this arrangement, UNDP is undertaking only the fiduciary function on behalf of the IP).

[135] Financial audits and Spot Checks appear to have been conducted in accordance with UNDP policy. ENTC underwent a HACT audit in 2013 and another 5 years later in 2018.

[136] The TE did notice an anomaly in the Auditor General's report (2020) which indicated that the "clean opinion" given referred to a different project (not this one) and which obviously was a cut and paste from a different document (see below copied from that report). The TE inquired further about this anomaly and was informed by UNDP that, "ENTC was requested to sign fresh documents so that they can be clear and the documents were submitted to the Auditors office. The resubmission of documents to the Auditors office was done before the signature of the Auditor General and finalisation of the Audit report".

Co-Financing
[137] A total of almost US$23,600,000 in co-financing was committed at project signing. Table 9 indicates the amount of co-financing committed by each entity at PRODOC signature compared with the amount actually accounted by the time of the TE. Based on the most recent information provided to the TE team by UNDP, the cumulative total of co-financing contributions is US$972,605 which is only 4% of the amount committed at project signing. The TE notes that there are differences in the figures provided by

UNDP in the co-financing table (below) and that shared in the Project Information Table. There are also differences in the amount of co-financing reported by ENTC compared with that reported by UNDP.

Table 9. Co-Financing Committed versus Actually Accounted as of the Time of the TE

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier (source)	Type of Co-financing	Pledged at time CEO endorsement request was submitted to GEF	Amount Reported at MTR	Amount Actually accounted at time of TE Start (1 Sept. 2021)	% of amount committed that was actually accounted	Does PMU or UNDP have breakdown of amount accounted
Donor Agency	UNDP	Grant	200,000		148,404	74%	Yes
Donor Agency	UNDP	In-Kind			80,000		
Recipient Country Government	ENTC	In-Kind	1,140,000		700,000	61%	Yes
Recipient Country Government	EEA	In-Kind	2,200,000		40,000	2%	Yes

[138] Annex 10 is a list of all the major reports and plans produced with project support, including the cost of each of the contracts/consultancies. The TE questioned several of the costs and the answers provided are given in the same Annex.

[139] Of the total number of contracts awarded by the project to individual consultants, five (5) were awarded to international consultants/entities and seven (7) contracts were awarded to national consultants. The average size of the contract for national consultants was significantly less than that for the international consultants.

[140] Lesson: There are many well qualified national consultants but pay rate may be an issue which prevents more from applying for project positions and consultancies. It is important to involve national consultants in GEF projects whenever possible as they normally know the situation the best and involving them also contributes to enhancing national capacity.

4.2.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Overall M&E Plan

[141] The PRODOC states that, "The project's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan will be presented and finalized in the Project's Inception Report following a collective fine-tuning of indicators, means of verification, and the full definition of project staff M&E responsibilities". No fine tuning of indicators took place at the inception workshop. For some indicators (e.g., Outcome Indicator 1.3, Outcome Indicator 2.1, in the old Results Framework). Timeframes and responsibilities for the monitoring activities were specified. The PIRs provide the main source of information on data collected for the specified indicators in the RF. M&E activities are expected to be in compliance with standard M&E plan used in UNDP-supported, GEF-financed projects (see Table 18, page 78 & 79 of the PRODOC). Only 1 Quarterly report (Quarter 2, April-June 2021) and 1 Annual Report (January –December 2020) were shared with the TE

Team. Overall, a combination of narrative reports and other standard templates (such as Excel spreadsheets) (e.g., Reports from COSPE as an Implementing Partner) are used to present M&E data. In addition to the standard M&E instruments (e.g., PIRs, Annual Reports), most of the reports compiled by the project and that were shared with the TE Team were activity-specific monitoring reports. At the TE time, Terminal Report was not prepared. The Issues Log, Risks Log, and Lessons Learned Log were not shared with the TE Team. Apart from what is normally presented in PIRs, the TET saw no evidence that lessons learned logs were actually compiled.

M&E Design at entry and M&E Budget

[142] M&E design at entry was standard in that all common elements of an M&E plan were planned for, including the mid-term review (MTR), the terminal evaluation (TE), Project Terminal Report, audits, and PIRs. A number of these were, however, under budgeted, including the MTR (US$30,000) and the TE (US$30,000). The budget for M&E in the Project Document (US$150,000) was not adequate as best practice sets a budget of at least 5% of total project costs for M&E. Simple calculation based on the GEF allocation and the 5% minimum shows that at least US$269,500 would have been earmarked for M&E. No adjustments were made to address these shortcomings during the inception workshop. Annual audits were also included in the M&E plan.

M&E Implementation (MU*)

[143] The UNDP CO administered this project through the Environment and Climate Change Programme Officer, expected to provide the quality assurance function (including monitoring overall compliance and adherence to quality standards, ensuring effective risk mitigation, and adherence to anticipated results). Day-to-day monitoring of implementation is done by the National Project Manager, based on the agreed indicators and targets set out in the SRF and Annual Work Plans. This setup takes tremendous time from the NPM as the PMU did not include any dedicated M&E staff for this role. The PMU's Administrative/Finance Officer handled financial planning, budgeting, reporting and procurement aspects. The monitoring systems used by the project followed the established UNDP and GEF procedures, including reports against the annual work plans which are then submitted to UNDP-CO as Quarterly Progress Reports and Annual Reports, accompanied by the more detailed and analytical PIRs. The latter were completed for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021. The PIRs followed the standard GEF format. Only 1 AR (January –December 2020), and 1 Quarterly Report (April-June 2021) were shared with the TE Team. Most measurement of progress is being carried out at the activity level. Though regular meetings were held between the NPM and the Landscape Coordinators for activity planning purposes, follow up, and reporting, there is no evidence that what is being measured is aligning with the expected results, and contributing substantively to the delivery of the overall project objective. We also concur with the conclusion of the MTR (2018) that, at project level, there is lack of a much needed "systematic approach to data collection and monitoring of indicators for different outputs, or an overarching tool that links information across results areas, at different spatial scales or through different implementation avenues, and there is no tool that shows how the multiplicity of M&E instruments that is being produced links together".

The Results Framework

[144] There were weaknesses in this project's RF (See Section 4.1.1 for further analysis) including indicators mostly being process oriented. No impact indicators pertaining to biodiversity conservation were included. The results framework was changed in 2016 leading to a set of Revised Results Framework Indicators. A close analysis of PIR reveals that the old set of Indicators (as appearing in the PRODOC) is used concurrently with the new Revised Indicators when reporting on Development Objective and Outcome Progress. No proper explanation clarifying the matter was shared with the TE Team. The use of appropriate indicators was to effectively guide work planning, and provide an annual check on progress through the PIR reviews involving the PMU, NPM, UNDP CO and the UNDP RTA.

[145] The detailed MTR assessment of the RF had indicated that some changes be made (see MTR Report, 2018). According to the documents reviewed by the TE Team, and the interviews with stakeholders, changes were made but never officially approved by the relevant structures (including the PB, and the RTA's Office). The opportunity to refine the RF at the inception workshop was missed. Thus, the RF and (unofficial) revised RF Indicators used by the project during implementation was not a tool that was well articulated to enable monitoring progress and results and tracking progress toward the achievement of outcomes and objectives.

Completion and Effective Use of GEF TTs
[146] A weakness of the M&E plan is that it does not specifically incorporate use of the METTs as a key part of the M&E framework. According to the PRODOC, the TTs should have included the GEF BD-1 Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool, and the GEF BD-2 Biodiversity Mainstreaming Tracking Tool.

Monitoring Visits by the PMU to Project Sites
[147] Regular monitoring schedule was developed by the PMU. Monitoring reports were compiled and forwarded by implementing partners (e.g., COSPE Monitoring Report, 2017). Output Verification Templates were filled for each visit on the ground. Weekly meetings were held with staff to plan. Based on information provided by the PMU (i.e., Reports shared with the TE Team), over the project period between 2016 and 2021, the number of meetings and reports of monitoring nature amounts to 41, most of which are during the period 2020-2021. Some reports are not dated.

UNDP Monitoring Visits
[148] The field monitoring visits made by UNDP and others during the seven-year project are summarized in Annex 11. Reports shared with the TE Team comprise 3 Monitoring Reports Q1, 2, and 3 (2017), 1 output verification report dated 08.10.2020, and 1 output physical verification report dated 19.05.2021. A combined UNDP/PB site tour to see first-hand activities undertaken and being implemented on the ground took place on the 22-23.09.2020. Five different RTAs have supported the project over the 7-year lifespan of the project. The first RTA participated in the project inception workshop. One (1) post-MTR mission (28 January – 01 February 2019), was shared with the TE Team. The Mission Report of this Post-MTR Technical Supervision Mission contained recommendations for approval by the Project Board.

[149] Though it refers to the GEF-RCU in the Project Document, the M&E plan does not specify how the project will keep the GEF OFP informed and, where applicable and feasible, involved. The Project Board

was constituted as planned, and met a total of 21 times over the project period, averaging 3 meetings per year. The PSC also met regularly, 30 times over the project period. Although these committees met frequently, neither appears to have steered the project effectively. The NPM made presentations on the activities and performance of the project against the annual work plan at the Project Board meetings, providing members with the opportunity to comment and advise on the workplan and incorporate adaptive management measures.

[150] No annual report for 2016 2017, 2018, and 2019 were shared with the TE Team. There was no project terminal report to inform the terminal evaluation. A mid-term review was conducted for the project in 2018, but though recommendations were made and Management Response agreed with most of them, subsequently indicating the key actions to be undertaken, little was done in this regard. Instead, the post MTR period was an idle prolonged stretch wherein no tangible planned activity took place this leading into stalled project implementation.

[151] Staff turnover (both at UNDP CO and PMU), and capacity challenges affected the M&E implementation. The UNDP CO should have been more proactive in ensuring that UNDP Results Based Management standards were applied during implementation including ensuring for the injection of M&E staff at PMU level. The project had no gender specialist at the PMU, and out of all the process indicators, only Outcome Indicator 3.1 was gender-disaggregated. There is also no evidence of inclusive, innovative or participatory monitoring systems in use.

[152] The environmental and social risks (as identified through the UNDP SESP) were rated "low" and no existing social and/or environmental risks have become more severe. According to the 2021 PIR, the project's SESP categorization has not changed during the project implementation.

Overall Quality of M&E (MU*)
[153] Given the above, the overall quality of M&E is assessed as Moderately Unsatisfactory.

4.2.5 UNDP Implementation/Oversight (U*) and Implementing Partner Execution (U*), Overall Project Implementation (U*), Project Management & Coordination

[154] This seven-year (84 month) project effectively operated over a total period of only 52 months (or 62% of the project period as a result of several factors including:

a) There was a slow start effectively subtracting 8 months from the project period. (PRODOC signed 22 October 2014, the NPM only came on board 5 months later on April 1 2015, the Project Inception workshop took place approximately 2 months later on 4 June 2015; according to the inception workshop report the project was officially launched one month later on July 1 2015.)

b) There was very little activity during a period of 19 months following the MTR (6 months in 2018, 12 months in 2019, and 1 month in 2020). In the first month the new PMU was busy with finalising AWP for 2020 and masterplans which was a prerequisite for clearance and approval of the work plan amongst other procurement initiation activities (BOQs

developments).

- c) Even between July 1 2015 when the project was officially launched and end of November of that year (a period of 5 months) little happened on the ground due to the difficulties being experienced related to the participation of the primary RP (BGP suspended participation 23 November 2015).
- d) Adoption of the 2016 Project Strategy which deviated significantly from the approved PRODOC took the project off-track detracting from the time available for the project to undertake approved activities. (This point not only relates to the impact this had on the effective operating time period of the project, but also relates to the effectiveness of the PB in steering the project and how effectively UNDP played its oversight role as GEF Agency for the project.)
- e) Some delays were experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[155] Several factors contributed to the above-described delays: a) continuous re-working of the project strategy well into the last half of the project, b) poor UNDP oversight and direction, c) inadequate technical and managerial experience in the PMU (this was the single largest project ever managed by the IP), d) capacity constraints in the UNDP CO that even though the CO attempted to address by having officers from other UNDP offices "detailed" to the CO in Eswatini, still affected the project.

[156] The project was fundamentally affected by significant changes in the effective time frame for implementing activities as well as in regards to the scope of work to be undertaken. Given the delays experienced as described above, the time period was significantly affected. The withdrawal of BGP (which was to have been the primary "Responsible Party" for the project, implementing approximately 33% of the budget -- including many activities only it could implement), affected the scope of work to be undertaken as originally planned.

[157] A project extension of 1 year was given. According to the Management response to the MTR (pre-COVID), "A project extension not exceeding 12 months (within available resources) is anticipated to provide sufficient time to implement project outcomes following the reorientation."

UNDP Implementation/Oversight (U)

UNDP Oversight as GEF Agency
[158] The TE considered numerous factors in assessing the quality of project oversight provided by UNDP as the GEF Agency for this project. Many of the tasks that should normally be undertaken by a GEF Agency were not completed satisfactorily. As the GEF Agency responsible for this project, UNDP failed to ensure full compliance with GEF policies including contacting GEFSEC as/when required (as described elsewhere in this report). Although UNDP ensured the project inception workshop was held on time with the various project executing agencies ("Responsible Parties") present, it did not ensure all topics expected to be covered in such a workshop were adequately discussed. It did not ensure experiences/lessons from other relevant projects around the world were shared. Although annual PIRs were prepared, these did not always provide a comprehensive and candid picture of progress and risks. Although the MTR was conducted in a timely fashion, due to inadequate information sharing, two missions (as opposed to the normal single mission) were required for the MTR to truly understand the project. Although there was timely preparation and submission of the Management Response to the MTR (2 weeks after the final MTR report was submitted), there was a less timely and less effective follow-up of MTR recommendations

which had been agreed in Management Response to MTR. The TE was undertaken at the right time but, as was the case with the MTR, experienced many of the same issues with UNDP not providing the "Project Information Package" in a timely or organized fashion and not providing numerous requested documents at all.   Tracking Tools/Core Indicators were not prepared for all relevant GEF Focal Areas at project inception, mid-term, and just prior to the TE as they should have been and UNDP as the GEF Agency was responsible for ensuring they were. Another role of a GEF Agency is to ensure proper composition and functioning of the PB/PSC. This was not done and resulted in a great deal of confusion over the project period, even following the MTR (which made recommendations regarding this issue). The TE is unable to assess whether UNDP in its role as GEF Agency fulfilled its responsibility to ensure audits/spot checks were conducted as required or whether all recommendations made in audit reports were addressed as not all of these were shared (as requested) with the TE. It is also not possible for the TE to assess if UNDP conducted all of the required field monitoring visits to verify progress reported and to manage any risks identified as only a few Back to Office Reports (BTORs) were shared with the TE.

Lack of adequate guidance and compliance with GEF policies regarding the withdrawal of BGP.

[159] When BGP pulled out of the project in November 2015 (soon after project start), the co-financing of US$ 9,800,000 which they had committed at PRODOC signing (representing a not-insignificant 42% of the total co-financing committed for this project) was no longer available to the project. Given that the withdrawal of BGP changed the ratio of co-financing -- for which a minimum is required to obtain GEF funding, the TE believes the GEFSEC should have been contacted for advice. It was not. In response to the TET inquiry in this regard, UNDP responded that, "As per the latest GEF Co-financing Policy and Guidelines, agencies are only required to report changes to co-financing at MTR and TE stages. So there is no requirement to send a project back to the GEF Sec for re-approval when the co-financing changes after CEO ER." The TET disagrees and believes that the GEFSEC should have been contacted not only because of the significant change post CEO endorsement in co-financing, but also because of the major change in scope of work that would result from the withdrawal of the primary "Responsible Party".

[160] The withdrawal of BGP from the project meant that many of the activities that had been assigned to BGP for implementation could no longer be undertaken (and, in fact, were not). The total GEF funding awarded for this project did not, however, change after the BGP pull-out, meaning that while the funding remained the same, fewer of the expected products (as per the CEO endorsed document) could be delivered. The assumption in Results Frameworks is that the various activities planned contribute to outputs/products which contribute to expected outcomes, which in turn contribute to attaining the objective. The BGP pull out meant amongst other things that a significant number of the activities which they were to implement could not be pursued as, in the case of many of these activities, BGP and BGP alone (given their mandate) could implement them. UNDP seems to have recognized this at the time of the pull-out as indicated in a UNDP paper outlining various scenarios related to BGP participation (or lack thereof) in the project indicating, "The BGP made an in-kind commitment of US$ 9,800,000.00 for the implementation of the project, which might have influenced the amount of funding received from the GEF. In the event that the BGP considers not to participate in any way in the implementation of the SNPAS Project, the project document management, structural arrangements and implementation of the activities *will be completely flawed*. This will have an effect on about 40% of the project activities and budget.   Implications: The SNPAS Project through the Project Board has to inform the GEF Executive Council and consider the revision and re-structuring of the project document to facilitate implementation."   In addition to recognizing the issue early on, UNDP also acknowledged in the MTR

Management Response that, "This development underfed the ability of the project to deliver on a significant part of its scope as BGP manages a large part of the national parks that were targeted under the programme" (2018). Notwithstanding their own assessment, and clearly understanding the implications of the BGP pull out, according to information UNDP provided to the TE, no approach was made to the GEFSEC to seek advice as none was needed.

[161] Project funds inappropriately used. GEF funds were used to pay costs associated with activities not included in the PRODOC and not justifiable as adaptive management. Although the choice to use the Chiefdom Development Planning process was an appropriate choice, it was inappropriate for the GEF to pay for the development of the CDPs. The CDP concept was adopted by the MTAD in 2017. The Ministry's goal is to have CDPs for every Chiefdom. Only 39 of the 385 Chiefdoms have CDPs as of present as there was no Government budget for the development of these plans. (The Ministry was able to secure some funding from Government for two CDPs in 2021). Due to budgetary constraints, the Ministry has been relying on partners to assist in elaborating and implementing the CDPs. All 39 of the CDPs elaborated since the initiative began (and prior to 2021) were developed with support from the ESWADE project and 9 of those were financially supported by the SNPAS project.

[162] The MTR pointed that it was inappropriate to use GEF funds to pay costs associated with the elaboration of CDPs. The TET review of these plans leads us to concur with the MTR. The plans include a brief chapter on biodiversity but otherwise are strict development plans which may contribute to MTAD's goal to have CDPs for every Chiefdom but which otherwise do not contribute significantly to the objective of this project. Better oversight by UNDP should have prevented the project was inappropriately using GEF resources for this purpose.

[163] Lack of adequate oversight to ensure budget expenditures by Component do not represent a major change from that approved by the GEF. Actual budget expenditures per Component vary significantly from the budget presented in the PRODOC, with one component being overspent by more than 200%. Again, there is no evidence that UNDP discussed the possible need to bring this to the attention of the GEFSEC.

[164] This project had a high turnover of Programme Officers responsible for the project in the UNDP Country Office (3 in total) and an even higher turnover of Regional Technical Advisors with 5 RTAs in total over the project period. A consultant was in place as an RTA for an extended period (almost a full year).

Implementing Partner Execution (U*)

[165] ENTC, as the lead executing agency for the project (also known as the GEF Implementing Partner, or IP, in GEF terms[5]) was responsible for project management and for coordinating and collaborating with other implementation partners. According to the PRODOC, "The project will thus be implemented by SNTC but in close collaboration on an implementation level with other government divisions as well as with civil society and private sector stakeholders ('responsible parties' and others) and with financial and technical support from UNDP. The primary role of SNTC will be to coordinate the project, as an

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[5] UNDP and GEF terminology can be quite confusing. GEF Implementing *Agency* = In this case is UNDP; Implementing *Partner* = GEF *Executing* Agency = in this case is ENTC; *Execution* Modality = National *Implementation* Modality (NIM); "Responsible Parties" are those who *implement* project activities.

Implementing Partner and Chair of the Project Steering Committee. SNTC will also assist in the liaison with local government and other government agencies at the landscape level to ensure buy in and engagement".

[166] This project represented the biggest single investment into conserving biodiversity in the history of the country and was also naturally the biggest project ever managed by ENTC[6]. The HACT assessment of SNTC undertaken in 2013 did not, however, indicate there were any areas of "high" risk.

[167] There were serious shortcomings in the way in which the IP managed and administered the project's activities. There was significant deviation from what was approved in the PRODOC, some of which could not be justified as contributing to the project expected outcomes. There was inadequate focus on results and timeliness. There were extended periods with very little implementation of project activities. There was unapproved (see next paragraph) and significant dependence on the UNDP CO to execute actions that should have been executed by the IP under the NIM modality, including contracting of consultants, and purchasing of equipment.

[168] Significant deviation from the PRODOC. A significant amount of the first half of the project was dedicated to activities and outputs that were not included in the PRODOC and did not contribute significantly to the achievement of expected outcomes. This issue was described in detail in the MTR. The project developed a Project Strategy and M&E Plan in 2016 which significantly deviated from the GEF-approved project plan, and according to the MTR, "introduced different outcomes, outputs, and indicators – only some of which overlap with those in the approved Strategic Results Framework. This has resulted in the project losing its core focus on protected areas". This cost the project time and money that was intended to be used to implement GEF-approved activities that were designed to contribute to the project expected outcomes. Some examples of GEF funds spent inappropriately include funds spent to pay costs associated with the elaboration of Chiefdom Development Plans, cost of elaborating the ENTC strategic plan 2018-2022[7] (expense was justified by the PB as the need to reinforce ENTC capacities), and elaboration of a national strategy on IAPS.

[169] This unapproved (by the GEF) and inappropriate use of GEF funds is not only an issue related to IP execution but also to governance of the project (lack of adequate steering by the Project Board), and inadequate oversight by UNDP as the GEF IA for the project. It is difficult to imagine that with proper oversight this extent of divergence (and over a fairly prolonged period) from the PRODOC could have happened.

[170] Consultancies that were not followed up on by the IP (ENTC) or did not yield quality deliverables. Consultancies that did not result in quality deliverables as well as cancelled contracts for failure to perform or deliver.

[171] Not genuinely a NIM Project. Although the project was, according to the signed PRODOC, to be executed through the National Implementation Modality (NIM), the UNDP CO undertook to execute, upon the request of the IP, a significant percent of the budget (75% in 2015, 57% in 2016, 43% in 2017, 46% in

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[7] See PB Meeting Minutes Item 34

2018) over the years up until the MTR, and continued to do so post MTR in contradiction to the recommendation of the MTR (agreed in the management response). Indeed, the TE notes that practically 100% of the budget (with the exception of $479 in bank charges paid by ENTC) was executed by UNDP in 2019 (the year following the MTR). The explanation provided by UNDP CO is that 2019 was a transition year in which the PMU was transitioned from being under UNDP contracts to being under ENTC. Nevertheless, according to Combined Delivery Reports, PMU staff salaries were still paid by UNDP including that of the Admin/Finance Officer and a Driver/Landscape Coordinator, amongst others. The TE does not believe this justifies UNDP continuing to provide this type of execution "support" and moreover notes that the pattern continued in 2020 (the last year for which CDRs are available for inspection) with UNDP executing more than 57% of the total budget for that year[8]. UNDP executed 54 % of the total project budget spent through 2020. It is not clear how this can legitimately be considered either NIM or NIM with UNDP CO "support" as it would appear that UNDP has been the primary executing agency over much of the project period with ENTC executing more than UNDP in only two of the six years for which CDRs are available.

[172] Unapproved (by the GEFSEC) and Inadequately Detailed UNDP Execution Support. UNDP execution support was provided without approval of the GEFSEC (no evidence has been shared with the TE that the GEFSEC had been approached in this regard as it should have been prior to CEO endorsement) and without the required LOA in place specifying the nature and cost of the execution services to be provided by UNDP. The TE understands that the GEF does not support a GEF IA to provide execution support unless a HACT assessment of the proposed IP indicates significant or high risks. The HACT assessment of ENTC conducted in 2013 and again in 2018 did not indicate such risk, thus, it is our understanding that UNDP was not justified in providing execution support to the project. In the case that execution support is justified and approved by the GEF, a LOA must be prepared that specifies the nature and cost of the support required. The UNDP CO considers the standard LOA signed in 2015 (attached as Annex 12) to be adequate for complying with this requirement. The TE does not agree. Annex 13 is an example of a LOA (from Zimbabwe) properly detailing execution support and the costs associated with that support.

[173] Inappropriate Cost Charging by UNDP for Execution Support Provided to ENTC. In addition to not having the proper LOA in place specifying the nature and cost of the execution support to be provided by UNDP, there was no budget assigned for this in the budget approved as per the signed PRODOC. UNDP was instead charging the cost associated with the execution support they provided to the project across the various project components. This should have been charged to "project management costs" if indeed it had been approved (which it was not).

[174] Comparative Institutional Advantages/Capacities/Mandates Ignored in Implementing Project Activities. Despite several of the RPs being under the same Ministry, questionable choices were made regarding which Government entity would undertake certain activities leading to those best prepared to

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[8] The "Master Plan" prepared by the NPM in 2020 indicates, "Key weakness is the existence of the smallest PMU since project inception and a key threat being that the 2020 AWP budget is the highest ($1,701,553.78) since inception of project. The countering strategy is outsourcing implementation to stakeholders and the PMU focusing on supervision of implementation. *The UNDP country office will manage the procurement system to ensure efficiency in delivering the project inputs and activities*."

undertake some activities being on the sidelines whilst those less qualified were put in the position of being the primary responsible entity (e.g., instead of ETA, ENTC played the more significant role related to the project-supported ecotourism initiatives). Micro-Projects not engaged until well after problems were experienced with ENTC despite PB Meeting Minutes dated 27.07.2017, item no 26, decision to recruit Quantity Surveyor responsible for compliance. This led to problems related to inadequate/incorrect bill of quantities at Khelekhele, Mlawula, and Mhlumeni.

[175] Poorly Prepared LOAs. LOAs between the IP and NGO RPs did not specify that these undertake any monitoring, including no monitoring for impact on biodiversity (whether to be undertaken by the NGO itself or by the community involved). Detailed MOUs and LOAs between the IP and all RPs should have been drafted at project inception stage. Beginning quite late in the project (in what was originally to be the last year of the project), additional NGOs became involved as RPs. Involving additional RPs in the project is an example of positive adaptive management (see section 4.2.1) undertaken by the project, even if very late in project implementation. Nevertheless, the LOAs developed were lacking in some important regards including clarity in activities to be implemented on the ground. This had an impact on the actual work undertaken by the NGOs.

[176] Lack of follow through by the IP (ENTC) to ensure adequate technical support for the PMU. The IP, although itself a technical entity, was, *according to the PRODOC*, to have been supported by several Technical Advisors. This was envisaged to be provided through the participation of BGP in the project, the support of two *Technical Advisors* (or "Project Managers") under the direction of the NPM, and an international Technical Advisor (Peter Smith). No TORs for any of these positions were included in the PRODOC as they should have been. The withdrawal from the project of BGP left the PMU without one of the anticipated Technical Advisors. The international Technical Advisor was only contracted for a total of 30 days. His assessment was that the PMU was weak technically in the areas of PA management and the landscape approach, and that it was important for the project to bring on additional technical support. This was never done and by the mid-term of the project, the MTR noted the continued need for additional technical support, recommending that a Senior Technical Advisor (STA) be recruited. A STA was indeed recruited but months after the incumbent had started in that capacity, issues pertaining to performance and conflict of interest were cited as the main reasons leading to the non-renewal/termination of the contract of the TA. It is not the task of the TE to affirm or deny whether these issues actually existed.

[177] There were significant delays in project implementation, some of which had serious consequences:
- There was an extended period of time of approximately (19months) during which very little implementation took place. Only part (approximately 20%) of this time could be attributed to COVID-19-related impacts. (Calculations based from March 2020 when 1st case of COVID-19 was declared in Eswatini till October 2021.)
- It took time to recruit a new PMU post MTR. During this time, the project was in essence without both a NPM (even though one was on the payroll as explained elsewhere in this report) as well as an Administrative and Finance Officer. It was not necessary in the opinion of the TE to recruit a new NPM as this was not a recommendation of the MTR (which had recommended that the PMU be restructured and reduced in size but had made no recommendation regarding contracting a different NPM) and, according to performance reports, the NPM was performing well.
- The master plan of how to proceed with project implementation following the MTR was not developed until February 2020, 13 months after the management response to the MTR had been

approved by the PB.

- Activities related to the establishment of the Landscape Associations were not initiated until the last year of the project when it would have been most appropriate to initiate these at the beginning (with the exception of the Lubombo Landscape where as previously mentioned it would have been best to simply support the existing structure rather than creating a new one).
- Activities related to trying to put in place some assurance that private landowners would not convert their land that was dedicated to conservation to non-biodiversity compatible land uses was not initiated until well after the PLOs received financial support from the project and only weeks before project closure (seemingly as an afterthought and perhaps in response to questions posed by the TET). There is no evidence that the PB or PSC addressed this issue.

[178] Some costly purchases were made with little prior consultation with stakeholders who could have provided helpful advice on more appropriate purchases (e.g., biogas briquette making machine).

[179] The IP has had a historically contentious relationship with the entity that was to have been the primary RP in the project. The primary RP, BGP, suspended its membership in the PSC/PB and later withdrew altogether from the project due in part to this poor relationship. The IP was also unable to maintain a workable governance structure (in the form of the PB and PSC) with several key stakeholders quitting these bodies due to disillusionment with the operation of the PB and PSC. Although relations between some of the key stakeholders were already strained at project start, according to accounts shared by stakeholders with the TET, these have worsened over the project period (SGRA, COSPE, Lubombo Conservancy, some PLOs). This issue is further elaborated upon in Annex 9, Planned versus actual stakeholder participation.

Overall Project Implementation (U*)

[180] Project implementation was fraught with problems from the start even though implementation significantly improved during the last two years of the project. By that time, however, it was too late to complete some of the activities, thus, much is left to be addressed as part of the project's exit strategy. Effectiveness and sustainability are at risk when so much is left to be done after project end which was anticipated to be done during the project. COVID had some effect on implementation (as described in Section 4.2.6).

[181] Notwithstanding the following statement (which is part of the 2018 Management Response to the MTR), many of the MTR recommendations were not followed. "In conclusion, the Government of eSwatini and UNDP consider the MTR recommendation as in general well-articulated and agrees with the rating attributed to the project. Efforts will be made to implement all recommendations during the remainder of the project period".

[182] Procurement and contracting of goods and services (whether through Government or UNDP) took longer than envisaged in many cases leaving at the time of the TE some activities unfinished, and from the perspective of some of the communities involved, no means of doing so. There were issues of poor quality and inappropriate purchases related to procurement undertaken both by UNDP and ENTC.

Project Management & Coordination

The Project Management Unit (PMU)

[183] The Project has had 3 different National Project Managers (NPM), all well-qualified and all of whom performed their duties well. Notwithstanding seemingly talented NPMs, project management suffered over the years for a variety of reasons. Project management improved significantly during the last two years of the project.   The PMU was not well structured during the first few years of the project and was restructured following the MTR (and upon its recommendation). There were also several periods during which the PMU was not fully staffed, missing a Finance)/Administrative officer for an extended period. During part of the middle three years of the project, the PMU was in essence without a NPM, with the NPM at the time asked by the PB to excuse himself from PB meetings. This created an uneasy working relationship with the Project governance structures and PMU, and negatively impacted on the Project's ability to deliver. For approximately 18 months after the MTR, the PMU had little to do as there was very little being implemented due to lack of PSC agreement on how to proceed despite an agreed management response to the MTR which had been approved by the PB. There was high turnover in the PMU. Over the seven-year project period, the project had a total of 3 NPMs and 3 Finance/Administrative Officers.

The Project Board (PB) and the Project Steering Committee (PSC)

[184] Both a Project Board and a Project Steering Committee were established. This created confusion and this confusion had adverse effects on project implementation and oversight as described below. The PB met 21 times over the project period, averaging 4 meetings per year – more than most PBs. The PSC also met regularly, meeting 30 times over the project period. Although these committees met frequently, neither appears to have been especially effective. The PB was not able to steer the project effectively as demonstrated by the low PIR ratings given for the project over the project period and as substantiated throughout this report. The Project "Steering" Committee, was in fact supposed to be a Project Technical Committee but had confusing TOR which made it difficult to be clear on what their role was supposed to be. As a technical committee, there is little evidence that their focus was indeed on technical matters related to the project such as, for example, re-introduction of species, biodiversity surveys, the landscape approach to conservation, etc.

[185] As indicated above, the confusion between the PB and the PSC contributed to the PSC approving the Project Strategy and M&E Plan, something a technical committee should certainly not have been responsible for doing. The MTR pointed out that the strategy caused the project to deviate significantly from what was described in the PRODOC. As a result, the project had to get back on track and was defined by UNDP as a project "in transition and readjustment".

[186] Both the PB and the PSC made project site visits. Although it is helpful for a PB to know first-hand about the project it is tasked with, the site visits appeared to be mostly focused on monitoring infrastructural works and other things that a NPM is normally best placed to do, rather than trying to get a "big picture" of what was going on with the project. The PSC made site visits to many of the same sites visited by the PM with often very little value added in the opinion of the TE -- while incurring additional costs to the project.

4.2.6 Risk Management including Social and Environmental Standards

[187] Risk management in the PRODOC included risks related to climate change (PRODOC, Table 12 and 13), and there was inclusion of activities that could enhance resilience in relation to climate change (e.g.,

fencing of wetland and subsequent restoration of flora, gender and women's empowerment enhance the socio-economic status of women and increase their resilience to climate change).

[188] An overarching principle of SES is a focus on human rights; gender equality and women's empowerment; sustainability and resilience; and accountability. UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) underpin UNDP's commitment to sustainable development and required the project to enhance positive social and environmental opportunities and benefits as well as to ensure that adverse social and environmental risks and impacts were avoided, minimized, mitigated, and managed. The Environmental and Social Screening Procedure assessed the five (5) components of the project Enhancing SNPAS Social and Environmental Safeguards project. Classified as Category 1 (i.e. projects that are unlikely to cause any significant environmental impact), it included the small scale tourism rated projects encompassing Rehabilitation of Khopho Community Eco-Lodge, Khelekhele River Lodge, Luzelweni Eco-Tourist facility, Mhlumeni Eco-Tourism Infrastructure, and Construction of Bee-Hive Hut for Shewula Mountain Camp.

[189] All the Five (5) Components scored 'Low' Negative Environmental Impacts, and all Components recorded 'High' Positive Socio-Economic Impacts. This a typically low risk project because of the careful selection of the sites not interfering with people's lives and environment. When a Project is categorized as Low Risk no further social and environmental assessment is required. If stakeholders have raised concerns regarding the Project's social and environmental aspects, the Low Risk designation must be carefully reviewed (e.g. serious objections should warrant Moderate or High Risk categorization).

[190] Besides adhering to the UNDP Social and Environmental Safeguards, the implementation of this project also strictly adheres to the National Legislative Frameworks requirements. During the assessment process, Environment and social issues are taken into context. The initiative to develop effective infrastructure for community owned rest facilities is a high priority that intends to complement commitments to conserve communal land in Chiefdoms. The social and environmental screening and assessment aimed to inform the preparation of a site specific social and environmental management plan to guide the project to a socially and environmentally sustainable implementation.

4.2.7 COVID-19 Impacts

[191] The impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on PA operations and programmes include the disruption or inability to conduct regular field patrols, conducting anti-poaching operations, and loss of revenue from various sources. According to 2021 PIR, COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns (aimed to minimize risk of contracting the Corona virus) caused disruption and delays to execution of some project activities, and monitoring efforts. Restrictions on gatherings limited progress toward community mobilisation and engagement on many components of the work plan. There were delays on civil works related to improvement of tourism and conservation infrastructure, and consultancies that required international consultants and community level engagements.

[192] Due to these delays, the project operational period was extended for additional 12 months to allow completion of key project activities and avoid loss of foundational investments made in previous years. In addition, the project adopted online stakeholder engagements and reduced numbers for physical meetings. Technical support through consultants adopted a twining approach where international

consultants worked with national counterparts to mitigate travel restrictions. The TE was also impacted by the pandemic as some stakeholder consultations were done virtually.

[193] The impact of the pandemic on revenue generation was very negative. In ENTC managed PAs, operations and activities were disrupted (e.g., introduction of giraffes in Mlawula NR was limited by game capture requirements which could not permit under COVID-19 restrictions). The loss of income to already underfunded PAs has huge implications on their ability to perform basic functions, including protecting biodiversity. COVID-19 impact was very severe on PLOs who had already placed their land in conservation. as their income depends primarily on tourism which came to a halt. Catalytic grants to PAs owned by PLOs are important in keeping these areas under conservation. Affected community ecotourism ventures (e.g., Shewula Mountain Camp, Mhlumeni Bush Camp, Mahamba Gorge) suffered huge losses. These community-based conservation areas reported that they could barely maintain basic operations (e.g., Shewula Mountain Camp parted ways with some employees due to inability to pay salaries, cancellation of all outside bookings since December 2019 up to time of TE at Mhlumeni Bush Camp) due to COVID-19.

[194] Overall, the impression of the TE is that the pandemic had an impact on the project, and slowed down some field activities. Moreover, COVID-19 has potential to have negative impacts for the sustainability of the project outcomes, through reduction in annual budget allocations to ENTC as a result of shifts in government priorities, reduction in tourist visitation to protected areas in Eswatini (affecting revenue generation); and local impacts on communities related to national economic changes (unemployment, economic recession), movement restrictions and direct health impacts.

4.3 Project Results and Impacts

4.3.1 Progress towards Objectives and Expected Outcomes (MU*)

[195] The TE is tasked with assessing project progress and results against what is committed in the signed PRODOC as well as the indicator targets presented in the Results Framework (it is important to make this distinction as RF do not always comprehensively or accurately portray what was promised in a PRODOC).

[196] The original RF for this project was considered to be weak in certain respects (see MTR report) and the MTR recommended that certain elements of the RF be rewritten. Even though the RF was eventually revised following the MTR, it was never officially changed in the UNDP system. No explanation for this has been given by UNDP despite a TE inquiry about this. The original RF was used for reporting in all PIRs. While the original RF was presented in the PIRs, in practice the PMU and UNDP reported on a mix of both the original and the revised RF. This is poor practice and UNDP should not have allowed this.

[197] Because of the confused way in which progress towards the indicators/targets was reported, the TE decided it best to provide our assessment of progress towards the objective and expected outcome indicator/targets for both the original and the revised RF. A fuller TE assessment of progress towards the project objective and expected outcomes is presented in Annex 14 of this report.

[198] An overall summary of RF indicator target status at TE is presented here. No appreciable progress was made to the objective-level indicator target (as presented in the original RF) but the revised indicator target can be said to have been partially achieved.

[199} All 3 of the original Outcome 1-level indicator targets were partially achieved. Regarding Outcome 2 indicator targets, no appreciable progress was made to one of the original indicator targets whereas targets were partially achieved for 2 others of the original indicators. Two of the revised indicator targets were also partially achieved. Regarding Outcome 3, 4 of the original indicator targets were partially achieved and no appreciable progress was made towards one whereas 2 of the revised indicator targets were partially achieved and no appreciable progress made towards one.

[200] As indicated above, RF are often imperfect (especially for biodiversity projects – which do not lend themselves to the same degree of quantification and ease of reporting as, for example, a POPPS project might). Shortcomings with RFs frequently seen include: a) Things that were included in the PRODOC but not reflected in the RF and which were *not* done by the project ("lost commitments"), b) Things not in the PRODOC and not in the RF but done by the project anyway ("unexpected add-ons"). "Unexpected Add-Ons" are not necessarily all bad as some may represent cases of helpful adaptive management. In other cases, "unexpected add-ons" may represent unauthorized and unjustified expenditures that do not necessarily contribute to the project outcomes. Annex 15 describes some of the "lost commitments" and some of the "unexpected add-ons".

4.3.2 Relevance (S*)

[201] The stated objective of the project as well as the expected outcomes were relevant and responsive to national needs. Much of what the project actually did (and was supposed to do according to the PRODOC) was relevant, nevertheless, some of what was actually done was far less relevant to the objective and some was not approved by the GEF.

4.3.3 Effectiveness (MU*)

[202] The extent to which the project contributed to the UNDP country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, CBD Aichi targets, the UNDP Strategic Plan, GEF strategic priorities, and national development priorities is briefly described below.

1. The project made contributions towards UNDP, GEF, global MEA and national development plans and priorities. Although it cannot be legitimately claimed that significant global environmental benefits were achieved during the project period, the project did help set the stage for future contributions in that regard.
2. The project contributed towards the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies: BD 1.1 Improved management of existing and new protected areas. BD 2.1: Increase in sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation.

3. The project contributed towards Aichi targets 5 and 11. It contributed to Aichi Target #5 through the expansion of the PA system and support for PA management effectiveness. It contributed to #11 by increasing the PA system's area of coverage through OECMs and Special Habitat designations.

4. The project contributed towards SDG 15 (Life on Land) through the same results that supported the above-mentioned Aichi targets.

5. The project contribution towards national development needs includes supporting the development of the National Policy on Invasive Alien Plant Species, contributing initial steps to the process of developing a PA classification system, contributing to the development of guidelines for OECMs that fit the Eswatini context, the work it supported geared towards financial sustainability of the PA system.

[203] Information related to the extent to which the project's actual outcomes/outputs were commensurate with what was planned is presented in the table of progress against RF indicator targets (See Annex 14).

Areas in which the project had the greatest and fewest achievements:

[204] Overall, the project had its greatest achievements in:

- Restoration of wetlands located on communal lands. Water quantity and quality has been restored in 3 wetlands, and as a result, some species of native plants and animals have returned. This has been accomplished by managing livestock and human access to these areas (Khalangilile wetland, Malanti wetland, Ntondozi wetland). Evidence for this is based partly on actual monitoring of water quality/quantity and species richness surveys (conducted in 2018 and again in 2021), and partially on anecdotal observation by community members and members of the PMU.

- Some isolated populations of certain wildlife species have been genetically recharged with the insertion of small numbers of Blesboks, Blue Wildebeest, Impala, Giraffe, and other species into some of the ENTC PAs.

- Poaching in ENTC-managed areas has been somewhat reduced. Mlawula Nature Reserve poaching incidents have slightly decreased due to increased patrols, improved communications and successes in court cases in prosecuting poachers. The evidence for this is actual data collected on poaching incidents by ENTC in the PAs they manage (see Annex 16).

- Poaching in some private conservation areas has decreased somewhat due both to efforts of the PLOs as well as injection of project support provided through OECM catalytic grants (Dombeya, Wide Horizons, Mbuluzi). Although grant size was relatively small, the impact was important especially for support received by PLOs during COVID when most of the PLOs lost all revenue normally coming in from tourism and may not have been able to afford such investments on their own.

- Fire management has improved in some private conservation areas due to injection of support provided through OECM catalytic grant (Dombeya)

- Awareness of local leaders (Chiefs), Inner Councils and communities regarding the importance of biodiversity has increased which has resulted in increasing the area within communal lands dedicated to conservation (Shewula, Luzelweni, Mhlumeni). Project success can in part be attributed in some of these areas (Shewula and Mhlumeni) to previous support from other initiatives.
- Trainings provided by the project in (PAs) patrolling, law enforcement, drone operation for ecological and security monitoring, and fire management have led to decreased poaching and improved skill in fire handling (e.g. Trained ENTC Park Managers, Senior Ecologist, GIS Coordinator and Rangers at ENTC managed PAS at Mlawula and Malolotja Nature Reserves).
- The process of elaborating the PA management plans, in particular for the ENTC-managed areas, resulted in building both the capacity of those Park Wardens involved in the exercise as well as their buy-in into the implementation of the plans.
- Especially in the last year of the project, the project has contributed to increasing the awareness and interest of decision makers in Government regarding the potential revenues and other benefits that could be generated from PAs and this interest has contributed indirectly to the development of a new project that adopts the landscape approach in the Lubombo landscape.

[205] Those areas where least was achieved include enhancing management effectiveness of PAs on communal lands, enhancing capacity of communities to manage their PAs, advancing true alternative and viable livelihoods for communities living in areas considered to be worthy of protection because of the biodiversity contained therein.

Constraining factors, such as socio-economic, political and environmental risks; and how they were overcome:

[206] The design and implementation of this project experienced significant constraining socio-economic factors given the poverty of many communities living on Swazi Nation land and living in many cases immediately adjacent to either legally gazetted PAs or other conservation areas owned by PLOs with relative great wealth and resources compared to those available to them. Overcoming these disparities and the pressures they create on natural resources and on remaining natural areas that still have an abundance of wild flora and fauna is beyond the scope of this project. The project did, however, undertake efforts to try to ensure more equitable distribution of benefits through requiring that all PLOs receiving OECM catalytic grants describe the plan for access and benefit sharing with neighboring communities. This was a helpful first step but as there is no means for the project to enforce or monitor, it may or may not have actual on-the-ground impact. Nevertheless, it brought greater awareness to the issue and perhaps a greater commitment by some of the PLOs to ensure some degree of benefit sharing. Human population pressure also presents a constraining factor which again is beyond the scope of this project. The contribution this project made in this regard was related to the activities to empower women. There were, unfortunately, no project activities to educate girls despite ample opportunities for doing so within the context of this project, and women empowerment efforts were limited despite the known inequalities between women and men in the Swazi society.

Alternative strategies that would have been more effective in achieving the project's objectives:

[207] An alternative strategy that would have been more effective would have been to focus exclusively on protected areas – increasing the area under protected area status and enhancing the management of these areas to better conserve biodiversity within both existing and new PAs. This is indeed the stated project objective but the approach that was then described in the PRODOC was not a focus on PAs but rather a mix of a landscape approach with a protected area cluster approach. This lack of clarity in defining the strategy to achieve the objective led to a project replete with many activities (all of which could be justified as potentially contributing to the conservation of biodiversity) but without a coherent strategy. The dispersed approach has resulted in a barely felt impact in BD conservation in the different landscapes.

[208] Section 4.3.8 describes the project contribution to gender equality and empowerment of women.

4.3.4 Efficiency (U*)

[209] There were many inefficiencies in under-taking of the infrastructure projects (e.g., Bill of quantities not well prepared, non-completion of ecotourism infrastructure such as at Luzelweni). Several consultancies did not result in usable products, with some being terminated early. Some products were not produced until quite late in the project making efficient use of these quite difficult.

4.3.5 Overall Outcome (MU*)

[210] The overall outcome is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory based on the ratings for relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical. Overall project outcome is assessed using a six-point scale, described in Section 1.1

4.3.6 Sustainability: financial (ML*), socio-economic (MU*), institutional framework and governance (MU*), environmental (MU*), and overall likelihood (MU*)

Financial Sustainability (ML*)

[211] At project design stage, according to the PRODOC, "despite the substantial economic potential, the PAs in Swaziland are severely underfunded". The PRODOC goes on to explain, "Swaziland's SNTC PAS have traditionally been funded from the government treasury and given low priority, as it was seen to have little to contribute to the national development process. Recurrent budgets are commonly just enough to keep only basic management structures in place, and capital budgets were insufficient to prevent depreciation and decay of PA infrastructure". The PRODOC goes on to indicate that, "the current composition of mechanisms and sources is insufficient and inadequate, since it is not, as far as can be determined, meeting the financial needs of the system, nor is it taking full advantage of available funding and market-based opportunities".

[212] The ENTC budget for PA management is basically unchanged from levels at project start. The Government budget continues to be inadequate to fully implement the management plans for the ENTC-managed PAs (all of which were developed with the support of this project). There has been no investment by the Project in the management of PAs on communal lands during the project period with the exception of the investment made by this Project (which itself did very little in this regard).

[213] The situation regarding financing available for PA management has not significantly improved over the 7 years of the project and, indeed, financial challenges related to PA management (especially privately-owned PAs) have been even further exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in a significant reduction in revenue that would have normally been generated from tourists visiting Eswatini's PAs.

[214] The project invested in preparing options related to financial sustainability of PAs (2017), and in the development of a conservation fund including drafting of the Eswatini Conservation Fund Bill and related regulations as well as a Resource Mobilisation Strategy (May, 2021). It also supported the development of a "Description & Quantification Of Ecosystem Services and Training Manual On The Evaluation Of Ecosystem Services For Protected Areas In Eswatini" (April, 2021).

[215] Even though the report on the Conservation Fund was only recently finalized earlier this year, there is progress on this with the Government actively pursuing the processes needed to approve regulations and eventually enact them as law. There is a lot of interest in the Fund and a great deal of consultation has taken place regarding how to move forward. According to the GEF Operational Focal Point in Eswatini, it is expected that the Conservation Fund will become operational in late 2022 or early 2023. Depending on the level of capitalization of the Fund (which cannot be known at this time but which is also under discussion), this may be an important source of funding that would enhance sustainability of Eswatini's PAs.

[216] Although to date there is no significant improvement in financial sustainability of Eswatini's PAs, there is a possibility that this situation may soon change. In the past three years, Eswatini has made a significant outreach to access more donor funding to support conservation efforts in the country. Eswatini recently received approval from the GEF for another biodiversity and land degradation project, the "Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini" project. The PIF for this $3,916,950 GEF-financed project (with an additional $25,768,500 in co-financing from other sources) was approved and a Project Preparation Grant was awarded. If the full project is approved, this could contribute significantly to prospects for sustainability related to the management of Malolotja, Shewula, and other nature conservancies in one of the three landscapes targeted by the SNPAS project.

[217] The Government has also initiated planning for another project which will involve Hlane National Park (managed by BGP), Mlawula Nature Reserve (managed by ENTC) and the Tibiyo company which owns large cattle ranches adjacent to these PAs. The idea is to form a large nature reserve encompassing all of this area and to adopt a landscape approach to managing the area. The TE has not been given further information regarding this initiative, thus we are unaware of the details regarding how a landscape approach is to be implemented on the ground (e.g., if there is expected to be free-roaming wildlife within the larger new reserve across the various landownership areas, if fences will be taken down? If predators and prey will be allowed to share the same space as they would in natural ecosystems, Etc.).

[218] In addition to the above project concepts, a proposal has been submitted to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to restore critical ecosystems that were negatively affected by a water scheme in the Lower Lubombo region. The TE requested more information on this to be able to determine if this effort might also contribute to sustainability of PAs and the outcomes of this project but no information was provided.

[219] The TE understands that a proposal for support for the Lubombo TransFrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) was also recently submitted (to the EU) for possible funding. If approved, this could contribute to the financial sustainability of the Lubombo Landscape.

[220] Overall, the financial sustainability of some of the project outcomes can be described as moderately likely due to the numerous opportunities being actively pursued through the afore-mentioned project initiatives and to the expected approval of the new Conservation Fund. The financial sustainability of project outcomes related to privately owned conservation areas in Eswatini will depend to some extent on the length and severity of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, which is beyond the possibility of this TE to assess except for to indicate that this is currently a major factor affecting Eswatini's private PAs.

Socio-Political Sustainability (MU*)

[221] The involvement of traditional leaders and communities in further pursuing and sustaining some of the outcomes of the project related to conservation on communal lands is key. The involvement of the MTAD in initiatives related to the conservation of biodiversity on communal lands has increased over the project period in part as a result of the processes related to the development of Chiefdom Development Plans and the involvement of the MTAD Officers in the various workshops supported by the project. This enhanced the awareness of MTAD and its community officers on the importance of conserving biodiversity and is expected to contribute somewhat to socio-political sustainability of the project outcomes.

[222] Some of the biodiversity surveys supported by the project involved participation of local community members, helping to build buy-in for conserving the biodiversity surveyed and thus leading to greater potential for sustaining conservation efforts. Nevertheless, to ensure this result, more participatory exercises had to have taken place so that communities themselves could continue with the surveys/monitoring.

[223] Capacity of local communities was enhanced through some of the trainings provided by the project (including those related to financial management of business enterprises including ecolodges), and this will also contribute towards socio-political sustainability.

[224] There is, according to the GEF OFP in Eswatini, a great deal of excitement in Government regarding the opportunities presented by OECMs and by the new initiative to establish a large nature reserve encompassing Mlawula, Hlane and Tibiyo cattle ranches. The Prime Minister himself has been tasked with pursuing some of these efforts. This high level of Government interest will contribute to socio-political sustainability of some of the project outcomes.

[225] The risk identified in the PRODOC that, "Local community and other stakeholders hamper the efforts of landscape-based management strategies due to conflicting and unsustainable land use practices that lead to further degradation. Unsustainable practices such as agriculture also expand into PAs reducing the ecosystem integrity" is a continuing risk. Due in large part to poverty experienced on communal lands and the disparity of available natural and other resources to those living on communal lands compared to

those adjacent landowners with title deed land who have designated part or all of their land as conservation area, there are significant pressures on title deed lands related to poaching (primarily to obtain meat for both consumption and for sale), agricultural encroachment (to have sufficient land to farm to produce for self-consumption), and encroachment for the purpose of growing marijuana (for sale) by neighbouring communities. This negatively affects the ability to truly adopt a landscape approach. This jeopardizes the socio-political sustainability of outcomes related to adoption of a landscape approach to biodiversity conservation.

[226] Given the above, the TE has assigned a rating of Moderately Unlikely for socio-political sustainability.

Institutional Framework and Governance Sustainability (MU*)

[227] The project has put in place some platforms (including the newly established Landscape Associations) that will enable to advocate for greater support for PAs.

[228] The Cabinet has adopted the report of the stakeholder consultations undertaken related to the amendment of the SNTC Act. Some provisions in the legislation may be changed and it seems likely according to the GEF OFP that the Act will be approved although this is a controversial piece of legislation and it is difficult to speculate on the outcome. Deliberations are expected to begin soon.

[229] The institutional framework related to the management of the country's PAs and its wildlife has not changed as a result of this project, nor was it expected to. The project was, however, expected to fortify relationships between the key conservation players in the country -- SNTC and BGP -- but this did not happen. TE has no information regarding current working relationships between these entities but understands that the new initiative planned in the Malolotja landscape is expected to involve collaboration between the two (as well as other stakeholders).

[230] According to the GEF OFP in Eswatini, the SNPAS project provided a bridge that has allowed multiple stakeholders to come together who had no previous engagement and has allowed the two biggest conservation players in the country to talk to each other. This may be, but relationships between all stakeholders are still far from ideal.

[231] According to some of the private landowners and associations of landowners with private conservation areas, relationships are now worse than they were at project start. ENTC has sent a letter to the LC indicating it has suspended its membership in the Lubombo Conservancy. The relationship between COSPE and ENTC is strained as a result of the challenges presented by this project. The Swaziland Game Ranchers Association (SGRA), which was one of two private landowners represented on the PSC, pulled out of the PSC at one point (and subsequently rejoined although participation since that time has not been nearly as engaged due in part to disillusionment with the project and the processes as undertaken). Game ranches in Eswatini combined comprise the largest area of conserved land in the country. Therefore, the SGRA should have been an important player in this project and was at least initially willing to be one. BGP pulled out of the project soon after project start.

Environmental Sustainability (MU*)

[232] Threats to environmental sustainability still include many of the same threats identified at project design stage as well as some additional threats that were not identified at the time. These include habitat fragmentation, habitat degradation due (in part due to over-grazing by livestock), invasive alien plant

species, wildlife poaching, cultivation of illegal substances within PAs, and climate change. Given these continued threats to biodiversity, environmental sustainability is assessed as Moderately Unlikely.

Overall Likelihood of Sustainability

[233] Using the six-point GEF sustainability scale, the overall likelihood of sustainability of project outcomes is assessed as Moderately Unlikely (MU).

4.3.7 Country Ownership

[234] Relevant government representatives were involved during project implementation, including the Permanent Secretary (MTEA) chairing the PB meetings, the EEA, Ministry of Agriculture, MNRE, the Department of Forestry, the EEA, the STA, the MTAD, Ministry of Finance (MoF), and Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD). The composition of the PSC is a reflection of country ownership, and helps promote greater country ownership.

[235] The project supported several outputs including Output 1.1 and 3.1 which entailed the participation of several Government entities which actively participated in these activities, thereby demonstrating significant country ownership of some of the training and capacity development as well as biodiversity surveys conducted.

[236] The project concept, objective, and outcomes are directly relevant to national development and environmental objectives in Eswatini, providing an important vehicle for delivery for implementing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), particularly in relation to eradication and management of invasive alien species.

[237] A few key stakeholders have disengaged from the project (unfortunately, including the King's Office and Big Game Parks) during project implementation, somewhat weakening the otherwise strong ownership at project start.

4.3.8 Gender equality and women's empowerment

[238] Reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment during SNPAS implementation was somehow adequate, thus allowing to understand what was actually contributed by the project to gender equality and women's empowerment.

[239] It is worth noting that gender was not adequately mainstreamed in the project document as it was not clearly articulated in the objective of the project, project outcomes in some component indicators, and there was no clearly defined budget allocation for promotion of gender equality. This was due to lack of a specific gender analysis study which should have been conducted prior to inform the design of the project document. The analysis would have assisted in understanding the gender dynamics in society to inform the design and implementation of the project.

[240] No Results Framework Process Indicator concerns the involvement of women and youth. There is no gender analysis or gender action plan in the Project Document. However, the documents that were

produced during project implementation had some degree of gender considerations mainly within the social and environmental assessments and screening which ultimately informed the implementation of the project activities[9]. The latter integrated gender in capacity building activities where both men and women participated.

[241] The PIR for 2021 and 2020 set the Atlas Gender Marker Rating at GEN2 (gender equality as significant objective, some contribution to gender equality). This rating appears fair, as there were indeed some positive contributions by the project (as captured in the paragraphs below) – although the project design, and the Strategic Result Framework did little to include a more systematic and strategic approach towards gender equality and the women's empowerment by SNPAS.

[242] Overall, the results areas where the project contributed to gender equality include inclusion of women in leadership positions and governance structures at local level, participation in decision making, inclusion in capacity building exercises, and inclusion/participation in availed job opportunities.

Contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources:
[243] The project has contributed to closing gender gap by ensuring equal participation of men and women in project activities. Women have been nominated to be part of the landscape management committee where landscape issues emanating from communities, private and government are discussed.

Improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance:
[244] Women have the potential to lead and make decisions as evidenced in some Trusts that are led by women such as Mvembili, and Mhlumeni where they are holding Chairpersonship positions, as well as Shewula Nature Reserve Camp whereby a woman is a Manager. In terms of the project influence on issues relating to gender and women in leadership and decision making, there is some degree of positive influence though it still remains that influencing culture and tradition significantly may be achieved in the long term due to patriarchal nature of society. In the Ngwempisi Landscape, there are nine (9) committee members and five (5) are females, while in the Malolotja Landscape there are Eleven (11) committee members and four (4) are females, and in the Lubombo Landscape there are thirteen (13) members and three (3) are females. This translates to 36% women representation in decision-making.

[245] The participation of women was significant in the Bulembu community (part of Malolotja Landscape) mobilization exercise and training on protected area establishment. Mobilisation was for declaring their pristine forests under the Flora Protection Act 2001. After mobilization and awareness campaigns, the community was trained on how Special Habitats are established and capacitated on processes of developing forests management plans. During training, twenty-three (23) out of forty-six (46) participants were females. This accounts for 50% women participation.
[246] As far as the TE can ascertain, this level of participation was actually put into practice, and is an important achievement for PAs/CAs throughout the landscapes.

Targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women
[247] Women were empowered in various skills to effectively manage income generation activities as a deliberate effort. Furthermore, these income generation activities were supported both technically and

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[9] Final combined report of environmental & social impact assessment (ESIA) by use of social & environment standards (SES) screening process on the five (5) components of the project Enhancing SNPAS social and environmental safeguards. July 2020.

materially. The project made significant contributions in this area, and the project's IGA support targeted women as priority. The project's efforts in promoting and supporting livelihoods activities which benefited both men and women through training sessions on specific projects (e.g. pricing of handicraft products, quality assurance and marketing) was commendable. For the level of involvement by men and women in income generating activities, women represented 59.5% (48), while men were 41.5% (34) which shows that more women were involved in income generating activities than men[10].

[248] In a bid to ensure sustained conservation and harvesting of resources within some of the fenced wetlands, SNPAS developed seven wetlands management plans for Lukhetseni, Malanti, Ndzangu, Eluvinjelweni, Mphini, Ntondozi and Khalangilile communities. In the capacity building exercise for developing the plans in all communities, women's participation was significant with fifty-eight (58) women out of 129 participants. This accounted for 45% of women participation.

[249] The project has improved socio-economic benefits and services for women through improved management of wetlands resources that are harvested for craft; and improved access to water for domestic use and livestock. Two (2) wetlands were fenced in Khalang'lile and Ntondozi respectively as part of the SNPAS wetland's protection program targeting communities. The wetland in Ntondozi supplies water to Mvimbeko High School and 350 households, while the one in Khalangilile is a source of domestic water for 41 households.

[250] Therefore, women have been able to tap into an income generation option that has been created by the project's wetlands conservation efforts, and this has improved household income. Now that wetland flora is assisting in generating income for women, they have taken full ownership of the wetlands protection to ensure they continue harvesting wetland flora for income generation.

Significant impact to gender equality and women's empowerment
[251] SNPAS took steps to ensure that perceptions of both women and men are taken into consideration (through community meetings and BD conservation awareness trainings). However, since most IGA are still in the infancy stage, it cannot be established (qualitatively or quantitatively) that fair and equitable access to and distribution of project benefits will be effective.

[252] The project highlighted the role of women in BD conservation, and targeted women's groups for the development of alternative income generation activities (IGA), capacity building to increase women's participation in BD conservation. The empowerment of women was achieved through training through women groups (e.g., cutting grass from the wetland to make handicrafts for sale by women at Khalangilile, group of widows involved in honey production in Luzelwini chiefdom).

[253] In the absence of systematic records (from the WMC or the PMU), the TE team cannot quantify and ascertain the trends for the long term in generating income from the sale of handicrafts (made out of the grass harvested from the wetlands), as well as the impact on their livelihoods. For example, for Khalangilile, the only data available for the time being are as follows: In 2020, the harvest from cutting

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[10] Table 5: Representation in income generating activities. An Assessment of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Strengthening National Protected Area Systems (SNPAS) Project Implementation. August 2021.

the grass was effected by 30 women resulting in 80 flora bundles fetching a value of SZL588.00, whilst in 2021, 22 women cut the grass, resulting in a harvest of 59 flora bundles valued at SZL491.00[11].

4.3.9 Other Cross-cutting Issues

The Poverty-Environment Nexus

[254] The Project Document underlines the dual nature of the Swazi economy, with high productivity in textile manufacturing and in the industrialised agricultural TDLs on the one hand, and declining productivity subsistence agriculture (on SNL) on the other, may well explain the country's overall low growth, high inequality and unemployment with unemployment estimated at 40%.

[255] With very high dependency on land and natural resources for livelihoods, the increasing population size, droughts and poor agricultural practices threaten both livelihoods and the environment. Specific environmental threats related to poverty include: unsustainable agricultural practices, and overgrazing pressures. The project's focus on elevating sustainable land use and rehabilitation of eco-tourism facilities in community conservation areas sought to address these threats.

[256] While there was no stated aim to focus on the most vulnerable members of the communities during the project's IGA interventions, the project's efforts did provide benefits to some sections of society i.e. women within those communities. In Eluyengweni Chiefdom, Ngwempisi Landscape, women of Khalangilile wetland benefited from cutting the grass used in manufacturing handicrafts for sale thus improving their socio-economic situation through improved management of wetlands resources; and improved access to water for domestic use and livestock. The wetland in Ntondozi supplies water to Mvimbeko High School and 350 households, while the one in Khalangilile is a source of domestic water for 41 households.

[257] There was no monitoring of socio-economic status or incomes among the communities whose wetlands were fenced and sustainably managed, therefore no quantitative data are available on changes in these conditions. However, it is likely that the project's promotion of sustainable wetland use and management of its natural resources (flora species and water) reduced threats such as indiscriminate cutting of grass and cattle drinking.

Capacity Building

[258] This project included a variety of capacity development aims, relating to improving the management effectiveness of protected areas.

[259] Output 1. 1 aimed at conducting Biodiversity field surveys, vegetation assessments and tourism assessments carried out in PAs and surrounding landscapes to fill information gaps. The TE has found no evidence that the biodiversity surveys conducted – most of which were simply checklists of species seen on one-time visits to areas – led to enhanced research or monitoring, or that the information provided by these surveys was used in making PA management decisions. There is also no evidence to suggest that the surveys were intended to fill specific information gaps. However, they were used to a certain extent

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[11] Records supplied by WMC Vice Chair on 21st October 2021.

in (the compilation of the Special Habitats Management Plans and) the mobilization of communities during the exercise to create awareness on biodiversity conservation.

[260] Output 3.1 stated that systematic training and capacity development for key personnel and stakeholders in the different forms of PAs, to enhance PA management and landscape based management including technical capacity building on PA management, planning, administration, marketing, customer care, conflict resolution, reporting, monitoring, policing and enforcement in PAs, ecotourism development and management, CBNRM practices and management, monitoring and enforcement and sustainable financing management.

[261] The end of Project target level was that at least 8 programmes on PA management, planning, administration, marketing, customer care, conflict resolution, reporting, monitoring, policing and enforcement in PAs, ecotourism development and management, CBNRM practices and sustainable financing management and at least a third of the participants should be women. As at 30th June 2020, four (4) capacity building programs had been delivered for ENTC, private formal PAs and private and communal informal PAs. They included Ecological and security monitoring (Trained ENTC Park Managers, Senior Ecologist, GIS Coordinator and Law Enforcement depart on drone operation), Marketing and ecotourism training, and Financial management, Integrated Fire management, and Protected Areas financing and resourcing. The End of Project (EoP) target of at least 1/3rd of trainees being women (tracked through attendance registers) was achieved as evidenced by the SNPAS Gender Assessment Consultancy (August 2021)[12].

Climate Change

[262] The PRODOC stated that climate change adaptation involves improving (society's) ability to cope with climatic variability and the associated risks. The adoption of landscape-based management strategies by SNPAS did not help substantially in mitigating some of the impacts of climate change through providing substantive alternative income sources through meaningful livelihoods for the local communities in an attempt to buffer them from the effects of climate variability including drought. The IGA programme was not robust enough to reduce the vulnerability of local communities to the vagaries of climate change and to attain resilience. An earlier and deeper socio-economic analysis would have helped in implementing a more appropriate set of livelihoods alternatives for the communities.

[263] The wetlands fencing programme resulted in strengthening their sustainability, the provision of drinking water and washing troughs that aim at limiting disturbance and pollution of wetlands. Ultimately, it contributed to climate change adaptation. By promoting women's empowerment, SNPAS enabled them to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

[264] Tree planting and fruit tree distribution programmes are considered as climate change adaptation measures. However, the lack of follow up to monitor the survival rate of the trees has compromised the full extent of the expected benefit. Community awareness raising efforts towards biodiversity conservation, support for income generating activities (e.g., bee-keeping), and training in fire

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[12] An Assessment of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Strengthening National Protected Area Systems (SNPAS) Project Implementation August 2021.

management (a major threat to the PAs that is likely to intensify with climate warming and drought occurrence) are also tangible initiatives at improving climate change adaptation.

4.3.10 GEF Additionality

[265] Little quantitative and verifiable data is available to demonstrate any global environmental benefits (GEBs) that may have been derived by the project. The Table below provides a brief comparison of the expected GEBs as described in the PRODOC with what can be observed. It should be noted that to meet the definition of GEF additionality these outcomes should be directly associated with the GEF-supported project.

Table 10: Comparison of Expected versus Actual Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) Derived

Expected Global Environmental Benefit as described in the PRODOC	Quantitative and verifiable data demonstrating GEBs
The project will put in place governance and institutional frameworks including knowledge-based management systems and mechanism, to facilitate inclusive landscape level management of the PA system of Swaziland for integrated biodiversity conservation and economic development. This will deliver global benefits through enhanced habitat integrity and through the maintenance of ecosystem function and resilience.	Although putting a knowledge-base management system in place may be expected to contribute to enhance habitat integrity (although the TE notes that alone will not be sufficient), the system has only recently become operational (and even then only to a limited extent). Therefore, there is no quantitative data to demonstrate that global benefits have resulted from the project effort in this regard.
The multi-use landscape level approach demonstrated by the project is expected to serve as a new model for managing similar systems throughout Swaziland	The landscape approach adopted by the Project has, according to some Government stakeholders, served as an inspiration to pursue the establishment of a large nature reserve encompassing several different PAs (one managed by BGP and one managed by ENTC) as well as cattle ranches owned by the Company, Tibiyo. If this is indeed pursued, and the landscape is truly managed at least in part with the intent to conserve biodiversity, the project effort can be said to have resulted in the expected global benefit as described. If, on the other hand, the area is simply designated as an OECM or other type of PA, and not actively managed for biodiversity conservation, the global benefit will not be derived. This means, the Tibiyo-owned cattle ranches will likely need to change some of their current management practices to ensure biodiversity is conserved on that land.
Global benefits include establishment of more PA and increased participation of local communities.	More PAs have been established as a direct result of this project intervention. None of the new PAs are, however, legally gazetted. Global benefit can only be derived from these additional PAs if they are truly effectively managed for biodiversity conservation. The Project has also led to increased participation of local communities in efforts related to the conservation of biodiversity, some more direct than others. A few communities have undertaken isolated efforts to control IAPS on small areas. Communities have also been involved in fencing and demarcation of communal PAs and in efforts to rehabilitate degraded wetlands.

4.3.11 Catalytic/Replication Effect

[266] The Project catalyzed some actions on communal lands related to the control of IAPS. It is not known at this time if the communities involved in this effort will truly take this up on their own. It also was expected to catalyze (and may still be able to do so by project end but at this time it is not operational), beekeeping and chicken and rabbit rearing on some communal lands.

[267] Perhaps the most important thing the project has done in terms of catalyzing other actions was to enhance awareness of decision makers regarding the options around OECMs and how designation of OECMs could benefit the country. Although it cannot be known at this time, it appears likely that more OECMs will now be designated in Eswatini. The effectiveness of OECMs in relation to their contribution to conserving biodiversity will depend on several factors including on whether criteria for OECM designation is strengthened (as recommended in this report), how the technical expertise involved in assessing potential OECMs (which also needs to be strengthened as pointed out in this report) is applied, and on whether long-term commitments can be assured through the OECM mechanism as it is applied in the Eswatini context. Without adequate consideration of these factors, designating more OECMs could enable Eswatini to report greater PA coverage (for example, when reporting to the Convention on Biodiversity) but would have little actual impact on the ground in terms of conserving biodiversity.

4.3.12 Progress to Impact

[268] This section evaluates progress towards the long-term impact outlined in the project's intervention logic and the extent to which long-term impact can be attributed to the project.

Environmental stress reduction
[269] There were no project indicators of environmental stresses, but there is data collected by ENTC and by the project that suggests that certain environmental stresses have been reduced in some areas.

[270] There is empirical data to suggest poaching has decreased in certain areas and that livestock grazing pressures have been reduced in certain areas. Data collected by ENTC park wardens on poaching incidents suggests that poaching has been reduced in all three of the ENTC-managed Nature Reserves (see Annex 16). Fencing to keep livestock out of wetlands, and the provision of alternative watering and washing areas for people and livestock has reduced environmental stresses on some wetlands according to data collected by the project.

[271] Although there is no quantified data regarding fires, according to some PLOs interviewed by the TE, the number of fires has been reduced given the fire training and equipment/infrastructure provided by the project.

[272] Demarcation of PA boundaries on the ground may have reduced livestock grazing/encroachment into some communal PAs but again there is no empirical evidence for this and TE interviews with community members would suggest there has been no change in livestock grazing pressures on communal lands or communal PAs.

[273] There is no evidence to suggest that the environmental stress related to agricultural encroachment into either Government-managed or private PAs has changed over the project period.

[274] Although the project undertook small-scale IAPS control efforts, these were too small and too infrequent (IAPS control requires continual effort) to have had an impact on reducing the stress posed from IAPS in communal areas or within PAs.

[275] From what the TE was able to ascertain based on its visits, some PAs are increasingly affected by the illegal cultivation of dagga within the PAs. This is a relatively new and increasing environmental stress in PAs in Eswatini.

Environmental status change

[276] There were no project indicators related to changes in environmental status. Nevertheless, the project effort to fence some areas to prevent livestock from entering and the provision of alternative watering and washing areas for livestock and people has resulted in the return of some native plants and birds to some wetlands, species that were not seen during the biodiversity surveys conducted at the beginning of the project.

[277] It is also likely, although not substantiated with data, that the supplementation of certain wildlife populations with additional individuals of those species (Blesbok, giraffe, blue wildebeest, impala) in some of the ENTC-managed PAs, enhanced the genetic variability within those populations.

Contributions to changes in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks, including observed changes in capacities and governance architecture, including access to and use of information

[278] The project effort led to the development and adoption of an updated National Strategy for the Control and Management of Invasive Alien Plant Species: 2020 – 2030 (July 2020). The project also contributed to the development of a draft Wetlands policy (no final report was shared with the TE). The project effort developed Guidelines for Protected Areas Categorization, Formalization and Compliance in Swaziland (November, 2016) but this seemingly has not affected any change in the way that PAs are categorized in the country. The project supported the drafting of the Eswatini Conservation Fund Bill, Regulations Segments & Resource Mobilisation Strategy (May 2021) which is likely to lead to the establishment of such a Fund although Cabinet has not yet approved this and consultations are still underway. The project also supported the development of a site-level methodology for identifying Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures and for customizing OECMS to the Eswatini Context.

Contributions to changes in socio-economic status

[279] There were no project indicators or monitoring of changes in socio-economic status, therefore no data are available to support any analysis. The restoration of a few wetlands on communal lands has contributed to increased income of a small number of women in some communities but whether that additional income is sufficient to make any change in socio-economic status is unknown. No sustained income has been derived from any of the IGAs (i.e., bee keeping, rabbit, and chicken rearing) as none of these are in full production cycle yet. Project investments in infrastructure related to enhancing tourism in communal lands may eventually lead to increased revenues but this has not been well tracked and in many cases the infrastructures were not completed until very late in the project (some are still not completed) so it is not possible to know if this will contribute to changes in socio-economic status.

5. MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

5.1 Main Findings & Conclusions

[280] A great deal of effort by many people was put into this project – the largest international donor-supported project to conserve biodiversity thus far in the country's history. There were many meaningful advances made. Nevertheless, the results in terms of biodiversity conserved are not commiserate with the effort or with the amount of funds allocated.

[281] The project represents a start, which, in order to get to the finish, i.e., to derive the outcomes that were anticipated by project end, must now be somehow further pursued. The Government of Eswatini can and should provide some of that needed support, and the beneficiaries of this project should do the same through their own continued effort, but further external support will also be needed to build on what this project started and to enhance sustainability of those project-supported efforts that were completed but which still require "hand-holding" for some time before "walking" on their own.

[282] It will be important for ENTC and others to learn lessons that might be extracted from this project experience to ensure the next donor-supported efforts to conserve biodiversity in Eswatini are more cost-effective than this one was.

[283] The task of the TE is to assess, amongst other things, how well the project performed against what was committed in the PRODOC as well as what was reflected in the RF (if there is variance between the two). In signing a GEF project document, parties commit to doing what is indicated therein. The TE attempts to assess how well that commitment was met.

[284] The reader should bear in mind that this section is a summary. More detailed findings are presented throughout the report.

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[285] Relevance. The stated objective of the project as well as the expected outcomes were relevant and responsive to national needs. Much of what the project actually did (and was supposed to do according to the PRODOC) was relevant, nevertheless, some of what was actually done was far less relevant to the objective and some was not approved by the GEF.

[286] The project envisaged the investment in improved lodging for tourists on communal lands to contribute to biodiversity through enhanced revenues generated and re-invested in conservation actions on communal PAs. This has not happened.

[287] The Concept. The concept of adopting the landscape approach was good but perhaps not realistic for all four of the landscapes originally targeted. Spelling out in greater detail exactly what was meant by a "landscape approach" would have helped tremendously. This should have been discussed in detail at the project inception workshop. It was not. In some ways, it is incongruent to have a project objective that focuses, as this one does, exclusively on PAs while adopting a landscape approach that involves much more than just PAs. There are many different ways to interpret the term "landscape approach" and this project, although it was to adopt this approach, failed to clearly spell out what that meant from the start. It is only now, close to project end, that the newly-established Landscape Associations will decide what the priority issues are for each of them, what collaborations are required between them (and the form

these will take), and what agreements need to be put in place. This is when the term "landscape approach" will be translated into action.

[288] Implementation suffered as a result of numerous factors including in some cases lack of clarity regarding what was to be done, delays in fund transfers, restructuring of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and frequent changes of Project Managers, and lack of adequate strategic direction and oversight by the committee tasked with steering the project.

[289] Efficiency. The Project was not efficient in use of resources. Slow implementation exacerbated inefficiencies including the additional funds spent on management costs committed as UNDP co-financing that could have otherwise been spent on project activities. There were investments that yielded little or nothing (e.g., some consultancies undertaken were aborted before all deliverables were delivered, no action was taken to follow up on some reports). There were misspent funds to pay for costs that should not have been paid for with GEF funds (e.g., elaboration of Chiefdom Development Plans (CDPs), elaboration of a national strategy on IAPS). There were inefficiencies associated with poorly planned and implemented infrastructural projects.

[290] Sustainability A number of the activities which should have been completed some time ago are only being completed in the last year of the project (during the project extension period). Thus, a strategy had to be put in place to ensure these late efforts would be completed and further built upon. There does appear to be political will to pursue a number of the activities initiated by the project and to expand upon them, and, for some areas, it seems likely there will be further donor support to finance some of those activities.

[291] Time Frame. This seven-year (84 month) project effectively operated over a period of only 52 months, or 62% of the actual planned project period. A total of 32 months were effectively lost – more if one counts time lost to COVID-19 impacts. (See Section 4.2.5 for details)

[292] Strategy. An extraordinary amount of time was spent after project start on project strategy development. Despite all the strategic planning undertaken by the project (Technical Advisor Huntley, Technical Advisor Rod de Vletter, development of a detailed project strategy (2016), strategic planning workshop (2017), development of the management response to the MTR (2018), development of a "master plan" (2020), the project failed to truly adopt a strategic approach to achieve the project objective.

[293] Project contributions to possible eventual impact. Despite inefficiencies, the project made some important contributions that may, if effectively pursued, result in conserving biodiversity on the ground. These include progress on establishing a Conservation Fund[13], establishment of Landscape Associations, enhanced awareness related to the importance of conserving biodiversity – especially by communities within Chiefdoms containing "protection worthy areas", enhanced awareness by decision-makers of the potential benefits that can be derived through the designation of PAs, official designation as some form or other of "protected area" assigned to numerous areas that were determined to be worthy of protection

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[13] MTEA is currently going through the process of enacting the regulations related to the Conservation Fund, including the plan to capitalize the fund once established. Not all Government entities agree that it was necessary to establish a new fund. The Environment Authority feels that the CF should have been incorporated into the existing Environment Fund and that simply because the ENTC Bill and the NBSAP call for the establishment of a CF did not indicate that a CF could not have been established under the existing umbrella of the Environment Fund.

thereby enhancing prospects that these areas will be conserved over the long-term, bringing some stakeholders together that otherwise may never have met and whose joint, collaborative efforts will in large part determine the success or failure of conservation efforts not only on their own land but also on adjacent lands, supporting women's efforts to benefit directly from the conservation of biodiversity (BD) thereby empowering women while contributing directly to the conservation of wetlands.

[294] Already perceived conservation results. In addition to the above-described contributions which may eventually lead to significant conservation on-the-ground, the project effort also resulted in some already perceived conservation of biodiversity and enhancement of ecosystem functioning. One can already see the benefit derived from the project effort related to rehabilitation of wetlands on communal lands. The project effort to reduce poaching of wildlife has apparently had some positive effect in ENTC-managed Reserves (although attributing this improvement directly to the project intervention is not possible). The project effort to supplement wildlife populations which were genetically isolated has (one may reasonably assume although no genetic testing was done before or after supplementation) resulted in more genetically diverse wildlife populations, and in some cases simply larger populations of the species within the PAs.

[295] The trainings provided through the project have contributed directly to conserving biodiversity as well as having the potential to contribute more in future. Those trainings involving PA staff are seen to have had significant and direct impact. It is unfortunate that, even though additional conservation management trainings were originally envisaged (and TOR for these trainings elaborated), those important trainings were not pursued – according to UNDP because of a simple procedural matter (deliverables could not be agreed upon between the contracting parties).

[296] Technical Advice. Much of the technical advice provided by the project was more project management/steering type advice rather than technical conservation advice. The 3 different National Project Managers which the project had over its "life" appear to be well-qualified project managers but did not always receive clear direction from the PB. This was not an issue that was most appropriately solved by providing external technical expertise. On the other hand, technical expertise that would have been helpful to the project was not always provided. For example, the PRODOC mentions game ranching on communal lands as an "alternative livelihood" -- a viable livelihood option in place of, or in combination with, cattle ranching. Despite this, the project provided no technical advice on how this could be pursued.

[297] Partnerships. The approach adopted by the IP (ENTC) – especially in the later part of the project -- of working together with other partners including NGOs with experience working with communities in the various landscapes, and the University of Eswatini, was helpful. Its collaboration with other Government entities, including those under the same Ministry (e.g., the Eswatini Tourism Authority), was, however, less effective, as the respective comparative advantages of the various entities was not always fully acted upon.

[298] As indicated above, in addition to the project successes, there were significant shortcomings as well as missed opportunities.

[299] There was disproportionate focus on one part of what essentially was a two-part objective. Relatively greater focus should have been placed on enhancing the effective management of PAs compared to the focus placed on expanding PA coverage.

[300] With the exception of wetlands, the project failed to improve BD conservation within designated community conservation areas – even those that had been established by customary law long before this project began (e.g., Shewula) and failed to contribute significantly to capacitating community members to undertake conservation activities on community conservation areas despite awareness of the importance to conserve BD having been improved. The project failed to facilitate meaningful links between communities and adjacent PLOs owning private conservation areas so as to truly reduce pressures on those areas (even though the requirement that PLOs outline Access and Benefit Sharing plans as part of their OECM applications was a helpful step).

[301] Following the MTR, the project focused its efforts on enlarging the PA estate by using the IUCN designation of OECM instead of pursuing expansion of the PA estate through increasing the number of legally gazetted PAs. Although this allowed for a significant increase in the PA estate (thus helping the project to report good progress related to the objective and to certain expected outcomes), there were shortcomings in the process, products, and results related to the project's efforts pertaining to OEMCs. This resulted in some areas being designated as OECMs which may not legitimately be designated as such in accordance with international standards (and if unchanged will also allow for future OECMs to be designated as such which might not legitimately qualify). It also resulted in designating some PAs for which there is little assurance in place that the areas will be maintained in their natural state over the long-term.

[302] Although the project was implemented by a technical entity (ENTC), was supported by several technical advisors, involved technical consultancies, involved technical working groups, had a Project Technical Committee (at least by some definition), and was managed by National Project Managers (NPMs) whose required qualifications included a relevant technical background and experience, the project somehow lacked adequate technical direction and oversight.   This was due to several factors including ignoring technical advice (as also reported in the MTR), putting emphasis on the criteria of Departmental representativeness rather than technical expertise in the area of biodiversity conservation as the means of comprising what were supposed to be technical entities (Project Technical Committee, OECM Committee), lack of adequate time for technically qualified individuals to act in their technical capacity due to the need to focus on project management (reporting, etc.).

[303] The CBNRM activities undertaken in community wetlands by women is an example of an excellent CBNRM initiative that truly directly contributes to biodiversity conservation. This initiative should be replicated in other wetlands around the country. The project has provided some important catalytic support and this should now be further supported to upscale and to replicate.   However, most of the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) efforts (with the important exception of those undertaken in the wetlands) had in fact little to do with biodiversity, or the management of natural resources, and were mainly focused on activities that are unlikely to contribute significantly (or sometimes even at all) to BD conservation (e.g., chicken and rabbit rearing projects and beekeeping projects that had no direct link to biodiversity conservation). These small-scale agricultural initiatives undertaken with project support are an indication that the project failed to learn from CBNRM initiatives linked with biodiversity conservation that have been supported by the GEF in other countries.

[304] Attempts to increase income for communities from ecotourism may enhance community awareness of the importance of conserving biodiversity, but in the case of many of the communities involved in the project, cannot possibly yield the expected result of actually conserving biodiversity within communal

PAs. That will entail more direct conservation action, changes in some cultural norms, and the financial security that allows communities to focus on that goal.

[305] Project governance was poorly designed with both a Project Board (PB) and a Project Steering Committee (PSC), the later which was really intended to be a Technical Committee. But, even after the issue was pointed out by the Mid Term Review (MTR) and revised Terms of Reference were drafted for the PSC (and the PSC renamed as the Project Technical Committee), confusion regarding what the Committee was intended to do persisted through to the end of the project. Partly (but not entirely) because of poor design in the governance entities for the project, the Project was not well steered.

[306] Project oversight by the GEF Agency responsible for this project (UNDP) was inadequate. The TE believes the GEFSEC should have been approached for advice related to several matters which represented a major change in the project from what had been endorsed by the GEF CEO. It was the responsibility of UNDP to ensure this was done. It was not.

[307] The UNDP CO in Eswatini requires stronger support from the UNDP Regional Service Center to ensure improved undertaking of its responsibilities as a GEF Agency for any future GEF-supported project for which it is asked to be the GEF Agency.

[308] Although a "National Implementation Modality (NIM)" project, there was a very significant amount of execution support provided by UNDP, the GEF Agency for the project. The problems with this were pointed out in the MTR (including the lack of the appropriate LOA specifying the nature of the execution support to be provided and the cost associated with that) but UNDP continued to provide very significant execution support even after the MTR.

[309] The original, as well as the revised, Results Framework have significant weaknesses. Reporting only on the indicators and targets in these RFs, a not-so-accurate or comprehensive picture of the project emerged in some project reports, including the main annual reports used to monitor the project, the PIRs. Inadequate attention was given to monitoring and reporting on progress toward impact, and the intended impact (which was to be on biodiversity) was sometimes confused with other things such as for example income generation that was not linked in any way to the conservation of biodiversity.

[310] There is little evidence that lessons from other relevant projects around the world were incorporated into the design of this project.

[311] Logistical considerations as described below affected the project ability to implement and monitor activities more effectively on the ground. Basing the Landscape Coordinators (and project vehicles) in the landscapes was critical to project success. Instead, the Landscape Coordinators and the (more than the originally planned number of vehicles purchased by the project) were based just outside of the capital city at ENTC headquarters, several hours drive round trip from some of the landscapes.

[312] Despite the shortcomings and missed opportunities, there are fair prospects for building further on some of the project achievements and getting those to the point where they make a real difference on the ground to conserving Eswatini's globally significant biodiversity.

5.2 Recommendations

Strengthen the criteria for designation as an OECM to make such designation more meaningful (Some of the areas designated as OECM under this project may not legitimately qualify as such if guidelines/criteria for designation were more rigorous and the application of those criteria were also more rigorously applied).

Strengthen the OECM committee (the committee responsible for deciding if a site should be designated as an OECM or not) with more relevant technical expertise in the field of biodiversity conservation. At present, institutional representation is a primary consideration for inclusion on the committee whereas, this not being a political but rather a technical committee, the primary consideration should be technical background.

Put in place additional assurance that OECMs and other formal (but not gazetted) PAs will not convert land to non-biodiversity compatible uses.

Put in place a monitoring system for OECMs to monitor long-term compliance with non-conversion to non-biodiversity conservation compatible uses.

The newly established Landscape Associations (LAs) need further assistance to become truly operational and meaningful. Without such support, there is high risk that they will become forums without action. The following actions should be taken to help ensure the LAs truly contribute to on-the-ground collaborative conservation action:

d) Assist each of the LAs to further refine the priority actions they will focus on (what specific collaborative efforts will they undertake; what agreements will they pursue between the various landowners in the landscape related to fence removal, encouraging free-ranging wildlife, Access-Benefit Sharing agreements between PLOs and adjacent communities, etc.).

e) Facilitate access to SGP funding for the LAs. Such funding should be to support actions, not meetings. It is good that the SGP is already in touch with the LAs to discuss sustainability.

f) Wherever relevant, include activities in future donor-supported projects to support LAs in implementing their priority on-the-ground collaborative actions (e.g., IAPS control, re-introduction of wildlife, schemes to compensate landowners for losses incurred related to reducing livestock numbers that result in increasing wildlife numbers, etc.).

The LC & the new Lubombo LA should meet with the assistance of a facilitator from the Project (such as the NPM) to discuss whether the LA is redundant/needed or not and a final decision in this regard should be taken to avoid confusion in future between the two entities. The TET does not see the added benefit of establishing a new Landscape Association (LA) for Lubombo given that an adequate and long-standing (since 1999) similar structure already exists. Duplication with the existing Lubombo Conservancy (LC) should be avoided. If the main difference between the existing LC and the newly formed LA is that the later would have greater geographic coverage, this, in the opinion of the TE is not adequate justification to pursue the new LA. Creating a yet bigger umbrella when the existing umbrella is not fully functional does not seem to be the best solution. The approach adopted by the LC is a good model of a landscape approach to conservation which has struggled over the years to become more operational in part for lack of adequate funding. Establishing a new, larger entity may actually detract from the ability of the LC to strengthen its efforts as it may create both confusion and competition for limited funding. The TE recommends that careful consideration be given to whether further effort should be made to pursue the new LA for Lubombo or whether it should be dropped and effort made instead to further strengthen the existing LC. Such discussions should take place with the members of both the existing LC as well as the members of the new LA for Lubombo.

The initiative undertaken to support women to harvest reeds from wetlands and to charge a levy which is then re-invested in the protection of those wetlands is an excellent example of a CBNRM initiative that directly contributes to conserving biodiversity. Build further on the project's successes in wetlands to ensure strengthening of nascent activities and replication of these successes at other wetlands within the 3 landscapes:

e. Encourage and support exchanges between women members of Wetland Management Committees from communities where wetlands management plans have been developed so that successful initiatives in some wetlands can be undertaken in others.

f.   Support in-school activities in communities where wetlands exist to increase awareness regarding the importance of wetlands and actions that can be taken to protect them (fencing, alternative watering and washing areas, reduction of livestock stocking rates, and other means)

g.   Further support nascent entrepreneurial activities undertaken by women based on extraction of resources from wetlands so that this can be replicated in other communities for more women to benefit and for the economic benefit they derive to be more significant. (A total of only approximately 30 women in only one community – Khalangilile -- are currently engaged in this activity which is harvesting of reeds to make into handicrafts and other products for sale. The economic benefit they currently derive from this is small. 30 women derived a total of E588 in 2020 and 22 women derived a total E491 in 2021, which is equivalent to approximately US$40/year. Local women pay a small levy (E5) to harvest reeds in the wetland and women from outside the community pay a higher levy (E20). The revenue generated from the fee is reinvested into maintaining fencing to protect the wetland and to control IAPS in the wetland area.

h.   Showcase nascent entrepreneurial activities undertaken by women based on deriving economic benefits from protected wetlands by including these in Environment Day and other national events.

The reintroduction of some wildlife species for the purpose of trialing game ranching within communal PAs should be further considered. Game ranching was described in the PRODOC as an alternative livelihood but was never pursued by the project. The relevant entities should meet to discuss the possibility of providing the necessary support to trial game ranching on one communal PA.

Trialing game ranching on communal lands will require a significant investment (in terms of community buy-in/commitment, financial subsidies, and technical support). It is not realistic to assume game ranching will be viable in the short term. Such an initiative will require long-term support and should be trialled on one communal PA to begin with. Criteria for deciding on the most appropriate place to do so should be developed as a first step. Such criteria may include, for example, communal land adjoining an existing conserved area, level of community interest/buy in, logistical considerations related to wildlife reintroductions, habitat condition, logistical considerations related to game processing possibilities, etc..

The project invested GEF funds in the purchase of equipment, some of which is not working (e.g., biofuel briquette making machine) and some of which is not being used in the best way to support on-the-ground conservation (e.g., project-purchased vehicles are not stationed in PAs where they are needed to implement PA management activities described in the PA management plans developed with support of this project). The following actions should be taken:

d)   Three of the vehicles purchased by the Project should be kept full-time in the 3 landscapes supported by the project and can either be attached to the Landscape Associations or to the ENTC-managed PAs for use by the Park Wardens to implement PA conservation activities within and around the PAs. None of these vehicles should be kept at Lobamba (ENTC headquarters) where they are now being kept.

e)   The project purchased a machine intended to produce fuel briquettes from IAPS. This machine is not operational and has not been since it was purchased. The project committed to making a viable business from this that would benefit communities at landscape level. The project should ensure the machine is operational before project closure and that follow up is ensured to put the business venture in place and to become operational (as was planned and budgeted for in this project).

f)   Water troughs were purchased for some ENTC PAs (e.g., Mlawula Nature Reserve) to encourage dispersion of wildlife during drought to prevent degradation of the environment around the few remaining water holes. These have not been used because the water tanker is not operational to take water to the troughs. Government of Eswatini should invest in repairing the water tanker. Adequate funds for fuel should be included in budgets of each of the ENTC managed areas to ensure this investment is not lost.

Ensure the following activities which have not yet been fully completed are completed by project end: complete the Luzelweni eco-lodge rondavel, ensure Shewula bee hives are set up and operational, ensure Shewula fencing is complete, ensure Mahamba bee hives are set up and operational, ensure rabbits are acquired for Mhlumeni.

The project invested GEF funds in building and restoring infrastructure, some of which has not yet been completed and some of which has not served the intended purpose of contributing to BD conservation. The following actions should be taken:

  e) MTAD to facilitate the CDTs to access the funds of RDFs to fortify/finalise the pending activities (e.g. finalizing structures, purchasing required equipment or required inputs, and compiling needed business/management plans);
  f) Capacitate the same communities (through skills development or reinforcement) in order to mobilize resources and forge partnerships to carry out and successfully income generating activities;
  g) Devise (in close consultation with the communities on the ground) more viable and sustainable alternative livelihood options that are long term oriented to counter the temptation to venture in the cultivation of illegal substances triggered by unemployment and poverty;
  h) Link the communities involved in ecotourism with national or international interested partners (e.g., NGOs who as in the case of the Mhlumeni Bush Camp can help to market and bring clients to the Eco lodges).

Provide the necessary training and technical support as well as the necessary financial support required to *capacitate* communities to conserve biodiversity on their communal PAs and to enable these communities to *implement on-the-ground actions* to conserve biodiversity within communal PAs.

This project was intended in part to enhance on-the-ground conservation, including on communal lands – i.e., to enhance conservation within community conservation areas/protected areas. In practice, however, other than the activities related to wetlands on communal lands and those related to fencing of CCAs, project activities on communal lands mostly focused on activities outside of PAs (i.e., enhancing infrastructure to enhance tourism opportunities, and on small-scale agricultural initiatives -- erroneously termed CBNRM).

There is little conservation activity taking place within PAs on communal lands. Many such areas are devoid of many of the wildlife species that should naturally be found in them. Some have severe IAPS problems. The native biodiversity in some of these areas is threatened by the (illegal) cultivation of dagga. Livestock grazing continues to negatively impact the native biodiversity in many of these areas. Thus, there must be a focus on conservation efforts within PAs on communal lands and such efforts must include rehabilitation and restoration, and importantly, local community members must be capacitated to undertake such efforts (with outside technical support where required). Such efforts are usually quite costly and require long-term financial commitments beyond what could possibly be derived from small-scale ecotourism alone.

Facilitate a meeting between Chiefs (from Chiefdoms for which the project supported the elaboration of CDPs and which have designated PAs) and private companies (national or multinational) with interest in supporting biodiversity conservation and raising their profile as "green" companies. The purpose of the meeting would be to bring Chiefs and private sector together to facilitate the search for funding for the initiatives described in the recommendations in this Table related to communal lands.

BGP withdrew from this project soon after project launch. This had major implications for the project. The project has now undergone a TE in which lessons are identified for future investments. The TE tried unsuccessfully to interview BGP as a key stakeholder in this project (as the originally planned primary RP and also as a key conservation player in the country). The TET understands that BGP and ENTC have recently begun to collaborate on another large biodiversity project which adopts a landscape approach. That project is being designed before the TE for this project is completed. A meeting should be convened to ensure the findings and lessons emanating from this project are shared and discussed to ensure the new project builds on the experience of this project.

In order to facilitate access to the knowledge base generated during the course of the Project, undertake the following:

  d. Upload all technical documents produced with project support onto the biodiversity portal.
  e. Support/equip the Landscape Associations to access the GIS Portal/platform, and to use available information.
  f. Explore partnerships with the Royal Swaziland Technology Park to ease the challenges of hosting the platform hence ensuring reliability, constant uptime (24/7).

g.	Promote and uphold institutional memory through documents digital archiving for transmitting the lessons learned for future programming.
	The GEF Secretariat (GEFSEC) should be contacted to determine what if any course of action may be required as a result of deviations from the approved PRODOC which were pursued by the project as described in this report. Due to the early withdrawal from the Project of the primary "Responsible Party", the project lost a very significant percent of the co-financing that had been committed (and in part on which the GEFSEC approved the project), and did not undertake as originally planned, numerous activities committed in the CEO endorsed document (activities 1.3.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 3.2.3, 3.3.2, 3.4.2). In addition to the change in co-financing and the change in scope of work resulting from the withdrawal of the planned primary RP from the project early on in the project, the project's inappropriate pursuit of an alternative project strategy (which was not congruous with the CEO endorsed document) cost the project funds and time -- funds and time which should have been spent pursuing the activities described in the approved PRODOC. The GEFSEC was never approached for advice (as the TE believes it should have been), regarding such major changes from the GEF-approved PRODOC. Even though this is now the end of this project, the GEFSEC should still be approached for advice on what, if anything, should now be done.

5.3 Lessons

[313] Lesson: Spending more time, effort (and of course funds) "up front" (i.e., during the elaboration of the PIF and during the PPG) might well have helped the project to be more effective and efficient. It is cost-effective to spend more time on strategy development and PRODOC formulation prior to project submission. Note: This lesson will be difficult to learn in practice unless the GEF is willing to provide a greater level of funding at project concept/project preparation grant (PPG) stage.

[314] Lesson: TOR for all anticipated personnel and for all major consultancies to be undertaken should have been described in the PRODOC. Few were included in the PRODOC (e.g., no TOR for Community Liaison Officers/Landscape Coordinators were included in the PRODOC). This would have also helped to clarify what was needed and why and how it would contribute to the project expected outcomes.

[315] Lesson: A project is not a programme. To be successful, the scope of a project should be limited.

[316] Lesson: Effective participation of UNDP on PBs is essential to project success. UNDP is accountable to the GEF when it is designated as the GEF Agency for a project. Although UNDP must respect the role of IPs, it must also serve effectively in its oversight role to ensure accountability to the primary donor, in this case, the GEF. Poor PIR ratings that do not significantly improve from year to year is one indication that a PB is not effectively steering a project and that UNDP's participation on a PB may need to be strengthened.

[317] Lesson: Whenever there is any doubt on the need to approach the GEFSEC for advice, it is best to do so early on.

[318] Lesson: Restoring biodiversity (including native fauna and flora) on communal lands is expensive and takes time. It also comes at a cost to communities over the short and medium term, even if communities may gain over the long-term. Communities living in poverty cannot afford to incur such costs. They cannot be expected to conserve biodiversity simply because they believe in it. Projects that are intended to conserve biodiversity on communal lands in Eswatini must provide the possibility for

communities to adopt a longer-term perspective and actions by providing financial and other support until such a time as conserving biodiversity pays for itself (through ecotourism, continual long-term guaranteed philanthropic support, game ranching, or other means). The cultural context must be seriously considered as financial support alone will not necessarily be sufficient to change practices that lead to biodiversity degradation on communal lands. This will require decisions regarding livestock stocking rates that must be taken at Chief and Inner Council levels, as if only some community members implement actions that may result in benefits to biodiversity whilst others don't, the benefit will not be derived and some community members will incur costs with no associated benefit. Project design must take all of the above into consideration.

[319] Lesson: There may be different goals for adopting a landscape approach to conserving biodiversity. In some cases, the goal may be to encourage and enable free-roaming wildlife to have a more naturally-functioning ecosystem. Encouraging free-roaming wildlife would normally entail taking fences down. The project has spent effort instead on erecting fences, including in the Lubombo landscape where free-roaming wildlife was one of the goals identified in 1999 when the Lubombo Conservancy was established. Any future initiatives that may entail adoption of the landscape approach to conservation should carefully consider and explicitly define what the goals are (e.g., free-roaming wildlife across the landscape – irrespective of the landowner whether it be private or communal lands, or perhaps reduced pressure emanating from communal lands on the biodiversity being conserved on privately owned or Government-managed self-contained conservation areas, or any number of other possibilities.) and should update goals if these change based on realities. Different objectives for adopting a landscape approach will require different actions. Thus, clear and precise definition of the goal for adopting a landscape approach from the start is extremely important to avoid wasted effort and an unfocussed "dart throw" approach which would not represent a strategic, focused intervention.

[320] Lesson: Some barriers (especially those related to policy and legislation) are not possible to remove through a project effort, and if not addressed by Government (who has the sole possibility of removing such barriers) prior to financing a project, will continue to present barriers to project success, making project interventions less than cost-effective. More effort should be placed on removing such barriers *prior* to signing of PRODOCS to enhance prospects for successful GEF-supported projects.

[321] Lesson: Avoid establishing both a Project Board and a Project Steering Committee. These are simply different names for the same thing.

[322] Lesson: It is good practice to establish technical committee/s but these should truly be technical in nature (their TOR should be exclusively to provide technical advice not project steering advice) and the composition of these committees/groups should be technical, i.e., people should be invited to be part of technical committees based on their technical expertise rather than on other considerations such as institutional representation.

[323] Lesson: The IP for projects that are implemented as "National Implementation Modality" or (NIM) projects are expected to execute the vast majority, if not all, of the project budget. If this is not the case, they should not be referred to as NIM projects.

[324] Lesson: If the GEF Agency for a project is expected to provide any execution support, clearly specify this in the LOA and also specify the costs associated with providing such support.

[325] Lesson: Assign costs related to execution support provided by GEF Agencies to NIM projects to Project Management Costs (PMC) rather than distributing these costs across project components.

[326] Lesson: Preparing for MTRs and TEs takes time. It is very important that the "Project Information Package" be shared in a timely fashion and that it is comprehensive and well organized.

<u>Some Lessons Related to Systemic Issues Not Specific to this Project but which Affected this Project</u>

[327] Lesson: Results Frameworks may not be the most appropriate for use in biodiversity projects. Although they may work well for monitoring and reporting on more quantitative types of projects (e.g., POPs), the use of RFs has been shown to be problematic in many GEF-financed biodiversity projects. UNDP and the GEF should consider a different tool for monitoring and evaluating the progress and impact of biodiversity projects.

[328] Lesson: The GEF should consider providing a greater level of funding at project concept/project preparation grant (PPG) stage. A bigger investment "up front" is likely to yield better project results.

[329] Lesson: With the exception of a single rating of "Satisfactory", this project received ratings that were less than satisfactory for both Implementation Progress (IP) and for progress towards the achievement of the Development Objective (DO) for every year for which PIRs were completed. Likewise, the ratings assigned by the MTR only assigned one "Satisfactory" rating to the project. Ratings subsequent to the MTR did not significantly improve. Although this evaluation – the evaluation of the largest donor-supported biodiversity project undertaken in the country's history – has not yet concluded, the concept for the next GEF-supported biodiversity project has already been approved. It is difficult to see how the lessons from this project experience can be incorporated into the design and formulation of the next project if that project is being designed even before the TE for the last project is completed. If there is serious intent to learn lessons from past project experiences, the GEFSEC should give careful consideration to how this can best happen when it approves new projects in the same GEF Focal area before ongoing projects are completed and evaluations for those become available.

6. ANNEXES

Annex 1. GEF Rating Scales

Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance	Sustainability ratings:
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings	4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability
5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings	3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings	2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings	1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability
2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings	Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings	
Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment	

Risk Assessment Guiding Matrix

		Impact				
		CRITICAL	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	NEGLIGIBLE
Likelihood	CERTAIN / IMMINENT	Critical	Critical	High	Medium	Low
	VERY LIKELY	Critical	High	High	Medium	Low
	LIKELY	High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	MODERATELY LIKELY	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Negligible
	UNLIKELY	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Considered to pose no determinable risk

Annex 2. Evaluation Question Matrix

Evaluative Criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the UNCBD and to the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels for biodiversity in Eswatini?				
Is the project relevant to the UNCBD objectives?	• How does the project support the objectives of the UNCBD?	• UNCBD priorities and areas of work incorporated in project design • Extent to which the project is implemented in line with incremental cost argument	• Project documents • National policies and strategies to implement the UNCBD, other international conventions, or related to environment more generally • UNCBD and other international convention web sites	• Documents analyses • Interviews with project team, UNDP and other partners
Is the project relevant to the GEF biodiversity focal area?	• How does the project support the GEF biodiversity focal area and strategic priorities related to biodiversity conservation	• Existence of a clear relationship between the project objectives and GEF biodiversity focal area	• Project documents • GEF focal areas strategies and documents	• Documents analyses • GEF website • Interviews with UNDP and project team
Is the project relevant to CIS's environment and sustainable development objectives?	• How does the project support the environment and sustainable development objectives of CIS? • Is the project country-driven? • What was the level of stakeholder participation in project design? • What was the level of stakeholder ownership in implementation? • Does the project adequately take into account the national realities, both in terms of institutional and policy framework in its design and its implementation?	• Degree to which the project supports national environmental objectives • Degree of coherence between the project and national priorities, policies and strategies • Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities • Level of involvement of government officials and other partners in the project design process • Coherence between needs expressed by national stakeholders and UNDP-GEF criteria	• Project documents • National policies and strategies • Key project partners	• Documents analyses • Interviews with UNDP and project partners

Is the project addressing the needs of target beneficiaries at the local and regional levels?	• How does the project support the needs of relevant stakeholders? • Has the implementation of the project been inclusive of all relevant stakeholders? • Were local beneficiaries and stakeholders adequately involved in project design and implementation?	• Strength of the link between expected results from the project and the needs of relevant stakeholders • Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of stakeholders in project design and implementation	• Project partners and stakeholders • Needs assessment studies • Project documents	• Document analysis • Interviews with relevant stakeholders
Is the project internally coherent in its design?	• Are there logical linkages between expected results of the project (log frame) and the project design (in terms of project components, choice of partners, structure, delivery mechanism, scope, budget, use of resources etc)? • Is the length of the project sufficient to achieve project outcomes?	• Level of coherence between project expected results and project design internal logic • Level of coherence between project design and project implementation approach	• Program and project documents • Key project stakeholders	• Document analysis • Key interviews
How is the project relevant with respect to other donor-supported activities?	• Does the GEF funding support activities and objectives not addressed by other donors? • How do GEF-funds help to fill gaps (or give additional stimulus) that are necessary but are not covered by other donors? • Is there coordination and complementarily between donors?	• Degree to which program was coherent and complementary to other donor programming nationally and regionally	• Documents from other donor supported activities • Other donor representatives • Project documents	• Documents analyses • Interviews with project partners and relevant stakeholders
Does the project provide relevant lessons and experiences for other similar projects in the future?	• Has the experience of the project provided relevant lessons for other future projects targeted at similar objectives?		• Data collected throughout evaluation	• Data analysis
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been/be achieved?				
Has the project been effective in achieving the expected outcomes and objectives?	• Has the project been effective in achieving its expected outcomes?	• See indicators in project document results framework	• Project documents • Project team and relevant stakeholders • Data reported in project annual	• Documents analysis • Interviews with project team • Interviews with relevant stakeholders

				and quarterly reports	
How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?	• How well are risks, assumptions and impact drivers being managed? • What was the quality of risk mitigation strategies developed? Were these sufficient? • Are there clear strategies for risk mitigation related with long-term sustainability of the project?	• Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning and design • Quality of existing information systems in place to identify emerging risks and other issues • Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed	• Project documents • UNDP, project team, and relevant stakeholders	• Document analysis • Interviews
What lessons can be drawn regarding effectiveness for other similar projects in the future?	• What lessons have been learned from the project regarding achievement of outcomes? • What changes could have been made (if any) to the design of the project in order to improve the achievement of the project's expected results?		• Data collected throughout evaluation	• Data analysis
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?					
Was project support provided in an efficient way?	• Was adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use? • Did the project Results framework and work plans and any changes made to them use as management tools during implementation? • Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information? • Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes? • Was project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)	• Availability and quality of financial and progress reports • Timeliness and adequacy of reporting provided • Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures • Planned vs. actual funds leveraged • Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations • Adequacy of project choices in view of existing context, infrastructure and cost • Quality of results-based management reporting (progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation) • Occurrence of change in project design/ implementation approach (i.e.	• Project documents and evaluations • UNDP • Project team	• Document analysis • Key interviews

	• Did the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happen as planned? • Were financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently? • Was procurement carried out in a manner making efficient use of project resources? • How was results-based management used during project implementation?	restructuring) when needed to improve project efficiency • Cost associated with delivery mechanism and management structure compare to alternatives		
How efficient are partnership arrangements for the project?	• To what extent partnerships/linkages between institutions/ organizations were encouraged and supported? • Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? • What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? • Which methods were successful or not and why?	• Specific activities conducted to support the development of cooperative arrangements between partners, • Examples of supported partnerships • Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained • Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized	• Project documents and evaluations • Project partners and relevant stakeholders	• Document analysis • Interviews
Did the project efficiently utilize local capacity in implementation?	• Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise as well as local capacity? • Did the project take into account local capacity in design and implementation of the project? • Was there an effective collaboration between institutions responsible for implementing the project?	• Proportion of expertise utilized from international experts compared to national experts • Number/quality of analyses done to assess local capacity potential and absorptive capacity	• Project documents and evaluations • UNDP • Beneficiaries	• Document analysis • Interviews
What lessons can be drawn regarding efficiency for other similar projects in the future?	• What lessons can be learnt from the project regarding efficiency? • How could the project have more efficiently carried out implementation (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements etc…)? • What changes could have been made (if any) to the		• Data collected throughout evaluation	• Data analysis

	project in order to improve its efficiency?			

Results: What are the current actual, and potential long-term, results of activities supported by the project?				

How is the project effective in achieving its long-term objectives?	• Will the project achieve its overall objective ?
	• Is the globally significant biodiversity of the target area likely to be conserved?
	• What barriers remain to achieving long-term objectives, or what necessary steps remain to be taken by stakeholders to achieve sustained impacts and Global Environmental Benefits?
	• Are there unanticipated results achieved or contributed to by the project?
		• Change in capacity:
		  o To pool/mobilize resources
		  o For related policy making and strategic planning
		  o For implementation of related laws and strategies through adequate institutional frameworks and their maintenance
		• Change in use and implementation of sustainable livelihoods
		• Change in the number and strength of barriers such as:
		  o Knowledge about biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources, and economic incentives in these areas
		  o Cross-institutional coordination and inter-sectoral dialogue
		  o Knowledge of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use practices by end users
		  o Coordination of policy and legal instruments incorporating biodiversity conservation and environmental strategies
		  o environmental economic incentives for stakeholders
			• Project documents
			• Key stakeholders
			• Monitoring data
				• Documents analysis
				• Meetings with UNDP, project team and project partners
				• Interviews with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders

How is the project effective in achieving the objectives of the UNCBD?	• What are the impacts or likely impacts of the project?
	  o On the local environment;
	  o On economic well-being;
	  o On other socio-economic issues.
		• Provide specific examples of impacts at species, ecosystem or genetic levels, as relevant	• Project documents
			• UNCDB documents
			• Key Stakeholders
			• Monitoring data
				• Data analysis
				• Interviews with key stakeholders

Future directions for results	• How can the project build on its successes and learn from its weaknesses in order to enhance the		• Data collected throughout evaluation	• Data analysis

	potential for impact of ongoing and future initiatives?		

Sustainability: Are the conditions in place for project-related benefits and results to be sustained?			
Are sustainability issues adequately integrated in project design?	• Were sustainability issues integrated into the design and implementation of the project?	• Evidence / quality of sustainability strategy • Evidence / quality of steps taken to ensure sustainability	• Project documents and evaluations • UNDP and project personnel and project partners • Beneficiaries	• Document analysis • Interviews
Financial sustainability	• Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues? • Are the recurrent costs after project completion sustainable? • What are the main institutions/organizations in country that will take the project efforts forward after project end and what is the budget they have assigned to this?	• Level and source of future financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities after project ends • Evidence of commitments from international partners, governments or other stakeholders to financially support relevant sectors of activities after project end • Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs	• Project documents and evaluations • UNDP and project personnel and project partners • Beneficiaries	• Document analysis • Interviews
Institutional and governance sustainability	• Were the results of efforts made during the project implementation period well assimilated by organizations and their internal systems and procedures? • Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support? • What degree is there of local ownership of initiatives and results? • Were laws, policies and frameworks addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms? • What is the level of political commitment to build on the results of the project?	• Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts or institutions/organizations • Level of financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities by in-country actors after project end • Efforts to support the development of relevant laws and policies • State of enforcement and law making capacity • Evidences of commitment by government enactment of policies and laws and resource allocation to priorities	• Project documents and evaluations • UNDP and project personnel and project partners • Beneficiaries	• Document analysis • Interviews

	• Are there policies or practices in place that create perverse incentives that would negatively affect long-term benefits?			
Social-economic sustainability	• Are there adequate incentives to ensure sustained benefits achieved through the project?		• Project documents and evaluations • UNDP, project personnel and project partners • Beneficiaries	• Interviews • Documentation review
Environmental sustainability	• Are there risks to the environmental benefits that were created or that are expected to occur? • Are there long-term environmental threats that have not been addressed by the project? • Have any new environmental threats emerged in the project's lifetime?	• Evidence of potential threats such as infrastructure development • Assessment of unaddressed or emerging threats	• Project documents and evaluations • Threat assessments • Government documents or other external published information • UNDP, project personnel and project partners • Beneficiaries	• Interviews • Documentation review
Individual, institutional and systemic capacity development	• Is the capacity in place at the regional, national and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of the results achieved to date?	• Elements in place in those different management functions, at the appropriate levels (regional, national and local) in terms of adequate structures, strategies, systems, skills, incentives and interrelationships with other key actors	• Project documents • UNDP, project personnel and project partners • Beneficiaries • Capacity assessments available, if any	• Interviews • Documentation review
Replication	• Is there potential to scale up or replicate project activities? • Did the project's Exit Strategy actively promote replication?	• Number/quality of replicated initiatives • Number/quality of replicated innovative initiatives • Scale of additional investment leveraged	• Project Exit Strategy • UNDP, project personnel and project partners	• Document analysis • Interviews
Challenges to sustainability of the project	• What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts? • Have any of these been addressed through project management? • What could be the possible measures to further contribute to the	• Challenges in view of building blocks of sustainability as presented above • Recent changes which may present new challenges to the project • Education strategy and partnership with school,	• Project documents and evaluations • Beneficiaries • UNDP, project personnel and project partners	• Document analysis • Interviews

	sustainability of efforts achieved with the project?	education institutions etc.		
Future directions for sustainability and catalytic role	• Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results? • What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of the project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed?		• Data collected throughout evaluation	• Data analysis

Annex 3. List of Documents Reviewed

Folder # As Identified in Google Drive	Item	Status[14]
	PROJECT DOCUMENTS	
0	Completed Up-to-Date Project Information Table (as a WORD file)	
1	Project Identification Form (PIF)	☑
2	Final UNDP-GEF Project Document (PRODOC) with all annexes (please share this as a WORD document)	☑
3	CEO Endorsement Request	☑
4	Completed UNDP Social and Environmental Screening (SESP) and associated management plans (if any)	☑
5	Project Inception Workshop Report (complete with all annexes)	☑
	PROJECT MONITORING DOCUMENTS	
6	The Project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan with associated budget (only need to share if this is different from that in the PRODOC)	☑
7	Mid-Term Review report & management response to MTR (please share as a WORD document)	We have the MTR but not in WORD
8	All Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) including latest one even if still in draft	☑
9	BTORs/mission reports and management memos, minutes or correspondence relevant to the effective delivery of the project	
10	Minutes of all Project Board Meetings	☑
10a	Minutes of Project Steering Committee Meetings	☑
10b	Minutes of UNDP Project Appraisal Committee meeting	

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[14]This column is to be completed by the UNDP Focal Point for the Project. Please use the following codes:
S = Shared
NA = Not Available. If not available, please explain why not.
NAE = Not Available Electronically. Will be provided to the NC in printed form.

11	Completed GEF Tracking Tools for all relevant GEF Focal Areas (at CEO Endorsement, Mid-Term and terminal stages)	☑
12	Completed UNDP Capacity Development Indicator Scorecards (baseline and most recent)	
12a	All Annual and Quarterly Progress Reports	We have some but not all
	FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS	
13	All Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs)	☑
14	Approved Annual Work Plan Budgets (please use format included at end of this list)	☑
15	Actual Project Expenditures by Year and By Component as of the time of the TE (Please use format shared)	
16	Co-financing Accounted as of the time of the TE (Please use shared format)	
17	All Audit reports & Management Responses to audit recommendations	
	PROJECT OUTPUTS	
18	All technical deliverables/reports paid for with project funds along with the TOR for the consultancies to develop those deliverables/reports (Please share only FINAL reports. Do not share draft reports unless only draft is available.)	☑
18a	Chiefdom Development Plans developed with project support We have received 9 CDPs	☑
18b	PA Management Plans developed with project support We have received 12 including 6 Community Protected Wetland Management Plans and 6 Management Plans for Game Reserves, Nature Reserves or Conservancies including: 1) Big Bend Mholsinga Conservancy, 2) Malolotja Nature Reserve, 3) Mantenga Nature Reserve, 4) Mlawula Nature Reserve, 5) Wide Horizons Mountain Retreat; 6) Ekuvinjelweni Community Protected Wetland, 7) Lukhetseni Community Protected Wetland, 8) Malanti Community Protected Wetland, 9) Mphini Community Protected Wetland, 10) Ndzangu Mashatane Community Protected Wetland, 11) Ntondozi Community Protected Wetland	☑
18c	Integrated Landscape Management Plans	☑

	We have received 3 including: Lubombo, Malolotja, Ngwenpisi (all our Final)		
18d	SWOT Analysis of clusters done with project support	☑
18e	Biodiversity Surveys conducted with project support We have 3 including: Herpes and Fishes, Mammals and Birds, and Insects	☑
18f	Landscape-Based Management Planning Assessment by H. Sibanda	☑
18g	PA Financial Sustainability Report by Brian Huntley (2017)	☑
18h	Others (See comprehensive list of reports and plans prepared with project support)	☑
	CONTRACTS, INFRASTRUCTURE, EQUIPMENT	
19	List of all infrastructure (including new construction as well as infrastructural repairs) paid for with project funds	☑
20	List of all equipment (including vehicles, boats, computers, printers, cameras, etc.) purchased with project funds	We have up until end 2018
	TORs	
21	TORs for Project Manager, Finance/Administrative Officer, and CTA (if project has one)	☑
22	TOR for the Project Board/Steering Committee	☑
23	List of PB members	☑
	WORKPLANS	
24	All approved annual workplans	
	RESULTS FRAMEWORK	
25	The original RF	☑
26	Any and all amendments that have been made to the RF since project start (if revised RF is shared, please highlight changes that have been made)	
	TRAININGS	
27	Training agendas and participant lists (including gender breakdown summary for each training) and any impact-assessment that may have been conducted regarding trainings	
	KNOWLEDGE SHARING MATERIALS	
28	Communications materials produced with project support (brochures, posters, booklets, videos, etc.)	

29	Knowledge sharing platforms including the project website if one exists	☑
	RELEVANT INITIATIVES & PARTNER AGREEMENTS	
30	All partner agreements (Small Scale Fund Agreements, Partner Cooperation Agreements, UN-to-UN Agreements etc.)	☑
	OTHER	
31	Project Exit/Sustainability Strategy (if one has been developed)	☑
32	Project Terminal Report or End of Project report prepared by Project Manager (if one has been prepared)	Will not be prepared until after end of September
33	Management plans for all PAs/Conservation Areas included in the project	☑
34	UNDAF for the country	☑
35	Maps of Project Area	

Annex 4. TE Site Visit Itinerary & Site Visit Notes by National Consultant

Date (2021)	Site Visited	Summary Notes
9/21	Shewula Mountain Camp Community Conservation Area	Interview with Mountain Camp Manager, CDC, CDT, and Community Members beneficiaries Visited SNPAS supported activities (including fenced mountain camp, nursery, tree planting, village chicken and rabbit houses, new and rehabilitated Mountain Camp infrastructure, and bee hives). All activities are unfinished; 2650ha of conservation area partially fenced. Nursery is earmarked to raise seedlings for sale, and serve as an educational centre; OECM status.
9/21	Mlawula Nature Reserve (Lubombo Landscape)	Conducted interview with Senior Warden, Rangers; Visiting SNPAS supported activities in the nature reserve; Visited materials depot, workshop, storeroom, exhibits room, Drinking troughs to be installed at strategic points to assist in controlling the population distribution patterns within the park, not implemented; Visited workshops, infrastructure being rehabilitated, NR fence, wildlife;
9/22	Mhlumeni Bush Camp (Lubombo Landscape)	Visit to community eco-tourism facility, and Interviews with Bush Manager, staff, CDT, CDC, Members of the community beneficiaries of IGA; Visit tree planting programme (with poor survival rate), and toured IGA site. Poor designs led to delays in handing over the constructed eco-tourism extensions; 100ha of conservation area. COVID 19 has crippled the tourism activity as reflected by the cancellation of all bookings; Training raised awareness about biodiversity conservation; following meetings at Royal kraals organized with help of the project.
9/23	Dombeya Game Reserve	Site visit to private nature reserve: Interview with PLO and Rangers; Privately managed Reserve, The Project budget allowed them to strengthen their existing fencing, leading to improved security (they already had complete electric fencing on the perimeter before the Project.).; Combined mechanical and Chemical IAPs control; Supported by SNPAS through Catalytic funding and OECM. Raised infrastructure and introduced animals (including Giraffe).
9/23	Khalangilile community wetland	Meet and interview CDC , WMC, women beneficiaries; Visit the wetland; Endlovini wetland (1000sqm) was fenced in 2019; After fencing, there was water recharge, and regeneration of grass, indigenous flora and herbs, as well as birds reappeared; Women beneficiaries who cut grass for making mats/handcrafts for sale; awareness campaign to educate and emphasize the need to protect the wetland by the community.
9/23	Khelekhele community eco-lodge (Ngwempisi Landscape)	Interview with CDC, CDT, Inner Council and IGA beneficiaries; Khelekhele ecolodge being furnished; poor design, bill of quantities, inadequate supervision and monitoring have marred the construction of the facility; IGA activities including chicken, rabbits and apiary are yet to operate fully; 2144ha for conservation is set aside (Velezizweni Chiefdom) not fenced, and no MP in place; BD conservation awareness improved by early mobilization of local leadership and community;
9/24	Malolotja Nature Reserve (Malolotja Landscape)	Site visit to SNTC-managed national park and TFCA Area; Interview with Senior warden, Rangers, and tourism staff; Park is 18 000.00ha, and has been demarcated; Cabins Rehabilitation works still ongoing; Successful reintroduction of animals (e.g. (30 blesbok, and 2 female elands); Successfully using drones for curbing poaching, and fire control; Main Threat to biodiversity: Dagga cultivation within park; Capacitated through SNPAS supported training programmes (e.g. drones operation- for senior warden, 1 ranger, 1 law enforcement warden); No fence on the side of the TFCA side/bordering SA and illegal intrusion; Covid-19 worsened poor revenue collection;

9/30	Mahamba Gorge Eco-lodge and CCA (Ngwempisi Landscape)	Interview with CDT, Inner council, Eco-lodge management; Beneficiaries; Visited ecolodge, IGA & Tree Planting program; Community conservation area covers 220ha partially fenced (1.5km); OECM status; Women actively involved in IGA activities (on –going); Dagga cultivation in the CA is a threat to BD; Awareness of BD in community is still high; Tree planting resulted in limited success due to poor monitoring, inadequate terrain(waterlogged), and inappropriate tree species (not adapted to agro-ecological zone);
10/7	Luzelweni Nature Conservation and EcoLodge	Interview with CDT, Inner council, Beneficiaries; Visited Eco-lodge, IGA & Tree Planting program; 900ha of conservation area set aside, and 10ha for the Eco lodge facility; Eco-lodge facility poor designs; works unfinished; Fruit tree planting; IGA activities on-going; IAPs control erratic due to lack of funds; Mixed success of tree planting programme; Community early enthusiasm towards vi-a-vis project (mainly resulting from the aggressive awareness campaign towards BD conservation) due to long stretch of inactivity in post MTR period; OECM status.

Annex 6. Signed UNEG Code of Conduct Forms (IC and NC)

7(a) Signed Code of Conduct for International Consultant

Independence entails the ability to evaluate without undue influence or pressure by any party (including the hiring unit) and providing evaluators with free access to information on the evaluation subject. Independence provides legitimacy to and ensures an objective perspective on evaluations. An independent evaluation reduces the potential for conflicts of interest which might arise with self-reported ratings by those involved in the management of the project being evaluated. Independence is one of ten general principles for evaluations (together with internationally agreed principles, goals and targets: utility, credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism).

Evaluators/Consultants:
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 imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated and did not carry out the project's Mid-Term Review.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form
Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:
Name of Evaluator: A. Virginia Ravndal
Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): NA
I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation. Signed at Fort Collins, CO, USA on February 12, 2021

Signature: *A. Virginia Ravndal*

7(b) Signed Code of Conduct for National Consultant

Independence entails the ability to evaluate without undue influence or pressure by any party (including the hiring unit) and providing evaluators with free access to information on the evaluation subject. Independence provides legitimacy to and ensures an objective perspective on evaluations. An independent evaluation reduces the potential for conflicts of interest which might arise with self-reported ratings by those involved in the management of the project being evaluated. Independence is one of ten general principles for evaluations (together with internationally agreed principles, goals and targets: utility, credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism).

Evaluators/Consultants:

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 imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgment is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated and did not carry out the project's Mid-Term Review.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Evaluator: __Jean Baptiste RWANIKA_____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): ___N/A_____

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

Signed at __Mbabane_____ (Place) on 29.10.2021_____ (Date)

Signature: _____

Annex 7. Original and Revised Results Framework

Below is the original RF as presented in the PRODOC

Original Results Framework

Indicator framework as part of the SRF

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Source of Information	Risks and Assumptions
Objective – To effectively expand, manage and develop Swaziland's protected area network in order to adequately protect the biodiversity and landscapes of the country.	Legally protected PA network increased.	Current baseline of 3.9% of the country	PA system covers at least 6%	PA Formalisation and gazettement notices Independent mid-term and final evaluations Project reports Land use plans and GIS maps	Risk: - Limited cooperation between stakeholders and stakeholders are reluctant to establish PAs. Assumption: - Continued interest and support of government and staff in the implementation of strategies and programmes to mainstream biodiversity conservation and economic development in national planning
	Number of capacity building programmes developed for improved PA management	0	At least 3 PA capacity building programmes to improve the management and operations of PAs	Capacity building curriculums and reports Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations	
Component 1 – Knowledge based management platform operationalised at the National and regional level to address current and emerging threats to PAs and biodiversity conservation.					
Outcome: PA management and biodiversity conservation guided by research and knowledge, for improved and adaptive management	1.1 Biodiversity field surveys, vegetation assessments and tourism assessments carried out in PAs and surrounding landscapes to fill information gaps. This results in enhanced research and monitoring, improved information on biodiversity, ecosystems, tourism and ecosystem services, improved understanding and awareness of biodiversity and the benefits of PAs including stakeholder consultations and dissemination of information as well as increased understanding of knowledge-based mechanisms for improved management of PAs and the wider landscapes. 1.2 GIS-based knowledge and information management system operationalised and supports systematic biodiversity planning through identification of critical biodiversity areas, ecological support areas for maintaining ecosystem processes, biodiversity conservation targets (in line with Aichi targets and national				Risks: -Complexity in stakeholder collaboration due to differing interests and wide range of stakeholders, resulting in slow operationalisation of knowledge management platform. Assumptions: - Governance systems will enable the

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Source of Information	Risks and Assumptions
practices within and outside PAs.	plans) and determination of ecosystem and species management objectives. PA and landscape management				

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Source of Information	Risks and Assumptions
	plans that integrate conservation efforts with sustainable economic development practices in the four identified landscapes are developed incorporating field monitoring and knowledge-based management mechanisms. 1.3 PA and Landscape based management plans that integrate conservation efforts with sustainable economic development practices in the wider landscape are developed and implemented, incorporating field monitoring and knowledge-based management mechanisms. Stakeholder consultations and prioritisation of the 18 new formal and informal PAs as per land-owner application, feasibility studies and boundary demarcation and clarification of the appropriate legal framework for each PA to be gazetted. Business plans developed for the prioritised existing and new PAs. Public awareness campaigns implemented to promote a conservation ethic.				necessary cohesion and pace of implementation of the knowledge management platforms and landscape management plans.
	Number of biodiversity field surveys	0	At least 6 PA and 3 landscape level biodiversity surveys carried out	Field survey reports; Independent mid-term and final evaluations; Project reports	
	Number of information management systems at regional and national level	0	1 GIS-based knowledge and information management system	System database reports; Operational guidelines, manuals and reports; Independent mid-term and final evaluations; Project reports	

	Number of landscape-based management plans	None	4 landscape based management plans	Government and GIS maps PA assessment reports PA management plans; Landscape management plans; SNTC and BGP PM reports Project reports	

Component 2 – Landscape approach operationalised and leads to expansion of PA network.					
Outcome: Legally protected PA estate expanded and results in*: (i) maintenance of wildlife populations and ecosystems functionality in the PAs under Community, SNTC and BGP*	2.1 Gazettement of informal PAs prioritised in Component 1 in accordance with land-owner application. Investments in the establishment of these informal PAs as part of the National PA system based on the PA management plans and feasibility studies from Component 1 including matching grants for fencing, reintroduction of native species, conservation equipment and machinery, staffing and other appropriate PA establishment costs. 2.2 Selected areas of significant biodiversity established as new Protected Areas under the SNTC Act including: **Shewula, Nkalashane, Makhonjwa, Sibebe, Motjane vlei, Mambane** and **Muti-muti**; with management structures developed including hiring of PA staff, fencing, reintroduction of native species, conservation equipment and machinery, and other appropriate PA establishment requirements as identified based on the PA management plans and feasibility studies from Component 1.				Risks: - Resistance by local communities to the expansion or establishment of PAs including the risk of requests for compensation for human wildlife conflict. - Land use pressure from local communities hamper landscape based management efforts.

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Source of Information	Risks and Assumptions
management; (ii) compatibility of land uses in adjacent communities with overall biodiversity management goals; (iii) containment of threats from Commercial agriculture, infrastructure placement and tourism impacts	2.3 Selected areas of significant biodiversity established as new Protected Areas under the Game Act including: **Mahhuku, Ngwempisi, Manzimnyame** and **Mkhaya west**; with management structures developed including hiring of PA staff, fencing, reintroduction of native species, conservation equipment and machinery, and other appropriate PA establishment requirements as identified based on the PA management plans and feasibility studies from Component 1. 2.4 Selected areas of significant biodiversity established as new Protected Areas under the Flora Protection Act including: **Jilobi** and **Bulembu** and new Community Conservancies in **Mdzimba, Nyonyane, Mahamba, Ndlotane** and **Nsongweni**; with management structures developed including hiring of PA staff, fencing, reintroduction of native species, conservation equipment and machinery, and other appropriate PA establishment requirements as identified based on the PA management plans and feasibility studies from Component 1. 2.5 Implementation of land-scape management plans within the *Lubombo, Mkhaya, Malolotja* and *Ngwempisi* landscapes; with appropriate sustainable management structures and co-operation emplaced including livestock stocking rates, shared game management agreements, eco-tourism traversing			- Climate change could lead to both changed distributions of BD components, and changes in demands on biodiversitybased resources. Assumptions: - Stakeholders buy-in to the expansion and formalisation of new PAs has	

	agreements, forest product harvesting quotas and harvesting permits and enforcement structures as well as field based monitoring.			been ascertained and that a compensation culture will be dispelled. - Landscape approach understood and bought into by stakeholders
	Number of informal PAs established as National PAs	None	At least 4 informal PAs gazetted and managed as National PAs	Government gazettement notices PA legal documents Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations
	Number of new PAs gazetted and operationalised	0	6 new PAs are established, gazetted and managed for biodiversity conservation	Government gazettement notices PA legal documents Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations
	Number of streamlined PA and landscape management structures and standards developed	0	At least 3 streamlined landscape management structures and management plans implemented based on international conservation standards	Management guidelines and reports Landscape management structure reports Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Source of Information	Risks and Assumptions
Component 3 – Strengthening PA functioning through improved Conservation management and Operational support for existing and new PAs including both formal and informal PAs.					
Outcome: Technical and Operational capacity improved with respect to planning, financing, surveillance, policing, monitoring and infrastructure maintenance in the new and existing PAs; particularly for the formal and informal PAs identified at PPG and to be developed by the projects interventions in component 2.	3.1 Systematic training and capacity development for key personnel and stakeholders in the different forms of PAs, to enhance PA management and landscape based management including technical capacity building on PA management, planning, administration, marketing, customer care, conflict resolution, reporting, monitoring, policing and enforcement in PAs, ecotourism development and management, CBNRM practices and management, monitoring and enforcement and sustainable financing management. 3.2 Establishment and implementation of a mobile alien invasive species harvesting, milling and removal business through a matching grant, with implementation of other alien invasive species control projects utilising cost-effective and efficient practices across the different forms of PAs in order to improve biodiversity conservation and habitat integrity. 3.3 Strengthening of PA wildlife management through reintroduction of native species and for conservation equipment and infrastructure including fencing, bomas, equipment for game ranching, game product development and marketing, and other sustainable resource use initiatives across the different forms of PAs in order to improve the success of conservation initiatives. 3.4 Strengthening of PA eco-tourism through eco-tourism equipment and infrastructure (including camps and trails), product development, branding and marketing across the different forms of PAs (including informal PAs) in order to improve PA revenue generation and sustainability. 3.5 Employment of individuals from rural communities to co-ordinate and develop community based conservation initiatives and to monitor biodiversity in community PAs; matching grants for entrepreneurs resident in rural communities to establish conservation friendly businesses; and grants for residents of rural communities (as individuals, companies or CBOs) to establish conservation initiatives within their PAs or landscapes.				<u>Risks</u>: - PA financial sustainability measures meet resistance as well as slow operationalisation. - Climate change could lead to change in distribution of biodiversity. - Limited participation by women due to lack of awareness and cultural norms. <u>Assumptions</u>: - Clear and defined interest in economic engagement by appropriate stakeholders including women.

			At least 8 programmes on PA management, planning, administration, marketing, customer care, conflict resolution, reporting, monitoring, policing and enforcement in PAs, ecotourism development and management, CBNRM practices and sustainable financing		
Number of training programmes developed	0			Training programmes curriculums and reports Project reports	

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Source of Information	Risks and Assumptions
			management and at least a third of the participants should be women		
	Number of invasive alien species control programmes	None	At least 1 sustainable control programme per PA management category (SNTC, BGP, Private, Community)	AIS control reports Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations	
	Number of conservation infrastructure or equipment programmes	0	At least 1 conservation infrastructure or equipment programme per PA management category (SNTC, BGP, Private, Community)	Equipment or infrastructure purchase receipts Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations	

Number of ecotourism infrastructure, product development or marketing programmes	0	At least 1 ecotourism infrastructure, product development or marketing programme per PA management category (SNTC, BGP, Private, Community)	Infrastructure purchase receipts Product development reports Tourism marketing and branding reports Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations	
Number of CBNRM programs developed	0	At least 4 CBNRM co-ordinators employed and capacitated and at least 2 sustainable CBNRM programs developed.	Employment contracts CBNRM reports Project reports Independent mid-term and final evaluations	

Revised Results Framework

Below is the revised RF shared with the TE. It is without date and with no indication of the author. As can be seen in the text below, it appears to be a proposal, as it indicates, "Below is a revised results framework for your review and clearance". Notwithstanding, this was the "revised RF" officially shared as part of the Project Information Package. According to UNDP, it was officially approved by the Project Board although the TE could find no reference to this in its review of PB meeting minutes. As mentioned in the text of the TE report, the revised RF was used to report on in the "progress" column of the PIRs while maintaining the original RF indicators and targets. This is very confusing and poor practice and does not allow for proper reporting on either the original RF or the revised RF. This should not have been allowed by the UNDP CO, and certainly the UNDP RTA should have rectified this right away following the revision of the RF. Nevertheless, it went unchecked until project end.

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UNDP-GEF PIMS 4932: *Strengthening the National Protected Areas System of Eswatini Project*

Revised Results Framework Indicators

The MTR undertaken in 2018, observed that a project strategy developed in 2017 aimed at providing an over-arching plan for delivery of the entire project resulted in diverting substantively from the GEF-approved project plan, introducing different outcomes, outputs, and indicators – only some of which overlap with those in the approved Strategic Results Framework.

The MTR further noted that three key risks had emerged which led to constrained progress: (i) the SNTC Amendment Bill stalled making it difficult to attain target of getting new protected and more flexible set of PA categories not available for the project to implement; (ii) Big Game Parks, a key responsible party to the project withdrew from the project creating uncertainty, and resulting in a significant loss of capacity for implementation in two landscape clusters; and (iii) the underlying principle on which the project design is based (the landscape approach), was not been well understood in the SNPAS community, leading to disjointed implementation of activities.

In light of the above, the MTR among others recommended that;

1. Objective/impact-level indicators (with revised targets) especially on protected area expansion be revised with a clear new approach to deliver on results. (I suggest we remove the highlighted)
2. Outcome2 indicators and associated targets especially 2.1 and 2.2 be replaced

Below is a revised results framework for your review and clearance:

Indicator Level	Old indicator	Proposed New indicators	Target	Rationale
Objective	Ind.0.1:PA expansion- at least 6% gazetted	% of land under effective conservation management, according to OECM5 or IUCN Green Listing Standards6 (with time-bound,	6%	The assumption at project approval that the ENTC law would be amended to recognize other categories of PAs. Amendment of the

Indicator Level	Old indicator	Proposed New indicators	Target	Rationale
		geographically specific targets set)		ENTC has not been possible and the project has no control over the legislative process.
	Ind.0.2 : 3 Capacity Building programmes	Improved PA management effectiveness, as measured by increased METT scores (or other objective criteria for measuring PA management effectiveness, drawn from PA management plans)	Baseline: 52 (2014) Target: 62 (METT score for 6 ENTC PAs)	The old indicator is repeated under outcome 2 and is not appropriate for objective level as per MTR recommendation; and is repeated at outcome level. The METT score is a better measure at objective level.
Or Outcome1	Ind.1.1: Biodiversity Surveys (6PA and 3 landscape)	Ind.1: Biodiversity Surveys	9 surveys	No change
	Ind.1.2: 1-GIS-based information system	Ind.2: GIS-based information system	1 platform Portal operational	No change
	Landscape management plans	Drop from this outcome	NA	The indicator is already catered for under indicator 2.3
Outcome2	Ind.2.1: number of informal PAs gazetted as National PAs under ENTC Act	08 informal and community and private land owners PA under active conservation management, in compliance with international criteria for Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECM)	08 informal PAs (35,000 ha)	These informal PAs would be recognized as community PAs under OECM. Because of the legislative process constraints, it would be difficult to have these gazetted within the life of the project.

Indicator Level	Old indicator	Proposed New indicators	Target	Rationale
	Ind.2.2 New PAs gazetted and operationalised under Game Act; 2 under Flora Protection Act; and 5 under community conservancy			Focus has shifted from gazettement to OECM due to the ENTC legislative challenges.
	Ind.2.3-streamlined Landscape management plans, structures and standards developed	Ind.2.3: Landscape management plans, structures and standards developed and implemented.	3 (Lubombo, Ngwempsis and Maloloja)	No change proposed
Outcome3	Ind. 3.1-8 Capacity building programmes	Ind. 1: Capacity building programmes	8 programmes implemented	No changes proposed
	Ind.3.2: 1-Invasive Alien Species control programme	Ind.2: 2 Invasive Alien Species control programmes	1 programme implemented	No changes proposed
	Ind. 3.3: Conservation infrastructure programmes (1 per PA category)	Ind. 3: Conservation infrastructure programmes (1 per PA category)	4 conservation infrastructure programmes	No changes proposed
	Ind.3.4: Eco-tourism infrastructure, product development and marketing (1 per PA category)	Ind.4: Eco-tourism infrastructure, product development and marketing (1 per PA category)	4 Eco-tourism infrastructure / product development and marketing	No changes proposed
	Ind.4.5: biodiversity-based CBNRM programmes (programmes	Ind.5: biodiversity-based CBNRM programmes	2	No changes proposed

Annex 8. BGP Withdrawal Letter

The Kingdom of Swaziland's
BIG GAME PARKS

23 November 2015

The Minister of Tourism and Environment
The Hon Jabulane Mabuza
MBABANE

Dear Minister

UNDP/GEF Strengthening the PAs of Swaziland

Very respectfully, Minister, the developing UNDP/GEF project proposes a direct contradiction and, in my view, a threat to the Head of State's responsibilities for wildlife.

You will be aware that His Majesty took the Wildlife and Flora Act No 51 of 1953 (short title Game Act) away from the Ministry of Tourism and transferred it to his own portfolio in the King's Office. You will also be aware that two previous Ministers of Tourism, in direct contradiction of the Head of State, tried to claim back the Game Act – "wrench back" was the term used. This is a historical reality which resurfaces from time to time.

When direct confrontation did not work for those previous Ministers of Tourism, the strategy changed. Firstly, the King's Office and BGP were ignored and disregarded on all issues concerning wildlife, in spite of objections being raised by both institutions. Official documentation which should have been passed on to BGP were processed out of portfolio by the SNTC. Then, Legal Notice 25 of 2009 was gazetted depicting conservation and wildlife management as the responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism, without consultation with, or the knowledge of, the Authority responsible for it. Then the SNTC developed an Amendment Bill which, if enacted, would enable it to swallow and control all wildlife responsibilities – Legal Notice 25/2009 was used to justify this. The EU was also engaged to develop a National Wildlife Policy for Swaziland, and later the UNDP was engaged to develop a strengthening of the Protected Areas of Swaziland – both these engagements were without consultation or knowledge, of the King's Office or BGP who is mandated by the Head of State to administer and manage the Game Act on behalf of the King's Office. BGP is also mandated to keep the Head of State fully informed on all wildlife issues. The King's Office circulated these new ... in several letters, but particularly in a letter

referenced KO52 dated 05 July 2007 to all relevant officials, including our Ministry of Foreign Affairs and CITES. Your Ministry and the SNTC ignored this.

In accordance with this mandate, it was surely **not** the prerogative of the Ministry of Tourism to initiate such developments, bearing in mind that the Head of State had taken the responsibilities for wildlife (The Game Act) away from the Ministry of Tourism. Bearing in mind too, that the SNTC, and its wildlife, remained with the Ministry and that the SNTC mandate confines its responsibilities to its own institutions.

Subsequent developments and the new SNTC Amendment Bill are seen as an intention to expand the Ministry's responsibilities to infringe on and swallow the Game Act, using the international community to support this. Assurances to the contrary by the Ministry and the SNTC, as reflected in the MoU between SNTC and BGP, wear thin when the historical realities and contradictions around wildlife seem to persist and resurface in spite of objections written by the Chief Officer in the King's Office and by BGP.

BGP was subsequently invited onto the UNDP Steering Committee after these issues were brought into question and threatened to polarise this development. BGP's acceptance of this appointment was conditional on the Head of State's responsibilities for wildlife not being infringed upon, reduced, subordinated or diluted. There have been many engagements and letters around this issue and there is no shortage of empirical evidence to support what I am saying.

I am now told about concerns that BGP, by its very presence at Steering Committee meetings, is merely being used as a rubber stamp to decisions made by the Steering Committee, even when BGP does not agree with those decisions. I see a danger in BGP being construed as being a party to those decisions inspite of its disapproval of them. These developments are also in direct contradiction of the MoU BGP signed with the SNTC.

It is common cause, from King Sobhuza's time, that Swaziland's wildlife has flourished under the personal direction of the Monarch after it was decimated under Colonial rule. It is also common cause that wildlife failed under the various Government departments – whether Ministerial or Parastatal, and BGP is in total loyalty to this heritage remaining the responsibility of the Head of State.

We made it very clear that BGP membership of the Steering Committee would be conditional on the following, that
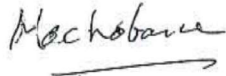
BGP will not support anything which threatens to dispossess, dilute or

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From my own personal viewpoint, I have had a lifetime of untainted service to my King, and I cannot compromise this by being party to anything which threatens the dilution of the Monarch's responsibilities for wildlife.

In consequence of the above, and other concerns which keep surfacing, I must regretfully suspend BGP's membership of the UNDP/GEF Steering Committee pending further consultation. I have also instructed our Finance Division not to open a bank account or to accept any GEF money. I truly regret having to present you with this anomaly.

All of us at BGP wish you and your family compliments of the Season, a merry Christmas, and a prosperous new year.

Sincerely

Mechobane

TED REILLY
Chief Executive

Cc   Mr Titus Dlamini - SNTC CEO

Annex 9. Planned Versus Actual Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder	Planned Participation (as planned in ProDoc, Table 6)	TE Assessment
Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs	Leadership Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs for the implementation of the project. Implementing the project. Providing co-finance. Support to development and growth of the PAs under the mandate of the SNTC Act and Flora Protection Act	The MTEA through the Department of Forestry supported the project in the undertaking of the project activities and technical backstopping through the attendance Project Steering Committee meetings.
SNTC	Leadership and coordination for implementation of the project. Implementing the project. Providing co-finance. Day to day operational execution of the project. Technical consulting and capacity building. Marketing and infrastructure development. Support to development and growth of the PAs under the mandate of the SNTC Act.	No change
Big Game Parks	Leadership and coordination for implementation of the project. Implementing the project. Providing co-finance. Day to day operational execution of the project. Technical consulting and capacity building. Marketing and infrastructure development. Support to development and growth of the PAs under the mandate of the Game Act.	Suspended active participation in Project activities (in November 2015) almost 5months after Project Inception, and 4 months after Project launch. The PMU has been driving implementation in Ngwempisi Landscape, but, no sustainable adaptive strategy has been put in place to accommodate the loss of the Responsible Party. See detailed analysis below[15]
EEA	Implementing the project activities. Technical consulting and capacity building.	Mostly involved in the capacity building (e.g. training communities on CBNRM and general environmental management); further involved through

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[15] **A separate Analysis titled "TE Assessment of BGP withdrawal" is attached.**

(a) **The BGP suspending its participation in the project activities resulted in halting of activities and budgetary allocations for activities planned to be undertaken within the BGP Protected Areas, in particular biodiversity assessments and overall PA strengthening.**

(b) **The BGP was a key stakeholder in the SNPAS Project and had committed to co-finance through in-kind contribution a total of U$9,800,000.00 towards the SNPAS project, i.e. 33% of the total Project budget.**

(c) **The suspension of BGP's participation meant none would undertake the activities outlined in the Project Document as 1.3.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 3.2.3, 3.3.2, and 3.4.2 with a total budget of US$ 1,170,000.00.**

(d) **The suspension of BGP's participation meant inability to access the areas targeted under 3.2.3, 3.3.2, and 3.4.2, as well as the three (3) - Mlilwane, Mkhaya and Hlane PAs information to assist with the completion of the national biodiversity knowledge-based database, and the business plans for the said PAs.**

		the Emvembili Ecotourism Project; EEA was providing technical input into SNPAS.
Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy	Technical consulting and capacity building. Implementing the project. Support to development and growth of the different forms of PAs.	The project received digital information from the surveyor general office for uploading in the GIS laboratory Water sample analysis from wetlands conducted by SNPAS in conjunction with Water Affairs Department, and
MoA	Providing co-finance. Implementing the project. Technical consulting and capacity building.	PB and PSC Meetings Formulation of the Chiefdom Development Plans (CDPs) Production of maps for the landscape approach Workshops organised by the SNPAS OECMs projects Livelihood projects for the communities such as the providing technical information on the poultry, rabbit production, and the beekeeping. MOA also availed her Heavy Plant Equipment e.g. Bulldozers, Motor Graders for the construction of access roads to the ecotourism projects
University of Eswatini	Biodiversity surveys and ecological research. Technical consulting and capacity building. Formal training and education.	PSC Meetings Review of wetlands management plans and their launch Development of special habitats management plans The SNTC has granted three (3) university students 10 weeks internship positions in the project through their academic departments and faculties. UNISWA has also shared data with the project for uploading in the GIS portal.
Lubombo Conservancy	Support to development and growth of the different forms of PAs. Technical consulting and capacity building. Implementing the project. Providing co-finance.	Involved in implementation through COSPE, an NGO that had signed an LoA with ENTC, to implement a set of agreed upon activities including fencing in Shewula.
Swaziland Game Ranchers Association	Support to development and growth of the different forms of PAs. Technical consulting and capacity building. Implementing the project.	PSC Meetings

	Co-ordination and co-operation.	
All Out Africa Foundation/Others consultancy firms/Researchers	Biodiversity surveys, ecological research and monitoring. Technical consulting and capacity building. Field training and education.	Volunteer role Advice on marketing Eco-tourism infrastructure
Private PAs	Support to development and growth of the different forms of PAs. Implementing the project. Technical consulting and capacity building. Providing co-finance.	Full potential of PLOs participation maximized through more effective communication channels and fruitful sustained engagements (as some withdrew from PSC e.g. withdrawal of Phophonyane conservancy as PSC member)
SNL Communities	Support to development and growth of the different forms of PAs. Technical consulting and capacity building. Implementing the project.	Shewula CCA (Shewula Chiefdom), Mhlumeni (Langa Chiefdom), Mahamba Gorge, Ntungula Mountain (Luzelwini Chiefdom), Khelekhele (Velezizweni Chiefdom), Khalangilie (Eluyengweni Chiefdom), Ntondozi, Malanti, Mpini, Ka-Zulu, Luketseni, Ka-Ndinda, Ekuvinjelweni

Annex 10. List of Consultancies and Reports Produced with Project Support

Title of Report/Plan	Date of Report	Contract Amount (US$ equiv)	Name of Consultant/Organization
An Assessment of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Strengthening National Protected Area Systems (SNPAS) Project Implementation (2021)	July 2021 (final)	3,862	Gideon Gwebu,
Wetlands Policy	December (final)	43,882	Nicollete Ndlovu, Emmanuel Kasimbazi,
The Eswatini Conservation Fund Bill, Regulations Segments & Resource Mobilisation Strategy	May 2021 (final)	6,207	Noble Expression
Guidelines for Protected Areas Categorization, Formalization and Compliance in Swaziland	November 2016	17 500	Nyasha E. Chishakwe
Ekuvinjelweni Community Protected Wetland Management Plan			
Luyengweni Community Protected Wetlands Management Plan			
Lukhetseni Community Protected Wetland Management Plan			
Malanti Community Protected Wetland Management Plan	August 2021	12,949	ENTC Technical Working Group, chaired by Sandile Gumedze
Mphini Community Protected Wetland Management Plan			
Ndzangu Mashatane Community Protected Wetland Management Plan			
Ntondozi Community Protected Wetland Management Plan			
Master Plan to Deliver Project Objectives	February 2020	1,172	Project Manager, SNPAS
Description & Quantification Of Ecosystem Services and Training Manual On The Evaluation Of Ecosystem Services For Protected Areas In Eswatini	April 2021	31,259	Dr Derek Berliner Titus Dlamini
Customizing Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures Methodology to Eswatini Context & Site-level methodology for identifying.	October 2020	8,966	Dr. Wisdom Mdumiseni
Combined Report Of Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) By Use Of Social & Environment Standards (SES) Screening Process	August 2020	26,862	Dr. Godfrey Mvuma Dr Mandla Mlipha

Combined Project Strategy 2016-2021 & Exit Strategy	May 2016	?	SNPAS PMU, Led by M&E Project Manager, Nontobeko Mlangeni
Market Potential Of Honey And Wild Leafy Vegetables In The Lubombo Region – Swaziland	July 2017	5 292	Bheki Bulunga (COSPE)
Ndinda Chiefdom Development Plan	(final)	72,570	
Ka-Zulu Chiefdom Development Plan	(final)		
Luzelweni Chiefdom Development Plan	(final)		
Malanti Chiefdom Development Plan	(draft)		
Mvembili Chiefdom Development Plan	November 2017 (final)		
Ndzangu Chiefdom Development Plan	January 2018 (draft)		
Ntondozi Chiefdom Development Plan	September 2017 (final)		
Shewula Chiefdom Development Plan	June 2018 (final)		
Velezizweni Chiefdom Development Plan	April 2018 (final)		
Mantenga Nature Reserve Management Plan	December 2020 (final draft)	5,172	ENTC Reserve Manager, James Kunene
Mlawula Nature Reserve Management Plan	August 2020 (final)		ENTC Reserve Manager, Sonnyboy Mtsetfwa
Malolotja Nature Reserve Management Plan	November 2020 (final)		ENTC Reserve Manager
Consultancy to Undertake Biodiversity Surveys in Swaziland Survey Report	July 2017 (final)	26,207	Themb'a Mahlaba
Report On The Development Of A Landscape Programme Within The Ngwempisi Cluster	March 2018 (final)	9,655	Titus Dlamini
Socio-Economic Assessment of Protected Areas and Protection-Worthy Areas	June 2016 (final)	23,448	?
Swaziland Biodiversity Portal Operation Manual		2668	Geoenvi Solutions International ltd,
Ngwempisi Integrated Landscape Management Plan	September 2020 (final)	12,414	SNPAS PMU, Led by NPM, Dr. Lindani Mavimbela,
Lubombo Integrated Landscape Management Plan			

	December 2020 (final)		
Malolotja Integrated Landscape Management Plan			
National Strategy for the Control and Management of Invasive Alien Plant Species: 2020 – 2030	July 2020 (final)	4,345	Dr. Wisdom Mdumiseni

Summary Responses (from PMU/UNDP CO) to expenditure queries raised by the TE Team

TE Question	Response
A total of US$5,172.40 was paid to three park wardens for the elaboration of the management plans for the 3 ENTC PAs. How is this possible as they are full-time employees of ENTC?	Travel and sleep out allowance policy by project and UNDP policy warrants that allowances be paid.
A total of 12,413.80 was paid to SNPAS PMU for the development of 3 landscape management plans. Again, how is this possible as the PMU is project-paid staff?	Travel and sleep out allowance policy by project and UNDP policy warrants that allowances be paid.
What was the total amount spent by the project on the elaboration of the 9 Chiefdom Development Plans?	As per the information at my disposal the cost is US$72,569.99 (PMU Finance Officer)
Did this project pay for the elaboration of the 5 year ENTC strategy and if so what was the amount spent and to whom was it paid?	No answer has been provided.
What was the amount paid for the Swaziland Biodiversity Portal Operation Manual?	The cost was US$2,667.91
Who is paying the salaries of the following four individuals a) yourself (UNDP through UNDP co-financing committed to the project?), b) the Ngwempisi Landscape Coordinator (UNDP co-financing?), c) Lubombo and Malolotja Landscape Coordinator (ENTC in cash co-financing?), d) NPM (UNDP co-financing?)	GEF funds in 2020 and UNDP funds in 2021
Is the current Ngwempisi Landscape Coordinator (who was the driver) still being paid as a driver or is he being paid as a Landscape Coordinator?	He is still paid as a driver and his issue is handled by UNDP.

Annex 11. Monitoring Missions

Date of Monitoring Mission	Who Undertook the Mission (e.g. UNDP CO, UNDP RTA, UNDP RSC, PMU, PB, PSC)	Purpose of Mission
20–25 March 2016	PMU	Purpose: • Participating in the Capacity Building Workshop for Africa on Achieving AICHI Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12 (Entebbe, Uganda)
23rd June 2016	PMU/UNDP	Purpose: • Trip to the Lubombo Cluster for visiting the Jilobi Forest which is proposed as a reserve forest to be proclaimed under the Flora Protection Act; Mbuluzi Game Reserve for a meeting with the Lubombo Conservancy (LC); Shewula Mountain Camp and the Inyoni Yami Swaziland Irrigation Scheme (IYSIS).
14.12.2017	PMU	Activity Progress/Programme Management Purpose: • Monitoring an implementing partner (COSPE Lubombo) to check on progress in implementing activities
No date indicated	PMU	Catalytic Funding Final Monitoring Visit to PLOs (Mhlosinga Nature Reserve, Mhlatuze Wilds, Rosecraft (Wild Horizons), Dombeya Game Reserve and Mbuluzi Game Reserve) Purpose: • Overall objective of the monitoring visits was to wrap up the catalytic funding program. • Specific objectives of the monitoring visits were to monitor the projects implemented by PLOs with the funds availed by the SNPAS project, to undertake and finalize the GEF tracking tools (where necessary), and to record all the lessons learnt in preparation for the second leg of the catalytic funding
28 January – 01February 2019	UNDP Joint RTA/RSC supervision Mission to Eswatini	The purpose of the mission: • To provide support to the ENTC (as the Implementing Partner), the UNDP-CO (as the GEF Implementing Agency), and the project PMU • Post-MTR Technical Supervision Mission (28 January - 1 February 2019 Mission Report with recommendations for approval by the Project Board)
08 October 2020	UNDP/PMU	Purpose of the field visit: • Assess status of implementation Hawane Dame and Wetland Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Fencing

08 October 2020	UNDP/PMU	Purpose of the field visit: • Assess status of implementation • Malolotja Reserve Reception Upgrade
08 October 2020	UNDP/PMU	Purpose of the field visit: • Khelekhele Eco-lodge Reconstruction • Assess progress of ecolodge reconstruction
22-23.09.2020	UNDP/PB	Purpose: • Activity Progress/Programme Management to different sites (Shewla Mountain Camp, Mbuluzi Game Reserve, Phophonyane Conservancy) in different Landscapes (Lubombo and Malolotja)
2020 (date not indicated)	PB	Purpose: • Board Tour sites Fact Sheet in Ngwempisi Landscape (including Khalangiglie, Ntondozi, Rosecraft, and 1. Emantini Game Reserve)
19 May 2021	UNDP/PMU	Visit Purpose: • Khelekhele Eco-lodge Reconstruction • Assess progress of rehabilitation and upgrade of community tourism infrastructure.

Annex 12. Signed Letter of Agreement between ENTC and UNDP

STANDARD LETTER OF AGREEMENT (LOA) BETWEEN

THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND
SWAZILAND NATIONAL TRUST COMMISSION (SNTC)
TO CARRY OUT ACTIVITIES
WHEN UNDP PROVIDES SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE *STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEMS OF SWAZILAND - GEF PIMS 4932 PPG PROJECT*

Dear Sir,

1.   Reference is made to the consultations between officials of the United Nations Development Programme (hereinafter referred to as "UNDP") in Swaziland and officials of *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* with respect to the realization of activities by *the Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* the implementation of the UNDP support services to: Project Number: 00091061 entitled Strengthening the National Protected Areas Systems of Swaziland, as specified in Attachment 1: Project Document, to which UNDP has been selected as a responsible party.

2.   In accordance with the LOA signed between the government implementing partner and UNDP for support services and with the following terms and conditions, we confirm our acceptance of the activities to be provided by *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* towards the project, as specified in Attachment 2: Description of Activities (hereinafter referred to as "Activities"). Close consultations will be held between *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* and UNDP on all aspects of the Activities.

3.   *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall be fully responsible for carrying out, with due diligence and efficiency, all Activities in accordance with its Financial Regulations and Rules.

4.   In carrying out the activities under this Letter, the personnel and sub-contractors of *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall not be considered in any respect as being the employees or agents of UNDP. UNDP does not accept any liability for claims arising out of acts or omission of *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* or its personnel, or of its contractors or their personnel, in performing the Activities or any claims for death, bodily injury, disability, damage to property or other hazards that may be suffered by *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* and its personnel as a result of their work pertaining to the Activities.

5.   Any sub-contractors, including NGOs under contract with *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall work under the supervision of the designated official of *Swaziland National Trust Commission.* These sub-contractors shall remain accountable to *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* for the manner in which assigned functions are discharged.

6   Upon signature of this Letter, UNDP will make payments to *Swaziland National Trust Commission,* according to the schedule of payments specified in Attachment 3: Schedule of Activities, Facilities and Payments.

7.   *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall not make any financial commitments or incur any expenses which would exceed the budget for the Activities as set forth in Attachment 8. *The Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall regularly consult with UNDP concerning the status and use of funds and shall promptly advise UNDP any time when *Swaziland National Trust Commissions* aware that the budget to carry out these Activities is insufficient to fully implement the project in the manner set out in the Attachment

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2. UNDP shall have no obligation to provide *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* with any funds or to make any reimbursement for expenses incurred by *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* in excess of the total budget as set forth in Attachment 3.

9. *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall submit a cumulative financial report each quarter (31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December). The report will be submitted to UNDP through the UNDP Resident Representative within 30 days following those dates. The format will follow the standard UNDP expenditure report [a model copy of which is provided as Attachment 4]. UNDP will include the financial report by *the Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* in the financial report for Project Number 00091061 entitled,Strengthening the National Protected Areas Systems of Swaziland.

10. *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall submit such progress reports relating to the Activities as may reasonably be required by the project manager in the exercise of his or her duties.

11. *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall furnish a final report within 6 months after the completion or termination of the Activities, including a list of non-expendable equipment purchased by *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* and all relevant audited or certified financial statements and records related to such Activities, as appropriate, pursuant to its Financial Regulations and Rules.

12 Equipment and supplies that may be furnished by UNDP or procured through UNDP funds will be disposed as agreed, in writing, between UNDP and *Swaziland National Trust Commission.*

13. Any changes to the LOA between the government implementing partner and UNDP for support services which would affect the work being performed by *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* in accordance with Attachment 2 shall be recommended only after consultation between the parties.

14. For any matters not specifically covered by this Letter, the Parties would ensure that those matters shall be resolved in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the LOA for support services and any revisions thereof and in accordance with the respective provisions of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* and UNDP.

15. The arrangements described in this Letter will remain in effect until the end of the project, or the completion of Activities according to Attachment 2, or until terminated in writing (with 30 days notice) by either party. The schedule of payments specified in Attachment 3 remains in effect based on continued performance by *Swaziland National Trust Commission* unless it receives written indication to the contrary from UNDP.

16. Any balance of funds that is undispersed and uncommitted after the conclusion of the Activities shall be returned within 90 days to UNDP.

17. Any amendment to this Letter shall be effected by mutual agreement, in writing,

18. All further correspondence regarding this Letter, other than signed letters of agreement or amendments thereto should be addressed to:

Mr Israel Dessalegne
UNDP Resident Representative
PO Box 261
Mbabane
Swaziland

19. *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* shall keep the UNDP Resident Representative fully informed of all actions undertaken by them in carrying out this Letter.

20. UNDP may suspend this Agreement, in whole or in part, upon written notice, should circumstances arise which jeopardize successful completion of the Activities.

21. Any dispute between the UNDP and *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* arising out of or relating to this Letter which is not settled by negotiation or other agreed mode of settlement, shall, at the request of either party, be submitted to a Tribunal of three arbitrators. Each party shall appoint one arbitrator, and the two arbitrators so appointed shall appoint a third arbitrator, who shall be the chairperson of the Tribunal. If, within 15 days of the appointment of two arbitrators, the third arbitrator has not been appointed, either party may request the President of the International Court of Justice to appoint the arbitrator referred to. The Tribunal shall determine its own procedures, provided that any two arbitrators shall constitute a quorum for all purposes, and all decisions shall require the agreement of any two arbitrators. The expenses of the Tribunal shall be borne by the parties as assessed by the Tribunal. The arbitral award shall contain a statement of the reasons on which it is based and shall be final and binding on the parties.

22. If you are in agreement with the provisions set forth above, please sign and return to this office two copies of this Letter. Your acceptance shall thereby constitute the basis for your *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)* participation in the implementation of the project.

Yours sincerely,
Signed on behalf of UNDP
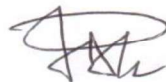
Kabiru Nasidi
Resident Representative a.i.

Date: 18/06/15

Signed on behalf of *Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)*

Titus Dlamini
Chief Executive Officer
Swaziland National Trust Commission

Date:

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Annex 13. Example of a LOA Specifying Execution Support

STANDARD LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN UNDP AND THE IMPLEMENTING PARTNER FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES UNDER PROJECT TITLE:

Strengthening Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management and Climate-Smart Landscapes in the Mid to Lower Zambezi Region of Zimbabwe

Dear Dr Chitepo,

1.   Reference is made to consultations between officials of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Hospitality Industry through the Directorate responsible for Environment, (hereinafter referred to as "Implementing Partner") and officials of UNDP with respect to the provision of support services by the UNDP country office for nationally managed project titled **"Strengthening Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management and Climate-Smart Landscapes in the Mid to Lower Zambezi Region of Zimbabwe"** or (UNDP Short Description: Strengthening Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management UNDP Award ID: 00107199; Project ID 00107558). UNDP and Implementing Partner hereby agree that the UNDP country office may provide such support services at the request of Implementing Partner in the project document as described below.

2.   The UNDP country office may provide support services for assistance with activities as specified in the Project Document and direct payment. In providing such support services, the UNDP country office shall ensure that the capacity of the Implementing Partner will be strengthened to enable it to carry out such activities directly.   The costs incurred by the UNDP country office in providing such support services are to be recovered from the administrative budget of the project. .

3.   The UNDP country office shall provide, at the request of the Implementing Partner, the following support services for the activities of the project:

(a) **Identification and/or recruitment of project personnel;**
(b) **Provision of Responsible Party Agreement (s);**
(c) **Identification and facilitation of implementation of activities;**
(d) **Procurement of goods and services required under the project;**

4.   The procurement of goods and services, provision of Responsible Party Agreement (s), and the recruitment of project personnel by the UNDP country office shall be in accordance with the UNDP regulations, rules, policies and procedures. Support services described in paragraph 3 above shall be the

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form provided in the Attachment hereto. If the requirements for support services by the country office change during the life of a project, the Attachment is revised with the agreement of the UNDP Resident Representative and the Implementing Partner.

5.   The relevant provisions of the SBAA, signed between the Government of Zimbabwe and the United Nations Development Fund on 27th May 1980 including the provisions on liability and privileges and immunities, shall apply to the provision of such support services. The Implementing Partner shall retain overall responsibility for the nationally managed project. The responsibility of the UNDP country office for the provision of the support services described herein shall be limited to the provision of such support services.

6.   Any claim or dispute arising under or in connection with the provision of support services by the UNDP country office in accordance with this letter shall be handled pursuant to the relevant provisions of the SBAA.

7.   The manner and method of cost-recovery by the UNDP country office in providing the support services described in paragraph 3 above shall be specified in the Attachment.

8.   The UNDP country office shall submit progress reports on the support services provided and shall report on the costs reimbursed in providing such services, as may be required.

9.   Any modification of the present arrangements shall be effected by mutual written agreement of the parties hereto.

10.   If you are in agreement with the provisions set forth above, please sign and return to this office two signed copies of this letter. Upon your signature, this letter shall constitute an agreement between the Implementing Partner and UNDP on the terms and conditions for the provision of support services by the UNDP country office for nationally managed project.

Yours sincerely,

Signed on behalf of UNDP

Bishow Parajuli
Resident Representative

Date: 17/11/2012

Implementing Partner

Thokozile Chitepo
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Tourism, Hospitality Industry and Environment

Date: 23/11/12

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DESCRIPTION OF UNDP COUNTRY OFFICE SUPPORT SERVICES

1. Reference is made to consultations between **Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Hospitality Industry "MTEHI"** and officials of UNDP with respect to the provision of support services by the UNDP country office for the nationally managed project **"Strengthening Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management and Climate-Smart Landscapes in the Mid to Lower Zambezi Region of Zimbabwe"** or (**UNDP Short Description: Strengthening Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management, Award ID: 00107199; Project ID 00107558**).

2. In accordance with the provisions of the letter of agreement signed on .... and the Project Document, the UNDP country office shall provide support services for the Project as described below.

3. Support services requested to be provided by UNDP Zimbabwe

Support services (insert description)	Schedule for the provision of the support services	Cost to UNDP of providing such support services (where appropriate)	Amount and method of reimbursement of UNDP (where appropriate)
1. HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES: - Identification and/or recruitment of project personnel and consultants (national and international). Service contract recruitment service package: (advertising, shortlisting, interviewing). - Recurrent personnel management services: staff payroll, banking admin, and management (first year and subsequent year) - Other HR service e.g. post classification, creation of post in Atlas, conduct reference check process, request for home leave, education grant travel, medical clearance, etc.	Annually	USD 27,580.28	Estimated value of the support is USD 27,580.28 Reimbursement for services costed will be based on annual Universal Price List (UPL) per transaction. (2017 UPL Estimate)
2. ADMINISTRATION OF AGREEMENTS SERVICES: - Issuance of the Responsible Party Agreement (RPA) with the identified Agencies, including the due diligence process, document clearance, management of financial disbursement, checks and reporting, and payment.	Annually	USD 99.00	Estimated value of the support is USD 99.00. Reimbursement for services costed will be based on 2017 Universal Price List (UPL) per transaction.
2. PROCUREMENT SERVICES: Procurement of goods and services to	Annually	USD 41,344.50	Estimated value of the support is USD 41,344.50.

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facilitate project implementation including training workshops: - Procurement of goods not involving local CAP (low value procurement). The process includes PO issuance. - Procurement of goods and services involving local CAP. The process includes PO issuance. - Individual consultant recruitment. - TA arrangement. - Ticket requested (booking grand procurement). - Settlement of F10 claim contractual services, procurement of IT equipment, supplies, office furniture, audio-visual materials and publication.			Reimbursement for services costed will be based on annual Universal Price List (UPL) per transaction. (2017 UPL Estimate)
3. **FINANCE SERVICES:** - Payment to vendors/staff/consultants - Vendor profile creation - F-10 claims settlement - PO creates in Atlas - AR Management Process - General Ledger Journal Entry	Throughout project implementation when applicable	USD 25,681.13	Estimated value of the support is USD 25,681.13 Reimbursement for services costed will be based on annual Universal Price List (UPL) per transaction. (2017 UPL Estimate)
4. **IT SERVICES** - Email account creation and maintenance for Project Management Units; - Support to procurement of project IT equipment - Support to e-conferences	Throughout project implementation when applicable	USD 4,243.20	Estimated value of the support is USD 4,243.20. Reimbursement for services costed will be based on annual Universal Price List (UPL) per transaction. (2017 UPL Estimate)
5. **ADMINISTRATION SERVICES** - VAT exemption certificate application - Meeting and conference arrangement - Logistic arrangement (bus, car, meeting and equipment rental)	Throughout project implementation when applicable	USD 10,920.00	Estimated value of the support is USD 10,920.00 Reimbursement for services costed will be based on annual Universal Price List (UPL) per transaction. (2017 UPL Estimate)
6. **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES:** - Programme Specialist Environment and CC - Project Analyst/Project Assistant - M&E Specialist - Gender Specialist - Programme Finance Analyst - Team Leader Poverty Reduction, Environment & CC	Throughout Project Implementation	USD 500,535.04	UNDP will charge direct project costs directly to the project budget. Already provided for in the Project Budge. Estimated based on 2017 Proforma costs of each position.

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7. Assistance may consist of any other form which may be agreed by the Government and UNDP.

8. Description of functions and responsibilities of the parties involved:

    a. IP to determine the type of services to be provided by UNDP, in line with the AWPs;
    b. IP will be consulted by UNDP in the process of providing the support services;
    c. UNDP will conduct the provision of the services using UNDP's procurement/recruitment/financial rules;
    d. UNDP will update IP annually, on the cost of the provision of the services.

9. All the decisions related to the support services provided by UNDP shall be made upon agreement/approval of the government.

10. The Poverty Reduction, Environment and Climate Change (PRECC) and the Operations Units of UNDP Zimbabwe with support of the relevant teams in the Regional Service Centre in Ethiopia will be responsible for the provision of the support services as referred in the above-mentioned support services to be provided. The reimbursement cost of support services by UNDP Zimbabwe, in relation to activity implementation and/or delivery of project outputs, which are beyond the UNDP roles of general project oversight and monitoring as well as reporting to donor, will be considered as the Direct Project Cost (DPC). The cost of these support services will be analyzed on an annual basis, based on the actual time spent of UNDP Zimbabwe staff and charged to project accordingly. The support services cost provided by the Operations Unit will be recorded to the project budget as per transactions, based on established UNDP policies.

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Annex 14. TE Assessment of Progress towards Objective and Outcome Indicators

The project continued to report on the indicators and targets using the original RF even though the progress reported relates to the revised indicators and targets instead of those in the original PRODOC. The TET felt it appropriate to include in this table both the original indicators and end of project targets (as these were left unchanged officially in the UNDP system), but felt it was also important to include the revised indicators and targets as these were officially approved by the PB as per UNDP CO (even though no reference to this could be located by the TE in PB meeting minutes). The revised indicators and targets appear in this table in brown. The TE assessment of progress is presented for both the original indicator and the revised indicators and targets (wherever these have been revised).

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	Progress as Reported in 2021 PIR	TE Assessment of Cumulative Progress Since
Objective – To effectively expand, manage and develop Swaziland's protected area network in order to adequately protect the biodiversity and landscapes of the country.	Original Indicator 1: Legally protected PA network increased.	Current baseline of 3.9% of the country	PA system covers at least 6%	Target on track PA system currently covers 5.5%, through the other effective conservation measures (OECM) declarations of 19,943 ha in private, public and communal land. The 6 % project target will be met by project closure since more private landowners (Montigny, Shiselweni Forest, Tibiyo and IYSIS) are still being engaged to get 20,700 ha. Communities are also being engaged to have their informal conservation areas declared as special habitats using the Flora Protection Act 2001 and the target is 5,300 ha. Level of progress is 75%	No appreciable progress made towards the target. The legally protected PA network has remained unchanged.
	Revised Indicator 1: % land under effective conservation management according to	There were no designated OECMs in Eswatini in 2014 (TE insertion)	6%		Target partially achieved The project reported on only part of this essentially two-part indicator. It reported on area (% land) of expansion but hardly reported at all on "*under effective conservation management*" of those areas. Expansion of PAs

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| | OECM5 or IUCN Green Listing Standards6 (with time-bound, geographically specific targets set) | | | | The PA estate has been expanded quite significantly through the intervention of the project, from 3.9% of the total land area of Eswatini at project start to 5.14% at project end. None of the expansion is in legally gazetted PAs. Instead, and as agreed in the revised RF following the MTR, the expansion is due to declaring areas as OECMs and Special Habitats.

Including OECMs, the total PA area increased from 4.26% to 5.5% (an additional 1.24%). According to the information shared with the TE, 8 OECMs were declared during the project (there were none prior to the project) and the 8 OECMs total 19,943 hectares (with the smallest being 24 ha and the largest 15,422). It is noteworthy that a single OECM, the privately-owned Mhlosinga Big Bend Conservancy, comprises 77% of the total area added under OECM. Of the 8 OECMs, 4 are privately owned and 4 are on communal lands. All of the large private landowners approached by the project for possible designation as OEMCs (Montigny Forest, Shiselweni Forest Company (SFC), Mhlosinga Nature reserve, Peak timbers, IYSIS) have declined to establish conservation areas. Inclusion of these areas into the PA estate would have added at least an additional 25,000 hectares to the PA estate.

Masivini, Luzelweni, Shewula, Mvembili, KaZulu, and Ndinda Chiefdoms were all considered to have protection worthy areas in the assessment done in 2003. Of these, 3 Chiefdoms have officially designated new conservation areas since 2014 totalling 3,274 hectares.

Effective Management of PAs

METT scores for PAs are addressed in a different indicator.

None of the new OECM or Special Habitat PAs have satisfactory safeguards in place to assure land use will not be converted to non-biodiversity-friendly uses and the report on customizing OECMs for the Eswatini context prepared with project support makes no mention of this.

Few of these new PAs are implementing management plans and several don't even have management plans.

There is a risk that many of these areas, especially those on communal lands, will remain as "paper parks" if further significant support is not provided to them.

There is also a risk that some areas which are under active conservation (especially those owned by smaller PLOs) may be converted (in total or in part) to non-biodiversity compatible uses, especially given the financial pressures that some now face as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has already happened during the project period in the case of at least one private landowner who benefited from catalytic funding provided by the project but subsequently converted some of the land area to non-biodiversity-compatible land uses. |

| | Number of capacity building programmes developed for improved PA management | 0 | At least 3 PA capacity building programmes to improve the management and operations of PAs | <mark>Target achieved</mark> in 2020

Seven (7) capacity building programs have been delivered for Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC), private formal protected areas and private and communal informal protected areas.

These are:
i, Trained ENTC Park Managers, Senior Ecologist, GIS Coordinator and Law Enforcement depart on drone operation for ecological and security monitoring.

ii, Marketing and ecotourism training covering topics of strategic and operational management plans associated with the marketing function.

iii, Financial management covering topics relating to fundamentals of financial management.

iv, Integrated Fire management covering aspects of landholder fire management strategies and community-based fire management.

v, Protected area financing and resourcing composed of an online survey, 3-part online webinar series (pending boot camp practical session).

vi, Eco-tourism exchange visit where tour guides, trustees and front office/ hospitality assistants from Mvembili, Mhlumeni, Shewula and | (Note: This target was dropped as an objective-level indicator in the revised RF) |

				Ngwempisi were taken through an exchange visit to established PAs to share their experiences and gain more experience to strengthen capacity to run their Community-based Eco-Tourism PAs.

vii, Community Eco-tourism Financial Planning and Accounting Training for 7 community eco-tourism projects namely Mhlumeni, Shewula, Mvembili, Khelekhele, Khopho, Ntfungulo and Mahamba was undertaken.

The level of progress is above 100% | |
| | Revised Indicator 2: This indicator was dropped as an objective-level indicator in the Revised RF | | | | |
| **Outcome 1:** PA management and biodiversity conservation guided by research and knowledge, for improved and adaptive management practices within and outside PAs. | | | | | |
| | Number of biodiversity field surveys | 0 | At least 6 PA and 3 landscape level biodiversity surveys carried out | Target Achieved in 2019 with a 133% progress.

In terms of sustaining survey work post-project, the project has provided baselines and activities of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and the revised strategy will have indicators for improvement. Furthermore, ecological research and monitoring is part of the management programmes of all the ENTC Nature Reserves and OECM beneficiaries embedded in their management plans. In | Target partially achieved

No "landscape level" biodiversity surveys were carried out. |

				the case of ENTC on an annual basis it is planned that there will be i. Veld Assessment ii. Ecological data collection iii. IAPS monitoring iv. Priority species monitoring v. Identifying ecological threats to biodiversity vi. Alien plant control vii. Culling viii. Priority species management (plants and animals) ix. GIS mapping of resources	
	Number of information management systems at regional and national level	0	1 GIS-based knowledge and information management system	<mark>Target Achieved</mark> One (1) GIS based knowledge and information management system has been developed and is functional. It is accessible on the URL: https://eswatinigisbiodiversity.com. Guidelines and protocols for managing, sharing and updating information was completed and data uploads have begun gradually and are expected to be completed by project closure. In terms of continued management and updating of the system post-project, the implementing partner employed a GIS Coordinator who manages the portal and data uploads. For coordinating other stakeholders to share information a multi stakeholder task team was selected during the data sharing protocol exercise.	<mark>Target partially achieved</mark> The system is now operational but very little data has been uploaded and it is not being actively used at this time to "address current and emerging threats to PAs and biodiversity conservation".

				The progress is at 100%.	
				<mark>Target Achieved</mark> [Note: The EOP target was 4 landscape plans, but since Big Game Parks pulled out of the project this led to the Mkhaya landscape no longer being part of the project area. The MTR recommended the focus be on the three landscape clusters – Lubombo, Ngwempisi and Malolotja. Therefore, the target was reset to 3 plans and this has been achieved.] Three landscape management plans were launched in 2020 and stakeholders have been organized formally through their registration as not-for-profit Landscapes Associations. Institutional arrangements for continued implementation beyond the project are in place. Landscape stakeholders voted for committee members with representatives from communities, publics entities, private land owners (PLO's) and none governmental organisations based in the communities of the landscape. From the committee members secretariat was nominated coordinated by ENTC to provide support. Therefore, the landscapes are led by a secretariat composed of representatives from ENTC, Private Land Owners (PLOs), Communities, NGO's and Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development.	<mark>Target partially achieved</mark> 3 landscape management plans were developed
	Number of landscape-based management plans	None	4 landscape based management plans		
	Revised Indicator 1.3:				

	Dropped from this outcome				

Outcome 2: Legally protected PA estate expanded and results in*: (i) maintenance of wildlife populations and ecosystems functionality in the PAs under Community, SNTC and BGP management; (ii) compatibility of land uses in adjacent communities with overall biodiversity management goals; (iii) containment of threats from Commercial agriculture, infrastructure placement and tourism impacts*

Component 2 – Landscape approach operationalised and leads to expansion of PA network.

	Number of informal PAs established as National PAs	None	At least 4 informal PAs gazetted and managed as National PAs	Target Achieved One of the MTR recommendations was to redefine indicators and specifically to shift the focus from gazettement of new protected areas to bringing more land under active conservation management, in compliance with internationally-recognised standards for creating a pathway to protection such as OECMs (Other Effective Conservation Measures) and the IUCN Green Listing Standard. This has led to five informal PAs having been declared as OECM's after cabinet approval, and the Minister of Tourism and Environmental Affairs launched the use of OECM Guidelines and awarded declared sites certificates. Two of these are from communities with Chiefdom Development Plan's (CDP's) (Shewula Mountain Camp and Luzelweni Conservation area) and three from PLO's (Wide Horizons, Dombeya and Mhlosinga – Big Bend Conservancy. All these have a collective area of 19, 943ha.	No appreciable progress made towards the target 6 informal PAs (Shewula Mountain Camp, Luzelweni Conservation area, Wide Horizons, Dombeya, Mhlosinga – Big Bend Conservancy, Mahamba Gorge) became OECMs but none of these were gazetted.
	Revised Indicator 2.1 08 informal and community and		8 informal PAs (35,000 ha)		Target partially achieved Only 6 informal PAs were designated as OECM

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	private land owners PA under active conservation management in compliance with international criteria for Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECM)				57% of the target related to # hectares achieved and 75% of the target related to the number of PAs achieved 19,943 ha are now formalized as OECMs that used to be informal PAs (these include Shewula Community Conservation Area, Luzelweni Community Conservation area, Mahamba Gorge Community Conservation Area, Wide Horizons Nature Reserve, Dombeya Game Reserve, Mhlosinga--Big Bend Conservancy). Several of these new OECMs are not, however, under active conservation management. Of the 6 new OECMs, only 3 (Dombeya, Wide Horizons, and Big Bend) have management plans. All of these areas are privately owned. None of the 3 new Community Conservation Areas that were designated as OECM (Shewula, Mahamba nor Luzelweni Community Conservation Areas) have management plans. Of those with management plans, 100% are implementing at least part of their plans. Of those without management plans, very limited active conservation management is being undertaken (e.g., some tree planting at Luzelweni, Mahamba), some demarcation of boundaries (at Luzelweni), some fencing of the conservation area (Shewula, Mahamba), some limited IAPs control (Luzelweni, Mahamba).
	Number of new PAs gazetted and operationalised	0	6 new PAs are established, gazetted and managed for biodiversity conservation	<mark>Target on track</mark> Three new PAs have been established through declarations as OECM's. Two sites are in communal land (Mahamba Gorge and Mdzimba Royal Kraal-Mgogodla) and one under PLO (UNESWA EIRMIP nursery). An additional 3 PAs will be targeted as special habitats to be declared through the Flora Protection Act 2001 include Bulembu mountain, Jilobi and Muti-Muti to mention a few, that will take the total to 6 new PAs established by project end. The committees selected by Chiefdom Authorities will oversee the implementation of special habitats management plan conservation programmes. They are accountable to the Chiefdom Development Committee,	<mark>Target partially achieved</mark> 5 new PAs (Phophonyane Conservancy, Libetse Nature Reserve, Emantini Game Reserve, Lubuyane River Reserve, Lomati Nature Reserve) totalling 4,761 hectares were gazetted from start of project until present with all the gazettments happening in 2015 and none thereafter. Of the PAs which were gazetted since project start, all are privately owned and all were under active conservation management (i.e., operational) prior to this project. This project assisted some of these PAs to enhance active conservation management to a limited extent through the provision of small grants.

				which also reports to the Inner Council. The committees continue getting support on development issues from the Ministry of Tinkhundla and Administration. The progress is at 80%.	
	Revised Indicator 2.2 None				
	Number of streamlined PA and landscape management structures and standards developed	0	At least 3 streamlined landscape management structures and management plans implemented based on international conservation standards	<mark style="background-color:#00FF00">Target Achieved</mark> Three (3) management plans for ENTC nature reserves have been developed and published (Malolotja, Mantenga and Mlawula) in 2020. Three (3) Landscape Integrated Management Plans (Lubombo, Ngwempisi & Malolotja) have been launched by their secretariat (governing body) and have been formally registered with the registrar of companies in Eswatini as an Association not for profit. The landscape committee integrates communities where chiefdom development plans have been developed and where these are anticipated to be developed by Ministry of Tinkhundla, private landowners, NGOs and ENTC efforts at a higher forum. The progress is at 100%.	<mark style="background-color:yellow">Target partially achieved</mark> 3 Landscape Associations were officially established. None of these are as of yet fully operational and thus cannot be said to be implementing their management plans.
	Revised indicator 2.3 Landscape management plans, structures, and standards developed and implemented		3 (Lubombo, Ngwempisi and Malolotja)		<mark style="background-color:yellow">Target Partially Achieved</mark> 3 landscape "structures" (one for each of the landscapes) have been legally established in the form of NGOs called Landscape Associations. Management plans for each of the 3 landscapes have been developed, but implementation of these plans has yet to begin. No on-the-ground activities or agreements or coordinated efforts have yet been undertaken by any of the Landscape Associations. The plans do include

					identification of goals and activities and these are budgeted and the partners involved in each are identified (although some of the plans identify the partners more specifically whilst others simply indicate communities but without naming these" and are not comprehensive omitting some of the key partners (e.g., Ngwempisi). Also, the science behind which natural corridors were defined, an important element in landscape management planning, is unknown but does not give the impression of having been based on conservation biology science.
Outcome 3: Technical and Operational capacity improved with respect to planning, financing, surveillance, policing, monitoring and infrastructure maintenance in the new and existing PAs; particularly for the formal and informal PAs identified at PPG and to be developed by the projects interventions in component 2. **Component 3** – Strengthening PA functioning through improved Conservation management and Operational support for existing and new PAs including both formal and informal PAs.					
	Number of training programmes developed	0	At least 8 programmes on PA management, planning, administration, marketing, customer care, conflict resolution, reporting, monitoring, policing and enforcement in PAs, ecotourism development and management, CBNRM practices and sustainable financing	==Target achieved== in 2020 with a 113% progress

In addition, the EOP target was that at least 1/3rd of trainees will be women. This target has also been tracked through attendance registers and the target has been achieved. This has been confirmed by the gender assessment consultancy for the project. | ==Target partially achieved==

Seven (7) capacity building programs have been delivered for ENTC, private formal protected areas and private and communal informal protected areas. None of these were about policing or enforcement in PAs. The trainings provided were:

i, Drone operation training provided to ENTC Park Managers, Senior Ecologist, GIS Coordinator and Law Enforcement depart on drone operation for ecological and security monitoring.

ii, Marketing and ecotourism training covering topics of strategic and operational management plans associated with the marketing function.

iii, Financial management covering topics relating to fundamentals of financial management.

iv, Integrated Fire management covering aspects of landholder fire management strategies and community-based fire management.

v, Protected area financing and resourcing composed of an online survey, 3-part online webinar series (pending boot camp practical session).

vi, Eco-tourism exchange visit where tour guides, trustees and front office/ hospitality assistants from Mvembili, Mhlumeni, Shewula and Ngwempisi were taken through an exchange visit to established PAs to share their experiences and gain more experience to strengthen capacity to run their Community-based Eco-Tourism PAs.

vii, Community Eco-tourism Financial Planning and Accounting Training for 7 community eco-tourism projects namely Mhlumeni, Shewula, Mvembili, Khelekhele, Khopho, Ntfungulo and Mahamba was undertaken. |
| | Revised indicator 3.1 Capacity building programmes | | 8 programmes implemented | | ==Target partially achieved== See above |

	Number of invasive alien species control programmes	None TE Comment: The baseline is not accurate. This project did not introduce IAPS control, this was already underway in at least some private conservation areas as well as in some of the SNTC and BGP areas.	At least 1 sustainable control programme per PA management category (SNTC, BGP, Private, Community)	<mark>Target achieved</mark> in 2019 with a 100% progress. Prevailing initiatives are to upscale efforts under landscape approach.	<mark>No appreciable progress made towards the target</mark> The baseline is not accurate. This project did not introduce IAPS control, this was already underway in at least some private conservation areas as well as in some of the SNTC and BGP areas. None of the efforts directed at controlling IAPS can be considered "sustainable control programmes" but were rather once-off exercises normally lasting several days. Without continual control, IAPS simply return. Thus, even the efficacy of these once-off efforts is limited. On ENTC PAs: Both Malolotja and Mlawula Nature Reserves (manged by ENTC) were doing some IAPS control before this project. The project provided additional support for a one-time control effort in both of these reserves. The Park Wardens and rangers report that these are ineffectual as continual effort is required and given budgetary and other constraints this is not possible. The situation regarding IAPS control has not significantly improved over the project period due to. On private PAs: A once-off exercise lasting several days was supported by the project in the privately-owned Dombeya Game Reserve. Community Areas: Occasional small-scale (normally not exceeding several hectares in size) IAPS control efforts are undertaken by community members on Luzelweni. The first effort was supported by the Project to kickstart the initiative. The community was engaged in a second effort at the time the TE visited. The community was hopeful for Project support to pay the labor of the community members involved but this was not forthcoming as the Project approach (which had according to the NPM been explained to the community) was for the community to take this over. Sustainability of this programme is questionable as according to what the TE observed, community buy-in if there is no payment is limited. An effort started in Mahamba to control IAPS but was stopped the next day because the community needed to start the tree planting activity supported by the Project. The TE has no information regarding what activities may be underway on BGP-managed PAs.
	Revised Indicator 3.2: 2 invasive alien species control programmes		1 programme		<mark>No appreciable progress made towards the target</mark> Although there have been isolated, small-scale, usually once-off efforts to control IAPs, these can hardly be termed as programmes. Note: No baseline was presented for this revised indicator.
	Number of conservation infrastructure or equipment programmes	0	At least 1 conservation infrastructure or equipment programme	<mark>Target Achieved</mark> Community conservation infrastructure includes the 1.1 km fencing done at Mahamba	<mark>Target partially achieved</mark> No infrastructure programme on BGP-managed area. Note: The indicator specifically refers to "conservation" infrastructure.

		per PA management category (SNTC, BGP, Private, Community)	Gorge to upscale the protecting of declared (OECM) conservation site from illegal sand mining. In the same category, an upscale of 2.1 km game fence is being erected in Shewula Mountain Camp conservation area to protect more area outside the mountain camp. In the private land category, a 1.36 km game fence has been erected through OECM grant for strengthening conservation efforts in Big-bend Mhlosinga Conservancy, while 1.2 km has been erected at Wide Horizons conservancy. 8.1 km fence has been completed in Hawane dam which is a RAMSAR site managed by ENTC. The progress is at 100%.	According to information shared by the PMU a total of 172 km of fencing was purchased and erected in 12 different conservation areas including SNTC, private, and community areas (the TE has no information regarding BGP-managed areas). This figure is dramatically larger than the total km of fencing done according to what is reported in the 2021 PIR which would suggest that a total of only13.9 km was fenced (in 5 areas). 2 water troughs to be used to disperse wildlife during drought (to try to avoid habitat degradation around water holes) were provided to Mlawula Nature Reserve, an ENTC-managed area. None of are, however, is use yet due to the fact that the truck which must be used to carry water to the troughs is not working. Fencing and other infrastructure projects were completed on private lands.
Revised Indicator 3.3: Conservation infrastructure programme (1 per PA category)		4 Conservation infrastructure programme		Target partially achieved See above.
Number of ecotourism infrastructure, product development or marketing programmes	0	At least 1 ecotourism infrastructure, product development or marketing programme per PA management category (SNTC, BGP, Private, Community)	Target Achieved. The project delivery indicators have been reviewed and the participation of BGP has been removed following their withdrawal in the project participation. Since now the categories are three, that renders delivery complete. In the upscale of this indicator, Khelekhele and Khopho community ecotourism facilities have been completed and Luzelweni ecotourism is ongoing (60% complete) within community category.	Target partially achieved Community PA ecotourism infrastructure: The structure of the new Khelekhele ecolodge is complete. There are however some issues which still need to be addressed including furnishing the ecolodge and landscaping. The TE has no direct information regarding Khopho ecolodge. Luzelweni. A foundation for a new lodge (rondevel) been built but nothing other than the foundation exists. A toilet structure for the lodge has been built which is still not functional and has nothing inside including no toilet. A small office has been built at the entrance of the lodge but this is not being used. All Out Africa provided trainings and developed a community hiking trail project in the Ngwempisi, Makhonjwa & Mvembili areas, including planning, designing & developing the hiking trails & training the community members (done in 2020). No ecotourism, infrastructure, product development or marketing programmes have been undertaken on BGP-managed PAs.

				To sustain this establishment, communication infrastructure through computer and internet connection has been provided and communities are to develop Facebook pages for marketing establishments.	
				The Eswatini Tourism Authority has been involved in the marketing of the community establishments and domestic travelers have been visiting Khopho, Khelekhele for camping and hiking.	
				The travel agents Swazi Trails and All Out Africa have been taken to the community facilities and international travelers have been brought to Mhlumeni Bush Camp, a facility the project supports.	
				The ENTC establishments got support for the reception information display and interpretation facilities, rehabilitation of lodge water supply and building of more picnic site braai areas in Mantenga Nature Reserve. Mololotja A-frame hut, entrance gate reception and picnic sites were rehabilitated. Magadzavane carport, Chalets and restaurant were rehabilitated. Wide horizons conservancy which is privately owned received an OECM grant to improve their eco-tourism accessibility especially in wet seasons through concrete strips construction.	
				The progress is at 100%.	

	Revised indicator 3.4: Eco-tourism Infrastructure product development and marketing (1 per category)		4 Eco-tourism Infrastructure product development and marketing		See above
Number of CBNRM programs developed	0	At least 4 CBNRM co-ordinators employed and capacitated and at least 2 sustainable CBNRM programs developed.	Target Achieved. Four (4) Landscape Coordinators were employed by the project and have facilitated community engagement implementation of the project. The coordinators were drawn from the community as part of strengthening resident capacity for implementation of landscape plans and natural resources management. In an upscale, currently seven (7) wetlands management plans have been handed to chiefdoms awaiting being launched. The chiefdoms are Ntondozi, Luyengweni, Mphini, Malanti, Eluvinjelweni, Ndangu and Elukhetseni. In these chiefdoms the committee managing the wetlands are trained and organized into a formal structure at the chiefdom. This initiative is to ensure effective management of wetlands to enable community women entrepreneurs benefiting from wetland flora for making handicraft to continue benefiting in the years to come. Again, Swaziland Fair Trade	Target partially achieved Although Community Liaison Officers/Landscape Coordinators were employed by the Project, they were not given the necessary training in CBNRM projects designed to contribute directly to the conservation of biodiversity, and were not logistically based where they should have been to be effective in designing and overseeing the implementation of CBNRM initiatives that could truly contribute to conserving biodiversity within communal areas. The Project did not provide the Landscape Coordinators with any specific training on either CBNRM projects or on monitoring with the exception of guidance given by the NPM. Training should have been provided to ensure a correct understanding of what is meant by CBNRM projects which are intended to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. Perhaps in part because of this lack of training, the Project mis-interpreted CBNRM to include chicken and rabbit raising and planting of fruit trees -- activities that had little if any direct connection with conserving biodiversity. And, although beekeeping can in certain situations be legitimately classified as a CBNRM activity that contributes to biodiversity conservation (such as in the case, for example, of the Malawi GEF project), the way the beekeeping initiatives were designed in the case of this project, they did not do so. At the outset of the project, 3 "Community Liaison Officers" were employed by the project and were based in the PMU in Mbabane. Their main responsibility was to ensure effective implementation of project activities within communities and capacitating the communities in CBNRM initiatives. By the time of the MTR, only 2 Community Liaison officers were active in the field; they are working through the CDP engagement process to identify alternative IGA opportunities. At that point, only a fruit tree programme had been developed, which as the MTR pointed out, had weak linkages to the project outcomes and objective. Following the MTR, it was decided that the positions be changed to "Landscape Coordinators" with stronger qualification requirements and greater responsibilities. 3 Landscape Coordinators were employed by the Project after the MTR and were on board for most of the remaining period of the project. These were based in the capital city instead of within the various landscapes as would have been more ideal for ease of communications/monitoring within communities. The Landscape Coordinators were chosen from members of the communities within the various landscapes. Few of the Landscape Coordinators had previous experience with designing/implementing CBNRM projects.

				SWIFT) has been engaged to train and make market linkages. Free range chickens and beehives have been supplied to different communities such as Malanti, Mhlumeni, Mvembili, Shewula, Luzelweni, KaZulu, Mahamba and Velezizweni and communities are still managing their enterprises with expected sales before project ends. The progress is at 100%.	In most communities supplied with chicken (e.g. Luzelweni, Mhlumeni, Shewula, Velezizweni), barely a third of the number of chicken to be supplied has reached the chicken sheds (at the time of the TE visit/assessment). With the bee hives are yet to be installed after a few trapping boxes have been installed (e.g. Mahamba and Mhlumeni, none at Shewula, and Velizizweni), rabbits yet to be supplied at Shewula, Mhlumeni, Velizizweni at time of TE Team visit, the sustainability of the IGA cannot be ascertained at this stage.
	Revised indicator 3.5: Biodiversity based CBNRM programmes	No baseline was included (TE insertion)	2		Target partially achieved The CBNRM activities in the wetlands which were supported by the project are an excellent example of CBNRM activities that are directly linked with biodiversity conservation. Other so-called CBNRM activities supported (such as the chicken and rabbit raising) have no direct link with biodiversity conservation and it was not appropriate for this project to support them. The beekeeping may or may not be classified as a CBNRM project contributing to biodiversity depending on how these initiatives are pursued. As none have yet been completed, it is not possible for the TE to make this assessment. Communications with community members did not indicate that there is at this point any clear connection between the beekeeping and biodiversity conservation.

Annex 15. Lost Commitments & Unexpected Add-ons

"Lost Commitments"	Unexpected Add-Ons
Game ranching on communal lands as an alternative livelihood & game product development and marketing in SNTC PAs, BGP PAs, private PAs and community PAs.	Chiefdom Development Plans (9 in total)
Development of land-owner and SNTC/BGP agreements committing to the long-term conservation of PAs.	Wetland Management Plans for wetlands which do not qualify as either informal or formal PAs (7 in total)
Information sharing campaigns on benefits of PAs to develop support for conservation and engender a national conservation ethic.	National Strategy on IAPS
Tourism assessments.	Elaboration of ENTC 5 year Strategic Plan
Conduct research on ecosystem services and functioning in the 4 landscapes.	So-called CBNRM projects that are truly not CBNRM projects and which do not contribute to biodiversity conservation
Establish and implement a sustainable mobile alien invasive species harvesting, milling and removal business.	
Provide fencing (and other infrastructure), law-enforcement, native species re-introductions, conservation equipment, machinery and staffing necessary to establish 12 areas -- Shewula, Nkalashane, Makhonjwa, Sibebe, Motjane Vlei, Mambane, Muti Muti Conservancy, Mahhuku, Ngwempisi (Ntungulu), Manzimnyame, Mkhaya West, Jilobi and Bulembu -- as National PAs as identified in the management plan, feasibility study and business plan during component 1.	
Provide fencing (and other infrastructure), law-enforcement, native species re-introductions, conservation equipment, machinery and staffing necessary to establish 5 areas -- Mdzimba, Nyonyane, Mahamba, Ndlotane and Nsongweni -- as Community Conservancies as identified in the management plan, feasibility study and business plan during component 1.	
Support to Conservancies and other co-operative structures to implement the landscape conservation management plans including support for meetings, co-ordination, monitoring programmes and priority co-operative projects.	
Training for SNTC, BGP, Private PAs and SNL communities, police and magistrates on Swazi conservation laws, law enforcement, anti-poaching, scene of crime investigation and evidence preparation.	
Employ community representatives within selected communities to co-ordinate and develop community conservation programs.	
Branding and marketing in SNTC PAs, BGP PAs, private PAs, community PAs and informal PAs.	

Poaching Incidents

Poaching has been a huge challenge for decades due to its location following that is surrounded by communities that stricken by poverty. The trainings that has been introduced in the past years has played a major role in reducing poaching activities in the poaching.

Year of Occurrence	Number of Incidents	Number of Arrest
2014	?	3
2015	?	4
2016	87	5
2017	74	5
2018	45	7
2019	35	3
2020	40	5
2021	30	5

Annex 17. Signed TE Report Clearance Form (to be attached by UNDP)

Annex 18. Audit Trail (annexed as a separate file)

Annex 19. List of Stakeholders Interviewed by the TE

Stakeholder Names	Institution/Community	Role/Position	Gender	Type of Engagement	Contact details (Mobile/Email)	Date
Thandi Mhlanga	Shewula Mountain Camp	Manager	F	Physical	766434920	21.09.2021
Juluka Maziya	CDT	Trust Chairperson	M	Physical		
Grace Mahlalela	CDT	Treasurer	F	Physical		
Doris Mahlalela	CDT	Secretary	F	Physical		
Lungile Matsenjwa	Community	Beneficiary	F	Physical		
Mandla Nhlabatsi	Community	Beneficiary	M	Physical		
Sipho Mnisi	Community	Beneficiary	M	Physical		
Sonnyboy Mtsetfwa	Mlawula Nature Reserve	Senior Warden	M	Physical	76443707	21.09.2021
Sicelo H. Dlamini	Mlawula Nature Reserve	Ranger	M	Physical	76307759	
Sandile W. TFWALA	Mlawula Nature Reserve	Ranger	M	Physical	76260732	
Samson Maziya	Mhlumeni Bush Camp	Supervisor	M	Physical	78292617	22.09.2021
Sizakele Matsenjwa	Mhlumeni Bush Camp	Camp Administrator	F	Physical	76987429	
Sabelo Matsentjwa	Community	Rabbit IGA (Income Generating Activity)	M	Physical	76415121	
Florence Matsentnjwa	CDT	Chairperson	F	Physical	78308761	
Busisiwe Maziya	CDT	Treasurer	F	Physical	76328427	
Nompumelelo Matsennjwa	Community	Bee Hives IGA	F	Physical	78395449	
Lucky Maziya	Community	Bee Hives IGA	M	Physical	76318698	
Thabsile Khumalo	CDT	Secretary	F	Physical	76112056	
Seth Maphalala	Lubombo Conservancy	Coordinator GIZ-Lubombo TFCA Support Programme	M	Virtual		
Matt McGinn	Dombeya Game Reserve	PLO	M	Physical	76150200	23.09.2021
Nkosinathi Sikhondze	Dombeya Game Reserve	Senior Ranger	M	Physical	76953050	
Stanford Makhubu	Endlovini Wetland (Eluyengweni) CDC	Treasurer	M	Physical	76383290	
Precious Ntshalintshali	CDC	Vice Chair	F	Physical	76054828	

Peter Mkhonta	Royal Kraal	Overseer and Chief representative	M	Physical	7615 0395	
Elizabeth Mkhonta	Community	Woman beneficiary	F	Physical	7671 6968	
Khanyisile Simelane	Community	Woman beneficiary	F	Physical	7657 0226	
Nompumelelo Masuku Dlamini	Wetland Management Committee	Treasurer	F	Physical	76081601	
Busisiwe Shiba	CDT	Treasurer Khelekhele Community Eco-Lodge	F	Physical	76315308	
Gertrude Dlamini	CDT	Vice-Chair	F	Physical	76280508	
Simon Vilakati	Inner Council/Royal Kraal	Bandlancane	M	Physical	76437352	
Thembela Dlamini	Malolotja Nature Reserve	Assistant Lodge Supervisor	M	Physical	76919534	24092021
Musa Masimula	Malolotja Nature Reserve	Senior Ranger	M	Physical	76189705	
Nosipho Dlamini	Malolotja Nature Reserve	Receptionist	F	Physical	78464645	
Teddy Dlamini	Malolotja Nature Reserve	Acting Park Warden	M	Physical	78069574	
Milton M. Mamba	Malolotja Nature Reserve	Community Outreach Programme	M	Physical	76036679	
Rod de Vletter	Phophonyane Falls Nature Reserve	PLO Strategic Technical Adviser to SNPAS	M	Physical	76023670	27092021
Tommy Stephens	Phophonyane Conservancy	PLO	M	Physical	7602 2253	
Kim Roques	All Out Africa	NGO Director	M	Physical	76023640	28.09.2021
Sandile Gumedze	ENTC Conservation Management Unit PSC Member	Ecologist	M	Virtual	7806 9560	
Sipho Simelane	Eswatini Tourism Authority & PSC Member	Product Development Oficer	M	Virtual	76024439	
Emmanue Kunene	University of Eswatini PSC Member	Researcher (EIRMIP)	M	Physical	76110775	

Dr Wisdom N. Dlamini	University of Eswatini	Consultant to SNPAS	M	Physical		
Thabani Mazibuka	MTEA	OECM Chairperson	M	Virtual		
Tsakasile Dlamini	PELUM and PSC Member	NGO responsible party	F	Virtual		
Mzwakhe Khumalo	CDT Mahamba Gorge Community Conservation Area	Chairperson and OECM Committee Member	M	Physical		30.09.2021
Walter Kunene	Mahamba Lodge	Administration Officer	M	Physical	76115382	
Douglas Lushaba	CDT	Representative of Dlovunga Community	M	Physical	76363223	
Patrick Simelane	Masibine Royal Kraal/ Inner Council	Bandlancane	M	Physical	78226990	
Nohlahla Kunene	Community Member	Women Group	F	Physical	76229911	
Lungile Hlophe	Community Member	Volunteer Beekeeping	F	Physical	76806960	
Ireen Ngambi	TENVELO NGO	Director	F	Virtual		
Zachariah Dlamini	MTEA Forestry Department	Head of Herbarium Section	M	Physical		01.10.2021
Nomsa Mabila	GIZ Support Project	Former Technical Officer	F	Virtual	76031931	02.10.2021
Bongani Magongo	Ministry of Agriculture PSC Member	Land Use Planning Department	M	Virtual	76084593	04.10.2021
Bheki Bulunga	COSPE	Project Manager	M	Physical	76029707	05.10.2021
Lisa Zaneni	Cospe	Country Director	F	Physical	76514590	
Thulani Methula	ENTC	Director Parks Former NPM to SNPAS	M	Virtual	76043660	
Mandy Cadman	UNDP (RTA, Current)	Former Consultant SNPAS MTR	F	Virtual	+27844642559	06.10.2021
Fikile Mazibuko	Matsapha Municipal Council	Former SNPAS Administrative/Finance Officer	F	Virtual	76056677	
Juliana Van-Vuuren	CDT Luzelwini Chiefdom and Conservation Area	Treasurer	F	Physical	76348350	
Johannes Nkonyane	Luzelwini Chiefdom	Umgijimi/Inner Council	M	Physical	76131452	07.10.2021

Tal Fineberg	Mbuluzi Game Reserve PSC Member, SGRA Chair	PLO	M	Virtual	76913722	
Zakhe Dlamini	ENTC	GIS Coordinator	M	Virtual	76240744	
Hlob'sile Sikhosana	MTEA	GEF OFP	F	Virtual	76062806	
Lynn Kota	ESWADE	SMLP National Director	F	Virtual	76063609	09.10.2021
Gcina Dlamini	UNESWA	Former NPM	M	Virtual	7608 1445	11.10.2021
Lungelo Dlamini	CFI	Former Community Outreach and Ngwempisi Landscape Coordinator	M	Virtual	78085567	
Sipho Matsebula	EEA	Ecologist PSC Member	M	Virtual	78060236	
Dr Lindani Mavimbela	PMU	NPM	M	Virtual	78068940	
Musa Hlatjwako	Tambankulu Estate	Lubombo Landscape Association	M	Virtual	7602 9342	
Kayise Lukhele	Tambankulu Estate	LLMA Secretary	F	Virtual	76080251	
Machawe Dlamini	IYSIS	LLMA Member	M	Virtual	76474017	
Jerry Nxumalo	RMI	Malolotja LA Chair	M	Virtual	76021544	
Nhlanhla Nxumalo	PKT	Malolotja LA Chair	M	Virtual		
John Hlophe	PS MTEA	PB Chair	M	Physical	76062826	13.10.2021
Onesimus MUHWEZI	UNDP CO	Project Officer responsible for Project	M	Virtual		
Jefferson Gina	UNDP CO	Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst/TE Manager	M	Virtual	78086112	
Nontobeko Mlangeni	UNDP CO		F	Virtual		
Shaima Hussein	UNDP CO	DRR	F	Virtual		
Lindiwe Mavuso	Ministry of Finance	PB Member	F	Email Quest	76039185	14.10.2021
Sipho Shiba	Ministry of Agriculture	PB Member	M	Email Quest	76645193	
Malangeni Gamedze	MTAD	PSC Member	M	Email Quest	76128608	19102021
Stephanie McGinn	Dombeya Game Reserve	PLO	F	Virtual/Email	76025277	23.09.2021

Annex 20. TOR for the Terminal Evaluation (National Consultant)

Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR) for The Strengthening National Protected Areas Systems (SNPAS) in Eswatini Project (PIMS #4932) *- formatted for the* [UNDP Jobs website](#)

BASIC CONTRACT INFORMATION

Location:	**Home based**
Application Deadline:	**30 July 2021**
Type of Contract:	**Individual contract**
Assignment Type:	**NPSA**
Languages Required:	**English and Siswati**
Starting Date:	**20 August 2021**
Duration of Initial Contract:	**30 days**
Expected Duration of Assignment:	**8 weeks**

1.   INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the TE of the full-size project titled Project Title: The Strengthening National Protected Areas Systems (SNPAS) in Eswatini (PIMS #4932) implemented through the Eswatini National Trust Commission/Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs. The project started on the 03 October 2014 (final signature date) and is in its 7th year of implementation. The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document 'Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects' (http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/GEF/TE_GuidanceforUNDP-supportedGEF-financedProjects.pdf).

2.   PROJECT BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Strengthening National Protected Areas Systems (SNPAS) in Eswatini is funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF), supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and implemented by the Eswatini National Trust Commission (ENTC) in collaboration with the Eswatini Tourism Authority and Local Governments (Tinkhundlas). Eswatini's formal Protected Areas (PAs) baseline covered approximately 3.9% of the country's total land area. These areas are relatively rich in biodiversity with their share of endemism as represented in various ecosystems. Furthermore, the country has set targets for the conservation of its ecosystems and species in line with the National Development Strategy (Vision 2022) and other international targets such as the Aichi Targets under the auspices of the Convention on Biological Diversity. While some of the critical ecosystems and species are found in existing PAs, some are found in areas prone to unstainable utilization and overexploitation of resources, thereby threatening livelihoods and impeding sustainable development.

The SNPAS project's goal was to strengthen the management effectiveness of the PA system of Eswatini to ensure a viable set of representative samples of the country's full range of natural ecosystems are conserved, through a network of PAs. The project objective is to effectively expand, manage and develop Swaziland's protected area network in order to adequately protect the biodiversity and landscapes of the country. This involved devising a system of integrating land and natural resource management that transforms the current PA patchwork into a protected areas network, while creating incentives for all Swazis (land management agencies, conservancies, private landowners and tourism operators) to work together toward conservation and sustainable economic development. In order to achieve the project goal and objective, the project's interventions have been organized in three components:

Component 1: Knowledge based platform operationalised at the National and regional level to address current and emerging threats to PAs and biodiversity conservation.

Component 2: Landscape approach operationalised and leads to expansion of PA network.

Component 3: Strengthening PA functioning through improved Conservation management and Operational support for existing and new PAs, including both formal and informal PAs.

The project was designed to contribute to objective 8 of the Eswatini National Development Strategy 2022: to ensure environmental sustainability and strategic area 3.7 on environmental management; and outcome 3 of UNDAF/CPD 2011-2015 on National institutions have the capacity and providing guidance on the ulitilisation of natural resources in a sustainable and equitable manner. Implementation of the project has spanned three UNDAF/CPD frameworks including UNDAF/CPD 2016-2020 and 2021-2025. The project started on the 03rd October 2014 and is in its 7th year of implementation. Financing for the project included: US$ 5,500,000 GEF grant and co-financing of US$ 23,600,000. Although it was designed for a six year implementation period, following the mid-term review recommendations and COVID19 pandemic the project was extended for an additional 12 months. Implementation followed UNDP policies and procedures for Nationally Executed projects with Country Office support.

Like many countries, Eswatini has been affected and impacted by the COVID19 pandemic. The country has registered 823 cases with 676 death as at 17th June 2021[16]. A total of 35227 have been vaccinated since the programme was rolled out at the end of March 2021. Following the registration of positive COVID-19 cases in the country, the Government, on 17 March 2020, declared the COVID-19 pandemic a National Emergency. It further activated a comprehensive programme for managing initial and cascading impacts, which were induced by the strain on the health care capacity as well as the enforcement of core measures as means to mitigate the spread of the virus. Measures undertaken included cross border and air travel bans and limitations, suspension of public gatherings, closure of offices and businesses except for emergency services to minimise the spread of the virus. As a result of these measures, a number of project activities were disrupted, delayed and suspended due to COVID restrictions.

COVID-19 Pandemic delayed implementation of all activities that required international travel, community engagements and delayed deliveries of equipment's and civil works materials due to restrictions in travels and closure of many none essential service providers. The ban of international travel delayed service delivery on other effective conservation measures (OECM) activities and site evaluations to expand protected area networks (ultimate objective) disbursement of catalytic funding for communities Furthermore, supply chain for some civil works such as cement and steel materials imported from South Africa took longer than planned thus delaying completion of deliverables.

3. TE PURPOSE

- The TE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

- The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments.

- The objective of the TE is to assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework. The TE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects.

4. TE APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

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[16] **Eswatini Ministry of Health, Daily information update**

The TE team will review
- all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP) the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation.
- the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

The TE team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office(s), the Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful TE.
- Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to *(Eswatini National Trust Commission; Eswatini Tourism Authority, Tikhundulas in the Ngwempsis, Maloloja and Lubombo Landscapes, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs)*; executing agencies, senior officials and task team/component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project steering committee, project beneficiaries, academia, local government and CSOs, etc.

- Additionally, the TE team is expected to conduct field missions to *(Ngwempisi, Maloloja and Lubombo landscapes/clusters and interact with project stakeholders and beneficiaries)*, including the following project sites *(Mlawula Wildlife Reserve, Shewula community Camp, Mhlumeni Bush camp and Luzewleni of Lubombo Landscape; Ntondozi, Khelekhele and Kopho of Ngwempisi, landscape; Maloloja Wildlife Reserve, Mlwane, Mantenga Nature Reserve).*

In line with COVID19 standard operating procedures to minimise spread of the virus, protect consultants, communities and partners, the TE team will use extended desk reviews, secondary data, and virtual interviews.

The consultants may also use spatial technologies to assess status of investments undertaken by the project.

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the TE team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given *limitations of budget, time and data.*

The TE team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as *other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report*.

The *final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report* and be *fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the TE team.*

The final report must describe the full TE approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

As of 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic as the new coronavirus rapidly spread to all regions of the world. Travel to the country has been restricted since 17 March 2020 and travel in the country is also restricted.

If it is not possible to travel to or within the country for the TE mission then the TE team should develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the TE virtually and remotely, including the *use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires.* This should be *detailed in the TE Inception Report and agreed* with the Commissioning Unit.

If all or part of the TE is to be carried out virtually then consideration should be taken for stakeholder availability, ability or willingness to be interviewed remotely. In addition, their accessibility to the internet/computer may be an issue as many government and national counterparts may be working from home. These limitations must be reflected in the final TE report.

If a data collection/field mission is not possible then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.). International consultants will work remotely with national evaluator support in the field if it is safe for them to operate and travel. *No stakeholders, consultants or UNDP staff should be put in harm's way and safety is the key priority*.

A *short validation mission may be considered if it is confirmed to be safe for staff, consultants, stakeholders* and if such a mission is possible *within the TE schedule*. Equally, qualified and independent *national consultants will be hired to undertake the TE and interviews in country as long as it is safe to do so*.

5. **DETAILED SCOPE OF THE TE**

- The TE will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A).

- The TE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects *(http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/GEF/TE_GuidanceforUNDP-supportedGEF-financedProjects.pdf*.

- The TE consultants will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP), the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation.

- The TE team will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

- The TE consultants are expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office(s), the Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

The *Findings section of the TE report will cover the topics listed below*. A full outline of the TE report's content is provided in ToR Annex C.

The asterisk "(*)" indicates criteria for which a rating is required.

Findings

i. Project Design/Formulation

- National priorities and country driven-ness
- Theory of Change
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Social and Environmental Safeguards

- Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
- Assumptions and Risks
- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
- Planned stakeholder participation
- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Management arrangements

ii. Project Implementation

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
- Project Finance and Co-finance
- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
- Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards

iii. Project Results

- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
- Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
- Sustainability: financial (*)   , socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- GEF Additionality
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact

iv. Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- The TE team will include a summary of the main findings of the TE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
- The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.
- The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions. When possible, the TE team should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation.
- It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to include results related to gender equality and empowerment of women.

The TE report will include an Evaluation Ratings Table:

Evaluation Ratings Table for The Strengthening National Protected Areas Systems (SNPAS) in Eswatini (PIMS #4932)

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating[17]
M&E design at entry	
M&E Plan Implementation	
Overall Quality of M&E	
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Overall Project Outcome Rating	
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	
Socio-political/economic	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	

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[17] **Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point rating scale: 6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5 = Satisfactory (S), 4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2 = Unsatisfactory (U), 1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4 = Likely (L), 3 = Moderately Likely (ML), 2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1 = Unlikely (U)**

6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the TE will be approximately *30 working days)* over a time period of *(8 weeks)* starting *20 July* and shall not exceed five months from when the TE team is hired. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

   a) *30 July:* Application closes
   b) *15 August:* Selection of TE Team
   c) *20 August:* Prep the TE team (handover of project documents)
   d) *02 September: 05* days (recommended 2-4): Document review and preparing TE Inception Report
   e) *09 September: 02* days: Finalization and Validation of TE Inception Report- latest start of TE mission
   f) *10 September: 15* days: TE mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
   g) *20 September:* Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of TE mission
   h) *30 September: 08* days: Preparation of draft TE report
   i) *31 September:* Circulation of draft TE report for comments
   j) *10 October: (02* days Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report
   k) *15 October:* Preparation & Issue of Management Response
   l) *30 October:* Expected date of full TE completion

The expected date start date of contract is 30 September*.*

7. TE DELIVERABLES

The TE *consultant/team* shall prepare and submit:

- TE Inception Report: TE team clarifies objectives and methods of the TE no later than *2 weeks* before the TE mission. TE team submits the Inception Report to the Commissioning Unit and project management. Approximate due date: *(05 September)*
- Presentation: TE team presents initial findings to project management and the Commissioning Unit at the end of the TE mission. Approximate due date: *(20 September)*
- Draft TE Report: TE team submits full draft report with annexes *within 3 weeks* of the end of the TE mission. Approximate due date: *(31 September)*
- Final TE Report* and Audit Trail: TE team submits revised report, with Audit Trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report, to the Commissioning Unit *within 1 week* of receiving UNDP comments on draft. Approximate due date: *(10 October)*

*The final TE report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO's quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the ***UNDP Evaluation Guidelines***.[18]

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[18] **Access at: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml**

8. TE ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing the TE resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's TE is UNDP Country Office.

The UNDP Country Office will;

i)   contract the evaluators
ii)   ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the TE team;
iii)   procure venues and provide zoom/team platforms for virtual stakeholder consultations (inception and validation workshops).

The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the TE team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits where possible.

Duty Station

This is a home based assignment with one mission to Eswatini and project sites.

Travel:
- International travel to Eswatini will be optional considering COVID19 pandemic situation during the TE mission;
- The BSAFE course <u>must</u> be successfully completed <u>prior</u> to commencement of travel;
- Individual Consultants are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director.
- Consultants are required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under: https://dss.un.org/dssweb/
- All related travel expenses will be covered and will be reimbursed as per UNDP rules and regulations upon submission of an F-10 claim form and supporting documents.

9. TE TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent evaluators will conduct the TE – one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions) and one national expert.

- The team leader will be responsible for the overall design and writing of the TE report, etc.)
- The *national expert will report to the team leader*.
    - *S/he will assess emerging trends with respect to regulatory frameworks, budget allocations for co-financing, capacity building,*
    - *work with the Project Team in developing the TE itinerary and*
    - *lead stakeholder consultations and field visits and*
    - *contribute to preparation of required reports.*

The evaluator(s) cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the project document), must not have conducted this project's Mid-Term Review and should not have a conflict of interest with the project's related activities.

The selection of evaluators will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities as outlined below:

National Consultant (Team member)

Qualifications and expertise
- At lease an MSc degree and at least 7 years' experience in natural resources management, socio-economic development or related fields.
- Knowledge of integrated approaches to management of Biodiversity related issues in Eswatini

Experience
- Experience in the evaluation of development projects with UNDP or other UN development agencies and major donors, is required.
- Experience of working with Local Governments and Community Based Organisations in the areas of Natural Resource Management is an advantage.
- Excellent English writing and communication skills.

Competencies
- Excellent Analytical Skills;
- Positive, constructive attitude towards work;
- Ability to act professionally and flexibly to engage with government officials, donor representatives, and local communities.

Language: Fluency in English and Siswati

10. EVALUATOR ETHICS

- The TE team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment.
- This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'.
- The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data.
- The evaluator must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

11. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft TE report to the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%
- The final TE report includes all requirements outlined in the TE TOR and is in accordance with the TE guidance.
- The final TE report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.